

First Christian Church
800 Beech Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Newsletter
OCTOBER 2023

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Sunday, October 1, 2023

HOMECOMING CELEBRATION
Celebrating 103 Years of Worship



We invite you to join us as we celebrate 103 years of worship at First Christian Church of Elizabeth City (FCC). We're excited to see families traveling in to reunite and others who are extended family members coming to remember their loved ones who have passed. Even if you've never been to FCC, you are welcome to attend and enjoy a great meal with awesome people.

Local members are asked to bring a covered side dish or dessert. We are supplying fried chicken and ham, as well as, beverages.

To unsubscribe, please email office@fccec.org or call 252-338-6506 and request that your name be removed.



Email: office@fccec.org **Facebook:** [Facebook.com/FCCDOC](https://www.facebook.com/FCCDOC) **Phone:** (252) 338-6506

Rev. T.J. Long, Jr, Pastor
Teresa Moore, Moderator
Tom Sawyer, Vice Moderator

Rana White, Admin. Assistant
Nina Gregory, Choir Director
& Organist

Greetings, FCC Family!

It's fall, y'all! The weather is cooling down and, before you know it, the holiday season will be here. During the holidays its easy to let your busy schedule be thrown into overdrive with shopping, family get-togethers, parties and time-honored traditions. A season that's meant to be a time of reflection, gifts and thanksgiving can turn into a neverending blitz of things to do. Things you meant to do (some that you need to do) get pushed to the backburner.

Then, at the beginning of the year, most will take a breath for a moment and shortly after consider what they would change for the new year. (I know this sounds premature but 2024 is only 3 months away!)

With that in mind, let me share with you something that is indispensable to me; reading the Bible. Let me explain. We've had a dedicated group of 6-7 that have been reading 6 chapters of the Bible a week and meeting every Wednesday night for two years straight. On September 19th we passed the halfway point of completing the entire Bible. It's been slow but, as the saying goes, "slow and steady wins the race."

I've tried on multiple occasions to read the entire Bible in a year and failed. Reading 5-7 chapters a day is daunting enough, but imagine if you miss a day or two and have to catch up. It can be demoralizing as chapters pile up fast. It quickly becomes a chore. Our Bible Discussion group is on a (nearly) 4-year plan to complete the Bible. When you read 5-7 chapters a day, it's like trying to take in the scenery while driving 70mph on the highway. You see a few things but most of it is a blur. Since we are reading and discussing 6 chapters a week, it's like seeing that scenery while walking on a path. You can see everything. You can stop, examine things you've never noticed before and walk away with more much information and inspiration than you had before.

We've had longtime, octogenarian members of our church that have said, "I've never learned this much about the Bible before." Comments like that make it all worth it. We're about to start the book of Isaiah and would love to have more people join in the reading and discussion with us. We walk away not only with a better understanding of God's word, not only a closer relationship with each other, but also a closer walk with the Lord. If there's anything I would suggest for you, start now or for 2024. Join us in reading the Bible slowly. Our reading schedule is posted on fccec.org or can be found on our lobby table. It's the best investment into yourself that you can make.

Your Minister & Friend,
Rev. T.J. Long, Jr.



SEPTEMBER 2023 BOARD REPORT

The official board met in the Fellowship Classroom on Sept. 11, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. Teresa Moore, Moderator, called the meeting to order and opened with prayer. Our pastor and 20 board members were present. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The list of committee chairpersons agreeing to serve in 2024, as well as a ballot for the proposed board officers were distributed.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Portia Copeland provided the August check register as well as account balances.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE: The Worship Committee met on Sept. 10th with nine members present as well as the pastor. With the help of our office administrator, Rana White, there will be a brochure for Homecoming that will give a short history, points about what Disciples of Christ profess as well as other interesting facts. There are also plans to celebrate our longest living and newest members. New initiatives will be celebrated as well as any events that have occurred from October ’22 to October ’23. In addition to Homecoming, the liturgical calendar was discussed as the seasons of the year are fast approaching.

