

FCC Connection



connecting community

fccfarmville.org

Malinda's Moment

Greetings to First Farmville Christian Church!

It's an honor to walk with you as your interim pastor. I've enjoyed our conversations, our times of prayer, worship, and fellowship. I've discovered a basement where big things happen! I've listened to your joys and concerns about the future. We've created holy hope for this church and its ministries through open communication, mindfulness, and the Spirit's guidance. Penny and the choir enhance God's presence through music. Baptisms and welcoming new members have brought us joy beyond measure. To God be the Glory.

Thank you, church, for bubbling up with Hope that overflows into the community. We're having Bible study now using my husband's book, *Extreme Virtues*. I pray that it will be a time of reflection and renewal during our Lenten season. Where is our Hope? How do we remain anchored to Holy Hope when the world appears to have gone mad? How do we walk in faith while our feet shuffle in a state of uncertainty?

God welcomes our questions, invites us to ponder upon such things for the sake of deeper spiritual formation. Easy answers seem vaneer at times, satisfying us but for a minute. May this Lent be a time for searching God in new ways, ways that may cause you holy pause as you consider the way of the Cross. I heard a woman on the radio who complained that she needed a gluten free Jesus. The bread her church used upset her sensitive stomach. The radio host asked her if there was a big demand for gluten free Jesus at the communion table. The woman laughed, "I don't know if anyone else has been searching for gluten free Jesus, but if I am the only one doing so, then that's enough." May God upset us enough that we keep searching, keep longing for, keep serving, keep loving Jesus. He is enough.

Come visit me in the office, join me for lunch, or give me a call. You are important to this church. You matter. I hope to see you soon.

May the peace that passes all understanding be yours.

Malinda

All children are invited to joyfully wave the Palms to celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Our Chalice Singers will assist your child to march into the church during our Opening Hymn Palm Sunday. We look forward to sharing the excitement of Palm Sunday with you and your beautiful children at our March 29th 11am worship service. To facilitate the logistics of this, please try and be at church by 10:50am so some basic directions can be given. Thank you in advance for your participation!



Children's Time

Children's Time takes place every Sunday during worship. We encourage you to bring the children in your life to join us.

Board Meeting Highlights—Feb 8, 2026

Present: Judy Owens, Jean Suggs, Marah Walker, Christine Dempsey, Penny McCreary, Mary Steinbauer, Wes Flake, Donna Moore, Tammy Matis, John Briley, Chester Ellis, Bert Smith. Also Malinda Fillingim

EDUCATION: there will be an Easter Egg Hunt following worship on Easter Sunday.
PROPERTY: the church van needs some repairs.

OUTREACH: 57 meals served at the Community Kitchen, 132 boxes of groceries, 264 lbs of cheese distributed, 168 bags of groceries for seniors delivered.

WORSHIP: [see newsletter for Holy Week schedule]

DWM: serving lunch here at FCC on Monday of Holy Week.

MINISTER: "Let's Talk About It" - reviewed the church's mission statement. Does it meet our needs or should changes be made?.

Next General Board meeting: March 8

Outreach

Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers, we're keeping up our normal busy pace.

MANY thanks to Christine Dempsey and Shepard Lilley and their student team for stepping in to take over our senior food bags. Christine and Shepard also handle the Community Outreach Kitchen every other month. We're grateful for their help!

Changes are coming to the CSFP program that will make that program even more successful. One change is likely to be the addition of access to Door Dash to help deliver the boxes and cheese to homebound clients. Wonderful!

The Boy Scouts knocked it out of the park with their food drive in February. We're able to keep both blessing boxes stuffed full for a while.

Birthdays

Rylin Blunier	Mar 4
Jean Suggs	Mar 4
Christine Dempsey	Mar 6
Jen Blunier	Mar 17
Caleb Knox	Mar 21
Jesse Joyner	Mar 23
Jean Ellis	Mar 25
Wayne Dempsey	Apr 4
Mark Matis	Apr 30
John Redden Lewis	May 4
Noah Knox	May 5
Sallie Eason	May 11
Suzanne Davis	May 19
Sean Verzier	May 25
Johnny J. Briley	May 30

In Our Prayers

Concerns

Dottie Bryant, Bobby Hodge, Jr, Linda Hodge, Lynn McDustrell, Dave Pruette, Maury Verzier

Homebound

Mabel Bowen, Beth Norville, Nancy Quinerly, Ruth Taylor

Please notify an Elder of any changes.



