



# FirstChristianNews

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF NORTH HOLLYWOOD  
A CONGREGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
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JENNIFER LE'AU, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES  
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ALFREDO GOMEZ & LOYDI RIVAS GOMEZ, PASTORS, SPANISH SPEAKING CONGREGATION

*Volume LXV No. 32*

*December 13, 2023*

## WORSHIP WITH US THIS Christmas

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES** at **10am** (Worship) • **5:30pm** (Family) • **11pm** (Candlelight)

JOIN US IN PERSON OR WATCH SERVICES ON [YOUTUBE](#) OR [FACEBOOK](#).

Check out recent service streams and more at [www.fcnh.org](http://www.fcnh.org).



## Letter to the Family

"It is real!" I shared these words after the Children's Pageant on Sunday as part of the benediction. The original reference was to how the baby Jesus during the Children's Pageant was Quentin Hickey. The point was that the story is real. My hope and prayer was that we know and experience the "realness" of the birth of Jesus.

I closed the benediction by sharing the possibility that we can make the story of Christmas real for others. I can think of the people who made the story real for me. Can you think of those people?

For example, I saw one of my youth group sponsors when I went back to Alabama for Thanksgiving. I thanked her for having a profound impact on my life. She was surprised by my words and played off her importance. Then, I took the opportunity to explain the impact that she had on me and my life trajectory. I may have felt called to ministry, but her presence and love helped me to better hear the call. If I felt estranged from church while experiencing the call, I may not have listened.

The impact that we have on others is incredibly profound. You may be surprised by who you have impacted. You might try to play off your importance, but you made it happen. Perhaps it was behind the scenes by filling up the communion cups or it may have been by sending a birthday card.

Through the effort of our 100th Anniversary Cel-

ebration Team, I am reminded that we are blessed by those who have gone before us. They have ensured that our church was upright and standing. They made the phone calls to raise the down payment to make the move to this location. They made the follow-up phone calls when the first round of money was not enough. Some of them built the Youth Hut. Others counted the offering each week. Still others served as presidents, board members, and much more!

The story that we tell - the greatest story ever told (the Gospel) - is made real for us and for those who come after us because of our effort and our willingness to support the ministries of our church.

As was shared previously, we were \$90k (and, at some points during the year, more than \$100k) in the red for the year. This was due - in large part - to the strikes affecting numerous families in our church and the part of our budget where we anticipate facility use income from film shoots. Additionally, our utility bills have been higher than expected as the rates have increased. Thanks to your dedication and gifts, we are now only \$81k in the red for the year.

I am writing to ask that you join me and my family in making an additional gift to the church this December.

- We will do it for ourselves because of how this church blesses us.
- We will do it for others because we know the impact that this church has on our community and world.
- We will do it to honor those who "paid it forward" for us to be able to experience the gospel.
- We will do it because "it is real."
- We will do it because we want our neighbors to experience the "realness" of the Gospel.

Together,

*Pastor Jeth*

Senior Pastor





10AM SUN • DECEMBER 17

*Be an Actor in Your  
Story Not an Observer*

TEXT: EZRA 3:10-13

This Sunday is our final time in the Hebrew Testament before we turn the page to journey through the Gospel of Mark until the Sunday after Easter! Before we make the move, we are going to wrestle with the story of some of the Jewish people returning to Jerusalem after being away for many years.

Many of us know what it is like to go back home and experience things being different. In Ezra 1-3, we hear about how some people cried with joy as others cried because of the painful memories of the past. Eventually, some realized that they were participating in the next chapter of the story of redemption and healing. Rather than being merely observers of what God had done in the past, they were being active participants in what God was doing in the present! Our text this Sunday is Ezra 3:10-13. Pastor Jonathan's sermon is entitled "Be an Actor in Your Story Not an Observer."



OPERATION  
*Santa Claus*  
2023

It's that time of year again when we roll up our sleeves for Operation Santa Claus, FCCNH's annual giveaway to underprivileged kids. Just like last year we will not be giving away toys in the Social Hall. Instead, we will give gift cards to the kids in every car that drives into our parking lot **THIS Saturday, December 16, starting at 7:30 a.m.** To that end, we're accepting donations of Target or Walmart cards in the amount of \$15 or \$20. If you'd like to donate cards (or a check made out to FCCNH with "Operation Santa Claus" written on the memo line), we would be most grateful. If you have any questions, please contact **Ken Wilson, 818-903-0850** or email him at [kwmedia@earthlink.net](mailto:kwmedia@earthlink.net).