The last piece of the agenda came from the pastor who is concerned about our people not singing or engaging in the service. It was the consensus of the committee that if Rev. Long participated as best he could, it would help demonstrate the importance of singing in worship. Our music program, comprised of volunteers, does a good job of helping to lead in worship, and we encourage others to join them.

Rev. Long feels that we are not doing enough to inspire members to immerse themselves into the service and that he has received reports that our service appears “dead.” Although the pastor usually follows the lectionary as in many other Disciples congregations (a collection of scriptural readings from the Bible that follow the church year), at other times he has preached using other formats.

Committee members were encouraged to decide if they will choose to remain on their committees for next year and encouraged to talk with the chairperson about any needs that they see at this time. The next meeting is on Oct. 8th.

Betty Sawyer, Worship Chairperson

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Norma James is leading Children’s Church and Ashley James is assisting while learning to be a Children’s Church leader. Jessica James, Sandra Riggs, and Franskia Spruill volunteer in the nursery. Please sign up in the lobby if you can assist in the nursery. A Christmas play will be presented by the children in December.

Norma James, Education Chairperson

Report shared by Paula Crawford in the absence of the chairperson.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: A Pig Picking was held on Sat., Sept. 9th, with about 100 people attending. Special thanks to the Lassiter family for the pig, preparation and serving. Thanks to all who helped prepare the side dishes and desserts. There were 16 teams for the Cornhole Tournament, and the Three People Bouncy House was enjoyed by the kids. Upcoming plans include our Homecoming on Oct. 1st with fried chicken and ham provided by the church. Side dishes will be contributed by our members. Also, the Church Christmas Dinner will be on December 9th at 6:00 pm.

Portia Copeland, Membership Chairperson

OUTREACH COMMITTEE: In the month of August funds were raised to purchase supplies to fill 25 backpacks and to purchase supplies for the teachers’ coffee lounge at Pasquotank Elementary School. Members delivered the donations on Aug. 21st. Also, June, Arlene, Larry, and Melodi took our first donation to the Boys & Girls Club. We were given a tour and an explanation of all that the club has to offer the 200+ children Monday through Friday.

Melodi Robbins, Committee Chairperson

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE: The Stewardship Committee met on Sept. 7th to discuss the potential hire of a Children’s Ministry Intern. As many are aware, we have been discussing ways to expand our Children’s Ministry and take some load off Norma James and the other volunteers who have been teaching our kids on Sundays. One of the ways suggested was the hire of an individual to run this ministry and man the nursery if the need arose. Rev. TJ was asked to contact MACU to see if they had anyone interested in a youth ministry internship. Dr. Greene suggested and highly recommended Nick Crouse. Rev. TJ met with Nick and his wife, Kim, on several occasions and was highly impressed. Our committee was called to meet solely to discuss Nick and his potential hire. After much discussion, the Stewardship Committee recommends extending an offer of employment to Nick Crouse to be an intern with us and run our youth program. All committee chairs were requested to turn in their proposed budgets for 2024.

Gene Scott, Stewardship Chairman

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: Tom Sawyer, Committee Chair, has called Church Mutual to find out the cost of wind and hail insurance coverage. The lights under the portico will hopefully be replaced prior to Homecoming. Property has put off the replacement of two “AC” units, hoping that we can make it into the cooler months. The access door under the social hall has been replaced. If there are any suggestions for items to be addressed prior to Homecoming, please bring them to Tom’s attention.

