



First Edition

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Winter 2015

A Purposeful Pursuit

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Sunday Worship
8:30 and 10 AM

Church Office Hours
Mon-Thurs, 9 AM to 12 Noon

Church Council
Jim Savage (Chair), Dianne Chase,
Nathaniel Edmunds, Mike Lewis,
Kevin Van Brunt,
Pastor Thom Christian (ex-officio)

First Edition

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Articles and photos for the
spring issue, to be published
in March 2016, are due in the
church office by February 22nd.

In this newsletter I'd like to take you *back* to take you *forward*, ie. to catapult you into 2016. And the place to do that is in Exodus 15. But first let me lead you up to that. Actually things start in Exodus 14, where I'll give you a brief history and then get to my point. The people of Israel have been in bondage in Egypt, God rescues them with a mighty hand (the ten plagues), they trek to the Red Sea where Pharaoh and his army are in close pursuit, and there they find themselves trapped between the sea and the oncoming army. God parts the sea, the Israelites pass through on dry land, Pharaoh's army tires to follow, God closes the sea once the Israelites are safely through, Pharaoh's army is drowned, and Israel is safe on the eastern side. Then in response to their salvation, the people of Israel sing a new song to the Lord:

"I will sing a new song to the Lord, for He is highly exalted. The horse and rider He has hurled into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise His name!"

Now interestingly, at the moment they make this proclamation, God basically says, "OK, it's great that I've shown up and done something for you, it's really great that you proclaim Me King, but now we need to go to Sinai and talk about this relationship. Why? Because I didn't simply rescue you because you were enslaved, didn't simply rescue and redeem you so you could live a life that says, "Well, I've been saved!" "Rather," God

says, "I've rescued and redeemed you for a *purpose!*"

That purpose is for the restoration of all things. And God is telling them that He and they are going to "partner up" to bring the original peace promised back in the Garden of Eden to a broken and dark world in need of peace. And there at Sinai God gives them instructions on how He will be their God and they will be His hands and His example to usher in that peace. That's the history lesson!

Yet what I'd like us each to grasp from that lesson is that the same instruction He gives to the Israelites He gives to each of us—actually to every person who goes by the name of "Christian"—that being, that though we've made a profession of faith, that is not where it stops. Now comes the purpose of peace-speaking and living out His message in our world. There should be an active, intentional desire to partner with God and to be the heralds of His grace in our time. We live in tumultuous times, challenging times, when the church, like the people of Israel, will have to face many challenges in our world. Are we going to partner with God and receive His leading to do this?

Please know I will be joining with you as we partner with God to be His ambassadors in our homes, our communities, our jobs, our schools and our world.

▪ *Til next time, I remain,
Unworthy, but His, Thom*

Keeping up with our church family!

FCC welcomes new members

On November 15th, the First Christian Church family warmly welcomed Mike and Shirley Lymburner and Diane MacArthur into membership. Mike and Shirley make their home in Tufonboro, and Diane lives in Wolfeboro.

FCCers are on the go!



FCCers get around! And that means that the light of Christ is shining in many places. Here some of our church family are spotted at a political rally!

Coffee Hour a hit!

Sunday morning coffee hour is a great time of fellowship enjoyed by all. Many, many thanks to our wonderful kitchen staff, who make this special weekly time possible!



Dinner for Eight promotes fellowship!

Dinner for Eight is a great program designed to promote relationships in our church family. Anyone is encouraged to join in! Sign-ups are taken for winter/spring and fall sessions. These photos were shared by Bernie and Nancy Anderson of a Dinner for Eight they hosted.



