



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

The Visitor

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January 2024

Mike's Musings

Last month I presented the results of a survey that was conducted earlier last year. The conclusion was this: We need a Vision!

Re-visioning is not a complicated process, but it is a focused process, meaning some elements may seem smoother-going than others. Below, I have detailed a few of the major steps involved in a re-visioning process. They do not necessarily have to be done in any specific order, but some steps certainly are more beneficial to others if done earlier. Also, everyone plays a part in this process. Some congregations select a committee to lead the process. In our case, because we have such a high percentage of members that serve in committee/team/ministry roles, I believe it best to have the Board responsible for some elements, the Elders responsible for others, and obviously the whole congregation as the ultimate authority through prayerfully discerned decision-making. I pray that this process is meaningful, faith provoking, and free of major stress (because some stress is good). But most importantly, I pray that we keep Christ at the center of it all.

Steps to re-visioning:

Revising/Updating our Constitution and Bylaws: this element is something a healthy church should do every five to ten years, due to community, cultural, congregational, and fiscal changes that happen every few years. These changes include

neighborhood needs, population demographics, membership fluctuations, and financial and legal changes. The Board will be responsible for establishing an Ad Hoc Committee to conduct this revision/update of the Constitution and Bylaws, providing occasional updates to the congregation, until the process is complete; a final approval would come from the congregation.

Reorganizing and Clarifying committees, teams, and ministries to help them run more efficiently and effectively. Most will remain similar to their existing format, but with more defined structures of Authority, Accountability, and Direction. This will also entail clarified descriptions of purpose. Each committee/team/ministry will have a role in this, with direction from me and the Executive Committee. The next steps go together, and will be started first, although the others I have mentioned will overlap these processes.

First, we must develop a Mission Statement. Every church should have the same Mission, as outlined in The Great Commission, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20a).

Our current Mission Statement is this: "It is the mission of First Christian Church to be a Christ-centered Community in Bryan/College Station that seeks others to become followers of Christ and lovingly nurtures all in this body through prayer, worship, education and the encouragement to

service." Although this serves as a good example, I feel that "all in this body" is exclusively for members of the congregation, leaving out our responsibility to nurture those outside of the congregation.

Second, we must develop a Vision Statement. A church vision statement must be succinct—specific and detailed, but brief. I have been unable to locate an existing Vision Statement for FCC. But it should lay out what we do and how we do it, in no more than two sentences. The Elders and Intercessory Prayer Team will be responsible for conducting specific prayer for this process. The passions of our members, as detailed in the survey results, will be the basis for this process, and will be overseen by the Elders.

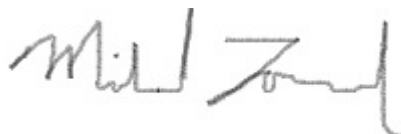
In addition, we should also have a text of Scripture that defines us as a congregation, one that connects our Mission to our Vision and provides a foundation for us to lean on when we struggle with our purpose and goal. Currently we have a verse that lines the top of the back page of our bulletin every week: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). This is a beautiful selection of Scripture, but also seems self-centered, at least to me, because, again, it is exclusionary. This step is one we can begin immediately, so, from February 4-25, there will be a clear canister on the table in the Narthex where you can submit suggestions for a congregation-defining Scripture. On March 3, we will begin the process of "voting" for our favorite suggestion, anonymously, by which we will eliminate those that do not receive many votes; we will do that every week in March. On Sunday, April 7, we will present the most favorable Scripture, which will be used in our correspondence and multimedia.

"Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings

is made known to all the gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen" (Romans 16:25-27).

Blessings!

Mike



January Sermon Schedule

January 7, 2024 - First Sunday after Epiphany
"Jesus Heals and Teaches"
Mark 2:1-22

January 14 - Second Sunday after Epiphany
"Parables in Mark"
Mark 4:1-34

January 21 - Third Sunday after Epiphany
"Jesus and the Gerasene Demoniac"
Mark 5:1-20

January 28 - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Bob Richards preaching

Board Meeting

January 21,
following
worship



Congregational Meeting

January 28, following worship

Kraft Korner will meet on
Thursday January 18th at 10-12



Sunday Morning Fellowship

Opportunities to help us with our Sunday Morning Fellowship are available, please sign up on the Gathering Space glass doors to the Fellowship Area. Please have items out by 10 AM to allow everyone time to participate. Funds are available if needed. Please see **Vicki Green** for more details.



February Elders Meeting

February 4, following worship

Disciples Women/CWF

The next meeting will be February 7, at 9:30am.



Disciples Men/CMF

CMF is now meeting **every third Tuesday at 12:30 for lunch**, at various locations. If you currently do not receive an email from Rev. Mike about this, please contact him.



Men's Fellowship

February Newsletter Deadline!

The February monthly Newsletter will be published **January 30, 2023.**

Articles will be due by January 29.

Please submit your articles to:
firstchristianbcs@gmail.com

Music Ministry

PICKERS – Wednesdays @ 5:30pm

CHOIR PRACTICE – Wednesdays @ 6:30pm

HANDBELL PRACTICE – Wednesdays @ 7:00pm



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 January/February

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

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.**

Many of our members have been ill these past couple of months, so this is something to keep in mind.

Please be considerate of others.



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)
Rose Bowden (sister of Diane Weber)
The Bray Family
Nancy Deu Pree (Bob Richards' cousin)
Charle Dishman
Dennis & Pat Henry Dugas (Friend of Mary & Cheryl)
Ashley Forster (Bob Richards' daughter)
Devin Forster (Bob Richards' grandson)
Verla Green (Jackie Green's mother-in-law)
Terry & Eva Hart
Leatha Jeffrey (Calvin Jeffrey's mother)
Alexander Lam (Bob Richards' stepson)
Bob McGee
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

Church Calendar: January 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 Disciples Women/CWF, 9:30am	4	5	6
7 Worship, 10:45am, in person & live- streamed	8 News from the Pews Due	9 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg	10 Pickers, 6:00pm Choir Practice, 6:30pm Michael Townsend	11 Marge Crouch	12	13 Jayce Phariss
14 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live- streamed Bob Richards	15 News from the Pews Due Avery Marie Douglas	16 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg Disciples Men/CMF, 12:30pm – location TBA	17 Pickers, 6:00pm Choir Practice, 6:30pm Handbells, 7:00pm	18 Kraft Korner, 10:00am	19	20
21 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live- streamed Board Meeting	22 News from the Pews Due	23 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg	24 Pickers, 6:00pm Choir Practice, 6:30pm Handbells, 7:00pm	25 Bob McGee Anne Parkin	26	27
28 Sunday school, 9:30am Worship, 10:45am, in person & live- streamed Congregational Meeting	29 February Newsletter Deadline Melvin Weber	30 10:30 am Worship Planning Mtg	31 Pickers, 6:00pm Choir Practice, 6:30pm Handbells, 7:00pm			