



## FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

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Text FCCTextMe to  
(844) 467-1299

### *Weekly Schedule*

**Worship Service: Sun. 10:15am**  
Hybrid Worship in Person &  
Streamed via Zoom and Facebook Live  
<https://www.fcclc.org/worship>

**Contemplative Worship Service**  
1st Sunday of the month, 6:30pm  
In-person only at this time.

**Social Hours: Wed. 6:30pm**  
1st Wed: Crafters Group  
3rd Wed: Adult Education Group

**Spiritual Practices: Thu. 9:00am**  
Every Thursday on Zoom  
Some practices we do regularly:  
Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, Christian  
Meditation, Bible Journaling, Scripture  
Doodling, Book Discussion, and more!

## *Announcements*

- » We have lifted all the Covid restrictions. The CDC has removed the Covid restrictions and rates of infection are low in the area. This means we do not require or request persons wear masks. It is up to your discretion if you wish to wear a mask. We are also returning to indoor coffee hour and potlucks.
- » The Pastoral Search Committee has finished collecting responses to measure the congregation's priorities for a long term pastor. They will now be analyzing the results to better inform their search moving forward.
- » To limit the length of the newsletter, the FCC Board Meeting Minutes are published as a separate document, available at <https://www.fcclc.org/community/>

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# WORSHIP COVENANT

In order to ensure that worship is a safe space for everyone who wants to return, we ask that you covenant with us to abide by the following safety guidelines:

- » While you may choose to wear a mask, they are no longer required or requested by FCC at this time. We may adjust this decision in the future based on the numbers.
- » Worship leaders, musicians, and speakers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.
- » We ask that you wear your name tag or a disposable name tag, available by the front doors.
- » Please maintain a six-foot distance between you and other members at all times when indoors.
- » When you enter, please take a bulletin, then find a spot to sit.
- » The Communion bread and wine are served row by row. Please accept the elements and pass the trays to your neighbor.
- » After the final hymn please make your way outside, taking your bulletin and any trash with you. There will be trash cans by the sanctuary doors

## NOTES

This covenant will change as recommended safety measures in our county change. We will communicate any changes through email blasts and in person announcements.

The livestream recording begins at 10:10 am. At that time, any sounds above a whisper may be heard on the livestream. Anyone who gathers near the front of the sanctuary may be visible on camera.

If you have any questions about the covenant, please contact Rev. Patrick..



# CALENDAR

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sun.	10:15 am	First Christian Church Worship
	10:15 am	St. John's Catholic Church Worship
Mon.	6:30 pm	Celestial Sounds (Sanctuary)
Wed.	6:30 pm	FCC Social Hour (Parlor)
	6:30 pm	Mesilla Valley Swing (Sanctuary)
Thu.	9:00 am	Spiritual Practices/Book Club (Zoom)
Fri.	12:00 pm	Al-Anon (Parlor)
	6:00 pm	New World Drummers / Dancers
Sat.	8:00am	HIV/AIDS Food Bank

## BIRTHDAYS

**2/9**  
John Schwendinger

**2/13**  
Theresa Urias

**2/14**  
Ralph Holmes

**2/15**  
Pat Weathers

**2/23**  
Karin Bergthold

## SPECIAL SERVICES

1/07      6:30 pm      Contemplative Worship (Chapel)

## SOCIAL GROUPS

2/07      6:30 pm      Crafters Group  
2/21      11:30 am      Brown Bag Lunch  
2/28      6:30 pm      Book Discussion Group

## ANNIVERSARIES

**2/9**  
Theresa & Daniel  
Urias

**2/20**  
Ralph & Karen  
Holmes

**2/20**  
Pat & Linda  
Weathers

## EVENTS

2/2      5:30 pm      Food Pantry Support Group  
2/9      5:30 pm      Food Pantry Support Group  
2/17      10:00 am      Weaving for Justice Sale  
2/18      5:30 pm      Mesilla Valley Jazz & Blues

## MEETINGS

2/10      10:00 am      FCC Board Meeting  
2/12      6:00 pm      Pastor Search Committee (Parlor)  
2/26      6:00 pm      Pastor Search Committee (Parlor)

# ELDERS & WORSHIP LEADERS

## February, 2024

### **Sunday, Feb. 4 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Hilda McKee  
Offering: Esther Devall  
Communion: Deb Cook

