First Christian Church
800 Beech Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Newsletter
MARCH 2026

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid Permit # 9
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

Lunch | Egg Hunt | Family Fun

Questions? Want to help? Contact Ashley James at office@fccec.org

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MARCH 2026

First Christian Church of Elizabeth City (Disciples of Christ)

Email: office@fccec.org Facebook.com/FCCDOC Phone: (252) 338-6506

Teresa Lassiter, Moderator
Norma James, Vice Moderator

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

"To be a Spirit-gifted, Christ-commissioned community where every person is invited and accepted while being transformed and made whole by God's love."

Recently the elders met to discuss personnel issues and unanimously agreed to move forward with presenting the information to the Executive Board. The executive Board unanimously agreed it was in the best interest of our church to terminate TJ Long as our pastor. We wish TJ and his family the best.

First Christian Church will be searching for a pastor that loves the Lord and is passionate about sharing His word. We will work to grow First Christian Church with families that will keep our church alive and thriving for generations to come. It is our hope that we grow from this transition. In James 1:2-3, scripture reads, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness."

In the interim, Mr. George Stonikinis has agreed to fill our pulpit as needed, until a permanent pastor is hired. We have enjoyed his ministry in recent weeks and look forward to what he brings us in the future. If you have not been able to attend a service with George, please join us at church or online.

Our church activities will remain the same, except for The Collective, which has been canceled. Our Bible Discussion is on hold for now. Other scheduled events include the following:

- Saturday, March 7, 7:00am – 10:00 am, AYCE Pancake & Sausage Breakfast
- Wednesday, March 11, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm, Butter Bean & Ham Biscuit Sale
- Saturday, March 21, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Bingo! Night
- Sunday, March 22, Baptismal Service
- Sunday, March 29, Easter Cantata and 3rd Annual Spring Fling
- Thursday, April 2, 7:00 pm, Maundy Thursday Service

Please pray that we continue to move forward with hope, faith, and the joy of the Lord during this time. Feel free to contact any of our elders or leadership with any questions you may have.

February 2026 Board Meeting Report

Meeting Type: Board of Directors Meeting 02/09/2026 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM and opened with prayer by Moderator Teresa Lassiter.

2. Attendance: Present: 18 Board members present, plus Rev. T.J. Long, Jr.

3. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes: The minutes from the meeting held in January were presented. A correction was made that Tom Sawyer, not Keith Sawyer, presented the Property Committee Report for January's meeting. Otherwise, the minutes were approved.

5. Reports-

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer, Portia Copeland, presented the financial reports and they were approved as presented.

Worship Committee Report: The Worship Committee met on January 18, 2026, immediately following worship, for its first meeting of the year. During the meeting, the committee reviewed its responsibilities as outlined in the church Constitution and Bylaws, and discussed operating procedures for the year ahead. Members shared positive reflections on worship and affirmed a commitment to supporting meaningful, Spirit-filled worship experiences at First Christian Church. The committee reviewed and approved the annual worship calendar and assigned planning responsibilities for special services to ensure shared leadership and adequate preparation time. Upcoming services discussed included the Installation of Officers on January 25th and Ash Wednesday on February 18th, The committee will meet monthly to monitor progress, coordinate planning, and support worship throughout the year. (Full report attached) Presented by Keith and Tammy Sawyer, Co-Chair.

Education Committee Report: Average Attendance has been three (four one week, two another week, lost two weeks of services due snow) Studying in the book of Acts-Conversion of Saul to Paul, we have approximately 10 more lessons until the Youth has completed their study of the New Testament in YM360, and will move on to the Old Testament. Our third annual Spring Fling/ Easter Egg Hunt is planned tentatively for Palm Sunday. Presented by Ashley James, Chair.

Membership Committee Report: We held our butter, bean soup and ham biscuit sale on January 14. Our net profit was $490. Cooked 30 pounds of beans (4 pots); 119 biscuits dipped out 117 pints of beans. We sold 109 orders of beans, and non-orders were given to the police department. Our next Butterbean and ham biscuit sale will be on Wednesday, February 11 from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM at five dollars per order. And another on March 11 with a bingo night on Saturday, March 21 from 6 to 8 PM. We are working with worship to provide subway sandwiches for the Ash Wednesday lunch on February 18 and outreach for the week of compassion soup lunch on Sunday, February 22 after worship. Presented by Portia Copeland, Chair.

