

First Christian Church
800 Beech Street
Permit # 9
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Newsletter
December 2022

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Postmaster: Address Correction Requested



December 2022

T.J. Long, Jr, Pastor
June Gibbs, Moderator
Teresa Moore, Vice Moderator



Devin Harrell, Administrative Assistant
Nina Gregory, Choir Director &
Organist

office@fcec.org
fcec.org
(252) 338-6506

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2022

Sundays	Sunday Morning Worship in Sanctuary & Facebook Live	11:00 am
Sundays	Sunday School in Fellowship Classroom	10:10 am
Mondays	Weight Watchers	5:30 pm
Mondays	Open Gym	6:00 pm
Tuesdays	Weight Watchers	12:30 pm
Wednesdays	Bible Discussion	5:45 pm
Wednesdays	Choir Rehearsal	7:00 pm
Dec 2	Christian Women's Fellowship	6:00 pm
Dec 6	Prayer Gathering	6:00 pm
Dec 10	White Elephant Christmas Party	6:00 pm
Dec 11	Christmas Cantata	11:00 am
Dec 13	Card Ministry	12:00 pm
Dec 15	Christian Men's Fellowship	6:30 pm
Dec 17	Christmas Caroling	6:00 pm
Dec 20	Prayer Gathering	6:00 pm
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Service	11:00 pm
Dec 25	Christmas Service	11:00 am
Dec 27	Card Ministry	12:00 pm

fcec.org
facebook.com/FCCDOC



Dear FCC Family,

I hope that you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday complete with great food and, more importantly, time with family. I took some time to watch some World Cup matches and football games, too. Have you noticed that sports fans hope a lot? They hope their team wins but even they realize that only one team will bring home the trophy. Another question: Have you ever considered that the word hope can be used as a noun and a verb?

When fans "hope" (the verb) for their team to win, they want something to happen. However, when we have "hope," (the noun) we have the assured expectation that something will happen. For Christians, the hope Christ gives us through His resurrection is not a wanting or wishful hope, but an assured expectation of what we know is to come.

1 Peter 1:3 says that believers in Christ are given a "new birth into a living hope." Peter uses hope as a noun. This message of hope is more than just a want or a desire. Peter assures us that this living hope is a joyful and confident expectation. Christ's resurrection from the dead gives us complete confidence that this hope will last for all eternity. Remember, that your hope in Christ is not wishful thinking, but an assured expectation of what is to come.

When we place hope in things, sports teams or people, we are often disappointed. But a hope that is firmly planted in Christ will give you a peace in life no matter how strong the gales blow or how high the waves get. So, as we dive headlong into Advent and prepare our hearts to welcome the Savior into the world for Christmas, I challenge you to make your faith in Jesus a noun, a solid hope that you can bank on not a slippery verb that gives no assurance.

I pray you and yours have a Merry Christmas!

Your Pastor & friend,

- T.J. Long, Jr.



Board Report November 2022

The official board of First Christian Church met in the fellowship classroom in November at 7 p.m. June Gibbs, moderator called the meeting to order and opened with prayer. There were 15 members present.

Treasurer's report: Portia Copeland reported that \$20,000 was taken out of the common fund and \$20,000 was taken from the Beasley fund to pay for several large bills due.

Worship Committee: Worship is well into plans for the seasons to come. We had a successful All Saints Day and we would like to thank Teresa Moore for writing an original poem that we hope to keep repeating yearly. Coming up will be Veterans' Day when we will celebrate our veterans past and present. On November 27th, we will begin advent season with the hanging of the greens and the first candle. We are using the children church members to do that this year. The cantata will be on the 11th and a children's play on the 18th, The candlelight service for Christmas Eve will be at 11pm. Volunteers are needed for the program. We will decorate on November 25th at 6:00 p.m.

Education Committee: Paula Crawford said Norma James is working on the Christmas play for the children.

