



FirstChristianNews

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF NORTH HOLLYWOOD
A CONGREGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
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ALFREDO GOMEZ & LOYDI RIVAS GOMEZ, PASTORS, SPANISH SPEAKING CONGREGATION

Volume LXIII No. 73

November 18, 2020



Enter into His gates
with thanksgiving, and
into His courts with praise

PSALM 100:4

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY AT 10AM - PLUS GROUPS, STUDIES,
SPECIAL EVENTS, GAME NIGHTS AND MORE — WWW.FCCNH.ORG

LETTER TO THE FAMILY



Our good friend, The Rev. Dr. William “Bill” Thomas Jr. passed away Saturday evening after bravely battling cancer for a year. When word came to us from his dear friend Virginia Keene my first thoughts were the words of John Donne – “And therefore never send to ask for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.” Our entire denomination, and especially the clergy, have lost one of our greatest inspirations and most talented colleagues.

Bill was a Broadway singer, a TV and movie star, a most talented minister of music and choir director, a gifted organist and an outstanding director of music for several General Assemblies of our denomination. He was always drawn toward ministry and at the age of 16 served as the choir director and organist of his home church in Ohio. He attended Claremont School of Theology and earned his Master of Divinity and his Doctor of Ministry degrees. His gifts were so numerous that he was then asked to contribute to the seminary curriculum by teaching a course in worship.

Bill served in the music ministry of Church of the Valley for several years. Nearly a decade ago he accepted the call to become Pastor of White Chapel Christian Church in Burbank. His creative worship, his introduction of a Saturday evening service of worship and his Bible study class were some of the highlights of his ministry in Burbank.



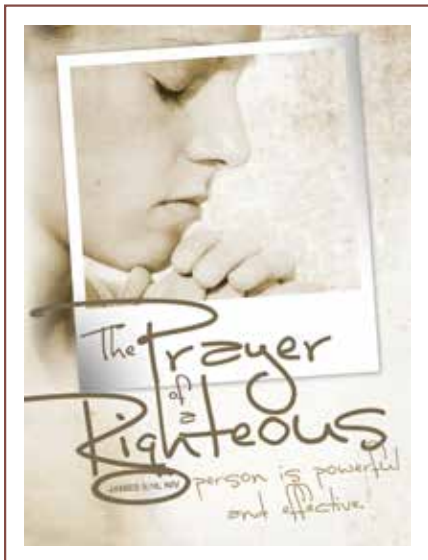
It has been my pleasure to work with Bill for many years in a variety of ways. Bill played both organ and piano for funerals and weddings at FCCNH whenever our staff musicians were unavailable. On occasion he also sang, which was a delightful treat for everyone present. Last year he played the piano and sang *Amazing Grace* at a memorial service in our sanctuary for the father-in-law of one of our staff. I don’t believe there was a dry eye in the room when the last note sounded. When I asked if he would record his rendition of such a well-known hymn he gave me that warm smile, for which he was so well known, and said he was just moved by the spirit and didn’t think he could duplicate it.

I always enjoyed working with him and especially the times when, following a service, we had time to talk and share regarding our lives and ministries. He was always interested in our sons and their lives and careers. And he was always extremely interested and supportive in what was happening in other congregations. He often expressed his love for our church family.

Bill was the epitome of a true Christian gentlemen. He was a careful listener, wise in his responses and always extremely sensitive to the feelings of others. To say he will be greatly missed would be the understatement of the year. Our condolences go to his husband Michael, who is Senior Pastor of Church of the Valley, to Bill’s family in Ohio and all his friends and colleagues worldwide. I was told there will be a small memorial service at this time with a celebration of Bill’s life one year from the day of his passing. I know that is a service many of us will want to attend.

I will remember Bill as a cherished friend, a brave fighter and lover of life and a most talented and inspirational colleague. The bells do truly toll of us as we say to Bill – “Safe travels, good friend. See you on the other side.”

Pergé!
Pastor Bob



PRAYER

is (still) always there



A Note to the Church Family from Your Prayer Groups

Prayer has always been a fundamental part of the glue binding us together as a church family. Unfortunately, the current realities of our worldwide health crisis mean that we cannot physically gather together for either worship or prayer in the church that is “home” to so many of us.

