

The Crosswalk

First Christian Church
2501 N Park Lane
Altus, OK 73521

OCTOBER
2016



What's The Deal With Church Membership?

During next month's congregational meeting we will be voting on an amendment to our church's membership policy. Which raises the question, why do we do it? What is the point of having membership rosters? Is it just so that we can know just how big (or small) we really are? As if this number somehow gives us stability or security. Or perhaps church membership is the spiritual equivalent of a turf war. These people are members of the Methodist church, these people are members at the Baptist church, etc. This way we know who is who and what they believe and why they are wrong. Just kidding. Well, a little. A third option would be that church membership is simply a secular addition to the church; something that other clubs and organizations did that people in the church thought sounded like a good idea and so adopted the practice. Obviously we don't want any of these to be our motivation, so why do we care about our membership policy? Is it even biblical?

The term the New Testament uses for church is the Greek word, ecclesia. It means, "called out." God's church is the group of people who have been called out of the world into a saving relationship with Christ. However, this word is used in a few different ways in scripture. First, it is used in a universal sense, without a specific local church in mind (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 10:32; 11:22). When Paul was persecuting Christians it says he was going from place to place attacking the churches in each area, but he refers to this persecution as being against "the Church of God" in a holistic sense (1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; Philemon 3:6). It is The Church. The word "church" is also used in the New Testament, not in a universal sense, but in a local sense. Of the 114 uses of the word 34 of them are plural, "churches." Also, many of its uses refer to a locality, describing the local church of that area (Acts 13:1; Rom 16:1). There are various references made about the churches that met in certain people's homes (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:9). So, while the church can rightly be described as universal, containing every Christian throughout time (The Church), it can also be accurately described as the group of people who assemble at 2501 N. Park Ln. on Sunday mornings (a church).

We need to understand one more thing before we get to what we think membership should look like here and now. We need to understand not just what the church is, but the purpose of the church as well. For starters, the church provides a place of community. God never intended for man to be alone and has always provided a community for his chosen people. In these last days that community is the church. Through outreach to the lost and equipping and encouragement of believers the church's mission is to bring people to God. Finally, the church is called the Body of Christ, meaning that we physically represent Jesus to the world. He is in heaven interceding on our behalf and we are on Earth interceding on His. In short, the church exists to provide a community of believers that bring people to God and accomplish His purposes on Earth.

The reason this is important is because, as a born again Christian you are a member of God's universal church. However, God's universal Church won't be gathering for worship this Sunday (unless Jesus comes back before then). Therefore, The Church can't fulfill God's purpose for His church. The Church carries out its purpose on earth one person and place at a time. For The Church to carry out its purpose it must be a church. For The Church to carry out its purposes in your life (community, encouragement, equipping, etc.) and for you to carry out your purpose as a member of The Church you must be committed to and involved with a local body of believers; a member of a church.

Therefore, through lack of a better system, we keep membership records. Not, because we want to know just how big we're getting these days, or so that we can distinguish ourselves from the Baptists, but because we need to know which people in our community consider themselves to be committed and involved with our particular church and want to help us as we try to accomplish God's purposes for our community. That is the heart behind the revision we are making. There is another aspect to this revision that I plan to address in next month's newsletter, but for now I would ask that you read over the planned revision and prayerfully consider it before we bring it before the church this November. If you have any questions or concerns about this revision, please talk with Ben or any of the elders before the congregational meeting. We want to help answer any questions and address these concerns so that we can be unified in this matter. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

October 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	3	4 SERVICE & ACTION MEEING 1:00 PM	5 LADIES BS 9:30AM PRAYER HOUR 5:30 PM ADULT BS 6:30PM	6 WORSHIP MEETING 6:30PM	7	8
9 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	10	11	12 LADIES BS 9:30AM PRAYER HOUR 5:30 PM ADULT BS 6:30PM	13 ELDERS 6:00PM DEACONS 6:30PM BOARD 7:00P	14	15
16 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	17	18	19 LADIES BS 9:30AM PRAYER HOUR 5:30 PM ADULT BS 6:30PM	20	21	22
23 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	24	25	26 LADIES BS 9:30AM PRAYER HOUR 5:30 PM ADULT BS 6:30PM	27	28	29
30 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	31 FALL FESTIVAL					

Serving In October

October 02

Meditation: Lloyd Colston
Servers: Brenda Gibson, *Iris Felix
 John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Christina Barnes, Sarah Skiles
Lord's Supper Prep: Brenda Risner
AV Booth: Tyler Tidwell/Sound, Robert Crawford/PP
Children's Church: Elisabeth White

October 09

Meditation: Doug Dalton
Servers: Brenda Risner, Doug Tritle
 *John Signorelli, ?
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Elisabeth White, Wanda Jones
Lord's Supper Prep: Brenda Risner
AV Booth: Tyler Tidwell/Sound, Robert Crawford/PP
Children's Church: Sarah Skiles

