

Pastor's CORNER



I can hardly believe it is already October! But with October comes planning for the end of the year—and even looking ahead to 2027. I already have my Advent sermon series mapped out. Not written—let's not get crazy!—but the themes, Scriptures, and overall direction are in place. Around the church, conversations about next year's budget have begun, the Nominating Committee is hard at work, and our Staff Relations Committee recently completed annual staff reviews.

As I prepared for mine, I had the opportunity to do some important reflection. I arrived at First Christian Church in April of 2024, which means this is already our third fall together. Thinking back to that first fall reminded me just how much has happened since then. FCC had been through several years of transition. We were still learning one another, building relationships, and figuring out what this new chapter would look like.

Two and a half years later, I look around our church and find myself incredibly encouraged.

Our choir is thriving. Spaces throughout the church have been refreshed and are being used well. We added a new preschool Sunday School class this fall. God's Gang continues to fill the building each Wednesday. Our youth group is growing, and Youth Alpha is creating meaningful conversations about faith and Jesus. Our committees and ministries continue finding ways to serve our neighbors, support our schools, and share Christ's love throughout our community. Perhaps most importantly, I continue to see this church love one another well.

We have said goodbye to far too many beloved members over these past couple of years and walked alongside others through illness, changing mobility, grief, and difficult family situations. Again and again, I have watched this church show up—with meals, calls, visits, prayers, rides, encouragement, and simple presence. Those things may not always make the newsletter, but they tell me a great deal about the health of our church.

That doesn't mean everything is perfect. We have challenges ahead, and one of the most significant is financial. For several years, our expenses have exceeded our regular income. If we want to continue growing, serving, and investing in ministry, that is something we need to address together. You will hear more about that separately in the weeks ahead. But I don't want that challenge to overshadow what is also true: there is a lot that is healthy at FCC, a lot worth celebrating, and a lot worth investing in.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month, and many of you have shared incredibly kind words with me. Thank you. But reflecting on these past two and a half years has reminded me just how grateful I am to be your pastor.

I get a front-row seat to the way you love one another, serve your neighbors, invest in our children and youth, and put your faith into practice. FCC isn't a perfect church, and I certainly am not a perfect pastor. But I am grateful for you, excited about where we are, and hopeful about where God is leading us next.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Isaac

OCTOBER 8TH, 2026

THE MESSENGER

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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**BELIEVING,
BEHAVING,
BECOMING
LIKE CHRIST**



Office Hours: MF 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM, MWF 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM

COFFEE BAR: 8:00 AM | WORSHIP: 9:00 AM | SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10:15 AM

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

OCTOBER PRAYER

Lord help us to magnify you rather than our troubles and help our trust to be in you alone. Remind us that your beauty is in full display when we see squirrels playing and hear birds singing. Amen

CALENDARS!

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS:

- Oct 11th: Pastor Appreciation
- Oct 12th: Staff Relations Mtg 6 PM
- Oct 15th: Koinonia 9 AM
PHS Football Dinner
- Oct 19th: Red Cross Blood Drive
@The High Rise
- Oct 24th: Disciple Men Brkft 8 AM
@PFR
- Oct 30th: PHS Cross Country Dinner
- Oct 31st: Scare on the Square

Date	Worship Elder	Bread Elder	Deacons	Deaconess	Jr. Deacons	Ushers
October 11th, 2026	Dennis Thiel	Chris Milam	Team #1	Nicole B	Team #1	Team #1
October 18th, 2026	Cindy Mathis	Angel Templeton	Team #2	Bev M	Team #2	Team #1
October 25th, 2026	Ellen Webb	Steve Webb	Team #3	Megan M	Team #1	Team #1
November 1st, 2026	Lisa Young	Barb Free	Team #1	Joel G	Team #2	Team #2
November 8th, 2026	Chris Milam	Candi Milam	Team #2	Emily T	Team #1	Team #2

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

- Finances: Attendance and giving remain remarkably consistent year over year. A significant operating deficit remains, although the financial picture improved slightly over the past two months.
- Children & Youth: Fall programming is off to a great start with God’s Gang, Jr. Disciples, a new Preschool Sunday School class, Youth Group, and Youth Alpha all underway!
- Supporting Our Schools: We fed the Beacon Brigade last month, and FCC will host the Football Team on Oct. 15 and Cross Country Team on Oct. 30. More than \$2,000 has also been raised to support music, theater, and fine arts students!
- A Busy Fall: Thank you to our Membership, Evangelism, and Community Outreach Committees and volunteers for a busy season of fellowship, community events, school partnerships, and outreach!
- Directory, Website & App: Work continues on our new church directory, and the Board approved an FCC website redesign, with a members-only app also coming. Our goal is to have everything completed by year’s end.
- Preparing for 2027: Our 2027 Nominating Committee has been approved and begins meeting Oct. 8, while work is also beginning on next year’s budget.
- Community Partnerships: FCC recently hosted 20 local pastors and nonprofit leaders to strengthen partnerships and better coordinate efforts to serve Edgar County.