**THIS SUNDAY • DECEMBER 17**

Special Day Offering for Disciples  
Mission Fund supporting the ministries  
of our Regional church.

## A VERY EXCITING WEEKEND AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** (1) Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> was our annual Christmas Concert presented by the Chancel Choir, under the direction of David Rigsby. This year's theme was *Dona Nobis Pacem: A Concert for Christmas Peace*. (2 & 3) On Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, Director of Children's Ministries, Jennifer Le'au and the children of our Sunday School classes presented the ever-popular Children's Christmas Pageant and, of course, adorable-ness took over the sanctuary with shepherds, sheep, angels, Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. (4) Pastor Tau with this past Sunday's acolyte, Romero Hunt as they pause for a photo in the narthex.

*photos by Byron Armantrout*

## INGATHERING SUNDAY IS · DECEMBER 17



The North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry serves roughly 5,000 people each month and this month we are especially in need of complete canned meals (ravioli, chili, etc.). Our next Ingathering Sunday is **THIS WEEK, December 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please bring your donations to the Narthex or the Church office.

### NEW NHIFP WISHLIST

Click here or go to the link below to check out the Pantry's new Amazon Wishlist -- an easy way to donate to NHIFP and be sure the donation is exactly what's needed. <https://tinyurl.com/yn54xrf3>

## Longest Night Service



7 pm wednesday  
december 20

Take time to remember loved ones who are no longer here on the longest day of the year during this quiet candlelight service.

## HOST A MEET & GREET



Interested in volunteering to host a Meet & Greet after one of the upcoming Sunday morning services? It isn't complicated and doesn't need to be anything fancy. If your family or club or group would consider hosting one of the open dates contact Alberto at [asigala480@gmail.com](mailto:asigala480@gmail.com) or 310-569-9908 to add your name to the list or answer your questions.



## MEN'S GROUP MEETING

meets online weekly at

### 7PM WEDNESDAYS

Interested in joining?

For Zoom info Email: [menocorner@gmail.com](mailto:menocorner@gmail.com)

### SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

*For today in the City of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Messiah, the Lord* — LUKE 2:11



## APPLY TO BE A 2024 PEACE INTERN!

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY JANUARY 31!**

Each year Disciples Peace Fellow selects three young adults (21-years-old or older) to serve as Peace Interns. This is a 12-week, paid internship (\$3,000 summer stipend) that will allow you to serve as an advocate for peace and justice in many different ways and in several different formats. The 2024 DPF Peace Internship will be a hybrid model again this summer. That means that Peace Interns will serve at in-person Disciples of Christ Church Camps AND they will have remote work weeks where they work on specific projects with Disciples Justice Ministries groups (like AllianceQ, Reconciliation Ministries, Green Chalice, and more) or inter-faith/ecumenical peace partners (like the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the InterReligious Task Force on Central America, and Blessed Tomorrow). If you are interested, please go to <https://www.disciplespeace.org/apply> or talk to Pastor Jonathan or Ben Bohren.



## *Communion Meditation* by Kevin Bailey, ELDER • on 10 December 2023

Part of my duties on Sunday mornings is preparing the communion trays. The current trays I believe have been used for the last 20 years. In the deacon room to the left as you approach the library, another set of trays sit rather ceremoniously. These trays were the ones used for many years prior. They serve as a reminder of all that shared communion at First Christian Church of North Hollywood over the years. The trays sit on the top shelf and I sense they have spiritual power. For years I thought they were donated by Ethel Bruce, Janet's mother. A few months ago, I mentioned to Janet that I keep the trays her mother donated clean. She told me they weren't donated by her mother; they were donated by Evelyn Briggs. Evelyn and Carvel Briggs were longtime members of

the church. Evelyn was church secretary from 1955 to sometime in the 1970's. Every couple of months I will clean those trays in remembrance of those who have faithfully provided service to our church.

Looking at those trays each Sunday I find my mind wondering how many times those trays have been served to the congregation with mixed feelings in their hearts. In times of joy such as today with the Children's pageant. In times of immense sadness, we pray for those with heavy hearts.

Part of the beauty of First Christian Church of North Hollywood is that Holy Communion is served each Sunday. We share communion; at that moment we share our faith. Our lives forever touch. All are welcome.

