

CONNECTION 2023

- MISSION STATEMENT -

To grow our faith in Christ and share it with others;
connect to God and to others through love;
create hope by serving others.

- VISION STATEMENT -

To be a faithful community called to
love, connect, equip, and serve.

- CORE VALUES -

Love
Inclusion
Creativity

CHURCH LEADERS & STAFF

MINISTERS	The Congregation
SENIOR PASTOR	Rev. Chad Thompson
Minister of Youth & Young Adults	Charlotte Thompson &Leah Torosian
Minister of Music	Jordan Williams
Organist	Anthony Imperatrice
Chair of the Congregation (2023)	Jane Ono
Chair of the Elders (2023)	Charlotte Thompson
Administrative Assistant	Cora Fluker-Pulley
Communications Coordinator	Cora Fluker-Pulley
Custodian	Josiah Thompson
Child Care	Tiffany Piper
Director of Children's Ministries	Kathleen Schales

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

We are in the season of Advent. Advent is the season of waiting and preparation for the birth of the Christ child. The word Advent derives from the Latin adventus, which means coming or arrival. Advent marks the beginning of the spiritual year, and it's observed the four Sundays before Christmas Day. Advent is an opportunity to prepare our hearts and to reflect on the birth of Jesus. During this season, we remember all that God has done for us and anticipate all that God is going to do. In Matthew 1:23 it says, "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means God is with Us." This is a message we should be reminding ourselves daily: God is with us.

When we face challenges, God is with us. When we lose a loved one, God is with us. When we lose a job, God is with us. When we have lost hope, God is with us. Wherever we are and wherever we go, God is with us. God knows and understands what we have gone through. What a message of hope that needs to be shared! We live in a world that we see people struggling with loss, depression, health issues, and pain. We have a message of hope: God is with us! The holidays are not always a joyful occasion. People are going through things. What if we shared the Good News that God is with us no matter what? What if we shared it like the Shepherds who spread the Good News shared with them by the angels, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior, which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all people" (Luke 2:10-14).

May we share the Good News that "Emmanuel, God is with us, through our journey of life. God is with us, from our greatest joys to our moments of pain. God is with us through it all. May our words and our actions reflect "God with us" to all we come into contact with. May they experience the "God who is with us," in all of life's moments, even the painful moments. And may they come to know the "God who is with us" the very same God who knows our pain, walks through the pain with us, and guides us to a better day.

Dear Church Family,

December 2023



We've all seen them, and we probably all think they're a little cliché, but you know those signs people put out on their front porch? "Welcome" "The Thompsons" or even "Happy Fall, Y'all!" I think their purpose is to give us a glimpse of what's to come. Will it be a warm welcome with hugs and laughter? Will there be a lot of love and a little chaos? Will everything be in shades of plaid with the scent of cinnamon lingering in the air? We have the same idea at church. We have the marquis on the front with different messages. "Focus on Bold Faith with Us" "Live a life of Thanksgiving" We want the people outside to know what the inside will be like. We want them to know that we are faithful and thankful to God. That we are loving, inclusive, and creative. We want them to feel welcome, like they belong. In most of Paul's letters in the Bible, he sends greetings to the churches. In 1st Corinthians 16:20, he says, "All the friends here say hello. Pass the greetings around with holy hugs! (The Message)" In Philippians, he says, "We greet you with the grace and peace that comes from God our Father and our Master, Jesus Christ. (The Message)" What would your sign say?

In Christ's Service, Charlotte & Leah, youth ministers

Young Adults and Chi Rho/CYF Meet every Sunday 7pm at the Thompson's

Board Meeting
First Christian Church of Selma
November 19, 2023

Present were Chad Thompson, Charlotte Thompson, Leah Torosian, Yolanda Gonzalez, Marsha Staley, Jane Ono, Jennifer Earle, Andrew Gutierrez, Michael Gutierrez, Jordan Williams, Kathleen Schales, and Teresa Keck.

Chairman Jane opened the meeting at 11:55 a.m. She lit the Christ candle, led the Board in reading the Mission and Vision statements and scriptures, then prayed and read a devotional.

MINUTES— October Minutes were approved on motion by Marsha, second by Charlotte.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

1. Communications— no report.
2. Education — working through Galatians, planning Advent stuff. Will have own communion starting in January.
3. Fellowship and Spiritual Growth — decorate for Christmas on Monday Nov. 27, 10 a.m.
4. Property — downstairs inside wall damaged; Jordan found solar powered outdoor lights online.
5. Stewardship and Outreach — Jordan reported Stewardship month was successful, pledges went up.
6. Technology— Michael and Joey will inventory our equipment.

FINANCE REPORT— Jennifer discussed printed report.

