

Elder's Message

~ Ray White, Elder

There is often a song that repeats in my two-channel head:

*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.
They shall mount up with wings as eagles.
They shall run and not be weary.
They shall walk and not faint
Teach me Lord, teach me Lord to wait.*

I believe it is based on one of those many encouraging Psalms.

I have noticed that all of us family members named Christian ask ourselves at least two questions: *Why me?* and *When do I see the answer?* As I ponder "why me?," I have to peer inside myself for an answer. I have to look inside the veil that covers me. Not liking the reflection makes me look at my foundation. Looking at three aspects of self, I see faith in God, hope in Jesus, and love given by the Holy Spirit. All of a sudden I look up from the waves of distraction that surround all of us daily. "As the deer panteth for the water, so my soul longeth after Thee." I realize that I have been given living water and am refreshed by the still waters. *Why me?* is answered by *Wait for God, my rock and my refuge.* His answer will come in His time.

In the meantime, "When?" knocks again with vigor. Waiting doesn't abide well with *when*. Questions asked about *when* simply cause anxiety, stress, fear, criticism, worry, and loss of the contentment we seek in living life given us by God. We so easily get distracted by our rationale, that we wander off course. Instead, we should "Bless the Lord, oh my soul." Look up and be a praise chime of adoration and not forget all of His benefits. We are indeed in His hands. We don't hold the reins or the steering wheel. I pray that we can rest in the shelter of His wings and abound in the pastures He provides daily.

I leave you with one of my favorite verses from Ephesians 2:8-9: **"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one can boast."**



"The characters in this book are real. The names have been changed because your brother can't pronounce them."

Help Us Make Connections

As you meet visitors to our worship from week to week, would you encourage them to fill out a visitor card? We would appreciate your help in learning how to contact and connect with those who are new to FCC.

Youth Update

~ Todd Loschen

Thank you to all the youth who filled the Easter eggs with candy and helped hide the eggs for the young kids in our community.

Youth Sunday will be May 7th, continuing with the theme of God's Love. There will be a Lock-In the night before that, on May 6th for Chi Rho and CYF. Friends are welcome to stay the night. We will practice for Youth Sunday and have some time for games, food & a movie, but we will also need to sleep in order to get ready for the Sunday Service.

Thank you for getting all your camp forms in on time. I will be looking for drivers to take the kids down to camp and pick them up, too.

There will be no Youth Group on May 7th or 14th due to the Lock-In and Mother's Day. We will be cooking at the Guadalupe Shelter on the 21st and finishing the year on May 28th—with fun and games and an ice cream party! All ages, and friends, are welcome.

Book Clubs

Monday, May 1 Evening Book Club 6:00p in the Parlor

The Monday Evening Book Club is currently reading *Same Kind of Different as Me* by Ron Hall and Denver Moore. This is the true story of a woman who brought her wealthy husband and a homeless drifter together in a life-changing bond of friendship.

Friday, May 12 Morning Book Club 10:00a in the Parlor

The Friday Morning Book Club is reading *Hillbilly Elegy* by J. D. Vance, a memoir of a family and culture in crisis.

Women's Fellowship

The CWF luncheon and general meeting will take place on May 4th beginning at noon. Installation of Officers will begin a 1:00. Reservations for the catered luncheon must be in by Sunday, April 30th.

The CWF Board will meet on May 11th in the Parlor at 10:00.

See the newsletter calendar for dates and times of small group meetings.



Easter Flowers

Thank you to everyone who purchased lilies to decorate the sanctuary for Easter in memory of loved ones. We are thankful, too, for the congregation's help in decorating the cross at the front of the church, and to the Worship Team and Pastor Mark for organizing such a special addition to this year's Easter worship experience.

Stitching Group

The Crafty Christians Stitching Group will take a *stitch in time*—a break in May and through the summer—to accommodate busy, variable schedules. Please plan to join us in September.

Invitation to Make a Difference

The Bridge at Greeley assisted living facility is seeking local volunteers to offer friendship to residents. Visitations could be as simple as engaging a resident in conversation before the Tuesday afternoon music presentations or finding ways to connect by sharing hobbies (knitting, etc.) or games. Call The Bridge at 970-339-0022.

