

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



In the last two years, there have been over a hundred new people who've become active at First Christian. Praise Jesus! This last month there was another baptism, more people who joined Discipleship Groups, and more people who joined the church as members. God is so good! To help you learn some new names, we've included a "cheat sheet" of pictures and names in this newsletter of many new families. Moreover, some others who've been coming for quite some time have been included because their pictures didn't make it to the photo directory last year.

On a different note, I wanted to reflect briefly on a concept that has surfaced much in my life the last two years, and especially the last few months: courage, pluck, boldness, temerity. It's important to understand that courage or boldness or temerity is not the state of having no fear or anxiety. In fact, fear or anxiety is *necessary* to express courage. Courage is *the ability to do something while feeling fear or anxiety*. The ability to follow through in spite of how you feel is courage, pluck, or boldness.

Something so striking to me is how often this ability is mentioned in the Bible. It's the human experience when doing what God wants. Here are some brief examples: Remember when Moses was exhorting His people to claim the land promised to them via Abraham? "*Be strong and courageous! Do not fear or tremble before them, for the LORD your God is the one who is going with you. He will not fail you or abandon you!*" (Deut. 31:6 NET) Remember when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water? They "were terrified. But immediately [Jesus] spoke to them: '*Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid.*'" (Mk. 6:50 NET) Remember when Jesus was giving His last long talk with His disciples on the way to Jerusalem? They got scared. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; I do not give it to you as the world does. *Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage.*" (Jn. 14:27 NET) And after Jesus spoke of how following Him could lead to suffering and death, He said, "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage—I have conquered the world." (Jn. 16:33 NET)



Moreover, after Jesus's death and resurrection, the earliest disciples spoke of the gospel and Christian ethics in a culture that, overwhelmingly, didn't want to hear it. Remember when Peter and John were told by the high priests and Jewish elders in Jerusalem to stop preaching about Jesus? When all the disciples heard this, "they raised their voices to God with one mind and said, ... And now, Lord, pay attention to their threats, and grant to your servants *to speak your message with great courage...*" and "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God courageously." (Acts 4:24, 29, 31 NET) Remember when Paul and Barnabas were in Iconium, and certain Jews stirred up Gentiles against the

Christians? Did they absquatulate? Nope. "So they stayed there for a considerable time, speaking out courageously for the Lord, who testified to the message of his grace, granting miraculous signs and wonders to be performed through their hands." (Acts 14:3 NET) Paul and his associates routinely spoke out "boldly" in towns that were not entirely receptive (e.g, Acts 9:27-28; 28:30-31). Paul explicitly states that "although we suffered earlier and were mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God *in spite of much opposition.*" (1 Thess. 2:2 NET) Remember when Paul was chained in prison because of His ministry, how Paul asked fellow Christians to pray for him, "*that I may confidently make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may be able to speak boldly as I ought to speak.*" (Eph. 6:19-20 NET) He knew what it meant to be strong in the face of opposition. This is why Paul can encourage His Corinthian church: "Stay alert, stand firm in the faith, *show courage, be strong.*" (1 Cor. 16:13 NET) Finally, chief servants in the church are supposed to have this ability. Deacons must have "*great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*" (1 Tim. 3:13 NET)

A few things stand out to me. First, based on the evidence we have, **the earliest Christians didn't shrink back**. Faced with almost constant opposition to their message, they prayed for strength and courage. What they did not pray for was "safety" or an easy way out. They prayed for boldness. They kept preaching. In a culture that had radically different values, from how you worked, how you treated children, with whom you had sex, how you used money, how you treated your enemies, and on and on, they remained buttressed in the truth of Jesus. And this boldness carried on in the church, from the second century until now. When Pliny the Younger (Propraetor of Bithynia at the time) wrote to his uncle, the Emperor Trajan around 110 AD, notice what he says about how he interrogates Christians: "I have never participated in trials of Christians. I therefore do not know what offenses it is the practice to punish or investigate, and to what extent. ... Meanwhile, in the case of those who were denounced to me as Christians,



I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy surely deserve to be punished. There were others possessed of the same folly; but because they were Roman citizens, I signed an order for them to be transferred to Rome.” He later states that when he learned about a church being formed, he had to determine if it were true. “Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition.” (Letters 10.96-97) The Church continued to be courageous in the face of suffering and death.