We in the Monday morning and Tuesday evening Prayer Groups want to reassure you that, despite temporarily suspending our weekly gatherings in the Chapel, individual prayers from and for you have continued all along. As part of our covenant, we both corporately lift

prayers when we are together, and lift them in our individual daily prayers throughout the week.

There Are Several Ways Your Prayers Can Reach Us

- Via direct email to one of our leaders:
Janet Bruce (grayladies@aol.com) • Eunice Cox (ec4prayer@aol.com) • Irion DeRouen (dashmom@aol.com)
- Via e-mail via the church website:
(go to www.fccnh.org, > Worship > Prayer Requests) or click here: www.fccnh.org/worship/prayer-requests/
- Via phone call to the church office: 818-763-8218
- If you are at the church, via prayer cards that are available at the Prayer Cabinet outside the Chapel. Fill one out and put it in the cabinet slot or drop it off in the church office.

Unless urgent, Janet will compile prayers submitted on Saturday and Sunday and for the weekly list. Midweek prayers will be sent out as received. We will continue to hold you close to our hearts throughout the coming days and weeks. 🌸



Find us on:
facebook®

Did you know FCCNH has a Facebook page? Please check it out and Like us on Facebook. It is a great way to keep up with what is going on in the life of the church.

www.facebook.com/pages/First-Christian-Church-of-North-Hollywood/111570318857728

“Just A Thought ...” by Rev. Louise Sloan Goben

Many of you recall the XPLOR program in which our church hosted young adult residents to our community. The program was hosted by the National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church. Members of our church made arrangements for an apartment for these young people to live in, set up internship sites, and they hosted dinner parties and other activities to introduce them to the Studio City and Los Angeles area. I served in the capacity of Spiritual Companion. My responsibility was to spend time each week with the group and together explore the dynamics of faith and of dislocation. I say “dislocation” because for some of these young folks, it was their first time living at a distance from family, friends, and familiar haunts. A major component of our time together was seeking to grow in meaningful ways as the residents explored the relationship between faith, compassion, and community engagement.

We participated in this program for three years, and the program continued for an additional four years, until the pandemic shuttered it, as COVID-19 has done to so many parts of our lives this past year. Last week I had the opportunity to meet with Ben Bohren and several Spiritual Companions from other locations that hosted the program. We were asked to share what had been meaningful about the program for ourselves and for the communities in which these young people lived and worked. Many of the Spiritual Companions are ministers. Others include a retired university professor, a social worker, a teacher and lay members of congregations.

Overwhelmingly, each of these folks spoke of how their lives had been enhanced by the experience of

growing together with the XPLOR residents. We are impacted by one another when we pray and worship together, when we examine our faith, or the faith of others in our community. We are challenged by one another’s assumptions or stereotypes of who we are. I fully admit, I had some trepidation that our final year of participating in the program included a gay man that identified as “it/they”, another man of Mexican descent from Brownsville, TX, and a young woman from Florida who admitted having a pretty conservative background. I came with assumptions about who these people may be, and they proved me totally wrong! They welcomed one another as they were, without judgement. I am grateful for the time I had sharing with each of them, and we continue as friends, and as brothers and sisters in faith to this day.

In his book, *Let Your Life Speak* Parker Palmer writes:

*As often happens on the spiritual journey, we have arrived at the heart of a Paradox: each time a door closes, the rest of the world opens up. All we need to do is stop pounding on the door that just closed, turn around – which puts the door behind us – and welcome the largeness of life that now lies open to our souls. The door that closed kept us from entering a room, but what now lies before us is the rest of reality. **

Life has a way of presenting us with opportunities to grow, and we never know from whom we are going to learn. Indeed, doors are always opening and closing, presenting us with a myriad of possibilities in life. If we keep our hearts and minds open to the moving of

"Just A Thought ..." continued

the Spirit in our lives, and in our world, we will have many wonderful surprises. Opportunity to grow is all around us as we share in love and generosity of heart.

Keep your heart open to the possibilities!

Pastor Louise

*Parker Palmer. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation.* Page 54

youthink



I greet you in the Wonderful Magnificent name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I have decided to dedicate the month of November as a Christian fellowship youth fun month. Each Friday in the month of November the youth will meet on Zoom for some fun interactive activities starting at 4pm (PT).