**John Mark Batchelor
Brett Webb, Michael Webb and Wyatt Webb
Michael and Wyatt were baptized, too!**



ANNUAL COMMUNITY WORSHIP SERVICE

Town Common Gazebo

Sunday, April 26 at 10am

**Bring a chair, bring a friend,
bring God's love and some sunshine!**



**SUNDAY
APRIL 5
Immediately after Worship**

2026 Official Board of First Christian Church

Trustees

2026

Miriam Lewis
Chester Ellis

2027

Wayne Dempsey
Bert Smith

2028

Miriam Lewis

Elders

2026

John K. Briley
Christine Dempsey

2027

Miriam Lewis
Bert Smith

2028

Donna Moore

Deacons

2026

Tammy Matis

2027

Jackie Bulpett
Jean Suggs

2028

Marah Walker

Officers

Judy Owens, Chair
Christine Dempsey, Vice Chair
Jean Suggs, Secretary
Mary Steinbauer, Treasurer
Julie Walker, Asst. Treasurer

DWM President
CMF President

2025 Ministry Teams

Property and Grounds

Chester Ellis, Co-Chair
Paul Bryant
Wes Flake
Al Joyner
Judy Rouse

Outreach

Kim Griffiths, Chair
Jackie Bulpett
Dorothy Haller
Katharine Griffiths
Tammy Matis
Mark Matis

Bereavement

Mary Steinbauer, Chair
Christine Dempsey

Christian Education

Jean Suggs, Chair

Worship

Penny McCreary, Chair
Joyce Albritton
Jackie Bulpett
Donna Moore

Membership

Christine Dempsey, Chair
Susan Smith
Marah Walker
Sarrah Wildermuth

Pastoral Relations

Christine Dempsey, Chair (Vice-Chair Board)
Judy Owens (Chair-Board)
Bert Smith (Trustee)
John Briley (Elder)
Tammy Matis (Deacon)
Joyce Albritton (Minister's Rep)

Memorials Advisory

Judy Rouse, Chair
Sallie Eason
Linda Hodge

**ripe
revival**

**Reviving Communities
Through Food**

EVERY WEDNESDAY
10:30-12 in front of First
Christian Church and the
May Museum. Fresh
produce, groceries, dairy
products and more! ALL
operated on a "pay what
you can" basis.

Come check it out!

(schedule subject to change)



Is there such a thing as
crunching your way to heaven?
Find out!

\$60/case at the church office
\$5/jar at Piggly Wiggly

Our church wishes to express their gratitude to Marah, Sarra, and Christine for lifting up their voices in song so beautifully and making a joyful noise in worship on so many occasions. We also are so thankful to Betsy Barrow and BJ Lawrence for generously sharing their musical gifts with us as



*joyful
noise!*

Good Friday Service Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to extinguish candles and read a prepared comment during the candle extinguishment. You may volunteer for one or two candles. Please see Malinda to sign up.



Faith Leaders Urge Humane Policies in DHS Negotiations

In a February 9 letter to the U.S. Congress, Rev. Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President, along with other faith leaders, shared requests as Congress faces a February 13 deadline to determine Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding.

February 9, 2026

Dear member of Congress,

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? (Isaiah 58:6).

The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the native-born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God (Leviticus 19:34).

United in faith and rooted in love, the nine undersigned Christian denominations and organizations composed of millions of people across the United States, grieve the ongoing assaults on the dignity, rights and well-being of our immigrant members and neighbors through aggressive immigration enforcement.

Our churches have decried denial of due process and recent violence by federal law enforcement agents, including the shootings of Keith Porter Jr., Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti by federal immigration agents. **We call for investigation, accountability and justice in these cases.**

We also see this as a critical moment to **legislate immigration policies that are just, humane and respectful of the dignity of immigrants** who, like all people, are beloved children of God. We are grateful that Congress heard the national outcry and did not vote hastily for a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) budget that would have provided additional unchecked funding to ICE and other immigration enforcement agencies. As you negotiate meaningful reforms in the coming weeks, we urge you to prioritize language that preserves the freedom to worship, to live in safety regardless of race or background, to love our neighbors, and to meet the basic needs and rights of all.

In particular, we ask that you emphasize the following in your negotiations:

- **Codify protections from immigration enforcement for our churches and other houses of worship, as well as schools, hospitals, courthouses, and other sensitive locations.** We grieve the fear that keeps our siblings and neighbors away from essential religious services and practices. We ask for the sanctity of worship to be respected by prohibitions on immigration enforcement at or near sensitive locations.
- **Limit excessive funding for immigration enforcement.** Federal immigration enforcement received over \$170 billion in summer 2025 to supercharge enforcement activities. This surge has led to widespread and indiscriminate detentions, detention facilities operated by private companies that fail basic standards of care and liberties, and intimidation and violence against U.S. citizens and entire communities. More funding for ICE is neither fiscally responsible nor morally defensible. We ask that DHS prioritize funding for programs that support the common good, including funding to reduce the USCIS case backlog.
- **Reaffirm restrictions on federal immigration agents' targeting of people based on race, language or country of origin.** Federal immigration agents' activities have targeted U.S. citizens, permanent residents and other immigrants because of their appearance, how they speak or where they work. We call for an end to indiscriminate enforcement efforts and an end to surge presences in Minneapolis and other cities.
- **Require due process for immigration agents and consequences for failure to follow these processes** in their interactions with immigrants and those supporting them. This includes independent investigations of ICE violence that result in meaningful consequences.
- **Ensure standards in immigration detention facilities and disallow funding used to detain children.** These standards must include adequate medical care, clean water, food, access to religious practices and services, and contact with families and lawyers. The standards must protect the dignity and safety of all. We also call for a total halt to the detention of children.
- **End the arrests and traumatizing reinterviews of lawfully present refugees.** We affirm our commitment to the U.S. refugee program and urge the protection and ongoing welcome of our refugee neighbors. Reopening cases is unnecessary, cruel, and destabilizes the lives of families that were promised safety by the United States.