Tom Sawyer, Property Chairman

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE: Gail Hobbs, committee chairper-

October Birthdays

4	Christopher David Albert
6	Gaye Hines
	Kaye Meads
9	Brian Weatherly
10	April Williams
12	Tammy Watts Sawyer
13	Paula Crawford
	Roberta Shaw Williamson
15	Chrissy Beals Forbes
	Joan Chappell
	Sydney Etheridge
	Emerald White
19	Mary C. Divino
	J. P. Rich
22	Kathryn James
	Amanda Duncan
23	Cynda Bunch
	Kolby Manning

24	Joseph Lassiter
25	Todd Tilley
26	Erica Beals Lassiter
27	Kelsey Copeland Owens
	Martha Best
29	Aiden Reed Copeland
30	William Gordon
	Ryland Lassiter
31	Danny Beals

October Anniversaries

2	Eugene & Mary Ann Scott
5	Kacey & Brian Weatherly
9	Jason & Charlene Pipkin
16	Gary & Christine Ambrose
20	Jeremy & Brittany Lassiter
28	F.C. & Michelle Twiford
29	Carlton & Louise Berry



Serving in October

Elder: June Gibbs, Michelle Hopkins

Deacons: Tammy Sawyer, Travis James, Jessica James, Sophia Martel, Teresa Moore

Deaconesses: Peggy Humphries, Jean Etheridge

Greeters:

Oct 1	Roberta Williamson, Gene & Mary Ann Scott
Oct 8	Justin & Ashley James
Oct 15	Jeff & Teresa Moore
Oct 22	Jean Etheridge, June Gibbs
Oct 29	Arlene & Larry Bruce

Acolytes:

Oct 1	Ava & Asher Long
Oct 8	Ryland Lassiter & Zoey James
Oct 15	Lilly Lassiter & Emily Gordon
Oct 22	Ryland Lassiter & Jessie Spivey
Oct 29	Allie & Morgan Stevens

In Loving Memory...

- A memorial was given in loving memory of Connie Gibbs by June Gibbs.
- A memorial was given in loving memory of Connie Gibbs by Julian & Portia Copeland.
- A memorial was given in loving memory of Connie Gibbs by Jean Etheridge.

Altar Flowers

Oct 1 — The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of the birthday of Wilson Dozier Williams, by Nancy Tatum and Judy & Charles McKenzie.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of the birthday of Cassie Williams, by her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Oct 8 — The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving honor of our son, Aiden, on his 22nd birthday by Tommy & Melissa Copeland.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving honor of our daughter, Kelsey, on her 30th birthday by Tommy & Melissa Copeland.

Oct 15 — The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. Willard White by Millie Sweetenham and Tom & Martha White.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory James Gibbs, by his wife, June Gibbs.

Oct 22 — The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving honor of Michael & Morgan Moore and Thomas Giarmono, on the occasion of their October birthdays by Tom & Betty Sawyer.

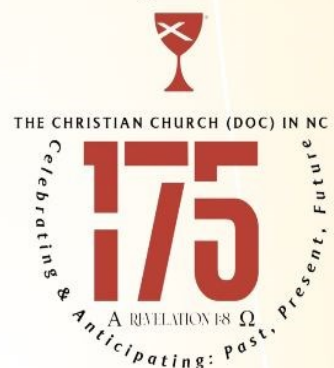
Oct 29 — The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs. William M. Norris by Sandra & Darrell Riggs.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of her sister, Theo Bohr and her brother, Wesley Norris, by Sandra & Darrell Riggs.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North Carolina

The 175th Regional Assembly

Part II - Barton College, Wilson, North Carolina



Pre-Assembly Opportunities - October 12-13 (Barton College and FCC, Wilson)

- Racial Equity Training
- Boundaries Clergy Training
- Trauma Training
- So You're interested in Regional Ministry
- Technology Training 101
- Laity Bootcamp: empowered and equipped to serve the local church

Assembly Events - Saturday, October 14 (Barton College)

- A Historical Walk with NC Disciples: *A Vibrant Menagerie*
- A Visionary Business Session
- Lunch with Parker's Barbeque (vegetarian options available)
- Educational Displays & Book Signings
- Young Adult, Youth, and Children's Engagement
- Meaningful Worship, Memorial Service & Communion

Keynoter - The Rev. Terri Hord Owens, General Minister, and President,
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada

Contact Us at

www.ncdisciples.org

Regional Office - 252.291.4047



Let's Ride Together!

