



**FIRST
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH**
OF BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

The Visitor

900 S. Ennis, Bryan TX 77803
979-823-5451
firstchristianbcs@gmail.com
www.firstchristianbcs.org

March 2023

Mike's Musings

1 Peter 3:12a – "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer."

You and I live in a loud world. To get someone's attention is no easy task. One must be willing to set everything aside to listen: turn down the radio, turn away from the monitor, turn the corner of the page and set down the book. When someone is willing to silence everything else so they can hear us clearly, it is a privilege. A rare privilege, indeed.

Your prayers are honored in heaven as precious jewels. Purified and empowered, the words rise in a delightful fragrance to our Lord. Your words do not stop until they reach the very throne of God.

Your prayer on earth activates God's power in heaven, and "God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven."

Your prayers move God to change the world. You may not understand the mystery of prayer. You don't need to. But this much is clear: Actions in heaven begin when someone prays on earth. (Adapted from *The Great House of God*)

We are entering the season of Lent. It is a time of prayer, reflection, sacrifice (either by action or in-action), renewal, and restoration; and it culminates in rejoicing at Easter. This year I decided to use the Lenten Devotional Resources provided by Disciples Home Missions rather than a store-bought devotional. Each week with the newsletter (and available by printout on the table in the narthex) a devotion will be provided. This first week you will also be given a Meditation that is to be used every day, once in the morning and again in the evening. My hope is that you will carve out a few minutes of your busy week to read the devotion and reflect on its message.

I journey with you this Lenten Season as a shepherd, but also as one of the flock that follows Jesus.

Blessings!
Mike



***[Please scroll to end of newsletter for a
Lenten meditation.]***

Sermon Schedule - March

March 5, 2023 - Guest Preacher: Darren Phelps

March 12, 2023 - "Wedding Banquet"
Matthew 22:1-14

March 19, 2023 - "Talents"
Matthew 25:14-30

March 26, 2023 - "Last Judgment"
Matthew 25:31-46

Behind the Scenes

There has been a lot of things going on behind the scenes of FCC. Michael and I were invited to attend the groundbreaking of the new Ruby Haliburton Auxiliary Complex on January 19th. Ruby was a bus driver with Bryan ISD for 36 years. After her passing in April 2021, her bus route was retired and her name was overwhelmingly submitted to name this complex in her honor. This complex will be home to maintenance, transportation, food services, custodial, warehouse, records management, and a multipurpose training room.



The Bryan ISD Build is now in progress. Groundbreaking was held on February 3rd for the home that will be presented to the Quintero-Mendez family. The district raised over \$40,000 and received a matching donation in mid-December to allow for this project to be possible. We look forward to being a part of the dedication ceremony later this spring. It is so wonderful that FCC is able to help support such a great school district.



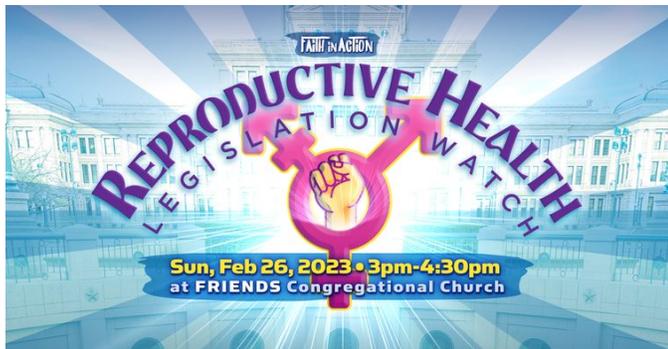
* Rev. Mike will be attending the Regional Meeting in Flower Mound on March 3-4th.

Easter Bunny Treats

We are in need of candy and small items to place inside our Easter Eggs for our Bunny Trail Egg Walk, along with prize items (books, cars, figits, play doh, ear buds, etc for ages 0-12). A box will be set up in our Gathering Space along with an Easter backdrop. we will be collecting items from now until March 15th to allow us time to fill the eggs and inventory our prize items. Donations are welcome to help us purchase items needed. EGGS ARE NOT NEEDED, we have plenty on hand (We plan to fill around 1500 eggs, or more if possible.) Sample items will be out to give you ideas. Please contact Karen Townsend for more details or if you have any questions.

Easter Bunny Trail Egg Walk Event

You may have noticed this is not listed as an egg hunt. We are going to try something **new** this year. We will be setting tables up in front of our church on the walk for the kids to come by and pick eggs up at each station (similar to Trunk or Treat). We have the ability to move this event indoors in case of weather issues. We plan to have refreshments available, information on our church, photo opportunities, and hopefully some games/face painting available. We will need your help to make this a very successful event. If you are available on **Saturday, March 25th from 10:30am to 1:00pm** (includes set up and tear down) please sign up in the gathering space (Easter Area). Once we have a team in place we will plan to meet to go over the details. We hope to have the entire church involved and get to know those in our community better! Please contact Karen Townsend for more details or if you have any questions.



On Sunday afternoon, **Feb. 26, from 3pm to 4:30pm**, Friends Congregational Church will be hosting a "faith in action" event called Reproductive Health Legislation Watch. It is free and open to the public.