FINE ARTS FUNDRAISER UPDATE

You have been tremendously generous in your giving toward our Fine Arts Fundraiser—**thank you** for your incredible support! If you haven't had a chance to participate yet, there are still envelopes remaining on the display board in the foyer.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Paris Healthcare: Martha Stephen, Ron Odle, Chuck McClarey & Chuck Dean
Pleasant Meadows: Linda Driver
Twin Lakes: Irma Julian
Continued Prayers: Carol Winemiller, Brad & Dorothy Farnham, Marge Houghland, Jim Bennett, Betty Swanson, Sue Elliott, Lisa Young, Nila Hasler & Betty Kelly.

THANK YOU!

The FCC Scarecrow booth was once again a HUGE success! 70 scarecrows went home with new families this year! Families were on the ground in the straw with each other, having fun in the sunshine - what a happy sight to see! There was a lot of laughter, and even some tears, sharing memories with our longtime customers! Thank you for your continued support through your donations of old clothing, purses, hats, scarves, and jewelry! And, as always, a huge shout out to Moss Farms for their continued support with the straw - what a great church family we have! See you next year!

P.S. As the leaders of this adventure continue to age, we may be looking for a younger, stronger crew to help with set up and tear down next year - keep us in mind!!!

PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

October is Pastor Appreciation month. We invite you to show your appreciation to Pastor Isaac with cards or gifts during this time! We invite you to a Pastor Appreciation Reception immediately following services on Sunday, October 11th. We encourage everyone to participate in showing gratitude. Let’s make this month special for Pastor Isaac.

OFFICE HOURS

Please note that our church office hours will change starting Monday, October 12th. The new hours will be Mondays and Fridays from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, and Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM. Thank you for your cooperation!

CIRCLE NEWS

Circle of Light will meet Tuesday, November 3rd at 5:00 PM.

Circle of Prayer will meet at 6:00 PM on Thursday, November 12th.

Koinonia will meet on Thursday, October 15th, at 9:00 AM.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Faith in Action will be hosting their spaghetti dinner on Friday, October 23rd, from 4:00 PM to 6:30 PM at Lake Ridge Christian Church. The meal includes spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, and dessert. Admission is by donation, with all proceeds benefiting Faith in Action of Edgar County. We hope to see you there!



KID’S CORNER

What a wonderful and busy season it has been! As we move into autumn, our children’s and youth ministries continue to reach out into our community and grow together in faith. We are so grateful for the ways God is working through our church family.

Community Outreach & Special Events

We have had fantastic opportunities to serve and connect with our community recently:

- **Lunch on the Lawn:** We were blessed to participate in Lunch on the Lawn during homecoming week at Paris High School, serving grilled hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, fruit, and delicious desserts to the entire staff and student body! They are always so gracious for this event and treat us like celebrities!
- **Honeybee Parade:** Our group loved marching in the annual Honeybee Parade. It was such a joy to see so many familiar faces, children, and former students cheering in the crowd!
- **Safety Training Partnership:** FCC has partnered with Horizon Health to offer a CPR/AED course for our volunteer teaching staff and anyone else in the congregation who would like to be prepared. Classes will be held on the evenings of **October 28** and **November 4**. If you are interested in attending one of these sessions, please let me know! Also, **if I sent you the Google form, please complete it as soon as possible!**

Youth & Children’s Ministry Updates

- **Alpha Youth Series:** Our youth are thoroughly enjoying the new Alpha Youth series on Sundays right after church! Alpha Youth is designed to give young people an open, welcoming space to explore their questions about life, faith, and purpose. It is definitely not too late to join—we’d love to have you!
- **Mark Your Calendars:** Save the date for our annual **God’s Gang Christmas Program** on **Wednesday, December 9 at 5:30 PM**. You won't want to miss it!

October is **Pastor Appreciation Month**, and I would like to extend a heartfelt, public thank you to Pastor Isaac for all he does for the church and how he fully supports me in my role as Children's Director. He is truly a dedicated leader for our congregation! Our church family is truly blessed to have him! As always, it is a pleasure and a privilege to serve the children and families of First Christian Church! I welcome your feedback and ideas you may have for our children’s programming. Thank you for your continued blessings and support.

Warmly,
Miss Kim

YOUTH GROUP FUTURE DATES

Oct 11th: Youth Group
Oct 18th: Youth Group & Club 3–5
Oct 25th: Youth Group
Nov 4th: Youth Group & Club 3–5

SCARE ON THE SQUARE

On Saturday, October 31st, the Evangelism Committee will have a booth to pass out candy to the kids. They are requesting donations of individually wrapped candies to be handed out. Please bring donations in by Sunday, October 18th.

SOCKATOME

We will be collecting socks for Paris preschoolers in October. Please help fill the big socks!! If you have any questions, please see Tammy Terry.