We have a sign up sheet in the lobby for anyone who plans to attend the Regional Assembly in Wilson. After you have completed your registration, feel free to sign up to ride. The church van is the best place to get to know one another and have extra fun in your trip. If you have any questions, please contact Portia Copeland at membership@fccec.org.

**Bishop
Valerie J. Melvin,
Regional Minister**

**Rev. Terri Hord
Owens
General Minister
& President**

Your Regional Assembly Planning Co-Chairs

Rev. Bruce Baker-Rooks
RA Commission Chair
bbaker1119@gmail.com

Rev. Addie Rawls
RA Commission Co-Chair
merawls92@gmail.com

son, reported three memorials given in August.

ELDERS: June Gibbs, Head Elder, reported all going well.

DEACONS: Sandra Riggs, Head Deacon, reported everyone is in place as needed.

DEACONESSSES: No report

CMF: On August 17th, 13 men attended the CMF meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for September 21st.

J.P. Rich, CMF President

CWF: CWF met on Thursday, Sept. 7th, at noon. There were nine ladies present. Opening with the CWF prayer, the group then studied the lesson from JUST WOMEN entitled "Anointed to Do Justice" led by Nancy Tatum. (Luke 4:14-20) After June Gibbs provided the treasurer's report, the group discussed recipients of our annual Angel Tree offering. It was decided to provide for two families: one from Pasquotank Elementary and one from P.W. Moore Elementary with suggestions from the guidance counselors..

Portia Copeland, CWF President

NEW BUSINESS: The board used ballots to cast anonymous votes on the proposed officers for 2024.

Stewardship made the motion to hire Nick Crouse as intern for youth. His responsibilities would include planning, inviting young people and families to church activities, and leading activities. After the discussion, Melodi Robbins seconded stewardship's motion to hire Mr. Crouse. Eighteen of the 20 members present raised their hands in favor of the hiring.

Another matter concerning safety protocol in the children's program was discussed. Volunteers who work closely with our children will be asked to have a background check. Another suggestion was that a camera could be installed in the nursery for the protection of both the nursery caretakers and our little ones.

The 2023 Congregational Meeting was scheduled for Oct. 22nd to approve the officers and the budget for 2024.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Tammy Sawyer led the ad-hoc committee's report of the Constitution and By-Laws revisions. The board members followed as the committee led us page by page through the suggested revisions. The finished copy will be brought to the Oct. board meeting for approval.

MINISTER'S REPORT: Rev. T.J. Long, Jr. made nine visits in August to members of our congregation.

Open Gym was closed for the month of August but will start back on Sept. 18th.

We began watching season three of The Chosen with an attendance of six but anticipate more in the coming weeks.

Our Bible Discussion group is currently reading through the books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. We will start Jonah and Isaiah soon. On the 19th of this month, we will have read half of the Bible!

We completed our Annual School Supply Drive on Aug. 6th. We raised a total of \$1171! We had 12 people help with the packing party. With those funds we were able to donate 25 filled backpacks complete with all needed school supplies plus cups, stirrers, k-cups and hot chocolate for the teacher's lounge at Pasquotank Elementary School. Nancy, Portia, Asher and Rev. T.J. delivered it all on Monday, August 21st.

Rev. T.J. had a fantastic, restorative vacation and was delighted to hear Rev. Dan Smith live from Colorado.

Here are the goals of Rev. T.J. for October:

1. I've been asked to serve on the Vision Committee for the Albemarle District where we will plan our 300th meeting next month in Washington,
2. I'm serving on the Local Arrangements Committee for the Regional Assembly that will take place at Barton College on Oct. 14th. We meet every Thursday and I have my own technology subcommittee that I lead.
3. Assist in implementing some of the changes to the worship service that the Worship Committee has agreed to as we approach Homecoming,
4. Help with the onboarding and paperwork that will be required from our new Children's Ministry Intern.

