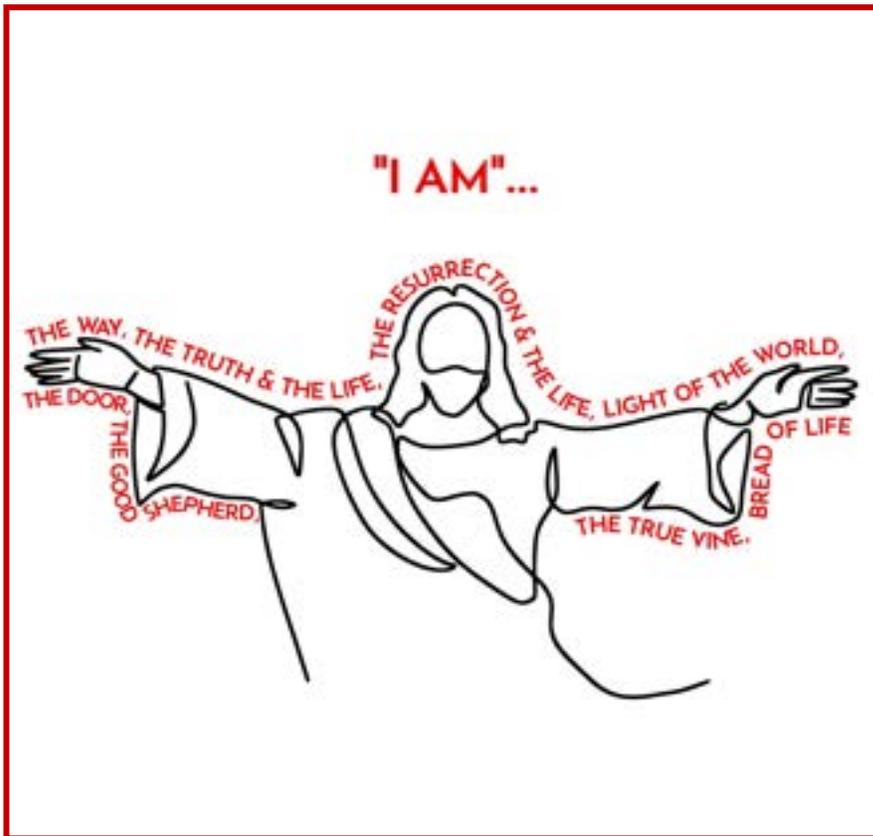




The Builder

First Christian Church
Midland

June 22, 2025 Volume 70 Issue 23



WEEK AT A GLANCE

SUN
JUNE
22

10AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
11AM WORSHIP

WED
JUNE
24

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

SUN
JUNE
29

10AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
11AM WORSHIP

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Rev. David Chisham
Senior Minister

I AM

This week in VBS our children have been studying some of the "I Am" statements of Jesus in the

Gospel of John. These statements, while being convenient "coat hooks" to help us understand who Jesus is, are also quite explosive. Statements like "I am the good shepherd" or "I am the true vine" help us understand how we relate to Jesus, but there are other "I am" statements that got Jesus into trouble.

In John chapter 8 a division had broken out over who Jesus was. Jesus had decided to secretly travel to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths, the great fall pilgrimage harvest festival, to celebrate in the Temple. Jesus knew that some Jewish leaders were trying to quiet, or even kill, Jesus because his popularity was growing.

While in Jerusalem a tit-for-tat argument breaks out between Jesus and some of the religious leaders in the Temple--at one point it devolves into name calling and *ad hominem* attacks. Some people in the Temple ask Jesus, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" I think even a high-school debate student could have come up with a better attack than that one!

"No," Jesus says, "I don't have a demon, and I have come from my Father"; i.e., I'm not from Samaria. The argument continues to take abrupt turns as some bring up that fact that their father is Abraham, the ancestor of all Jewish people. At that point Jesus says something truly shocking: "Before Abraham was, I am." At that point some

are so offended by what Jesus said that they take up stones in order to murder Jesus right there on the spot of his apparent blasphemy.

Much ink has been spilled about this particular "I am" statement. Though some of the finer details of exact interpretation may escape us, it is clear to those who heard Jesus that he is connecting his personal identity with the Lord God.

In the Hebrew language, the name of the Lord is "Yahweh". It comes from the Hebrew verb "to be". Where many ancient gods took their names for objects, such as "Yam" the god of the sea, whose name is also the Hebrew noun meaning "sea", the Lord God takes a name that defies description.

Centuries ago, Rene Descartes famously declared, "I think, therefore I am." Since he made that bold declaration, many have deconstructed human thought. Just because you can conceive of something in your mind doesn't necessarily mean you exist any more or any less.

The Lord God was careful not to attach divine identity to anything that humans could hold or manipulate or easily define. The Lord God is beyond quick definition.

So it is with Jesus. These I am statements are powerful metaphors that help us understand our relationship. Yet in John 8, Jesus' declaration "before Abraham was, I am," raises our understanding to a new level that boggles my mind.