*Celebrating One Hundred Years:*  
**CHRISTMAS TREE LOTS PAST AND PRESENT**



At the December 1, 1948 FCCNH Board Meeting (while the church was still at the corner of Moorpark and Bakman), there appeared a small item under New Business: "The Boy Scouts would like to raise funds by selling Christmas trees at church, providing they [have] approval to (a) use the adjoining lot, (b) to be underwritten by the church for \$100, (c) to have sleeping quarters in the Church school." After some discussion, the request was passed by an apparently unanimous vote. Whether the venture was a success or failure is not known.

Thirty-four years later, in 1982, David Haskell appeared before the Church board with a dream that FCCNH would sponsor a Christmas tree lot, with most profits going to support children's charities. The board minutes for that year have not yet been unearthed in The Great 100th Anniversary FCCNH History Search. A brief, tantalizing mention does appear in Tommy Tomlinson's 1984 update to Dorothy Hall's 1964 church history: "Other notable events in 1982," he said, included "the organization of the first annual church Christmas Tree lot by David Haskell, which turned out to be a major source of funds for our outreach program."

Forty-one years later, in 2023, the FCCNH tree lot continues, and has even added to its original children's charities. As we emerge from our COVID-defined lives, however, our church's historically important programs are challenged in very fundamental ways. It takes many hands, feet, strong backs, good minds, and even stronger hearts to turn dreams and ideas into realities and move them forward.

The tree lot is no exception. With a goal of re-igniting the enthusiasm that has kept them going all these years, while not wearing out their man-and-woman-power, the leaders decided to be open only on weekends. Their willingness to change appears to be bringing results, and cautious optimism is growing. Perhaps most telling of all, in their first three weekends, they have sold all but 40 of their original shipment of 440 trees.

*\*If you would like to learn more about the children's charities that tree lot sales support, visit the lot next weekend before the trees are gone. The friendly people there will be happy to tell you about them, as well as to help you pick out a tree.*

– The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Team



# FLOWER DEDICATIONS

To order flowers to decorate the chancel on an upcoming Sunday, please fill out the following form and place in the offering box or drop at the church office with your check for \$40.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Available dates:

12/24	12/31	1/7	1/14	1/21	1/28
2/4	2/11	2/18	2/25	3/3	3/10

Floral Dedication:

(Please check one of the following and write the specifics of your dedication in the space provided below)

- In Honor of ...
- In Celebration of ...
- In Memory of ...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed for arrangement (\$40)  
 Arrangements are supplied by Floral Crush Studio.  
 Checks should be made payable to FCCNH.

DECEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> IS  
 INGATHERING SUNDAY



cutout  
 wallet reminder  
 this month

the pantry is in need of:



meals in a can  
 chili • ravioli • stews  
 non-condensed soups



LEFT TO RIGHT: Pastors Jonathan Hall,  
 Larry Keene, and Ben Bohren.



**WINTER CAMP****February 16-19, 2024**

Chi Rho &amp; CYF (Grades 6-12)

With this year's theme "Virtual Faith IRL" campers will learn how to activate their own faith in their everyday lives through games, meaningful worship, and group activities. The camp ministry team is working hard to create a program that will explore Disciples faith practices and equip young people with tools to strengthen their

faith in Jesus Christ.

Check in on Friday, February 16 at 7 pm. Check out on Monday, February 19 at 11 am.

**EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT** • Cost is \$200 before January 1. Registration fee is \$300 after January 1. Scholarships are available--please check with Pastor Tau if you need assistance.

**COUPON CODES** • Please remember that the coupon codes are CASE SENSITIVE and do not include spaces.

- If 100% will be paid by the congregation, please use FULLSCHOLARSHIP2024.
- If 50% will be paid by the congregation, please use CHURCHPAY2024.

Using these codes will allow Camping Ministries to track payments and dues.

**SAVE the DATES****ALL YOUTH SLEEPOVER**

Friday, December 15th - December 16th

**OPERATION SANTA CLAUS**

December 16th 7:30-9:30am @ FCCNH

**CHRISTMAS TREE LOT SALES**

FRI 4-8PM | SAT & SUN 10A-8P @ FCCNH

**MARY & JOSEPH • LIVE NATIVITY**

Sunday, Dec. 24th 5:00 - 5:30pm

**Six Month Leadership Training for High School Youth**

- Learn to lead in your local Church
- Develop skills for leading in the world
- Build relationships with mentors
- Connect with young leaders across the country



[www.YouthLeadershipSymposium.com](http://www.YouthLeadershipSymposium.com)



Mark those calendars, families - Our FCCNH Summer Camps for 2024 are back to give your kids fun and educational activities right here on campus

JUNE 10 - JUNE 14  
**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)**

JUNE 17 - JUNE 21  
**MUSICAL THEATRE**

JUNE 24 - JUNE 28  
**MARTIAL ARTS**

JULY 1 - JULY 5  
**COOKING**

JULY 8 - JULY 12  
**ART**

JULY 15 - JULY 19  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**

Don't forget Loch Leven Camps too! Located at the beautiful Loch Leven facility in the San Bernardino mountains.