This Friday (11-20-20) our fun event will be Name That Letter. This game is pretty straightforward but supremely fun! The moderator (Me) will pick a random letter and our youth must type in the Zoom chat, the name of a famous person, a place, an animal, and a thing. The catch to the game is, each item must correspond with the letter chosen by the moderator. For example if "J" is the letter chosen by the moderator, a winning answer would look something like this:

1 - Jesus. 2 - Jungle. 3 - Jaguar. 4 - Jumpsuit.

This game will require wittiness, thinking quickly on your feet, and quick typing. This is going to be awesome! The winner will be mailed a prize!

I am looking forward to Friday and all the laughs, smiles, and love that will be displayed within our youth group.



REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY

For those of you who know someone serving in the armed forces, as well as people serving in other capacities, we want to lift them up in prayer... please let us know when they come home!

Chris Diaz • Joshua Bigbee • Steven Zaun

We also want to continue to pray for peace, for wisdom for the world's leaders, and for the people of all war-torn areas of our world.



With Love,
Jeremy Gillett

Director of Youth Ministries

NEWS FROM THE T4K TREE LOT

Dear Church Family,

The tree lot will open on November 27, the day after Thanksgiving. It's going to obviously look a little different this year but if you are willing to help, we will need your support.

We decided not to use the tent this year to avoid the close contact needed to raise it and take it down. Masks will be required for all. We will set up in the parking lot with a customer flow that will allow for appropriate distancing for both volunteers and customers. We got new credit card readers that process contactless payments including Apple Pay and Google Pay. Hand sanitizer, gloves, wipes, etc. will be readily available. Tree deliveries will be to doorsteps only. We will not have a physical sign up board obviously, so you can find our online sign-up at www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0a4dafa22a2f58-t4k2020 or you can just call ahead and check first if you find you are able to come out. The Youth Hut phone number is 818.985.7807. To volunteer go to. We really cannot accommodate walk-on volunteers.

The trees will be delivered all in one shot on either Monday, November 23rd or Tuesday the 24th. We will definitely need help unloading. Our order this year is 500 trees.

Per Pastor Bob's request, we will be leaving our children at home this season and ask that you do, too. Since we will not have volunteers under 18 years of age, we won't be able to provide community service hours for students.

We will not be sharing food so meal donations will have to look different. Probably money donations are the way to go for people interested in this type of support so that we can order individual items from restaurants. Separately packaged snacks would also be okay.

In the plus column, we will be blessed to have a dedicated volunteer full-time at the lot: Brad Bock! Brad has offered to come in from out of state to dedicate his time and energy to support this important ministry. He will be staying on-site in Matt and Vivian's Airstream, and a big shout out to them, too, for being so generous!

Please let us know if you have any questions. We have our Facebook page (Trees For Kids: F.C.C.N.H. Tree Lot) and Yelp page (Trees for Kids – FCCNH Tree Lot) active and our personal contact information is all the same. Hope to see you soon!

With love,

The Brooks and Vallero Families

2020
Trees for Kids



Buy a tree. Help a child.

OPENING NOV 27
11am - 7pm DAILY

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS
WILL BE OBSERVED**

TREES for KIDS is a non-profit, volunteer tree lot operated by First Christian Church of North Hollywood (Disciples of Christ) since 1982.



THANKSGIVING IN THE PARK

Do Jesus' work this holiday season for those less fortunate! The local homeless population has doubled in the past few years and with the COVID Pandemic they are really suffering. The Human Needs Committee is looking for help feeding the homeless of North Hollywood THIS SATURDAY, November 21 – the weekend before Thanksgiving. We plan to feed at least 100 people. We need volunteers to help pack the boxes as well as donations: financial, and food. We request that if you donate a turkey or ham that it be COOKED.

**Drop off the following prepared foods
THIS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21st
between 9:00 am and 10:30 am**

(If you can't drop off Saturday, Deborah will be at church Friday, November 20th.)
We will be doing "To Go Boxes" so we need the food at church early enough to pack.

WE STILL NEED

1 TURKEY (cooked and carved)
& **POTATO DISHES** (mashed/scalloped)

**Call Sharon Johnson at 818.414.0782 or Deborah Luster at 323.854.6707
so we can add your item to our list of donations.**



BABY GRAND PIANO FOR SALE

At the end of last year, FCCNH was gifted a beautiful baby grand piano. Unfortunately, space is so limited on our campus that it's impossible for us to showcase and use it in the way it deserves. We decided to offer it first to our church members before making it available to the general public. Here are the specs: 1980 Kawai Baby Grand Piano, GE1, Satin Ebony finish. Very good condition. \$5,500 obo. If interested contact the church office at 818.763.8218.



