



CHRISTIAN CHURCH

focus

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF 1ST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, MARCH 2026 – VOLUME 82

“Journey to the Empty Tomb” -
A Daily Devotional Experience

DEATH
COULD NOT HOLD HIM
JOURNEY TO THE EMPTY TOMB

Beginning **Sunday, March 15**, we invite you to take part in *Journey to the Empty Tomb*, a 22-day daily devotional leading up to *Easter Sunday, April 5*.

Each brief reading includes Scripture, a reflection thought, and a prayer to draw your heart closer to Christ through the stories of His life, death, and resurrection. Some days will comfort you; others will challenge you, and a few might even make you smile—but every day will point you to Jesus.

We'll email you a copy, or you can pick up a copy at church, or even follow along via our website. Let's walk this beautiful journey together as we move toward the joy of Easter morning!

South India Christian Mission Update

Dear Friends of SICM

Thank you for being a valuable benefactor of the work of South India Christian Mission (SICM). We appreciate your generous help.

Since we began in January 1994, SICM has continually had strong growth while maintaining almost zero overhead. We were there for the people when the tsunami wreaked havoc in south India and Sri Lanka. We continue to sponsor medical outreach into villages where little or no medical care is available. We have also been there in many times providing food, clothing, and aid during the yearly severe monsoon flooding. We now have planted and continue to nurture more than 70 churches spread all over South India, Sri Lanka, and a few in extreme NE India. Meeting humanitarian needs in the name of Jesus has proved to be very effective in opening doors to help provide for spiritual needs as well. As a result, SICM has grown rapidly through its mission of training preachers, planting churches, and reaching out to the needs of poor people.



This fall John Vincent, one of our lead preachers in India, spent more than a month with us. He really appreciated being able to spend time renewing friendships with many of you. As we talked about the upcoming year, he expressed a critical need for deep bored wells in several villages where we have planted churches. Many of you have responded and we now plan to provide funds for at least 6 village wells. Thank you! Clean water means health. It means dignity. It means little girls can go to school instead of hauling buckets in the heat. It means the love of Christ becomes visible, tangible, undeniable. What better gift is there to honor the one who called himself the “Living Water”? What better gift points people to Him? Our goal is to provide all of the needed wells during 2026 on top of our regular budgeted support for evangelistic outreach and other humanitarian needs.

Thanks again for your prayers and gifts to SICM at this momentous time!

Blessings,

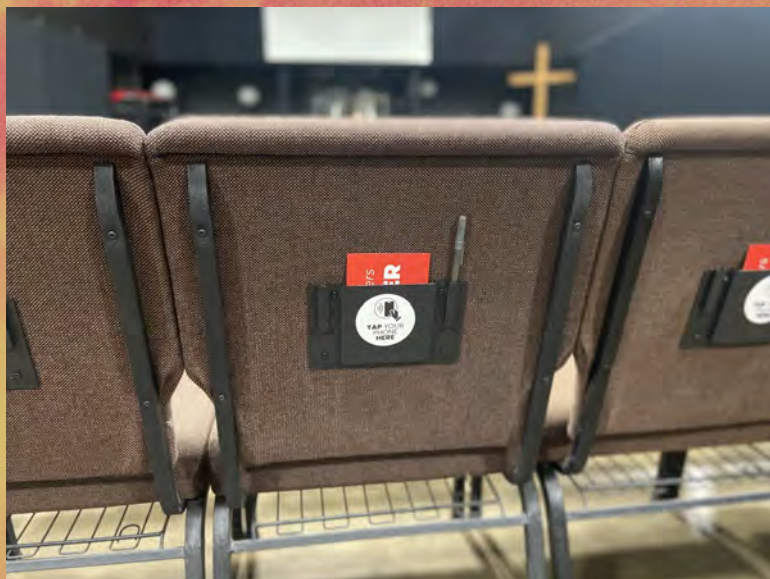
Dick & Susan Ingle
770-834-4519



Tap Cards

To help you stay connected with 1st Christian and make the most of the 9 and 11 AM service, we're using tap cards. You'll find one on the seat back in front of you.

1. To use it, just hold the back of your phone to the tap card. Hold it there until a link pops up on your screen. Tap that link to find everything you need to stay connected here at church.
2. Tap is easier than QR codes What's great about this is it's so much simpler than scanning a QR code. You don't need to open your camera or try to get your phone to focus on a far away screen – just tap your phone and you're instantly there.
3. Both iPhones and Androids support this. The NFC chip is located at the top of your iPhone and in the middle of your Android phone. If your phone doesn't pick it up right away, check to make sure NFC is toggled 'on' in your phone settings.
4. Tap the card in front of you anytime, to see helpful links like our newsletter, ways to get involved or give, and much more—all in one place.”



