

First Church FOCUS

2019 YEARLY REPORT

“Let Your Light Shine”

MATTHEW 5:16

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“Let your light shine...”

Matthew 5:16

Dear First Church family,

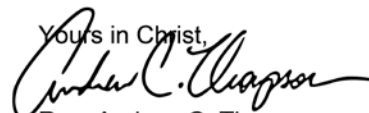
I'm excited to present you with this first edition of the First Church Focus. For some time, we have wanted to produce something for our congregation that offered vital information in an easy-to-use format—from budget statistics to lay leadership to ministry area summaries. Such a publication could serve as an easy reference tool for folks in our congregation to use throughout the year. The First Church Focus is our first attempt to do just that, and I hope you will find it to be helpful.

As I thought about the new year in the weeks leading up to January, there was one Scripture passage that kept coming into my mind: “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). That comes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, and he says it as a way to help his followers understand what it means for us to be the light of the world. That is our calling! We are the ones who are called to let our light shine, so that others will see and know the goodness of our God!

Thinking about our calling to let our light shine calls to mind for me the many different ways that we let our light shine here in Springdale and throughout Northwest Arkansas. From the Bread of Life to our Monitor Elementary School partnership, and from His Helping Hands to our Daily Bread Community Meal, we touch the lives of dozens of individuals and families each week with our mission and outreach. Our children, youth, and adult ministries are seeking to let our light shine by helping people “gather, grow, and go” in their discipleship to Jesus. With our newly renovated Chapel and the Cornerstone worship service that is taking place each Sunday at 9:45 am in it, we are trying to reach new people in a new way for the glory of God.

I hope that 2019 can be a year where we focus on letting our light shine in a thousand different ways. We have no reason to hesitate or fear, because we know that we serve a God who has sent us a Savior. So all we have to do is follow him with our whole hearts!

Please use the First Church Focus report as a resource for this coming year. My intention is that we will build on it each year by exploring what type of information the congregation finds useful, so feel free to let me know what you would like to see in the future. God bless!

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Andrew C. Thompson
Senior Pastor



Mission & Method Statements



“Connecting People
to God and One
Another”

MISSION STATEMENT



Gathering together in
worship; Growing
together in spiritual
maturity; Going together
in mission

METHOD STATEMENT

2019 Budget Summary



Ministry & Mission	\$299,522
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,278,915
Administration	\$291,500
Maintenance	\$108,025
Apportionments	\$206,764
TOTAL	\$2,184,726



“Let Your
Light Shine”





Committees

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Jen Ryerson

Rob Williams

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Jeff Reynerson

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Andrew Thompson

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Al Hanby

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2021

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Jen Simmons

2021

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Nancy Bostian

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Jen Ryerson

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Biddy Williamson

Bob Reynolds
Barb Reynolds

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Don Struebing

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Betty Rhodes

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Molly Campbell

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STAFF REP:

Jen Ryerson

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Russ Rhodes

2021

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Joshua Bland

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Renee Morris
Rich Morris
Jessica Ritchie
Ryan Ritchie
Stacy Waller Lile

Neal McAlister
Kelly McAlister

STAFF REP:

Joshua Bland

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Jeff Williams
Cyndy Hatfield

2020

Paul Lawrence, Chair
Karen Thompson

2021

Larry Wright
Debby Weiser
David Van Bebber

2022

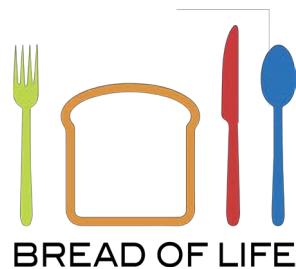
Susan White
Larry Wilkins

EX-OFFICIO:

Andrew Thompson

FOUNDATION STAFF:

Mary McKinney, Director



One of our most exciting developments over the past year has been the renovation of our historic Chapel. When the Grow Fourth Capital Campaign ended in early 2017, both the Board of Trustees and the Church Council expressed a strong desire for us to launch a restoration project to make our Chapel usable and useful for the present day. Built in 1936, the Chapel is the oldest existing part of our church building. By renovating it, we would be honoring our church's past while also equipping our congregation for the future. We knew it would be a great way to let our light shine!

Chapel Renovation Update



After a fundraising period, the actual renovation work began at the end of January 2018. Demolition and restoration were carried out by Commerce Construction Company, Inc., of Springdale. State-of-the-art audiovisual components were installed by Commerical Audio Systems, also of Springdale. Cinemation Design of Roanoke, TX, provided engineering and installation of the stage and stage lighting aspects of the renovation. The end result has been that the beautiful, Gothic ambiance of the Chapel has been preserved while the worship space has been equipped with up-to-date technology in the areas of lighting, sound, and video.



On Sunday, January 6, 2019, the 9:45 am worship service moved into the Chapel and was rebranded as the Cornerstone service. With our worship leader Michael Cooper, we are inviting the Holy Spirit to lead us as we seek to be a spiritual cornerstone for downtown Springdale. We do all of that knowing that our ultimate cornerstone is Jesus Christ, who is the foundation of our faith and of the church (Ephesians 2:20)!