In the coming Christian season of Lent, our churches will follow the journey of God's people displaced from their homes and wandering in the desert. Again and again, God provides for their needs, and when they are settled, issues a command: "The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the native-born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:34).

Thank you for considering our requests.

Sincerely,

Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Jihyun Oh, Stated Clerk
General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)

Richard Santos, President and CEO
Church World Service

Eddy Aleman, General Secretary
Reformed Church in America

The Provincial Elders' Conference
Moravian Church, Northern Province in America

Bishop Tracy Smith Malone, President, Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, President and CEO
Global Refugee

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, President and General Secretary
National Council of Churches

Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples in Christ) in the United States and Canada

Wed Mar 25
Wed April 22
Wed May 27

CSFP Food Boxes
Volunteers!
Please be at the
church by 9:30



Community Outreach Kitchen

Mon, Mar 2

Mon, April 6

March Servants

Elders: Miriam Lewis HE, Bert Smith

Deacons: Jean Suggs HD, Tammy Matis

Counters: Wayne Dempsey, Miriam Lewis

April Servants

Elders: Donna Moore HE, Christine Dempsey

Deacons: Jackie Bulpett HD, Marah Walker

Counters: Bert Smith, Donna Moore

Church Staff

Rev. Malinda Fillingim
910-442-6935

Penny McCreary

Kim Griffiths

Interim Minister
mkbdfg@gmail.com

Pianist

Church Administrator
office@fccfarmville.org

Mission of First Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

Farmville, North Carolina

It is the mission of First Christian Church (DOC) of Farmville, NC to provide an environment where all who come can learn, fellowship, worship, and grow spiritually closer to God. We will fulfill our greater obligation to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by being of service to the members of our community and to the world. Our efforts will be done in the name of Jesus Christ.



**First
Christian
Church**

Disciples of Christ

3776 South Main St.
PO Box 205
Farmville, NC 27828

Church Office: (252) 753-3179

Regular Office Hours:

9 am—4 pm, Mon—Thurs, 9am—1pm Fri

Also by appointment.

office@fccfarmville.org fccfarmville.org



Mon, Mar 30 **Holy Week**

12:05p: Lenten Lunch at First Christian Church,
Rocky Stone speaking

Tues, Mar 31

12:05p: Lenten Lunch at Farmville Presbyterian
Church, Graham Byrum speaking

Wed, April 1

12:05p: Lenten Lunch at First Baptist Church,
Malinda Fillingim speaking

Fri, April 3

6pm: Good Friday Tenebrae Service at First
Christian Church

Sun, April 5

6:30a: Sunrise Service at Farmville Methodist
Church, Shannon Marie Berry speaking

11a: Easter Service at First Christian Church

12: Easter Egg Hunt

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First Christian Church, Farmville fccfarmville.org



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:45 Bible Study 11 Worship 2 Den mtgs 	2 11 Community Kitchen	3 6:30 Cub Scouts	4 10:30-12 Ripe for Revival truck	5 Garden Club Spaghetti Dinner	<h1>March</h1>	
8 9:45 Bible Study 11 Worship with Bishop Valerie Melvin	9 5:30 Fellowship Hall—American Legion 7 DWM—church library	10	11 10:30-12 Ripe for Revival truck	12 11:30 Farmville Ministerial mtg	13	14
15 8 CMF mtg 8:30 Elders mtg 9:45 Bible Study 11 Worship 12 Board mtg 2 Den mtgs	16	17  7 Trustees mtg	18 10:30-12 Ripe for Revival truck	19	20	21
22 9:45 Bible Study 11 Worship	23	24 6:30 Cub Scouts	25 9:30 CSFP box distribution 10:30-12 Ripe for Revival truck	26	27	28
29 PALM SUNDAY 11 Worship 	30 12 Lent Lunch at FCC w/ Rocky Stone	31 12 Lent Lunch at Presbyterian Church w/ Graham Byrum	1 12 Lent Lunch at First Baptist Church w/ Malinda Fillingim	2 MAUNDY THURSDAY	3 Office closed GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE at 6	4 HOLY SATURDAY 