



The Builder

First Christian Church *Midland*

March 2, 2025 Volume 70 Issue 6



**Lent
Creating Space
For God**

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WEEK AT A GLANCE

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EVENING PROGRAM

**TUE
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6:30PM CUB SCOUTS
7PM SCOUTING AMERICA
BOYS TROOP

**WED
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7AM MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST
9AM FOOD PANTRY
7PM CHOIR

**SUN
MARCH
9**

10AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
11AM WORSHIP

CONTACT INFORMATION:

432-682-2541

1301 W LOUISIANA AVE., MIDLAND, TX 79701

FCCMIDLAND.ORG

OFFICE1@FCCMIDLAND.ORG





Rev. David Chisham
Senior Minister

SACRED SPACE

What's the holiest place in the world for you? Where do you encounter the living presence of God? Is there a

"thin place" for you where it feels like the boundary between heaven and earth has become blurred?

Naming sacred spaces is common in human experience. For Muslims there's Mecca and Medina and Jerusalem. For Buddhists there are sacred shrines scattered throughout the world. For Jews the Holy Land is where they believe the Lord God blesses them.

We do need to be careful as we go about naming sacred places and trusting in them. Certainly, this is a lesson we learn from the Temple in Jerusalem --God's people came to rely on the Temple as a sacred talisman that would protect them from all enemies. I'm sure it was a shock to the system when the Babylonians, and then the Romans, rolled through city and brought the Temple down.

Yet I think there are those places that do bring us a little closer to God. The other night, when I was on retreat with the youth in Carlsbad, New Mexico, standing under the nighttime stars was a stirring experience. Waking up in Ruidoso to fresh-fallen snow is a spiritual moment. And anytime I show our sanctuary to someone for the first time, there is something about that space that strikes them with a sense of beauty and transcendence.

As we've been reading through the Old Testament this year, often the place names become a blur of names that we read and instantly forget. Shiloh,

Mizpah, Meribah, Paran--my guess is none of those names ring a bell with many of us. But these places are important in the imaginations of the Israelites and Jews. And through the season of Lent we will explore some of the places that hold great significance for the story of our faith.

Along the way, as we learn how these places became sacred spaces for God's revelation to happen, we also want to explore how we make space for God in our lives. That might mean literally and regularly going to a place, such as a sanctuary or a dinner table, where we might find God's presence. It might also mean making space in our day, a prayer closet so-to-speak for meditation and reflection.

**...there is something about
that space that strikes
them with a sense of
beauty and transcendence.**

The Gospels often name places where someone encountered Christ in a transformational way. The Samaritan woman met Jesus by Jacob's well--that's a real place you can visit today. Peter gave the great confession at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus was in deep prayer with God on Mount Olivet, just outside the walls of Jerusalem. Unfortunately, today these are all tourist traps selling religious tzatzikis. But I also know that some visitors have said there is something mystical about visiting these places, even if you're crowded in with a bunch of noisy tourists.

Though we are geographically far removed from those places, we trust that God's presence can be found in the spaces we inhabit. That was one of the great insights the Jewish exiles in Babylon had to discover for themselves: though they were far removed from Jerusalem and the Promised Land, God followed them to Babylon and was blessing and protecting them in their land of exile and wandering.

And wherever you are, you can trust that God is near you as you open a place in your life for God to dwell.

See you AT the Table,



Rev. Tom Jones
Associate Minister

There are places in life that are very special to us. Homes where we grew up. Homes where our family lived.

Places that are meaningful and where we experience God's love and the love of others find a special place in our hearts.

A few of the special places to me are First Christian Church and my home. I have been a member of FCC for 38 years and lived in the same home for 39 years. I have many wonderful memories of my family and my church family. There have been countless special occasions where my life has been touched by God and the people around me. What places are special to you? Where have you experienced God?



**What places are special to you?
Where have you
experienced God?**





Rev. Remy Tercero
Associate Minister

CREATING SPACE FOR GOD

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

"Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he

said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.""

Matthew 26:36-46 NRSV

In between the final supper and Jesus being taken into custody to eventually be crucified, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. To Jesus, this was the sacred place where he would spend his final moments of freedom, praying to the Father.

The scripture says that Jesus threw himself on the ground and prayed for the cup to pass him. I interpret this line, as Jesus passionately threw himself on the ground, begging God, for one last chance at continuing to do God's work here on earth, then after more time in prayer Jesus came to peace with the fact that God knew it was his time and he was ready for Jesus to take our place on the cross.

To Jesus, that garden of Gethsemane was a sacred place. It is where Jesus chose to isolate himself so that he could pray. Jesus created a sacred space to connect with God. Jesus knew how to pray, and he knew that he wanted to isolate himself to pray in a beautiful garden.

Imagine what it would feel like if that garden remained after all this time and we could enter that space. Imagine what it was like to be in a space Jesus declared as sacred. I couldn't imagine the overwhelming stream of emotion that would pass through me.

Jesus only had one final evening to enjoy his freedom and he spent that time praying to his Father, further deepening that connection before he would face death. This sacred space for Jesus was powerful. Jesus was intentional about going to that garden to pray.