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

There being no further business, Portia Copeland moved to adjourn, and Melodi Robbins seconded the motion. Rev. Long dismissed us with prayer.

Minutes submitted by Nancy Tatum, Board Secretary

Finance Report AUGUST 2023

If you have questions, please call
Treasurer, Portia Copeland, 252-335-4447

Monthly Budget	\$ 15,312
Budget Income	\$ 7,685
Budget Shortage	\$ 7,627
Expenses:	\$ 8,392
Designated Income	\$ 1,387
Designated Bills:	\$ 762
Attendance:	
August (4 Sundays)	56 avg
Children	6 avg
Attendance:	
The Chosen	10 avg

Halloween Party & Hayride

Sunday, October 29 | 5:00 pm

FREE! All ages are welcome.

RSVP by text to
252-335-6506
or sign up sheet.
Event will be held
at the home of
Jeff & Teresa Lassiter.



October 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 HOMECOMING <i>Reconciliation Special</i> <i>Offering Continued</i> <i>Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost</i>	2 7:00 pm Board Meeting	3 6:30 pm The Chosen	4 5:45 pm Bible Discussion 7:00 pm Choir	5 12:00 pm CWF	6	7
8 12:00 pm <i>Worship Committee Meeting</i> <i>Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost</i>	9 6:00-7:30 pm Open Gym	10 12:00 pm Card Ministry 6:30 pm The Chosen	11 5:45 pm Bible Discussion 7:00 pm Choir	12 5:30 pm –9:00 pm Facility Use (social hall)	13 175th <i>Regional Assembly</i> October 13-14 <i>Wilson, NC</i>	14
15 <i>Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost</i>	16 6:00-7:30 pm Open Gym	17 6:30 pm The Chosen Double-Feature Finale!	18 5:45 pm Bible Discussion 7:00 pm Choir	19 6:30pm CMF	20	21
22 12:00 pm Congregational Mtg <i>21st Sunday after Pentecost</i>	23 6:00-7:30 pm Open Gym <i>Newsletter Submission Deadline</i>	24 12:00 pm Card Ministry 6:30 pm The Chosen 300th DISTRICT ASSEMBLY	25 5:45 pm Bible Discussion 7:00 pm Choir	26	27	28
29 5:00 pm Halloween Party <i>Baby Dedication in the Worship Service</i> <i>22nd Sunday after Pentecost</i>	30 6:00-7:30 pm Open Gym	31	NEAAAT Gymnasium Schedule: Mondays –3:30pm—5:00 pm Tuesday-Friday 4:00 pm-7:00 pm SAVE THE DATE! All-You-Can-Eat Pancake & Sausage Breakfast Saturday, Nov 4th 7:00 am—10:00 am			

PIG PICKIN' FUN



CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT

Winners!
Tim Ciccarelli
Justin Balance

Thanks to everyone who invested in this amazing family time on September 9th.

Wednesday Night Bible Discussion

5:45-6:45pm Fellowship Hall

We are reading through the whole Bible by reading six chapters a week. We discuss and question various aspects of each chapter. No lectures, no curriculum! We laugh some and learn from each other! Come and join us! A list of scriptures for each week can be found in the lobby or on our website at fccec.org.

Sample of One Week's Schedule

Thursday, September 28 – 2 Kings 12
 Friday, Sep 29 – 2 Kings 13
 Saturday, Sept 30 – 2 Chronicles 24
 Sunday, October 1 – Day off
 Monday, October 2 – 2 Kings 14
 Tuesday, October 3 – 2 Chronicles 25

Open Gym Basketball

6:00 pm —7:30 pm

Open Gym is an opportunity to spend time with our youth and have fun. The average attendance is 12 people plus area pastors are now joining us! A small devotion has been added. No registration is required. Come any Monday except the first Monday of the month. Contact Pastor TJ at minister@fccec.org for info.