PARENT POWER

There's a question every Christian parent eventually asks: *When should I start teaching my child the Bible?* The simple answer is—start now. Whether your little one is two, twelve, or twenty, it's never too soon—or too late—to begin shaping their heart with God's Word. Children are far more perceptive than we think. From their earliest days, they are soaking in values, attitudes, and the tone of home life. That's why the best Bible lessons begin before a child can even read—by watching how you live out the faith you profess.

Formal teaching matters too. Choose a simple children's Bible and read together a few minutes each day. Keep it short, visual, and joyful. Let them ask questions, even hard ones. When they do, thank God for their curiosity—it's the soil where faith grows.

At the same time, make Scripture part of the family's everyday rhythm. Talk about God's goodness at breakfast, His creativity during a walk, His forgiveness when someone says sorry. You're not just teaching information; you're shaping a worldview.

Remember, parents and grandparents are the child's first pastors. The world is eager to fill their minds—make sure the Word gets there first.

Parents and
grandparents are
the children's
first pastors...

Easter Lilies in honor or in memory of someone may be purchased through the church. Single stalk lilies will cost \$20.00 and may be purchased by donating funds by March 29th. Use the web site, giving boxes in the 9 AM worship area or the offering buckets for the 11 AM service. Please specify/designate funds given for lily purchases and provide information regarding whom the lily purchase is honoring or in memory of. Lilies purchased may be picked up after the Easter Sunday services.

Easter Lilies



Grow in Your Giving

For many people, the topic of giving comes with mixed emotions. Some carry gratitude, others carry questions, and some carry wounds from past experiences. God understands all of that. Faithful giving was never meant to be driven by guilt or pressure, but by trust and gratitude for all God has already given.

Scripture consistently reminds us that generosity flows from trust—trust that God is our provider, not our paycheck. When we give faithfully, we're not losing something; we're learning to place our confidence in the One who promises to care for us.

So how do we grow into faithful givers?

First, decide in advance. Faithful giving rarely happens by accident. Prayerfully choose a percentage or amount and commit to it before emotions, expenses, or circumstances weigh in. Planning turns good intentions into consistent obedience.

Second, give first, not last. When giving is what's left over, it's often inconsistent. When it comes first, it becomes an act of worship. This simple shift declares, "God, I trust You with the whole, not just the remainder."

Third, give regularly. Consistency matters more than size. Weekly, biweekly, or monthly—choose a rhythm that fits your life and stick with it. Over time, regular giving forms a generous heart.

Faithful giving is a habit of trust and a declaration that God comes first. Start where you are, take the next faithful step, and trust God with the results.

**Give first,
not last**

Fourth, give joyfully. God doesn't need our money, but He desires our trust. Ask God to shape your attitude as you give. Gratitude fuels generosity.

Finally, give expectantly—but not selfishly. We don't give to get rich; we give believing God will use our obedience to bless others and grow us spiritually.

WAYS
TO
GIVE



Sunday (Giving boxes)



1stChristian-



306 College Street



Text 1stcc to 73256

Dear Teenagers: A Plea to You About Sin

Sin. I hate this word. I hate what it does to people's lives. I hate what I have seen it do in the world and within the walls of my own family. I hate seeing teenagers disregard its severity and reap the consequences later in life.

And you know what? **God hated it too.** So much so that he sent Jesus to DIE on a cross to pay the penalty for us. Today's article is a plea from me to you. A plea to stop for a moment, read what I am saying and realize, yet again, that sin will destroy your life.

What are the positives?

In our book, one of the reflection questions asks girls to list "positives" of sexual sin, and today I want to expand that to any sin. Take a minute to think of different sins and then possible positive outcomes.

Sometimes sin might help you move up the "social ladder" or give you more attention. It may help you score better on a test. It might also help you trick someone into giving you what you want. Even the Bible states that there is "pleasure in sin for a season."

Now, what about long-term effects? What are the positive effects of long-term sin? Think of lying, cheating, sexual sin, gluttony, stealing, gossip, and so forth. Any positives there? No. There are never long-term benefits to sin.

What about the negatives?

I made a graphic with some of the common negatives that are associated with certain sins.