FCC Financial Update (as of 3/31/17)

Actual Income Year to Date: \$46,134.15
Actual Expenses Year to Date: \$50,067.46

May Birthdays

- 2 Anthony White
- 7 Gretchen Howland
- 8 Todd Loschen
- 8 Rob Ring
- 9 Jodi Hartmann
- 14 Betty Jensen
- 17 Cynthia May
- 22 Theresa Rusher
- 24 Dean Turner
- 28 Andrew Bishop
- 28 Ron Shetler
- 29 Debbie Berg
- 29 Steven May
- 29 Maximus Skow
- 31 Kathy Herman
- 31 Brian Knudsen

Are we missing your birthday? Share the date with the church office.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 2017	1 6:00p Book Club	2 8:30a Men's Coffee	3	4 Noon CWF Luncheon and Program 6:30p Chancel Choir	5	6 9:30a Women's Prayer Breakfast 5:30p Chi Rho, CYF Lock-In
7 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Sanctuary Service	8 4:30p Worship Team	9 8:30a Men's Coffee 1:15p Joy Group 6:30p Daughter's Dessert	10	11 9:00a P.E.P. Walkers 10:00a CWF Board 6:30p Chancel Choir	12 10:00a Book Club	13 8:30a Golden Corral Men's Breakfast 5:30p Tennyson Center Dinner
14 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Sanctuary Service Baby Bottle Campaign Begins	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 8:30a Men's Coffee	17 9:00a Clothing Bank	18 9:00a P.E.P. Walkers 6:30p Chancel Choir	19	20
21 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Sanctuary Service Noon Gen. Board Mtg. 3:30p Guadalupe Meal (Older Youth)	22	23 8:30a Men's Coffee	24	25 9:00a P.E.P. Walkers 9:30a Kindness Grp. 1:30p Peace Group	26	27
28 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Sanctuary Service 11:45a Elders' Meeting 4:00p All-Youth Party	29 Memorial Day Church Office Closed	30 8:30a Men's Coffee	31			



A Message from Mark

Dear Friends,

We have been here just six weeks and we already feel like you have made a temporary home for us. I have told friends that this interim at Greeley is like having grandkids; I come and have fun and go home. You all have been so warm and welcoming. You have something very special going for you in this congregation.

I look forward with excitement to the next couple of months. There is much we can do together to get ready to launch your next chapter in ministry. I am impressed with how well you work together and "do your jobs."

I thought your Easter week services were as inspiring and well executed as I have ever seen.

Let's keep this going!!!

Love,

Pastor Mark

Is It Time to Let Go?

Keys to First Christian Church are loaned out on a temporary basis, as needed. If you do not lead a group that routinely meets outside of regular office hours, please consider turning yours in. Thank you.



Youth Sunday will take place on May 7th. Don't miss it!

Upcoming: Pentecost Day Hymn Sing on 6/4

Senior Pastor Search Update

In Colossians 3:12 the Apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." I have emphasized the word "patience" because that is what God is asking of us, even in relation to our Search and Call process. It is widely thought that this epistle was written by Paul during his first imprisonment, so he too was exercising great faith in God and the **patience** to endure. Our former regional minister, Dean Phelps, was very clear with our team about the need to allow the Search and Call process to unfold in **God's time**, not in our time. He also cautioned us on multiple occasions not to rush the process of discernment of God's direction. With this in mind, our committee has been very deliberate in our process and mindful of the need for patience as we allow the primary candidate the time to discern God's direction for him and his family.

As many of you know, we hosted our primary candidate in early March, and then more recently his wife and daughter over Easter weekend. We felt the meetings with them went very well, and we are encouraged by their continued interest and the questions they are asking! We are now at a place where we are requesting the candidate to enter into negotiations and become exclusive with our church, and we anticipate hearing from him during the week of 4/24. Becoming exclusive means that he would not actively talk with other churches about Search and Call opportunities. If he agrees to become exclusive and enter into negotiations with us, we will begin that part of the process right away. Then, if negotiations are successful, the next steps would include a recommendation to the Board and then a Congregational Meeting to take a vote to extend a Call. As you can see, there are still some "if-then" steps that will require us all to exercise those qualities called out by the Apostle Paul.