### **Sunday, Feb. 11 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Karen Holmes  
Offering: Scott Hays-Strom  
Communion: Esther Devall

### **Sunday, Feb. 18 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Esther Devall  
Offering: Zanté Garcia  
Communion: Scott Hays-Strom

### **Sunday, Feb. 25 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Zanté Garcia  
Offering: Kamy McKenzie-Shaw  
Communion: Zanté Garcia

## March, 2024

### **Sunday, Mar. 3 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Eric Hays-Strom  
Offering: Paul Cook  
Communion: Kamy McKenzie-Shaw

### **Sunday, Mar. 10 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Kamy McKenzie-Shaw  
Offering: Debby Johnson  
Communion: Paul Cook

### **Sunday, Mar. 17 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Sue Stefford-Grey  
Offering: Melissa McKenzie-Shaw  
Communion: Debby Johnson

### **Sunday, Mar. 24 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Debby Johnson  
Offering: Scott Hays-Strom  
Communion: Melissa McKenzie-Shaw

### **Sunday, Mar. 31 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Melody Burns  
Offering: Deb Cook  
Communion: Scott Hays-Strom

# NEWS & LETTERS

## *PASTOR'S LETTER*

*Rev. Patrick Crocker*

“This is the bread of being human. This is the cup of becoming whole.”

Why do what we do at the Eucharistic Table/Table of The Lord/Communion Table? Because our congregation identifies within several progressive traditions, we have some welcome freedom to look for our own meanings within and beyond what has been passed on to us. As with what Baptism means, it's healthy to reframe and reclaim from time to time.

Starting from the story of institution (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:15-20, John 13-17, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26) we find different times, different words, different understandings: reminder of the covenant of the past, renewal & reunderstanding of the covenant for this community, giving and receiving of forgiveness, prophetic action, re-enactment, preaching & teaching. It's a place-time to taste basic sustenance that unites all creation, and to viscerally experience the unity of God's family in all times & places, and to recommit our souls and our community to the welcoming in of those on the outs, and to recalibrate our heart-vision in our calling to see Creation through Divine eyes.

Paul's rebuke of the Corinthian congregation (1 Corinthians 11) and the dire consequences he proclaimed due to improper eating of the Lord's Supper have led some faith communities to heap requirements on the Table: from grain or grapes that must be grown in a particular part of the world or from particular seed stock, to recipes for the making of the elements, to what we must do to be ready. Some of those consequences and requirements even prompted people to stay away from taking Communion and the Church had to produce a counter-requirement that everyone take Communion at least once per year. (And I can understand the fear, since Paul had said unworthy hearts taking Communion lead to death.)

It would probably be healthy for us to do more of a “fearless moral inventory” when we eat, whether it be The Lord's Supper or our own. Wisdom calls us to be more aware of those who aren't getting anything to eat, where we go away full, from The Lord's Table or our own. And yet, ... Jesus didn't call those who were perfect to join him at table. (The perfect wouldn't need it.) What Jesus did, and continues to do, is call those who are deemed friends. Peter, Andrew, James, John, Judas, you, me.

There is also a beauty in being “not quite there yet.” As the great sage and spiritual writer Alanis Morissette sings, “One day I’ll be at peace, I’ll be enlightened. ... One day I will be healed. I will gather my wounds, forge the end of tragic comedy. I have been running so sweaty my whole life, urgent for a finish line. And I have been missing the rapture this whole time of being forever incomplete.” (Incomplete, from the Flavors of Entanglement album.)

As we partake around the tables of worship (in the sanctuary, in the home, and even in the car), could we focus less on what we don’t have yet and focus more on what the Great Mystery is doing to nurture us and all of Creation toward wholeness? Perhaps, in so doing, we might discern exactly where the uniqueness of our own lives, as individuals and as community, would bring out the God-flavors for those who are desperately hungry.

Shalom,  
Patrick

PS: If you’d like to have a pastoral visit or chat on the phone, you’re welcome to call/text me at 575-551-1717 or email me at [Rev.Patrick.Crocker@gmail.com](mailto:Rev.Patrick.Crocker@gmail.com).