October 16

Meditation: Jim Jones
Servers: Brenda Gibson, Iris Felix
 *John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Jessica Buxton, Jeremy Buxton
Lord's Supper Prep: Brenda Risner
AV Booth: Tyler Tidwell/Sound, Robert Crawford/PP
Children's Church: Nicole Stanfill

October 23

Meditation: Randall Coffman
Servers: Brenda Risner, John Signorelli
 *Wanda Jones, ?
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Kristen Partin, Rebecca Cullen
Lord's Supper Prep: Brenda Risner
AV Booth: Tyler Tidwell/Sound, Robert Crawford/PP
Children's Church: Christina Barnes

October 30

Meditation: Lloyd Colston
Servers: Brenda Gibson, *Iris Felix
 John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Brenda Gibson, Jane Clark
Lord's Supper Prep: Brenda Risner
AV Booth: Tyler Tidwell/Sound, Robert Crawford/PP
Children's Church: Kristen Partin

In Our Prayers

Don Smith - cancer
 Gene Dreschler - stroke
 Glenda Brisco's brother - stroke
 Marlene Johnson - degenerative nerve disease
 Kay Bolden - cancer
 Bud Thompson - brain tumor/rehab
 Donna Peters - surgery
 Heidi Mund
 Laurie Cullen - salvation/early onset Alzheimer's
 Bob Coulter - Parkinson's disease
 Shaun Cecil
 Diana Williamson - cancer
 Larry Allen - heart
 Reba Stephens - health
 Charlotte McPherson
 Marcia Sharma - stomach cancer
 Nita Walker - health
 Andrea Matthews - heart problems
 Tammie Crowder - infection
 Sandy Farris - cancer
 Herb Lacey - liver cancer
 Linda Crandal - leukemia
 Billie Vaughn - Jerry's cousin

Periodically the Prayer List will be updated. If we remove someone that you still want on the list, please let us know and we will be glad to put them back on.

If you have a prayer need or know of any changes, please contact the church office.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

10/13 Abi Tidwell
 10/14 Kymberli Yancey
 10/25 Gene Dreschler
 10/28 Phil Carson

Sunday Services

Sunday School 9:30 am
 Worship Service 10:30 am

Wednesday Night

Prayer Hour 5:30 pm
 Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm

Secretary's Report September 2016

Average Attendance	62.75
Average Visitors	5.75
Total Average Attendance	68.5
Total Offerings	\$9,083.00

Your Elders

Phil Carson, Randall Coffman, Doug Dalton,
 Gene Drechsler, Jerry Gibson, Jim Jones

Your Deacons

Crystal Crawford, Rebecca Cullen, Brenda Gibson
 Wanda Jones, Joe Price, Rick Weinkauff, Dan White



"Daddy, we have a pumpkin that needs you to find it a face."

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Suggested Membership Revision:

The membership of this church shall consist of those who have been born again into Christ*, have submitted to the authority of the Bible as the inspired word of God, and who are committed to and involved with our congregation.

Scriptures teach that to be saved one must believe (Jn. 3:16), repent (Acts 2:38), confess (Rom. 10:9-10), and be immersed (Mt. 28:19-20, Rom 6:3-4). We understand that not all of these are practiced by other church denominations and those churches attempt to bring people to Christ through other methods. However, since we are submitted to the authority of scripture we attempt to bring people to Christ in the same manner as scripture outlines. We also understand that perfect theology is not what saves us, but the grace of God, which can cover our misunderstandings. If a person wishes to join our church having come from a background that taught and/or practiced something other than what is outlined in scripture then we, making no judgements about their current or previous salvation status, will ask them to submit to the teachings of scripture in each of these areas if they have not already done so.

One will be considered committed and involved with our local congregation when he/she openly declares it to the body privately expresses his/her interest to the elders or is perceived by the pastoral committee and/or the eldership to have been attending the church for a significant amount of time, and has shown a commitment to the church.

At this point they will be informed that they meet the qualifications of membership and may therefore serve and participate as such (vote, be elected to the board, teach classes, etc.) should they so desire. In Him, Ben



MONDAY, OCTOBER 31ST

**WE ARE NEEDING DONATIONS
OF CANDY. IT CAN BE PUT IN
THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

First Christian Church of Altus,

I want to thank you for providing such a welcoming environment to worship during my stay at Altus AFB. I was very lucky to be available to attend multiple Sunday services. I had the privilege of meeting most of you and apologize to those who I wasn't fortunate to meet.

Starting from the greeting at the front door one can immediately see that the FCC of Altus is a remarkable place. I can feel the love and joy that you share in Christ, but also the value placed on families and relationships between believers. I felt so comfortable attending church every Sunday and thoroughly enjoyed each and every conversation I had with you. I only wish that I could stay longer and get to know this church family better but I have a wife and two kids patiently waiting back in Ohio. They say around the base "all roads lead to Altus" and if that is true I am blessed to know that I have a church family to come back to.

Once again, thanks for your love and kindness over the past month and a half.

**With love, your Brother in Christ,
Ccpt Ryan Armstrong**