We appreciate your continued **patience** and prayers (for the candidate and his family and our team) as we continue to work through the process... in **God's time**. Blessings to you all! Kris King, Search Team Chair



In July we'll gather as ONE for the 2017 General Assembly in Indianapolis. Thousands of Disciples from across the U.S. and Canada will hear inspiring messages, elect a new General Minister and President, hear updates and learn together. Early registration discounts expire April 1. Go to <http://disciples.org/ga>

Thank You Notes

✝ **The Worship Ministries Team** thanks the many people who contributed their time and talents to our exciting, spirit-filled journey beginning with Pastor Lena's Ash Wednesday Service, to Lent and Holy Week and Easter. You worked tirelessly and so willingly. Special thanks to Pastor Mark, Susan, and our gifted musicians, to Maundy Thursday participants, Prayer Vigil pray-ers, and Easter service worshipers who transformed the chicken wire cross into a brilliant floral cross. It took a lot of setting up, cleaning up, and detail planning that seemed to never end. . . but, in the end it says. . . **WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE!**

✝ **He is risen! He is risen indeed!** Many thanks to all who made our Easter celebration special at FCC. A large team of volunteers helped with the burrito breakfast. Many of you donated time, money and food. A special thanks to Carol Williams and Colleen Heitman who helped organize and train us. Ray White was especially helpful in teaching us how to fold shells. God has truly blessed us with generous volunteers at FCC. Yes, He is risen! ~ Fellowship Team

✝ **Dear First Christian Church Family:**

On behalf of the family of Carroll Nickle, I would like to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers over the past few years for my Dad and for the many spirit-lifting cards and expressions of sympathy following his passing. We are also grateful for Pastor Mark and his wife, Mary Kay, together with Tom and Carolyn Rainbolt, who came to visit the day Dad passed, and for the many who came to Dad's service in celebration of his life. We are truly blessed to have such a loving, caring faith community! ~ Connie Davis

Baby Bottles for HOPE Bags

This year's baby bottle donations will go to the Zonta Club of Greeley to help them assemble HOPE Bags. The Zonta Club is a group of professionals working to empower women and girls around the globe. Their current focus is on the issue of human trafficking, and they sponsor NECCAT (Northeastern Colorado Coalition Against Trafficking).



ZONTA
CLUB OF
GREELEY
MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

Through NECCAT, they provide HOPE Bags to the Greeley Police Department to give to girls rescued from human trafficking—as well as to other vulnerable children in crisis. Packed with hope and love, the HOPE Bags contain a complete set of clothing, a blanket, and toiletry items. They offer victims dignity and needed supplies while providing officers with a person-to-person connection. Diana Laws, a long-time member of our congregation, is the driving force behind NECCAT and would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Baby bottles will be distributed on Mother's Day, May 14th & collected on Father's Day, June 18th.

Coming This Summer: Serve Day 2017

On Saturday, July 15, we'll join the city-wide effort in lieu of our own Worship in Action Sunday. Mark the date, and look for more info in the June newsletter.



Mission Matters

Many thanks to Lorilee Scott, Ron Creighton, Lana Nielsen, Marla Johnson & Gary & Carla Ikenouye for providing dinner to 35 guests at the Cold Weather Shelter on March 25th!

Join the second annual "Run for Refugees" on Saturday, May 13th, at 8:00 a.m. at the Greeley/Evans Youth Sports Complex, located near 65th Ave. and 20th St. This 5k run/walk is a fundraiser to support the Global Refugee Center in its mission to build more bridges between refugee/immigrant communities and the broader Greeley community.

For details & to register, go to <http://www.grccolorado.org/>.



On Saturday, June 3rd, our church will join forces with local Thrivent offices in a "Faith Build" for the Greeley Area Habitat for Humanity. Look for a sign-up sheet on the board outside Fellowship Hall. Talk to Gary or Carla Ikenouye to learn more.