My second reflection is, **the modern, Western church has almost completely lost this courage.** In every denomination I’ve worked, in every city I’ve worked, the general tenor of the churches are the same: preach and teach what is biblical *as long as it’s not offensive*. So what’s happened? **We’ve replaced the virtue of courage with the value of being “nice.”** Another term for “being nice” is “welcoming.” This is why so many, many, many churches measure success by how “welcoming” they are, not by how loyal they are to Jesus and His message. We’ve shrunk back. We’re scared. We’re anxious. Of course no rational Christian wants to be offensive. But when “being nice” trumps “being loyal to Jesus,” we’ve certainly rejected our spiritual ancestors who were loyal to the point of death. We’ve become too fragile.

But, we can’t shrink back! We can’t care about Christian virtues until danger comes. We must care about Christian virtues *especially* when danger comes. As C. S. Lewis says, “Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point, which means at the point of highest reality. A chastity or honesty or mercy which yields to danger will be chaste or honest or merciful only on conditions. Pilate was merciful till it became risky.” (Screwtape Letters, 29)

Think about it. Isn’t it rare to see a really courageous person? And, when you find one, don’t you envy that person? They seem to go boldly before them in the night, undeterred by opposition and without constant appetite to be praised by others? I’m convinced Dennis Prager is correct: “I am convinced courage is the rarest of all good traits. There are far more kind and honest people than there are courageous people. Unfortunately, however, in the battle against evil, all the good traits in the world amount to little when not accompanied by courage.” (The Rational Bible: Exodus)



This reminds me of an interview given by C. S. Lewis by a representative of the Billy Graham Association in 1963. Lewis accurately comments: “As Christians we are tempted to make unnecessary concessions to those outside the Faith. We give in too much. Now, I don’t mean that we should run the risk of making a nuisance of ourselves by witnessing at improper times, but there comes a time when we must show that we disagree. We must show our Christian colours, if we are to be true to Jesus Christ. We cannot remain silent or concede everything away.” And later he commented: “I believe that there are many accommodating preachers, and too many practitioners in the church who are not believers. Jesus Christ did not say, ‘Go into all the world and tell the world that it is quite right.’ The Gospel is something completely different. In fact, it is directly opposed to the world.”

So...(1) We need to make up our minds. We need to decide if we’re really His disciple or not. If we are, then let’s decide to stay loyal no matter the cost. (2) Know what Jesus actually taught (along with the other teachings of the New Testament). Read your Bible. Join a DGroup. Study and learn and apply. (3) Get to know other disciples of Jesus who are also committed to being loyal no matter the cost. Pray for each other. Pray for strength and boldness and courage, and not more ways to concede the truth of Jesus.

Does “boldness” mean “act meanly or curt”? *No*. Does “courageous” mean I have to be domineering and rude? *Of course not*. Jesus, the disciples, and the earliest Christians *were none of those things*. It just means we need to know what the Christian message is, and proclaim it in a winsome, attractive manner without ever changing the message because it might not be popular, or acceptable, or politically correct.

We must be bold. We must be courageous. We can’t shrink back. Jesus is with us...and that’s all we need, anyway.

For the Kingdom,

David

David W. Pendergrass, Ph.D. Senior Pastor

OUTREACH MINISTRIES



On April 29th, we had our Celebration Night and ministry fair for the Perspectives Class. This has been a tremendous year for the students. They grew significantly in various ways in their love for Jesus, devotion to God, and desire to be intentional and strategic in the Kingdom expansion, joining in the Father's business. Thank you to those who were part of helping FCC host the Perspectives course this term. The facility was excellent for the class, and used effectively to train, equip, and mobilize another ~40+ Kingdom laborers! It has been growing, convicting, encouraging, and inspiring to each person involved.

Here are a few responses from students lately:

At the beginning of lesson 11, we read the Willowbank Report where it reviewed the five aspects of humility for missionaries. The fifth aspect was "Trust the Spirit" and that has really stuck with me. We've been reviewing some pretty hefty concepts that, to be honest, don't always sit well with my traditional Christian beliefs. But as I've meditated this point, God has given me a great sense of peace. Sure, I may not have all the answers. I may not feel comfortable with some of the ways God is stretching and growing me right now. But I don't have to have it all figured out. I don't have to decide right now [how I would let people of other cultures worship God in their cultural ways]. You know why? Because the Spirit is guiding me. It is providing the answers as those events come up. And the Spirit is not just guiding me, it is guiding the local believers too! Meditating on this has brought such peace to my heart and a greater desire to see God glorified in the nations. I no longer feel the need to achieve as someone who wishes to go. I need only trust. God will work out all the other particulars. I want to cling to this truth and the freedom that it brings as we pursue the last few weeks of our class.