Sin's ultimate goal is destruction. When I was in unforgiveness, which you can learn more about here, I was bitter. I was angry. I obsessed about ways to seek revenge.

Through my life, I watched "recreational" drug use lead to the death of a family member after decades of struggle. I watched a false accusation almost destroy a loved one's life. I watched a marriage fall apart due to video game addiction and extreme bitterness.

Sin only destroys. There are NO positive long-term consequences to sin.

Consequences of Sin

Porn

- Changes normal brain activity
- negatively affects face to face romantic relationships
- more likely to objectify people

Gluttony

- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol
- heart disease
- stress on knees and joints
- diabetes as an adult

Fornication

- STDs
- Unwanted Pregnancy
- Shame/guilt
- Negatively affects reputation

Unforgiveness

- Consumes your mind with negative thoughts
- Will cause bitterness
- God WILL NOT forgive us if we do not forgive others

Lying

- Effects others
- Can negatively affect reputation
- Others will not believe you
- (It's Satan's native language)

Alcohol abuse

- liver damage
- impaired memory
- impaired judgement
- can lead to addiction

Pride

- Makes it almost impossible to love others who are not like you
- Others do not want to be around you
- Limits your sphere of influence

Do you see the point...?

Continued on next page

Dear Teenagers: continued

A Plea from Me to You

Please do all you can to follow God and stay away from sin.

Once you give sin a toe hold, it will take a foothold, then a stronghold, then a stranglehold.

If you are dabbling sexual sin, **stop**.

If you are a gossip, **stop**.

If you tell “little white lies” frequently, **stop**.

If you cheat on your schoolwork, **stop**.

If you think you’re the center of the world, **stop**.

If you watch porn, **stop**.

I have seen too many teenagers live to reap lifelong consequences of behavior they thought they would only indulge in for a season.

In closing

I have such a burden about the destruction I see being heaped on this upcoming generation. I want you to live a victorious life for Christ, not a life of defeat. Not a life of enslavement to sin and ruin.

If you are involved in any type of sin, please repent and ask God to help you stay away from it. Get an accountability partner if you need it. Do all you can to keep striving towards righteousness and away from sin.

Sarah and Susan, “Dear Teenagers: A Plea to you about sin” www.transformed4more.com



Ladies of our church. Do you remember when...we had an annual Mother/Daughter banquet??? When you sat across the table from your Mother, grandmother, daughter, niece, sister, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, all the above and more. It was a tradition here at 1st Christian, one we let slip away. Soooo, we're bringing it back. On May 2nd we will be celebrating again a real family tradition. The 2026 return of our Mother/Daughter Banquet. Family Tradition is the theme. For all our new members, join in the fun and start your own family tradition. Fun, food, and an **original play by our own Laura King**. More on this later. See you there!



Sunday Mornings

Looking Ahead

Our K-5th graders are rocking the monthly memory verses! Please continue to work with them at home. They earn prizes when they memorize the monthly verse and/or the books of the Bible. Here are this month's memory verses:

Preschool: "We have seen amazing things today!"
Luke 5:26 NLT

Elementary: "Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves." Philippians 2:13 NIrV

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life." John 3:16 NIrV*

*Kids are welcome to memorize and recite using any translation.

Join us on Wednesday, April 1st at 6pm for our Family Easter Egg Hunt! This will be an event the whole family can enjoy together. We will have dinner (starting at 5:30pm), crafts, a lesson and multiple Easter egg hunts (divided out by age). If you are interested in volunteering that evening, please see Brittany (Brittany@1stchristianchurch.com) or Beth (Beth@1stchristianchurch.com). There will be many opportunities to serve that evening!

Please note that there **will be no Sunday school classes on Easter Sunday, April 5th**. Instead, families can enjoy a wonderful free brunch together during the 10AM hour! Check in for the children's Sunday school for the 11AM service will resume at 10:45AM.

Save the date for VBS! **Mark your calendars for June 15th – 18th and Sunday, June 21st** and plan to join us at Vacation Bible School! Stay tuned for more details and a theme reveal coming later this month!



Brittany Vibhakar & Beth Morgan

Children's Directors



Prayer Requests

- Easter services
- South India Christian Mission
- Children , Youth and College students of FCC
- Praise God for all our many wonderful, talented volunteers
- Celebrate Recovery



SUNDAYS AT 4 PM

CONTACT JIM BLUMENFELD
FOR MORE INFO

470-654-3469

The following article is taken from Bigstuf.com and is titled "Why Student Ministry Matters More Than Ever in 2026."