## *PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE*

### *Update for February 2024*

The Search Committee spent most of 2023 gathering information about our church and its members desires in a new Pastor so we could update our Church Profile. The profile was submitted to the DOC and UCC regional denomination offices in December and we have started to receive Candidate Profiles. We will be spending the next few months gathering more Candidate Profiles and determining who God is calling to First Christian Church of Las Cruces. Please keep us in your prayers as we make this important decision.

Ralph Holmes  
Chair, Settled Pastor Search Committee

# *FAITH ACTION COMMITTEE*

## *Mission Moment for February*

Faith Action Committee would like you to, take action, with the Disciples of Christ during their “Week of Compassion”. “Gifts to Live On” is the theme for 2024. For 80 years Disciples have funded projects around the world, offering help and God's love wherever and however it is needed. This is their relief, refugee and sustainable development fund in the United States and Canada. In the past this fund has provided girls education in Afghanistan, welcomed refugees in Virginia, cared for children after wildfires in Hawaii, provided healthcare in South Sudan and built new homes after a tornado in Kentucky to name a few. They partner funds with volunteers to make a difference for those struggling. You can visit, [www.weekofcompassion.org](http://www.weekofcompassion.org) for more information and examples of their outreach. Sunday February 18th and 25th, First Christian Church LC will be receiving offerings for this program. The mission moment February 11th will provide more information as well. Offerings should have “Week of Compassion” written on the check or in a note with cash or when giving through our website using the green “Give” button on the home page.

Everyone associated with FCCLC, member or not, is welcome to attend our Faith Action Committee meetings the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 PM via Zoom through the “Join Faith Action Committee” button under the Community tab, on the “Meetings” page, on our website. The more diverse or group the better we can serve our members. Please bring your social justice and environmental concerns or pet projects to us and see if we can help you help others.

Ralph Holmes  
Facilitating our Faith Action Meetings

## *BROWN BAG LUNCH*

*February 21, 2024 11:30am - 1:00pm*

Fun gathering!  
Great conversations!  
Best fellowship opportunity!  
No agenda, no dues, no expectations!  
No reservation needed!  
Come join in; everyone WELCOME!

Sandy Weber



# ONLINE CLASS FOR LENT

*Eric Hays-Strom*

Lent is a Christian observance of 40 days recalling and commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert at the beginning of his ministry.

Some folk observe Lent by giving up something important to them. Other observe Lent by taking on some activity or behavior such as almsgiving or volunteering.

This year, Lent begins on Wednesday, February 14 and culminates on Holy Thursday, March 28. Did you know that Lent does not include Sundays? Easter is on March 31.

John Dominic Crossan, one of the world's foremost bible and Jesus scholars is offering an online class "The Historical Jesus: The Evolutionary Challenge to a Mediterranean Peasant". The class begins February 20. Cost is an optional contribution of any amount the participant desires to make. If you don't want or can't afford to make a contribution, \$0.00 is an option.

The classes will be pre-recorded video lectures that you will be sent each week. Then, every Tuesday from February 20 through March 19, will be a live question and answer period. This, also, will be recorded so you can listen in at your leisure if you can't make it to the live session.

Sessions include:

- » Prologue Class - Jesus' Theater: Anti-Semitism on Stage and Screen
- » Jesus' World: How is Global Peace to be Imagined?
- » Jesus' Vision: How did Tradition Become Traction in Galilee?
- » Jesus' Execution: What Happened That Passover in Jerusalem?
- » Jesus' Vindication: How is that Exaltation to be Imagined?

For information on how to sign up for this, please go to:

<https://homebrewedchristianity.lpages.co/the-historical-jesus-info-page-2/?fbclid=IwAR2hramBboWjU-D-7hiVaKOBb-pVxoVQ6Y1kfzcXO7TDuYHxlPbsiaG65k8>

# WHO ARE WE?

First Christian Church affirms the Good News of Jesus the Christ as revealed through Scripture, tradition, experience, scholarship, and reason. Within the community of faith, we are called to discern through prayer, study, and discussion God's message for today.



**The Newsletter is published monthly by First Christian Church. It is available free of charge to members and friends of FCC. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and to inspire, and to invite participation in the life of the congregation, the community, and the world. Submissions are welcome, including announcements of activities of interest to members, prayer concerns, thank-you notes, directory updates, etc. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. The due date for submissions is each month on the 25th.**