The concept of the necessity of Contextualization and Humility when evangelizing cross-culturally was fascinating to me! These concepts have helped me in the way I relate to other cultures by educating me on different strategies to humble my egocentric and ethnocentric prejudice. I found the different case studies and stories to be incredibly useful in illustrating God's miraculous work in missionaries' lives and reward for humility. I also enjoyed learning about the different worldviews of the 3D gospel, which has been useful in ministering to the needs of close friends with foreign worldviews to my own!!



Perspectives™

The idea of a dynamic and organic church strategy explained in Lesson 13 thrilled me! It was eye-opening when Cole explained that these churches should be viewed as living and focused on the future churches. From a western view, churches have always been seen as focusing solely on providing fellowship and training for those within the church to apply to their own lives,

but now I feel there is a much deeper understanding of how local churches should focus their attention, not [only] on the current generation of believers, but the generations to come!

Father, raise up faithful laborers, and thrust them into your ripe harvest fields!

David Nanne

480-524-6785 | dm.nanne@gmail.com

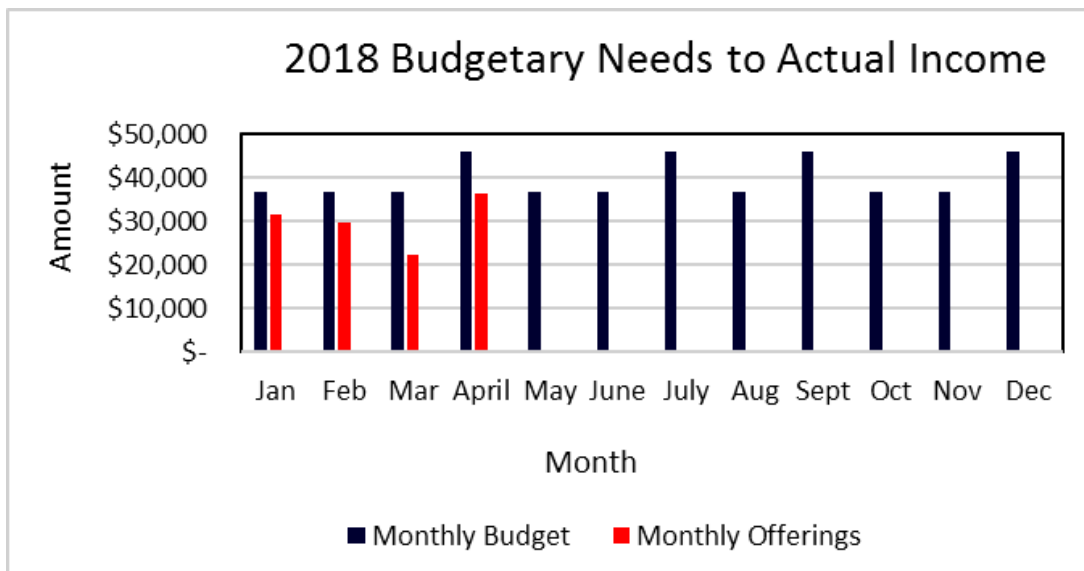
STEWARDSHIP

Because you give, FCC is able to provide a place for people to come who are hurting and lost, a place to learn more about God and his incredible love for us, a place where God can use people to change lives! With your gifts and time we are able to provide food through LINK and household items through the Helping Hands closet. Because you give, we can maintain a wonderful facility for children to attend preschool, for those new Christians to be baptized, for bible studies, for recovery groups to meet, for couples to get married, for families to dedicate new babies and for families to say goodbye to their loved ones who have been called home. We are so thankful, because of so many, we can continue to minister and to be a place and a people that God can use to change lives!

The Trustees are excited about 2018. The church is growing and sometimes it takes a little time for the finances to catch up. As we have mentioned in previous monthly newsletters, we are lacking in what we need to support our budget for 2018. Based on pledges, loose offering, and non-pledged funds we are at about 70% of what is needed. To keep the congregation informed, we will be including the chart below each month to show our average income needed compared to our monthly offerings.