Legislative policy analysts with Texas Impact in Austin will explain reproductive health bills currently under consideration by the Texas Legislature, identify key players, and guide us in developing action steps people of faith can take to influence legislators on reproductive health issues during the 2023 Legislature. Faith leaders will share how our faith can inform our advocacy work for reproductive freedom.

Sign-ups will be available for lobbying trips to Austin and local advocacy activities. Light refreshments and childcare will be provided.



Sunday Morning Fellowship

Please sign up to bring snack items for our Sunday Morning Fellowship between Sunday School and Church. We ask that you have items set up by 10 AM to allow our Choir to enjoy before their morning practice. There are funds available if needed to purchase items, we just need someone to facilitate. Please contact Vicki Green or Karen Townsend for more information.

Kraft Korner

Our next meeting will be March 16 at 10:00am.



Handbell Choir!

Handbell practice is Wednesday evenings at 6:00pm. We currently have 6 ringers, and 1 substitute. We welcome anyone who would like to join us!



Come to Choir!



Choir practice is Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm – come join us!

Disciples Women/CWF

CWF's next meeting is **March 1**.



Women's Fellowship

Disciples Men/CMF

Continue to meet each Saturday at 9:00am.



Men's Fellowship

April Newsletter Deadline!

The April monthly Newsletter will be published **March 28, 2022. Articles will be due by March 27.** We hope this monthly newsletter will include articles on people, ministries and reports as well as our calendar for April. Pictures are also much appreciated! Please submit your articles to: firstchristianbcs@gmail.com

Worship Services

**In person and live streamed,
Sundays at 10:45am:**

Our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/BryanCollegeStationDisciples/>

COVID and the Church: Update for March

We continue to follow CDC, and local Health Department guidance, in order to keep everyone attending our services as safe as possible.

Community level of Covid-19 is now **Low in Brazos County.**

- If you have household or social contact with someone at high risk for getting very sick, consider self-testing to detect infection before contact, and consider wearing a high-quality mask when indoors with them.
- [Stay up to date](#) with COVID-19 vaccines, including recommended booster doses.
- Maintain [ventilation improvements](#).
- Avoid contact with people who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Follow recommendations for [isolation](#) if you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Follow the recommendations for [what to do if you are exposed](#) to someone with COVID-19.

People may choose to mask at any time. **People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a high-quality [mask or respirator](#) when indoors in public.**

Prayer Concerns

While we believe everyone needs prayer, those named on our list have specific and ongoing needs:

Diane Andrews (friend of Cheryl Aufderheide)
John Atterbury
Julie (Atterbury) Porter
Teddy Atterbury (great-grandson of John Atterbury)
Jill Baker (Rozan Coody's niece)
Rose Bowden (sister of Diane Weber)
Gwen Bray
Nancy Deu Pree (Bob Richards' cousin)
Dennis & Pat Henry Dugas (Friend of Mary & Cheryl)
Ashley Forster (Bob Richards' daughter)
Devin Forster (Bob Richards' grandson)
Malcolm Foster (Rozan Coody's brother)
Charlie Green (Larry Green's father)
Verla Green (Jackie Green's mother-in-law)
Terry & Eva Hart
Leatha Jeffrey (Calvin Jeffrey's mother)
Alexander Lam (Bob Richards' stepson)
Caton Milstead (Karen Smith's nephew)
Roger & Emily Nichols (friends of Mary Richards)
Monique & David Reed (friends of the Aufderheides)
Brad Slocum (Stacy Atterbury's brother)
Richard Stadelmann
Elizabeth Weber
Reba Wood
John Wright

Shut-ins:

Jackie Kranz
Nancy Wright



LENT



Walk
in the
LIGHT
of the
LORD

see John 5:19-21

Church Calendar: March 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Disciples Women / CWF, 9:30am Handbell practice, 6:00pm Choir practice, 6:30pm	2	3 Cheri Graalum	4 Taylor Rasco
5 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live-streamed <i>Guest Preacher: Darren Phelps</i> Lauren Douglas	6 News from the Pews Due	7 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg House Church, 6:00pm Cheryl Aufderheide Zachry Graalum	8 Handbell practice, 6:00pm Choir practice, 6:30pm Jeremy Smith	9	10	11 Disciples Men / CMF, 9:00am
12 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live-streamed <i>"Wedding Banquet"</i> <i>Matthew 22:1-14</i> Board Meeting after worship Elders Zoom Meeting, 6:00pm	13 News from the Pews Due	14 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg House Church, 6:00pm Anniversary: Vicki & Larry Green	15 Handbell practice, 6:00pm Choir practice, 6:30pm	16 Kraft Korner, 10:00am	17	18 Disciples Men / CMF, 9:00am
19 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live-streamed <i>"Talents"</i> <i>Matthew 25:14-30</i>	20 News from the Pews Due	21 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg House Church, 6:00pm	22 Handbell practice, 6:00pm Choir practice, 6:30pm	23 Anniversary: Melissa & Ben Tedrick	24	25 Disciples Men / CMF, 9:00am
26 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live-streamed <i>"Last Judgment"</i> <i>Matthew 25:31-46</i>	27 April Newsletter Deadline Tonya Chandler	28 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg House Church, 6:00pm	29 Handbell practice, 6:00pm Choir practice, 6:30pm Arlen Crouch	30 Mark Weber Dale Claypool	31	

*****Apologies for the mistake last month, which had two March anniversaries in the February calendar. This has been corrected.*****



MORNING MEDITATION

*I heighten my senses to remember I am with
You throughout the day.*

*I am strengthened in remembering my shared
humanity with Jesus.*

EVENING MEDITATION

I pause to remember how I experienced You today.