Outreach Committee: January 5, Outreach packed and delivered 45 backpacks to Elizabeth City Middle School. January 7, we attended the pass tank ministries council for education at Weeksville Elementary School. The Student Government team shared with us their recent activities in different programs in which they have participated. We met with our partner school after this meeting to discuss a morale booster for the staff of PW Moore. Due to weather, we have not delivered as of yet, but will be in the near future. Also, due to whether we could not feed Souls. In conjunction with the local police, Knobs Creek Warming Station, and Gayle DeFlice's team (Souls Ministry), those in need were taken care of. Report submitted by Joy Rhodes and Melody Robbins.

Stewardship Committee: No Report, Gene Scott

Property Committee: Fixed ceiling tiles (four) by choir room/ baptismal pool; caulked and replaced wood at door frame by outside door to choir room. Property met with Bay Crawl Space, five foundation push piers to permanently stabilize the building are needed, they will give a 20% discount, and the quoted price is $12,900. Brick work will have to be done separately after the foundation work is completed. Presented by Justin James, Chair and Keith Sawyer, Member

Memorial Committee: No Report

Finance Report

Questions? Contact Treasurer, Portia Copeland, 252-335-4447

January 2026

Monthly Budget	$ 15,578
Budget Income	$ 6,614
Budget Shortage	$ 9,261
Expenses:	$ 12,200
Designated Income	$ 505
Designated Bills:	$ 2,000
Attendance:	
December *(**2** Sundays)*	43 avg
Children	4 avg
The Collective	9 avg

March Birthdays

04	Martha White	12	Donna White
06	Gwen Williams	14	Norma James
07	Christie Bray	17	Carol Rich
07	Makayla Martel	20	Halleigh James
09	Ava Long	24	Tighe Simons
09	Mark Williams	26	Allie Stevens
10	Kristin Lassiter	27	Kacey Weatherly
10	Blake Simons	31	Marvin Johnson III
11	Jon Van Dalsum		

Serving in March

Elders: Joe Lassiter, Teresa Lassiter

Deacons: Kacey Weatherly, Sandra Riggs, Tommy James, Bettie Duncan, Jeff Lassiter

Deaconess: Bettie Duncan, Helga & Franziska Spruill

Greeters:

01 Gene & Mary Ann Scott
08 Kacey Weatherly
15 Jeff & Teresa Moore
22 Jean Etheridge & June Gibbs
29 Arlene & Larry Bruce

March Anniversaries

01 Paul & Carolyn Dunwell
10 Stacy & Debbie Foster
16 J.P. & Carol Rich
16 Jon & Melba Van Dalsum
17 Rudy & Sharon Warden
20 Jimmy & Terry Cahoon

Gifts Given in Memoriam

No Memorials Received

Our Elders

We have a great appreciation for our Elders. They are:

Julian Copeland, Tom Sawyer, Joseph Lassiter, Teresa Moore, Jean Etheridge, Teresa Lassiter

If you have a need the Elders can help with, including sharing communion or prayer in your home, please let one of them know. You may also call the church office at 252-338-6506 or email office@fccec.org to have them contact you.

Altar Flowers

March 1–

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving honor of our children and grandchildren, by Tommy & Melissa Copeland.

March 8–

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Donald Etheridge by his family.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mrs. Gracie White, by Tom & Martha White.

March 15–

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs. W.E. "Mutt" Scott, and Mr. & Mrs. James E. White, Sr. by the families of Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Scott and Nina Gregory.

March 22–

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Thomas A. Sawyer, Jr. and Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Ferrell by Betty & Tom Sawyer, Jennifer and Lisa.

March 29–

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of my grandparents, Mack and Mattie Jennings, and Ethel Gennings, and in honor of my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren by June Gibbs.

Dear First Christian Church,

I am writing to gratefully acknowledge the generosity of your congregation to Reconciliation Ministry in 2025. Your gift in the amount of $190 helped us continue to move beyond brokenness to build beloved community in the General Ministries, Regions, Congregations, and Communities where we serve.

Charged by the call of reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5;20 reminds us that *"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."* Reconciliation is not just our name, it's our mission. Reconciliation Ministry is the Christian Church's (Disciples of Christ) mission fund that allows us to encourage, educate, and amplify Christ's call to reconciliation, as well as, to embrace our identity as an anti-racist and pre-reconciling church. We could not do this critical work without the generous support of partners like you.