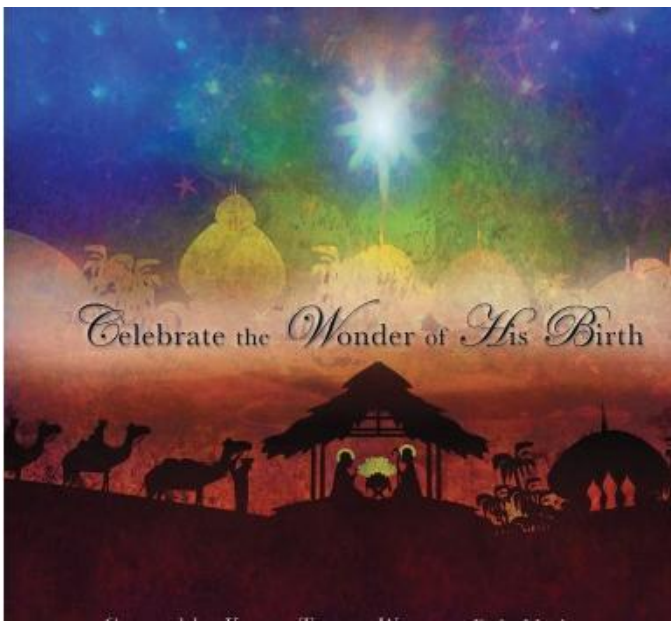
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
PO Box 681
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Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Thursday, December 24th
4:00 and 5:30 PM

(Prelude 15 minutes prior to services)



The prophet Micah foretold, “But you, Bethlehem, Ephrathah—David’s country, the runt of the litter—though you are small among the clans of Judah, from you will come the Leader Who will shepherd—rule My people Israel.” In a quiet, no account kind of town, the greatest wonder of all time occurred—God was born as a human baby.

You’re invited to join with our First Christian Church family on Christmas Eve in a joyous celebration that includes favorite carols, new Christmas worship songs, beautiful instrumental and vocal specials, a poignant message by our Pastor, and the traditional lighting of candles.

Men’s Choir makes debut

An enthusiastic group of men made their debut as a choir at First Christian Church on Sunday, October 18th, after only two rehearsals. They shared music again on November 22nd.

The prayerful inspiration of Dave Harubin, who provides organization and communication with the guys, this group encompasses men of a wide variety of ages. Any FCC guy is welcome to join their ranks! The choir’s conductor is Dave Snell, who is well experienced in leading men’s musical groups.

The choir holds periodic rehearsals on Sunday mornings following the 10 AM service. They are currently in recess until after the holidays.



Christmas Child Project well supported at FCC!

Thank you for making this Christmas a special one for children around the world! We as a church were able to send 115 shoe boxes to needy children in distant places! In addition to the gifts that you provided, you introduced these children to the Lord through the age-appropriate evangelistic materials that were later placed in each box. A special thanks to those who donated monetary gifts to the Operation Christmas Child ministry, as well. Thank you for participating in this wonderful mission!

—Jane Cook

Opportunity Alert!

Would you like to encourage another Christian who has been imprisoned for their faith in Jesus or become a prayer warrior for a "worker" carrying Bibles to people who desperately want to know about Jesus? I'll show you how, using Voice of the Martyr material and websites. These "on the line" persecuted brothers and sisters need our encouragement and prayers. Please call me so I can help you get started: Patricia Johnson (455-4919 or patsyjohn49@gmail.com).

Valentine's Day Dessert planned for February

Ladies, mark your 2016 calendars! You are cordially invited to the home of Bette Frazier on Saturday, February 13th, for our annual Valentine's Dessert. This event always provides not only spectacular treats, but a wonderful time of fellowship and friendship, as well.



His Story—and History

Whether we have been a Christian for two months, five years, or fifty years, we each know that there is no more important reading that we can be doing than to spend time in God's Word—His Story. Whether we are in the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Epistles, or the Book of Revelation, God invites us to spend time with Him, to learn with Him, and to learn to build His love, His depth, and His priorities into our lives.

Many of us enjoy time in other reading, also, whether it be biographies, novels, philosophies, treatises, Christian counseling and comfort, or so much more that can be worthwhile and rewarding. My own preference in non-biblical reading is history.

History is broad and diverse. It encompasses the history of great civilizations, the history of our country, including its wars, and the history of great accomplishments of every type.

Do you enjoy history, and would you enjoy reading a brief history of First Christian Church? A small booklet on the history of FCC was published in 1937 (the 125th anniversary of the church), and Carla Zwahlen and I had the pleasure of updating that three years ago, when the 200th anniversary of the church was celebrated. The availability of a book about Mark Fernald, our founding pastor, and internet information on the Christian denomination allowed us to clarify or correct several areas of information.

The updated history of FCC was distributed at a special service in November 2012. Now a supply of these booklets has been reprinted, and they are available in the foyer for anyone who would enjoy reading some about the church history.

Keep on reading His Story, but enjoy some history also!

▪ Bruce MacGregor