Please note the following:

- On average we need \$9,204 per Sunday to cover our budgetary needs.
- Some months have 5 Sundays, the graph will indicate those months with an increase in the budget number.
- Larger one-time gifts or early annual payments of pledges we be spread over the remaining months.
- These numbers represent what is given to the Unified Budget for our operating, missions and outreach budget. It does not include gifts for the building, capital improvements or other designated gifts.
- April was a 5 Sunday month and the April numbers are preliminary, any change should be minimal. The Trustees will meet later this month to approve the April statements.



Mar. Budget (4)	\$ 36,817
Mar. Actual	\$ 22,377
Mar. Deficit	\$ 14,440
Apr. Budget (5)	\$ 46,022
Apr. Actual	\$ 36,293
Apr. Deficit	\$ 9,729

We were about 40% behind where we needed to be for March and 21% behind for April. At this rate, on average, we will be behind roughly \$112,000 at year end. If you haven't pledged, please consider doing so. If you could consider an additional gift for 2018, it would be very much appreciated. The Trustees are keeping a close eye on the finances and will keep you further updated through the newsletter and bulletins. If you have questions, please contact the Trustees via e-mail, trustees@fcclawrence.org.

Monthly giving will fluctuate from month to month, some of the fluctuation is related to the timing of gifts. If someone is on vacation or misses a Sunday, their gift may fall into the next month. To avoid this, might we suggest setting up recurring payments through our online giving option. Just go to our website and click the "Give" button. We recommend the ACH option as the fees are much less, than using a credit card. If you have questions or need help, please contact Lisa in the Finance Office.

Ways to Give

Online - fcclawrence.org - Click the "Give" Button **Phone** - Text fcclawrence to 77977

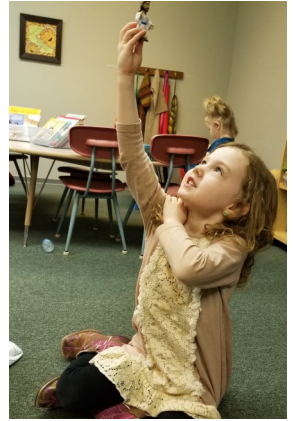
Offering Plate - Each Sunday **Mail** - First Christian Church, 1000 Kentucky Street, Lawrence, Ks 66044

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Hi Church Family!

Perspective is the way that we view something; our point of view. Too often, many of us do not consider the perspectives of others, but we can learn so much if we choose to look through another perspective. In FCC Kids, we have learned about the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. When some preschoolers were asked why Jesus went to Heaven (referring to the ascension of Jesus), one little girl said that Jesus went to Heaven because he was sick. It took a minute for me to understand her perspective (and then to explain to her that Jesus was not sick when he ascended into Heaven). Her prior knowledge told her that a sick grandparent and a sick uncle's dog went to Heaven. For her, going to Heaven had a different meaning.



While this made me chuckle a bit, it also reminded me that the perspectives that our youngest



disciples have is important. Their perspective gives them a starting point from which to learn about Jesus and his teachings. Our job (as more mature disciples) is to meet them where they are as we help them grow in faith. Will you partner with FCC Kids? Our mission is this: Loving children. Making disciples. Equipping families. Join us in this mission. Your perspective may change, and you may help others know more about Jesus as you begin to see things from their perspective. For more information, contact Elaine Pendergrass (elaine@fcclawrence.org).

Elaine W. Pendergrass
elaine@fcclawrence.org

(Pastor to Children)

 [FCCLawrenceKids](https://www.facebook.com/FCCLawrenceKids)

THE GIVING TREE PRESCHOOL



April brought many cool days and even some snow! Shouldn't April be full of warm rain showers, an abundance of mowing, flowers blooming, and trees leafing out? Sure, that is the norm and what we expect to occur this time of the year. We all know however, life doesn't always happen the way we think or hope it should. As I reflect over the past month, I am reminded that having a lack of patience, can cause us to miss many blessings.



No matter our age, small child or adult, we should remember patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and an important attribute of how God wants us to live. I strive to be a patient person, but I also work to teach patience



within the preschool setting. What a blessing it is to teach patience through Bible stories and by example to our preschool children!

May often brings a time of reflection for teachers as we approach the end of the current school year. We have had a wonderful year and are truly blessed to have such wonderful families within our community share their children with us! I am especially thankful that God

provided the opportunity for me to be part of The Giving Tree Preschool. We are so appreciative of your continued support and prayers.