OPERATION *Santa Claus* 2020

Operation Santa Claus, our annual toy giveaway to underprivileged kids, will be a bit different this year due to COVID-19. Because of the virus, no toys will be given out. Instead, we will buy Target gift cards, swab them with alcohol and pass them out to youthful passengers inside cars that will line up and drive through our parking lot. To that end, any gift card worth around \$20 will be most welcome. The safest way to do that would be to send them to the church office. Another way to donate would be to send a check with the words *Operation Santa Claus* in the memo line. Hopefully, we'll be able to get back into regular operation by Christmas 2021. If you have any questions about our limited 2020 operation, call Ken Wilson 818.903.0850.



People are in need now more than ever.

Please join the
North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry
& its' partners as we come together
for a virtual Interfaith Thanksgiving
service in which we celebrate our ability
unite both now and into the future.

Wednesday, November 25th • 7:30 pm

Meeting ID: **844 4832 4286**
Passcode: **9Ksqh5**



In partnership with

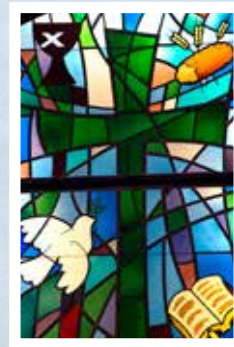
Adat Ari El
Anthology Church of Studio City
36th Church of Christ, Scientist
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day
Saints
Congregational Church of the Chimes
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Faith Presbyterian Church
First Christian Church of North Hollywood
First United Methodist Church of North
Hollywood
Metropolitan Community Church in the Valley
St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church
Temple Beth Hillel
Unitarian Universalist Church of Studio City



WOMEN *to* WOMEN
Online Women's Group
Meets Fridays via Zoom • 8:00 pm

Hosted by:
Sheryl Fitzpatrick, Jenny Harris
Trudie Kirkland, and Diane O'Brien

For Zoom info email:
W2W.FCCNH@gmail.com
[ALL CAPS - Case sensitive]



Join us for our Weekly Service of
Healing & Meditation
Wednesdays . 7:00 pm

For details on joining this Zoom service,
please email Louise@fccnh.org.



NORTH HOLLYWOOD INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY



Dear Pantry Supporters,

Thank you for your ongoing support. The Pantry is still in need of the following for those able to help:

HELP UNLOADING

We need strong bodies to help unloading the big truck at the Temple. Just a couple of hours of heavy work on **November 20th at 3:30pm** and **December 18th at 3:30pm**.

HELP TRANSPORTING NEEDED

Sign up at: www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0a4ba5a82fa5fa7-transporting

Our current food needs include **boxed cereal**, **canned fruit**, and **peanut butter** as well as the items on our Amazon wishlist at:

www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/l/3M15OOOZO59FV/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_2?encoding=UTF8&type=wishlist

HYGIENE KIT ITEMS NEEDED

toothpaste • toothbrushes • small deodorants • lip balm

Thank you!

Rae Eiklor, FCCNH Food Pantry Liaison



**WEEKLY MEN'S GROUP
MEETS SATURDAYS • 8:00 AM**

Interested?

For Zoom info contact:

MenOnCorner@gmail.com

BY WAY OF REPORT

WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2020_____

Total General Offering \$5,850.00

Ann & Maurice Davis Scholarship Fund \$10.00

CREDIT CARD OFFERINGS 11/11 - 11/17_____

General Offering \$3,550.67

Food Pantry \$100.00

Thanksgiving in the Park \$25.00



Did you know a percentage of your online purchases can be a donation to FCCNH?

Check out our website (www.fccnh.org) and click on the Donate or Vendor button at the top of the page and select “First Christian Church of North Hollywood” as your designated charity.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

FCCNH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS MIDNIGHT SUNDAY

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES VIA EMAIL TO: terrib@fccnh.org or terriburton@gmail.com

Articles can also be delivered to the office Monday thru Friday, 9am to 5pm.

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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

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Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Hebrews 12:28, ESV