Jesus calls me toward tangible care for myself and others.

When I was in college, the band Kansas released their biggest hit, “Dust in the Wind.” After hearing that song on the radio, with its stunning guitar intro, striking words, and haunting melody, I immediately went out and bought the album on which the song appeared, *Point of Know Return*. I liked the whole album and listened to it dozens of times. But I listened to “Dust in the Wind” at least 100 times while in college and many more times since then.

“Dust in the Wind” begins this way:

*I close my eyes
Only for a moment and the moment's gone.
All my dreams
Pass before my eyes, a curiosity.*

*Dust in the wind,
All they are is dust in the wind.*

And it ends with:

*Now don't hang on.
Nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky.
It slips away,
And all your money won't another minute buy.*

*Dust in the wind,
All we are is dust in the wind.
Dust in the wind,
Everything is dust in the wind.*

As you encounter those lyrics, you may be thinking, “That sounds a lot like a passage from the Bible.” Indeed, it does. The songwriter, Kerry Livgren, once said that “the message was out of Ecclesiastes.” Indeed, the use of dust echoes Ecclesiastes 3:20, which is itself an echo of Genesis 3:20. Also, Ecclesiastes repeats over and over again this refrain, “All is vanity and a chasing after wind” (for example, Ecclesiastes 1:14). Interestingly, Livgren wrote “Dust in the Wind” while on a spiritual quest that ended three years later when he became a Christian. The grim truth of Ecclesiastes no doubt helped him to recognize his need for a Savior, whom he found in Jesus (or, better, who found him).

“Dust in the Wind” is a fitting song for today, for Ash Wednesday. On this first day of Lent, Christians throughout the world ponder the fact that we are from dust. And, because of sin, we will return to dust. We are mortal. We will die. Our own mortality points to the brokenness of the whole creation. It's not just that we are dust in the wind. Rather, everything is dust in the wind.

Apart from God, that is. Though God does not grant us immediate immortality when we accept his grace through faith, and though our bodies will die, that's not the end of the story. We are not merely dust in the wind because the God who once breathed life into our dustiness now breathes eternal life into us through Jesus Christ. Moreover, though we live in a world that is still broken by sin, the mending of this world has begun through Christ. What we do with our lives is not simply

dust that will be blown away by the wind. Rather, it can have eternal significance.

On Ash Wednesday, however, we don't jump ahead in the story to the time of eternal significance. Rather, we take seriously our dustiness, our mortality, our brokenness and lostness. We feel the pain of human sin, our own sin and the sin of the world. We ache for victims of tragedy and injustice. We let the sufferings of the poor and oppressed into our hearts. With the Psalms we cry out, "How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?" (Psalm 89:46).

On Ash Wednesday, Christians throughout the world are marked with ashes as a sign of our terminal dustiness. We wear on our foreheads the symbol of death. Yes, the symbol of death, a cross, one of the most brutal forms of execution ever devised by fallen humanity. Yet in Christ the cross means more than excruciating death. It points to the grace of God that overcomes our sin. It highlights the love of God that never lets us go. So even as we acknowledge our sin and mortality on Ash Wednesday, even as we admit our desperate need for a Savior, we also confess that our Savior has come.

We are dust in the wind. Yes, that's true. But that's not all. It's not true that "*all* we are is dust in the wind." We are also people marked by the cross. We are children of a Heavenly Father who loves us beyond all measure. By taking seriously our dustiness, we are ready to celebrate even more fully our belovedness. Yes, indeed, but not today. That celebration comes after Lent. Today we're just beginning.

Prayer: Gracious God, you created this world as a thing of beauty and perfection. Indeed, you made human beings in your own image. Yet we have tarnished that image through our sin. We have corrupted both ourselves and our world. We are "dusty" mortals who will die. We are sinners in need of a savior.

O Lord, I experience my "dustiness" in so many different ways. Usually, I try to ignore it, or I complain about it. But, today, I am letting the fact of my mortality sink in. I am reminded of how much I need to be saved and set free. I am reminded of how much I need you!

As we begin the season of Lent, may this be, indeed, a time for me to grow in my relationship with you. May I be unafraid to look at myself honestly, especially those parts of my life that are all too "dusty." May I turn to you in this season in a special way, so that I might be prepared to celebrate the amazing news of Good Friday and Easter.

All praise be to you, O God, because you have not abandoned me in my mortality. All praise be to you for the hope that you give. *Amen.*