We are currently accepting enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year. Please contact me for more information if you have children 3 years old to kindergarten and are interested in having them attend preschool.

Julie Hafenstine (The Giving Tree Preschool Director)

www.lawrencepreschool.com  [TheGivingTreePreschool](https://www.facebook.com/TheGivingTreePreschool)



WORSHIP MINISTRY

Traditional Worship: The chancel choir wraps up another season of anthems this month before a Summer-long break. We will begin a new season in early September. Many thanks to the volunteers and staff who devote many hours each week preparing and rehearsing offerings of praise and thanksgiving for the Lord and His people!

FCC is in search of an organist for our 9am Traditional services. This part time ministry position would work directly with Greg Boyle (Traditional Worship Leader), and other staff involved in the Worship Ministry. If you or someone you know may be a candidate, contact Greg at greg@fcclawrence.org.

Modern Worship: The Modern Worship Team has just wrapped up a busy Lent and Resurrection season. Through Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Sunrise Service, and Resurrection Sunday, this group of Christ centered musicians worked together to bring a joyful noise to FCC. We sang songs that spoke of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Modern Worship Team is a great group of Christian guys and gals, so please keep them in your prayers as we continue to grow as a team in order to make Disciples of Lawrence and beyond.

In order to let you know that you can be a worshiper of God as well, I'd like to highlight a few new individuals involved in modern worship at FCC. Brock Caffee and Damon Gardner have recently joined the Modern Worship Team on acoustic guitar and drums, respectively. Their dedication to their faith is what makes them awesome team members to work alongside. While both in seasons of "renewed faith" and dedication towards discipleship, they have taken on the challenge of musical growth as well. I'm extremely blessed to call these two individuals fellow brothers in Christ, and steadfast worshipers of God. You can follow Jesus and worship God too!

Matthew Mulnix (Modern Worship Leader)
matthew@fcclawrence.org

Greg Boyle (Traditional Worship Leader)
greg@fcclawrence.org

ADULT MINISTRY



April was an excellent month of growth for the Discipleship Groups at FCC. We have added one new women's group while the existing groups have added new members, welcomed visitors or started studying some new curriculum materials. Both current and potential leaders were present at our Discipleship Leader Workshop for lunch and learning. Paul Porter, Marita Elliott, David Nanne and Elaine Pendergrass joined the group to share ways the D Groups can pray for their individual ministries and offer service as well. As Christians we do not have to be reminded that we are all members of a larger group, but the gathering of this group on April 15 was a demonstration of how small groups can work together for the benefit of the whole.

Now that May has arrived, school will be out soon. Summer obligations and fun will be filling our calendars. I hope FCC will not be an "only if I don't have something else" for you and your family in May, June, July and August. We will be present at FCC and our Discipleship Groups will be in full swing. Watch the bulletin and the table in the Fellowship Hall for some new things we will be doing as our D Groups gather, grow and go.

There are many reasons I feel compelled to build our existing groups and to create new ones, but in all of that I know these groups are doing what they are designed to do. I have seen first-hand what happens in people's lives when they are surrounded by those who want God's best for every single member of their smaller group. When I observe these groups, I think of Jesus, perfect in every way and the one who certainly could have done what he was sent to do here on earth all on his own. He, however, surrounded himself with twelve men—our first Discipleship Group example and a ministry worth modeling.

Discipleship Groups at FCC are small groups designed to help each one of us grow our faith. Though the curriculums in each group vary somewhat, each group uses only one authoritative text—the Bible. Scripture demonstrates the truth we in D Groups have come to know and want others here at FCC to experience as well. Life is more manageable when we are surrounded by a caring group of loving Christians. As John 13:35 reminds us, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." It is my prayer that everyone at FCC will join a Discipleship Group not only for themselves but also for their brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV)

Tammie Caffee (Pastor of Adult Discipleship)
tammiecaffee@gmail.com

YOUTH MINISTRY



As we are approaching the end of the 2017-2018 school year, I am looking forward to what God has in store for our youth students during the summer. During the spring semester we will continue to *gather* on Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings, and other various occasions. We desire to pour into the students, so that they *grow* to become more like Jesus. We work to accomplish this through biblical education, prayer, and discipleship with students; both individually and collectively. As students mature in Christ, FCC YTH *go* out into the world to serve practical needs



and spiritual needs of others primarily by sharing themselves and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In May, on Wednesday nights, FCC YTH will go through the mini-series, “Identity.” Teenagers are looking to find who they really are. The current youth trend is to “create yourself,” and this false notion causes problems with youth identity. We will explore how image, decisions, and relationships effect our perception of identity. We know that our identity is in Christ alone, and once students realize and believe that, lives will begin to change. On Sunday mornings, FCC YTH will be continuing the RightNow Media series, “Amazing Grace.” The Sunday morning study for May will focus upon God, His grace, and how we fit and participate in God’s gospel of grace.