To Jesus, this was the sacred place where he would spend his final moments of freedom, praying to the father.

Are we intentional in going out of our way to find a sacred space to pray?

How do we go above and beyond in creating a sacred space just for us and God?

Jesus praying in Gethsemane tells us that even Jesus had to be intentional in creating a space to connect with God. If Jesus was that intentional about creating that space, that he went out of his way to do so in a garden, what does that say about

how we should approach prayer and creating the space for God to connect with us?

This week, I encourage you to take the time, even if it is only 10 minutes, to go somewhere to disconnect with our world and connect with our God. I pray that the intentionality behind creating that space will take you a long way.



Youth @ FCC

Youth at Black River Camp



KIDS @ FCC

Sunday School

Preschool/Kinder will continue listening to amazing stories about Jesus.

1st – 5th Graders will read more about Peter and Paul from the Book of Acts.

Children's Church

Preschool/Kinder will hear the story of Jacob and Esau.

1st – 3rd Graders will listen to the story of "Jesus' Triumphant Entry".

Sunday Afternoon

As is the tradition...the children will take part in the ceremony of burning the palms from last year's Palm Sunday into the ashes used by our ministers on Ash Wednesday. This is very carefully monitored and is safe for the children to watch.

If time permits, the children will then continue watching the movie, "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe".



Memorial services for Reverend Michael Ray "Mike" Hunter, Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at First Christian Church of Lufkin.

First Christian Church, Midland will be livestreaming the memorial service for Rev. Mike Hunter in our sanctuary Tuesday, March 4th at 2pm.

We will open the Sanctuary doors at 1:30pm for anyone who would like to come to the church and watch the memorial service; you may also watch at home at <https://www.youtube.com/@firstchristianchurchlufkin1097/streams>.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be sent to Christian Church Foundation, ATTN: Mike and Enid Hunter Fund, P.O. Box 1007, Indianapolis, IN 46206; or give online at <https://christianchurchfoundation.org/donate/> (choose "In Memory" and indicate Mike and Enid Hunter Fund on payment page)

**Prayer List**

Those in need of prayer:

Jim Mauldin
 Hunter Family
 Abraham Ortega
 Virgie Lewis
 Tere Valero
 Kaylene Burgard
 Nancy Stanley
 Patsy Hill
 Fred Yates
 Vincent Cooper
 Pat Marshall
 Ginny Estes
 Joshua Harrison
 Mary Beth Corbett
 Linda Taylor
 Lisa Craven
 Mark Cranford
 Cricket Harrison
 Betty Odom
 Fred Schwiening
 Nicky Rodriguez
 Lana Cooley
 C.C. Petteway
 Pat Chambers
 Kathy Landrum
 Sheila Crudgington
 Gary Thompson

Military:

Lee Anna Crudgington
 Tyler Brown—
grandson of Lyn Brown

Families, Friends Beyond FCC

Cindy Garcia—
CLC Teacher
 Barrett Wood—
cousin of Ginny Estes
 Jay Warren —
friend of Pat Marshall

Kairos Conde—
nephew of Olivia Espino
 Grayson Pickett—
friend of Jeweli Flores
 Al Schorre—
friend of Sharon Boyd
 Robin Diegan & Jason Diegan—
cousins of Ginny Estes
 Amanda Bryant—
friend of Dave & Kathy
Cromwell
 Freda Benton
 Amanda Lee—
friend of Janice Ford
 Reymondo Garcia—*brother of*
Maria Vinson
 Gary Kennedy
friends of
Lauren & Justin Disney
 Lee Stone—
brother of Jean Jones
 Fred Copeland—
father of Lauren Disney
 Ed Keah
friend of Joy Singleton
 J.M. Moore —
father of Kathy Landrum
 Kairos Conde —
nephew of Olivia Espino
 Oscar Garcia —
brother of Amparo Olguin

Birthdays

03/03 Jim Morris
 03/03 Destiny Crudgington
 03/03 **Morgan Pierce-Dishron**
 03/05 Mary Lightfoot
 03/12 Clyde Kinsey
 03/15 Bill Terry
 03/16 John Schnable
 03/19 Michael Landrum
 03/22 **Brecken Hattenbach**
 03/23 Fred Yates
 03/23 Spencer Armour
 03/23 David Davis
 03/24 Mike Stephenson
 03/25 Sharna Gibbons
 03/28 **Aimsley Lastoka**
 03/30 Joe Gassie
 03/31 Gary Thompson

Anniversaries

03/04 Roy & Jeannine Hurst
 03/12 Charlie & LuAnn Morgan
 03/17 Beau & Barbara Estes
 03/17 Joe Gassie & Pat Vincent

Names in **red** are youth and children

Our Deepest Sympathy

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to the following family who has recently lost a loved one.

The Boyd/Evans family: Lee Evans passed away on February 18, 2025.

Lee is the brother of Sharon Boyd.



1301 W. Louisiana Ave.

Midland, TX 79701

432.682.2541

www.fccmidland.org



The Story

my story

A Year Reading
through the Bible

Scan this QR
code to find the
suggested reading
plan for 2025!