Outreach Committee: Jean Etheridge gave the report for Melodi Robbins, chairperson. On the 29th Of October outreach served a SOULS meal of Portia's tater tot casserole, green beans, pineapple slices, rolls, and Little Debbie cakes. We prepared 40 meals with only 17 coming to eat. There were 10 meals left over so we took them to the fire department. With the help of many of our faithful church family, we received and packed the food for six weeks of backpack distribution. Outreach is now asking for your support in the Samaritans Purse Shoe Box program as well as the yearly coat drive. At the last board meeting the request for a one-time donation to the Boys and Girls Club was approved. This is to be given next year. As chairperson for Outreach, I (Melodi Robbins) truly appreciate all the help that is so freely given to the many projects that we do. Without your dedication to this church and community it would not be possible. I also want to thank the church secretary (Devin) for helping me with the Christmas Shoe Box program. He pointed me in the right direction which helped me organize what needed to be done!

Stewardship Committee - June Gibbs reported the committee met to discuss a review of the Secretary position.

Property Committee: Steeple is due to be salvaged in the next weeks. Routine HVAC service completed with injuries to company employee. Upgrade to WIFI system under consideration. Door-knob to men's bathroom in social hall replaced by Jeff Moore. Request to add an alarm pad to front door will be investigated. The codes to the alarm system needs to be changed to the property chairman. This needs to be changed from Travis James to Tom Sawyer. Tom will call the alarm company. There also needs to be a backup person. There needs to be one system for the whole facility.

Memorial Committee: Gail Hobbs reported 4 memorials for October.

Elders- Tom reported that all is well.

Deacons- Betty Sawyer reported communion will be done the original way in January which includes passing the collection plate.

Deaconess: Jean Etheridge reports all is well.

CMF: J.P. Rich reported the Pancake Breakfast had a good turnout. He thanked everyone for the help and support. 310 plates were sold. The sum of \$2,479 was collected and the money cleared for plates and the sausage (sold separately) came to \$1,285.00, Their next meeting will be November 17th at 6:30 p.m.

CWF- Met October 6th with 12 ladies present. Our Just Women's Bible study was Lesson 7: Women of Galilee - Bold and Determined, the Power of Love. We had our treasurer's report, and then discussed Christmas party and set date the of December 10th. We also met November 3rd with 7 ladies present. Our Just Women's Bible study was Lesson 8: Mary and Elizabeth, Learned to Lean and Encouraged. Our CWF Christmas meeting will be at home of Roberta Shaw Williamson at 6 pm on Thursday

December Birthdays

1 Maylin Marie Cartwright
3 Cathy Taft Albertson
5 Ben Anderson
Carolyn Dunwell
Nancy Tatum
Lindsey Lee
8 Heather Taft Newbern
11 Donald Brown
12 Pete Gray
Gary Taft
Deloris Meads
13 J. W. Van Dalsum
Ashley Jennings
18 Murlene Williams
21 Julian Revels
Claudia Spencer
28 Peggy Manning
29 Amy Wall Petrill
30 Jean Etheridge
31 Melba Van Dalsum
Andrea Hardison
Kelsey Kaden

December Anniversaries

1 Richard & Pam Cobb
20 Lindsey & Sandra Lee
24 Pete & Kathy Gray
28 Glen & Rhonda Kaden



Upcoming Events

Dec. 4 Peace Candle
Dec. 11 Joy Candle/Choir Cantata
Dec. 18 Love Candle/Children's Play
Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service, Candlelight Service/End Advent
Dec. 25 Christmas Day Service
Dec.25-Jan. 5 Christmas Tide
Jan. 5 Undecorate The Church
Jan. 6 Epiphany

Memorials

In Memory of

Garland Anderson
Jimmy Scott

Given By

Murlene Williams
Castello Class
Jean Etheridge
Julian & Portia Copeland
J.P. & Carol Rich
Thomas E. Stevenson Jr.

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are still needed to help with Children's Church on Sunday mornings during the Worship Service. If you are able to help, please contact Norma James or you can email office@fccec.org

Finance Report September thru November 20th
If anyone has any questions, please call Treasurer, Portia Copeland, 252-335-4447.

October		November 1-20th	
Budget Income	\$ 11,157.15	Budget Income	\$ 3,309.52
Designated	\$ 1,080.54	Designated	\$ 2,589.00
Credit Card	\$ 339.55		
Total Income	\$ 12,577.24	Total Income	\$ 5,898.52
 Expenses:	 \$ 13,790.40	 Expenses:	 \$23,710.76
Attendance:		Attendance:	
October (5 Sundays)	= 48 avg	November (3 Sundays)	= 59 avg
Children	= 5 avg	Children	= 4 avg

Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Mr. James “Jimmy” Franklin Scott who passed to his heavenly Father’s home on November 15 2022. Mr. Jimmy was a lifelong member of the Castellow Sunday School Class. He was the husband of the late Mrs. Joyce “Bunny” Scott and father of John Scott.