FCC YTH will still have normal gatherings on Wednesday nights. Doors open at 5pm and gathering activities last from 6:30-8pm.

Upcoming Dates

- May 16th: VBS Student Volunteer training and End of School Party.
- May 20th: Graduating Seniors Recognition
- May 23rd & 30th: No FCC YTH on Wednesday night.
- May 23rd: Lawrence High School Graduation
- June 4-8th: Vacation Bible School (VBS)
- July 16-20th: Super Summer Camp

Please Note: FCC YTH will be going to Salina, KS for Super Summer Camp during July 16-20. We have 10 student spots available. The cost is \$250 per student and scholarships are available. Contact Paul Porter for more information at: paul@fcclawrence.org.

Paul Porter (Pastor to Youth and College)

paul@fcclawrence.org



@fcc_yth



[fbl.me/fccyth](https://www.facebook.com/fbl.me/fccyth)

COLLEGE MINISTRY



Transit College Ministry is the University/College Ministry of FCC Lawrence. As the University of Kansas approaches spring semester finals, FCC wants to pray for all our college students during this time that is full of stress and worry. If you are a college student and need a study break, talk with our Pastor to Youth and College Paul Porter, and he would be glad to break with you.

For church volunteers and servants, if you want to make or donate goodies for a finals survival kit or care package, please contact Paul Porter at: paul@fcclawrence.org.

Paul Porter (Pastor to Youth and College)

paul@fcclawrence.org

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

1000 Kentucky Street • Lawrence KS 66044

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Download the App
"First Christian
Lawrence"



www.fcclawrence.org



[/firstchristianlawrence](https://www.facebook.com/firstchristianlawrence)



[@fcclawrenceks](https://www.instagram.com/fcclawrenceks)



[@fcclawrenceks](https://twitter.com/fcclawrenceks)



[/fcclawrence](https://vimeo.com/fcclawrence)



Get encouraging texts. Send **first christian** to **69922**

Donate via text. Send **fcclawrence** to **77977**

David Pendergrass, Ph.D., Senior Pastor	david@fcclawrence.org
Elaine Pendergrass, Pastor to Children	elaine@fcclawrence.org
Greg Boyle, Traditional Worship	greg@fcclawrence.org
Julie Hafenstine, Director of Giving Tree	julie@fcclawrence.org
Lisa Hoag, Business Administrator	lisa@fcclawrence.org
Maddie Markley, Office Coordinator	office@fcclawrence.org
Matthew Mulnix, Modern Worship	matthew@fcclawrence.org
Paul Porter, Pastor to Youth and College	paul@fcclawrence.org
Elder Board	elders@fcclawrence.org
Trustee Board	trustees@fcclawrence.org

Want to make an announcement? Send an email to social@fcclawrence.org

Office Hours: Monday — Friday, 9am to 4pm (closed 12-1pm) 785-843-0679

Come to First Christian this week! Traditional Worship 9am • Modern Worship 11am

COMMUNITY AT FCC



REFRIGERATOR PAGE

MONDAYS IN MAY SOFTBALL

PAUL PORTER: PAUL@FCCLAWRENCE.ORG

PASTOR'S STUDY WEDNESDAYS 6PM

THE WORTHY LIFE

A STUDY OF 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

PANCAKES WITH THE PASTOR

SATURDAY, MAY 5TH, THE BIG BISCUIT

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JOINING FCC?

COFFEE & QUESTIONS

SUNDAY MAY 6TH, 10:15AM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

MAY 6TH | 12:15-1:45PM

VBS

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

11AM, THURS, MAY 10TH, THE BIG BISCUIT

JOY

JUST OLDER YOUTH

SUNDAY, MAY 13TH, 12:30PM

LINK

SIGN UP IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

MOM & ME

MAY 19TH | 12-4 PM

ELAINE@FCCLAWRENCE.ORG