JUNE 23 - JUNE 28  
**CYF CAMP (GRADES 9-12)**

JULY 7 - JULY 12  
**CHI RO (GRADES 6-8)**

JULY 21 - JULY 24  
**WEE CAMP  
(AGES 3 - KINDERGARTEN, WITH A PARENT)**

JULY 21 - JULY 24  
**MINI CAMP (GRADES 1-3)**

JULY 21 - JULY 26  
**JUNIOR CAMP (GRADES 4-5)**

Email [camps@fccnh.org](mailto:camps@fccnh.org) to be notified when registration opens, or for any questions!

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Morning Worship – 10:00 am

Live Nativity – 5:00 pm

Family Worship – 5:30 pm

Candlelight – 11:00 pm  
w/Chancel Choir



# W2W

**WOMEN *to* WOMEN**

**7:30pm FRIDAYS**

**NEWCOMERS WELCOME**

email for Zoom info

[W2W.FCCNH@gmail.com](mailto:W2W.FCCNH@gmail.com)

BY WAY OF REPORT

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023

Sunday Worship 10am	176
Youth Sunday AM	13
Sunday School	51
Wednesday Youth Group	11
Sunday Worship Donations	\$2,495.00
<b>SUNDAY GENERAL OFFERING</b>	<b>\$2,495.00</b>
<b>CREDIT CARD OFFERING 12/4/23 - 12/10/23</b>	
<b>GENERAL OFFERING</b>	<b>\$1,755.00</b>
Youth Programs	\$100.00
<hr/>	
<b>CUMULATIVE GIVING</b>	<b>\$4,250.00</b>

CHURCH STAFF

- Rev. Dr. Jonathan B. Hall  
SENIOR PASTOR
- Alfredo Gomez  
PASTOR, SPANISH SPEAKING CONGREGATION
- Jennifer Le'au  
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES
- Taulau Tupua  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR YOUTH AND MISSION
- Tyana Parr  
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S/YOUTH CHOIRS
- David Rigsby  
MUSIC DIRECTOR/ORGANIST
- Christine Karasseferian  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
- Gabriela Dorantes  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
- Glenda Morgan Brown  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
- Terri Burton  
CHURCH PUBLICATIONS
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- Elmer Maldonado  
BUILDING & GROUNDS SUPERINTENDENT
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- Amanda Sigala  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT OF CHRISTIAN NURSERY SCHOOL
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- Luis Oliart  
SECURITY

IN MEMORIAM

- Robert M. Bock  
SENIOR PASTOR
- Earle Immel  
MINISTER OF MUSIC EMERITUS
- Merle E. Fish, Jr.  
MINISTER EMERITUS



WAYS YOU CAN DONATE TO FCCNH

[Paypal@fccnh.org](mailto:Paypal@fccnh.org)

[Venmo@fccnh.org](mailto:Venmo@fccnh.org)

[Tithe.ly](https://tithely.com) · Zelle to offering@fccnh.org

On our website [www.fccnh.org](http://www.fccnh.org) or scan the code at right





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(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
4390 COLFAX AVENUE  
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91604 - 2898



## THINK GREEN! PLEASE RECYCLE!

**NOTE: If you would like to receive this newsletter via Email, which saves on printing/mailling costs and is better for the environment, please contact us. Annual subscription cost for first class mail version is \$24.**



### First Christian News

First Christian Church of North Hollywood  
818/763-8218 • FAX 818/763-8457  
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#### EMERITUS

Robert M. Bock	Mary Ann Steuterman
Billie Kline	Lillian Carlson
Heather Kenney	Margaret Defibaugh
Cathy Melendez	Fern Donald
Chuck Mont	Jean Johnson
Wanda Kanoy	Helen Scarna
Kay Smith	Betty Van Zanten
Shirley McClure	Deborah Wheeler
Virginia Stebbins	Cindy Kaller



The vine shall give its fruit,  
and the ground shall give its  
produce, and the heavens shall  
give their dew.  
And I will cause the remnant  
of this people to possess  
all these things.

*Zechariah 8:12, ESV*