Altar Flowers

4th The altar flowers are to the glory of God and In loving memory of Wimpy and Lizzie Stafford Onley and Ralph and Annie Rogerson Pipkin, by Ken and Ella Pipkin.

11th To the glory of God and In loving honor of my children and their families, by Melodi Robbins.

To the glory of God and In loving memory of Shelton and Thelma Bunch, Christine Dillon Poulas, Gladys Dillon DuBois, by their daughters and nieces, Bonnie Arnold, Carolyn Lanahan, and Cynda Bunch.

18th To the glory of God and In loving memory of Ethel and Hester Holmes, by their daughter, Glenda Guthrie.

To the glory of God and In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Alonza Holmes, and Mr. Melvin Cartwright by Mrs. Velma Cartwright and family.

25th To the glory of God and In loving honor of our granddaughter, Laurel Bright on the occasion of her second birthday, by Tommy and Melissa Copeland.

To the glory of God and In loving honor of our parents by Tommy and Melissa Copeland.

December 1st. Everyone will bring finger foods for refreshments. Van will leave church at 5:45 pm for anyone that would like to ride. Outreach is starting a non-perishable food drive for Sunday November 13th and 20th. We have a family for our angel tree and a member. Nancy will order our 2023 Just Women Bible study books. Submitted, Portia Copeland, President.

Membership Committee: Christmas dinner and party is set for Saturday, December 10, at 6 pm. Dinner will be fried chicken and roast pork with rice and gravy, green beans, glazed carrots, and rolls. Dessert will be provided by volunteers. -Portia Copeland Chairman of Membership.

The Christmas poinsettia will be \$11.00. The last day to place an order will be November 20th there will only be red ones available. They will be in the church on Dec. 18th, Dec. 24th, & Dec. 25th. They can be picked up after church on Christmas Day.

New Business: There will be a meeting on Dec. 5th, prior to board meeting, for a training meeting for the deacons and elders. June Gibbs gave a report on the congregational meeting results. The budget 34 votes and approved. 38 officers approved with one split vote. The Christmas Eve service was approved for 11:00 p.m.

Ministers report: This minister's report covers things accomplished in the month of October. I made three visits with Emerald White, Vivian Ashe and Cynda Bunch as well as a plethora of phone calls with other members and shut ins. On Sunday, October 16th I attended a Worship Committee meeting where I was given responsibilities to carry out for All Saints Sunday, Veteran's Day, and Advent. On the 20th, I attended CMF with a total of 12 men in attendance. Within our Prayer Gatherings, we just completed the book "5 Things to Pray For Your Church" and will be starting our new book "How to Pray" next Tuesday evening. We have 7 regulars who attend our Prayer Gatherings. I warmly welcome and strongly encourage more of our leaders to come learn the basics of prayer in this new book. Our Bible Discussion group just completed the book of 1 Samuel and have now completed 10 books of the Bible. For the month of November, we will be reading through 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles and Psalms. This month in Open Gym we had a better turnout with an average of 6 in attendance each week. We had 11 on October 24. On Friday, October 28th, I led a Greeters dinner and orientation in the Fellowship Hall with 11 volunteers in attendance. We began our Greeters schedule this past Sunday, November 6. I also put together and presented our new Fidget Boxes which are a collection of silent toys and crafts for kids to use during the Sunday service. I have also created an "Activity Binder" that includes all reoccurring activities, upcoming events and a list of special services through mid-January. This binder is for greeters to be aware of all these happenings and able to invite guests to any of these environments.

On Sunday, October 30th we had 18 total visitors from 6 families attend our Halloween Event for children and youth. We had a total of 12 volunteers help with the Education Committee. We received 4 connect cards and I've contacted all 4 families welcoming them to a Sunday service in the near future. I was not scheduled for this month's meeting for the NC Commission on Ministry. My next meeting with the Commission will be mid-January with a new timetable for ordination in March. I have several goals for the month of November, the chief of which is to begin planning sermons from the lectionary 6 weeks in advance. I will be able to do this by working on sermon planning even on weeks that I will not be preaching (Christmas Cantata, for example). I would like to get ahead to be able to help the Worship Committee plan even more efficiently. In partnership with Portia and the membership committee, I will be helping to plan our annual Christmas Party & White Elephant gift exchange as well as hopefully planning another caroling event with Worship, as well. I am always open to feedback, and I am thank you for all of your support for me and my family!