Students are growing up in a culture that constantly reminds them of everything that's wrong—both in the world and in themselves. They're bombarded with images of what they don't have, who they're not, and how they don't measure up. This relentless comparison and exposure to negativity take a toll, leaving many students feeling anxious, overwhelmed, and hopeless.

But here's the good news: Jesus hasn't changed.

The same Jesus we knew growing up—the one who calmed our storms, gave us purpose, and filled our hearts with peace—is the same Jesus our students are meeting today. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8), and His truth remains as powerful and relevant as ever.

Student ministry is an opportunity to point this generation to the unchanging love and hope found in Jesus Christ. It's a chance to meet them in the middle of their struggles, show them they're not alone, and remind them of a truth that outshines any darkness they face. Here are a few reasons why your investment in student ministry matters so much in 2026.

1. Today's Students Face Unique Pressures

While every generation has had its challenges, today's students are growing up in a hyperconnected, high-pressure environment. Social media exposes them to an endless comparison trap, and the constant stream of bad news can leave them feeling powerless and fearful.

Proverbs 4:23 reminds us, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." As youth leaders, you have the privilege of helping students guard their hearts by creating a safe space where they can take a break from the noise and encounter God's truth.

Whether it's through small groups, quiet moments in prayer, or heartfelt worship, you're equipping students to process their world through the lens of faith, rather than fear.

2. Jesus Is Still the Answer

No matter how the world changes, the Gospel doesn't. The same Jesus who transformed your life is ready to transform theirs.

In John 16:33, Jesus says, "In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." This is the hope that students need more than ever. While they may feel surrounded by chaos, you have the opportunity to introduce them to the unchanging Savior who offers peace that surpasses understanding.

Your ministry gives students the tools to hold onto this hope, even when life feels overwhelming.

3. The World Needs Godly Leaders

Today's students are tomorrow's leaders, and the world desperately needs leaders who know and follow Jesus. The time you invest in shaping their faith now is laying the foundation for the church, the community, and the culture they will influence in the years to come.

1 Timothy 4:12 encourages us, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity."

By discipling students today, you're raising up leaders who will boldly live out their faith and bring light to a world that desperately needs it.

4. The Next Generation Needs Us to Show Up

It's easy to assume that students will find their way to Jesus on their own, but the truth is, they need us to show up for them. They need leaders who will listen to their questions, walk alongside them in their doubts, and model what it looks like to follow Jesus in a broken world.

Galatians 6:9 reminds us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Your presence, your prayers, and your persistence matter. Even if you don't see immediate fruit, trust that God is using you to plant seeds that will grow in His perfect timing.



CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HOLY WEEK

SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday (March 29):
9 & 11 AM Services

Children's Easter Egg Hunt (*April 1*):
6 PM

Good Friday Service (*April 3*):
6 PM

Easter Sunday (April 5):
9 & 11 AM Services
10 AM Free Brunch

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3/1 -Celebrate Recovery 4 PM
- 3/4 - Wonderful Wednesday 5:30 PM
- 3/8 - Celebrate Recovery 4 PM
- 3/9 – Omega 6 PM
- 3/11 - Alpha 10 AM, Wonderful Wednesday 5:30 PM
- 3/15 - Celebrate Recovery 4 PM
- 3/18 - Food Pantry 9-10 AM, Senior Fellowship at Suttons 11:30 AM, Wonderful Wednesday 5:30 PM
- 3/22- Celebrate Recovery 4 PM
- 3/25 Wonderful Wednesday 5:30 PM
- 3/29 - Celebrate Recovery 4 PM
- 4/1 - Easter Egg Hunt 6 PM
- 4/3 - Good Friday Service 6 PM
- 4/5 - Easter Services at 9 & 11 AM, Free Brunch at 10 AM



**March 18th at Suttons
11:30 AM (Dutch Treat)**

February Numbers	<u>Weekly Offering Needed</u>			
	<u>2/1</u>	<u>2/8</u>	<u>2/15</u>	<u>2/22</u>
Attendance	233	264	261	266
Offering	\$68,982.63	\$15,317.40	\$14,672.53	\$7,492.10
YTD Received	\$161,315.82	\$176,633.22	\$191,305.75	\$198,797.85
YTD Needed	\$88,461.55	\$106,153.86	\$123,846.17	\$141,538.48