In 2025, through our annual granting program, we were able to provide support for the Center for Theology and Justice at Brite Devinity School and for the Be the Neighbor Justice service-learning trip program. Your support also enabled over 20 regional and congregational educational events. Additionally, Rev. Dr. William Barber II was our key note speaker at our General Assembly breakfast in Memphis, TN, where we also celebrated the 17-year tenure and outstanding service of Rev. Dr. April Johnson.

On behalf of the Reconciliation Ministry Commission, thank you for your generous gift and faithful ministry in partnership with God's reconciling spirit during a historic year of transition and transformation.

With gratitude and prophetic imagination,

Rev. Yvonne Gilmore
Interim Executive Director
Ministry of Reconciliation

Dear friends at First Christian Church,

What a joy it is to thank you for being ministers for Week of Compassion. It is through your generosity that hurting communities are able to heal. In a world where the needs are vast and the painful images can be overwhelming, your gifts bring HOPE. As one of the top 40 donating congregations your partnership blesses not only those who receive support, but all those who guide your gifts along the way. Together, we are the disciples of Christ.

With grateful blessings, Judi Frost
Retired Board Member

Dear First Christian Church,

I can't thank you enough for your ongoing kind and generous support! Your annual contributions help us tremendously to continue to provide a safe and supportive place where our club members can learn, grow, and thrive.

Many Thanks! Elizabeth Mitchell

Thank You!

Perhaps you sent a lovely card,
Or sat quietly in a chair.
Perhaps you sent a floral piece,
If so we saw it there.
Perhaps you spoke the kindest words,
As any friend could say;
Perhaps you were not there at all,
Just thought of us that day.
Whatever you did to console
our hearts,
We thank you so much
whatever the part.

The family of
Rebecca A. Sawyer

Sent by Dewey W. Sawyer
Swan Quarter, NC

6. Special Committee Reports-

Elders: No Report

Deacons: No Report

Deaconess: No Report

CMF: January meeting had 9 men in attendance. February's meeting is scheduled for February 19, 6:30 PM. In March, there will be a sausage pancake breakfast from 7-10 am. Presented by J.P. Rich, President

CWF: CWF met on Thursday, January 8th with five ladies present. Joy Rhodes stated that Outreach will provide subway sandwiches with chips as a March Booster for JW Moore school staff. Our study lesson is Women of the Bible- Sarah. We studied the first half of lesson and will continue at next CWF. We discussed the Week of Compassion Soup lunch to be held on Sunday, February 22nd, immediately after worship. Volunteers were lined up for the pots of soup, sandwiches and crackers. Membership will provide water and tea and coffee. CWF met on Thursday, February 5th with eight ladies present. Open with CWF prayer. Treasurer gave her report. CWF raised a net profit of $475.20 from the sale of the RADA kitchen ware. Will need to check with two more people about soup for Week of Compassion lunch. Next butter bean soup and ham biscuit sale will be on Wednesday, February 11th. Our study lesson is Women of the Bible-Sarah. We studied the 2nd part of her story. Presented by Portia Copeland, President

7. Unfinished Business: none

8. New Business: Motion was made to have Bay Crawl Space work performed. The motion was seconded, the board voted, and the motion carries. There was also discussion about the gloves for the acolytes, tips of the gloves are black from touching the brass. We discussed getting new white cotton gloves.

9. Ministers Report: Minister TJ Long Jr gave his report.

10. Adjournment: With no further business, a motion was made by Portia Copeland and seconded by Melodi Robbins to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended in a closing prayer by Rev. TJ Long Jr.

02/24/2026
Secretary/Clerk Signature

Ashley James

Note: *Please remember that this edition of the board report is from the date of the meeting. Please refer to the church calendar to verify event details as they may have changed.*

2026 Service Schedule

JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER

ELDERS	Tom Sawyer (3) Julian Copeland (3)
DEACONS	Jimmy Flowers (3) Melodi Robbins (1) Betty Sawyer (3) Arlene Bruce (3) Larry Bruce (3)
DEACONESS	Joy Rhodes (3)

FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST, NOVEMBER

ELDERS	Portia Copeland (1) Teresa Moore (2)
DEACONS	Norma James (1) Nancy Tatum (1) Justin James (2) Michelle Hopkins (2) Sophia Martel (1)
DEACONESS:	Teresa Moore (1)

MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER

ELDERS	Joe Lassiter (1) Teresa Lassiter (2)
DEACONS	Kacey Weatherly (2) Sandra Riggs (2) Tommy James (1) Bettie Duncan (3) Jeff Lassiter (2)
DEACONESSES	Bettie Duncan (2) Helga Spruill (3) Franziska Spruill (3)