We still have a little bit of work to do to make the Chapel renovation complete. This year we will be constructing an ADA-compliant wheelchair ramp on the outside of the Chapel and reconfiguring the front porch to accommodate it. In that way, we will be making the Chapel accessible to all people regardless of ability. In the meantime, we should be grateful for the hard work of the Building Committee for stewarding the Chapel renovation project through to completion: Mary Stockland (chairperson), Dick Stockland, Monty Henderson, Chris Weiser, Amanda Reed, Terry McConnell, Theresa Moore, and Andrew Thompson (pastor).
Thanks be to God!



Children's Ministry Update

AMANDA WORTHY



Spark Kids, strives to be a spark that helps all of our children to “be a light” in the world. We are excited about the ways we will be letting our light shine in 2019. We are starting the year with a brand new curriculum called “Grow.” We blast off with our study of spiritual habits in January before exploring the unbelievable miracles of Jesus in February. The rest of the year takes us through studies of worship and the early church before going back and spending some time with the Old Testament stories.



We will be exploring ways we can go out into the world and be the hands and feet of Jesus through a new monthly program called “Spark Go.” We will gather together on the last Sunday of the month for a family worship and outreach experience. During this program, families are encouraged to gather together for a time of worship. After we have spent some time worshipping together, the students will gather together for a meal followed by a missions and outreach project.

Our Wednesday program, Spark Grow, will start back with Grow First in January. As part of our evening program, the kids will be working on an Easter musical. We hope to spark the kids’ interest in music and eventually work toward forming a children’s choir. Wednesday night programming is also a great time of fellowship and learning. This semester we will be getting a little messy as we explore God’s Word through some fun hands on science experiments.

VBS will be out of this world this year when we travel to Mars and beyond to explore where God’s power can take us! Vacation Bible School is always a huge event for First Church. We hope you and your children can participate this year and even invite some friends.



“We are excited about the ways we will be letting our light shine in 2019”

Our annual Spark Family events will be returning this year as well. We will hold our Wonderfully Made Easter Egg hunt in April. This event provides many of the special needs families in our community with the opportunity to participate in an egg hunt designed especially for them. The annual Trunk-or-Treat event will be held in October and we hope to include a Wonderfully Made ministry component during this event as well this year.

We believe that this will be a fun, Christ-filled, year in Spark Kids. Our hope is to really focus not only on the children’s spiritual growth but on spiritual growth together as a family.

Youth Ministry Update

REV. TODD LOVELL

1st Youth exists to connect students to God and one another by gathering, growing, and going together. As we look forward to 2019, our first priority is finding a new youth minister who will match the needs of our students and their families, and lead them all to “let their light shine” in the community of Springdale and the world. During this interim time, we do not simply want to “hold the line.” Rather, we want to do everything in our power to set up 1st Youth (and the new youth minister) for success in 2019!

For the past several months, we have been working to build an infrastructure of support within our student ministry to provide the best possible opportunity for success when our new youth minister arrives. We’ve increased our adult volunteer participation from 11 people to over 70 people, and we’re continuing to work with our student leadership team so that they can help steer our ministry into the future and have real ownership as we move forward. With our increased adult participation and youth leadership, 1st Youth is in a perfect position to take every advantage of the amazing potential for student ministry at First Church in 2019. We’re confident that the year ahead will be filled with many opportunities for our youth to let their light shine to the glory of God.



Music Ministry Update

REV. DANNY REDING



The music ministry of First Church leads our congregation in worship each Sunday with music that lets us give voice to deep theological truths and heartfelt expressions of love and devotion to God. Music has been part of the language of God's people in worship from the earliest times and continues to enrich our services each Sunday. Led by Patrick Hall at First Praise, Michael Cooper at Cornerstone, and Danny Reding and Ernest Whitmore in the Classic Service, we offer a variety of expressions of praise and worship. These reflect the individual preferences of musical styles in our congregation, as well as, in some small measure, the infinite creativity of God, for whom no single style of music or worship could be adequate.



We want to invite every member who plays an instrument or who sings to be a part of your music ministry in some way. The Celebration Ringers Handbell Choir and the Chancel Choir meet each Wednesday evening and always welcome new members. The Children's Ministry is making plans for an Easter Musical. New groups are also under consideration and input from the congregation will be requested through a survey coming in February.



Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." May this be true for our church as we share the light of Christ through music.

Agape Fellowship

REV. ROB WILLIAMS

In 2019, Agape Fellowship will let our light shine by continuing to love and serve our community's youth and children. We also want to operate as a launch pad for college-age young people as they are trained in ministry and then sent out into their mission fields. We will continue to serve the community through ministries like the Agape Farm and Market, bus ministry, and twice-a-week meals. One of our overarching concerns is the need to continue to connect resources with needs within the mission context that God has given us—and we will keep pushing into that area of work. We will continue invest in our congregation and encourage them as a part of the Agape family to serve the Lord with their whole hearts. Psalm 18:28 says, "For it is you who light my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness." We know that God will continue to light our path, so that we can let our light shine in the world. This year we will continue to thank God for all that He has done and will do!



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