...there are other "I am" statements that got Jesus into trouble.

In a few months, in our tour through the Scriptures, we'll plow through the Gospel of John. I hope you keep your eyes and ears open as you read through the pages of this powerful gospel!

See you at the Table,



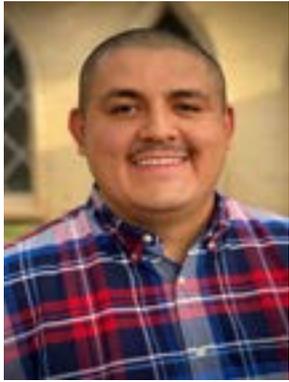
Welcome Lee'Ayn Lesley

Lee'Ayn is joining the First Christian Church staff as our new Bookkeeper. Please stop by the office and say hello!

CLC@FCC

Summer Fun at CLC today we got to play with Puppets in room 302.





Rev. Remy Tercero
Associate Minister

1 While Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. **2** Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach

them. **3** The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, **4** they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. **5** Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” **6** They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. **7** When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” **8** And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. **9** When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. **10** Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” **11** She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” **13** Then the Pharisees said to him, “You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.” **14** Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. **15** You judge by human standards; I judge no one.-John 8 1:15 NRSV

This passage cites a time where Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and entered the temple to teach those who were inside. The Pharisees noticed that he was teaching, so like they did so often, they came up with a question in an attempt to stump Jesus.

They asked Jesus what they should do with this woman who was caught in the act of committing adultery. According to their laws it would be customary for this woman to be stoned to death. He then said that whoever amongst them was without sin to be the one to throw the first stone.

The crowds slowly dissipated as they realized that not one of them was without sin.

Jesus then spoke saying that he is the light of the world, and while people judge by human standards Jesus does not judge anyone. Jesus didn't take into account what human standards thought about the woman.

Jesus conveyed to the people in the temple that day, that if they follow their human leaders, they would end up lost, but if they followed Jesus, then he would guide them with the “light of life.”

When have we held people to human standards rather than God's standards? How easy it is for us to classify ourselves as better than one another because of human standards?

We can be quick to classify people into certain groups within our minds and write those people off. “Well so and so must be a bad person because they had an affair, or they do drugs, or they cannot hold a job, or they have a bad temper, etc.”

Once we group people into one of these categories and toss them aside then we are judging people by human standards rather than forgiving them in the same way God constantly forgives us.

We should turn our focus towards finding ways to emulate and follow Jesus' light rather than deciding who deserves it.

The truth is not a single one of us are blameless. If any of us were in the temple that day, we would not have been able to throw that first stone. Then who are we to judge the people we know harsher than Jesus' judged this woman who he knew committed adultery?

People make mistakes. All people make mistakes. The next time we feel called to write someone off as a bad person, we should take into account that Jesus is the powerful light in all of our lives. Jesus is a light so powerful that even the worst of sinners can become saved.



Kids@FCC

Sunday School

Preschool/Kinder will hear the story of "The Rich Ruler".

1st – 5th Graders will begin "The Armor of God" activity book.

Children's Church

Preschool/Kinder will hear the story of "Balaam, The Talking Donkey".

1st – 3rd Grade will listen to "Acts of the Apostles".

June 29th, 4:30 – 6:00

Come to Creative Corner! You may bring clothes that you may create your own designs with permanent fabric markers.

You may draw a tattoo on yourself or have a friend do it.

You may make a pinwheel.

You may help create a wooden marble activity game.

Many other arts/crafts to choose from.

Come show off your creativity!

This is a special Sunday Afternoon Program.

YOUTH@FCC



Prayer List

Those in need of prayer:

- Betty Couch
- Cinnamon Stanford
- Abraham Ortega
- 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
- Lana Cooley
- C.C. Petteway
- Pat Chambers
- Kathy Landrum
- Sheila Crudgington
- Gary Thompson

Military:

- 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
- Fred Copeland—
father of Lauren Disney
- Ed Keah
friend of Joy Singleton
- J.M. Moore —
father of Kathy Landrum
- Oscar Garcia —
brother of Amparo Olguin

Birthdays

Names in red are youth and children

- 06/05 Danny Estrada
- 06/06 Charley Wilkinson
- 06/07 Charlie Morgan
- 06/08 Maria Cooper``
- 06/10 Lea Ann Schneider
- 06/13 Barbara Holeva
- 06/13 Bryce Kosanke
- 06/15 Stephanie Hall
- 06/16 Diane Faulkner
- 06/19 Tara Jones
- 06/20 Traci Hopper
- 06/22 Simon Crudgington
- 06/25 Roy Hurst
- 06/27 Lu Ann Morgan

Anniversaries

- 06/11 Dave & Kaylene Burgard
- 06/18 John & Sandra Schnable
- 06/28 Sandy & Diane Faulkner
- 06/28 Doug & Sandra Wills





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Martha Fentem Day

Sunday, June 29, 2025



**Join us after worship in the
Family Life Center for
a luncheon to celebrate
Martha Fentem**



SCAN QR CODE TO RSVP