March 2026

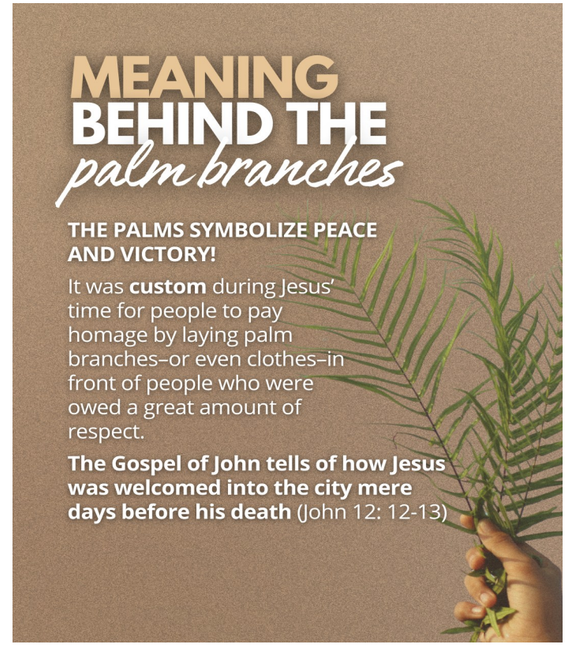
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:10 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship Service *Second Sunday in Lent*	2 7:00 pm Board Meeting	3	4 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	5 12:00 pm CWF	6	7 7am-10am AYCE **Pancake Breakfast** ($8/person) Daylight Savings Time Begins Tomorrow!
8 10:10 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship Service 12:00 pm Education Com Mtg **Int'l Women's Day** *Third Sunday in Lent*	9	10 12:00 pm Card Ministry	11 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	12	13	14 **11:00 am—1:00 pm** **Butter Bean & Ham Biscuit Sale** ($5/person)
15 10:10 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship Service 12:00 pm Worship Com Mtg *Fourth Sunday in Lent*	16	17	18 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	19 6:30 pm CMF ***Newsletter Submission Deadline***	20	21 6:00 pm—8:00 pm **BINGO! Night**
22 10:10 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship Service & Baptism **Baptism Service**	23	24 12:00 pm Card Ministry 3:00 pm Outreach: Backpack Ministry *(Fellowship Hall)*	25 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	26 8:00 pm Outreach: Backpack Ministry *END OF ACTIVITY*	27	28
29 10:10 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship Service **& Easter Cantata** **12:00 pm SPRING FLING** **PALM SUNDAY** **Easter Special Offering**	30	31	**LENT:** February 18—April 1			

EASTER Program
"The Name of the Lord"

The First Christian Church Chancel Choir will present the music program, **"The Name of the Lord",** Palm Sunday during the 11:00 am service.

It will include lovely selections from amazing cantatas previously sung by the Chancel Choir. Favorite songs include: Your Love Compels Me; Shine, Jesus, Shine; and Glorify Thy Name.

Please join our service on **March 29th** and be blessed in the glory of God's word through peace, prayer and music.



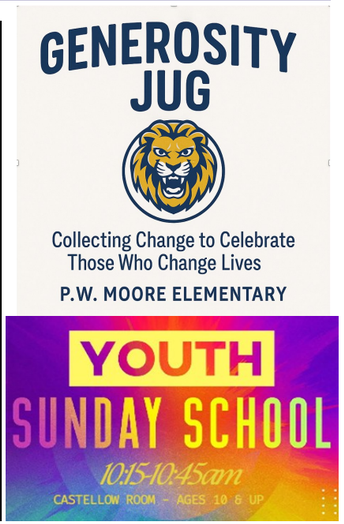
All-You-Can-Eat
Pancake & Sausage Breakfast

Saturday, March 7, 2026
7am – 10 am $8.00/Person

First Christian Church
800 Beech Street
Elizabeth City, NC

To Benefit Christian Men's Projects

Butter Bean Soup & Ham Biscuits Church Fundraiser

Wednesday, March 11th, 2026
11:00 am—1:00 pm

We are holding a sale of butter bean soup with a ham biscuit. Individuals will receive a pint of butter beans and one ham biscuit for a cost of $5. Those who eat at church will have coffee, tea, or water available to drink. This fund raiser is to support our budget. Pass the word and if you can come help, contact Portia Copeland.