Your Pastor & Friend, T.J. Long Jr.

There being no further business Portia Copeland made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Teresa Moore. Motion carried, Pastor Long dismissed us in prayer.

White Elephant & Christmas Dinner

We invite everyone to come celebrate Christmas as a church by having a meal together and capping off the evening with a White Elephant gift exchange. To participate in the gift exchange, simply bring a wrapped unisex gift of approximately \$10 in value.

Bring a child's gift for a child, an adult gift for an adult.

As far as the wonderful dinner...

Dinner will be cooked by the membership committee and there will be fried chicken and roast pork with rice & gravy, green beans, glazed carrots and rolls with coffee, water, and tea. Desserts will be provided by volunteers.

Dinner will be free, and RSVP will be required.

You can RSVP in the lobby, through text, or email office@fcec.org!

This event will be held in the Fellowship Hall, on **Saturday, December 10th at 6:00pm**

If you cannot afford a gift but would like to participate, please contact our Minister, TJ Long JR at minister@fcec.org



Yard and Breakfast Sale – March 2023

The church is planning a yard sale for Friday and Saturday, March 24 & March 25, 2023. Save and box up your items that you would like to donate. It would be a great help if you price them for us. Items will be accepted two weeks prior to the sale. Volunteers will be needed to set-up and work that Friday and Saturday. In addition, we will have breakfast items – sausage biscuits; cheese biscuits; coffee and apple jacks for sale.

Looking forward to receiving your items and your help.



Join Us For Christmas Caroling!



Good at singing or really bad? Well no worries because all are welcome to come Christmas Caroling with us, (especially kids!)

There will be either a hayride or horse-drawn wagon that takes us around the neighborhood surrounding First Christian Church. We will sing carols, hand out gifts and invitations to any that greet us on the route. Afterwards you can expect hot chocolate and cookies in the cookhouse upon returning!

We will meet in the church on **Saturday, December 17th at 6pm.**

If you would like more information please contact our Minister TJ Long, Jr—
minister@fcec.org

Bible Discussion on Wednesday Nights

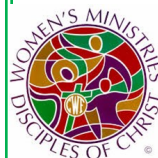
5:45-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall

This month we dive into 1 Chronicles & Psalms. We are reading through the whole Bible by reading 6 chapters a week together. No lectures, no curriculum! We discuss and question various aspects of each chapter. We laugh some and learn from each other! Come and join us!



Christian Women's Fellowship

The Christian Women's Fellowship will meet on Friday, December 2nd at the home of Roberta Williamson, 143 Hunters Trail West, Elizabeth City, NC at 6 pm. If you are able, bring finger foods! Van will leave church at 5:45 pm for anyone that wants to ride. We will continue our Just Women Bible Study. Feel free to come and join us.



Christian Men's Fellowship

Christian Men's Fellowship meets on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm! The next meeting is December 15th at 6:30 pm. Dinner is provided!



Open Gym Basketball

Come out Mondays December 12th & 19th, to participate in open gym basketball from 6:00 to 7:30 pm! There will be cornhole, foosball, games of 21, half court or full court for all ages!



Church Text Messaging Group

We have a texting service to send text messages to members to stay updated on church events and information! We have automatically added everyone who has given us a cell number in the directory, but if you would like to be added, please contact the church office. There is an option to opt out if you would like!



Merry Christmas!

We here at First Christian Church hope all have a wonderful, safe, and blessed Christmas this year celebrating our Saviors birth! We hope it is filled with blessings, time with family and friends, and gifts & cookies of course!



Christmas & Christmas Eve Service

Join us on December 24th at 11:00 pm for our Christmas Eve service, and December 25th at 11:00 am for our Christmas Day Service!

Serving in December

Elder:	Norma James	Vance Meads
Deacons:	Teresa Lassiter Joe Lassiter Brian Weatherly	Jeff Lassiter Tommy James
Deaconesses:	Melodi Robbins	Martha Best