PASTOR'S REPORT—Chad reported several meetings, counseling sessions, upcoming baptisms and Men's and Prayer Breakfasts. He will take Fridays off.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS— meeting together.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Reinvigorating Church continues.
2. AB-206 —- need to finish training by end of year.
3. Lifegroups —- grief support, baptism, choir, food pantry, tech group.
4. Vote on ByLaws —- Chad sending them to Board Members.
5. Updating Policy and Procedures —- Chad working on them.
6. Plans for the Future —- task force not ready to present, still gathering information.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Nominating Committee —- Jessica, Cora, Clemente, Kathleen, Jane.
2. Christmas Eve Service — @ 9:00 p.m.

PRAYER CONCERNS— musicians

Chad closed with prayer at 1:02 p.m.

Next Board Meeting on December 17.

Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Keck, Board Secretary



PRAYER REQUESTS, PRAISES, & GRATITUDE

PRAYER CHAIN: Please send prayer requests and praises to **Jennifer Earle**,
559-896-2358 or jen4earle@gmail.com

PRAYER REQUESTS & GRATITUDE:

First Christian's Food Pantry serving people in need every month.

Please pray for Becky Moreno. She had fallen earlier in the month, and was disoriented, but she is now awake and knows her niece. They think she had a mild stroke, but seems to be making a full recovery back at home.

Please surround the family of Alejandra Tejada. Her father has passed away.

David White called to tell me he was in the ER for a possible pinched nerve that he got driving from San Francisco back to Nevada. They said he has DDD which is Degenerate DisOrder and it's the padding between the spine that wears out. So they sent him home with steroids to help with the pain and the next steps are his next checkup where they discuss changing his diet and adding exercises to his daily routine. He's very sad that his body is breaking down and needs a lot of prayer and support.

Heart Cardin is requesting prayers for their Grandpa (and his sister and brother-in-law): his nephew passed away from cancer.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elders Meeting -

Sunday, December 3rd after worship

Board Meeting -

Sunday, December 17th after worship

Men's Ministry Breakfast -

Saturday, December 16th @ 9am at Legend's

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP:

Esther Group -

Saturday, December 16th @ 9:30am at Liz Martinez's

Miriam Group -

Tuesday, December 12th @ 9:30am at McCoy's

- ◆ Christmas Card Banner: At the back of the church there are two green banners. The Christian Women's Fellowship has provided them as a place to put your Christmas card. There is also a container for you to put in a donation of the amount you would have spent if you sent Christmas cards to everyone in the congregation. Cora will put up any cards we receive in the office. So, take a look at the Christmas greeting from your church family and add one of your own.
- ◆ Poinsettias: There will be slips at the back of the church to list the folks you are honoring with a poinsettia. Bring a poinsettia, fill out a slip and the names of the people being honored will be printed on the bulletin for Christmas Sunday and in the January Caller.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday:Worship Service..... **10:30am**
Baptism Class **2pm**
Iglesia DC..... **4:30pm & 6pm**
Young Adult Group (Every Sunday) **7pm**

Monday:Iglesia DC Food Distribution..... **3pm**
Narcotics Anonymous..... **7pm**

Tuesday:(No activities).....

Wednesday: ...Choir Rehearsal (intermittently) **7pm**

Thursday:Bible Study..... **11am**
Iglesia DC..... **6pm**
Grief Support Group **7pm**

Friday:Iglesia DC Food Distribution..... **3pm**
Alcoholics Anonymous **7pm**

Saturday:Community Choir (intermittently) **10am**

GIVING TO FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Thank you for financially supporting God's work in the various ways below!

MAIL

2026 Arrants St., Selma, CA 93662

"BILL PAY"

through online banking

IN WORSHIP

There is an offering box in the Narthex when you come through the main entrance.

MOBILE APPS

(download one or both at the Google Play Store or the Apple Store)

(General Fund only →)



SCAN TO GIVE!

◀ ◀ ◀ PayPal

Givelify ▶ ▶ ▶



(← Can designate giving)

EXTRA WAYS TO SUPPORT THE CHURCH

Facebook Donate

www.facebook.com/selmadisciples

Donating Supplies


The church is always in need of stamps, printer paper, face masks, paper towels, and toilet paper.

Contact the church office to see what is currently needed.

Thank you for your help in making the administration ministry successful in its work.



DECEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Alcoholics Anonymous 7p	2 CCC Dress Rehearsal 10a ALMS/SHS Rehearsal 1pm-4pm ALMS/SHS Cookies and
3 Elders Meeting after worship Baptism Class 2p Young Adults/Chi Rho/CYF 7p	4 Narcotics Anonymous 7p	5	6 ALMS/SHS Choir 6:30p	7 Bible Study 10am Grief Support Group 7p	8 Alcoholics Anonymous 7p	9 CCC Dress Rehearsal 10a Happy Sound Music Studio Recital 2pm
10 CCC Concert 2:30p "Christmas Cantata" Young Adults/Chi Rho/CYF 7p	11 Extending Hands Ministries 8a Narcotics Anonymous 7p	12 Miriam Group @McCoy's 9:30a	13	14 Bible Study 10am Grief Support Group 7p	15 Selma Cares Food Distribution at SHS 3:30p Alcoholics Anonymous 7p Williams' 18th Annual Christmas Concert 7p	16 Selma Cares Food Distribution at SHS 8:30a Men's Breakfast @9:00a @Legends Esther Meeting 9:30a @Liz Martinez's
17 Board Meeting after worship Young Adults/Chi Rho/CYF 7p	18 Narcotics Anonymous 7p	19	20 Extending Hands Ministries 9a Christian Café	21 Bible Study 10am Service of the Longest Night 7p	22 Alcoholics Anonymous 7p	23
24 Christmas Eve Service 9p Young Adults/Chi Rho/CYF 7p	25 Narcotics Anonymous 7p	26	27	28 Bible Study 10am Grief Support Group 7p	29 Alcoholics Anonymous 7p	30 

December

- 04: Cassandra Cabral
Jeffrey & John Terry '14
- 06: Daniel Acevedo
- 11: Jimmy Jensen
Zoe Thompson
- 13: Jeffrey Terry
- 16: Gary & Judy Woods '72
Chad & Charlotte Thompson '00
- 20: Kadi Fitzgerald
- 24: Gary & Kathleen Schales '94



SERVING IN DECEMBER 2023



PRESIDER	SCRIPTURE
3. Janice Baker	Luke 1:46-55
10. John Terry	Matthew 6:19-24
17. Marsha Staley	John 3:16-17
24. Jane Ono	Matthew 22:34-40
31. Lisa Piper	Luke 2:25-38

COMMUNION & OFFERTORY ELDERS

3. Leah Torosian & Alan Langstraat
10. Jane Ono & Jennifer Earle
17. Jordan Williams & Charlotte Thompson
24. Charlotte Thompson & Alan Langstraat
31. Alan Langstraat & Jane Ono



JUNIOR WORSHIP TIME LEADERS

3. Kathleen Schales
10. TBA
17. TBA
24. TBA
31. TBA



NOVEMBER 2023 ATTENDANCE (IN-PERSON)

5. 42	12. 39	19. 40
26. 39		

ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE UPDATE



The Task Force had a meeting on November 7th to further discuss our options:

#1 - Stay: if we remodel and retrofit our building, what is the minimum amount of work we need to do in order for accessibility to be acceptable and how much will that cost? Our beautiful building is 107 years old, so if we want to stay, we will need to do a lot more than just the minimum to get the building up-to-date. Jordan will approach an architect. Tony will approach an electrician.

#2 - Relocate (Nest): **A)** The Methodist Church is open to having discussions with us to rent their space. They have given us a list of questions for us to discern as we explore what possible collaboration might look like for our congregations. **B)** Jordan visited the Seventh-day Adventist church and spoke with the Head Elder, who will take our request for discussion to the rest of the church leadership. **C)** Jennifer and Jordan have plans to visit the Church of Christ evening service and approach their elders for discussion. **D)** New Day Church is not willing to rent or sell their building (they just fully paid it off).

#3 - Relocate (Purchase): Two locations are on our radar: The old SHS Gym on Rose Avenue (Chad and Jordan to explore) and the space where Sandy's Furniture was located (Jennifer to check on availability and cost).

In addition, a few members of the Task Force met with **Rev. Rosario Ibarra**, a representative of the **Disciples Church Extension Fund**. She gave us a short presentation on the work it will take if we explore more in-depth relocation. Whatever decision is made, Rosario will be a valuable resource and guide for us as we continue on this journey.

Your Task Force:

Michael Gutierrez (chair), Rev. Chad Thompson, Christian Cabral, Jennifer Earle, Yolanda Gonzalez, Tony Imperatrice, Leah Torosian, Charlotte Thompson, Jordan Williams

*Selma's Christmas Parade,
Santa's Arrival & Holiday Street Faire*
SATURDAY
DECEMBER 2, 2023
LINCOLN PARK
5:30P.M. -8:00P.M.
PHOTOS WITH SANTA!
CHRISTMAS PARADE, CRAFTS & FOOD VENDORS
GIFT DRAWING FOR GIRLS AND BOYS!

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Call 559-289-7848
for more information
Selma District Chamber of Commerce

SELMA CARES TOY AND CANNED FOOD DRIVE

WE WILL BE HOLDING A DRIVE
BY DROP OFF AT LEGEND'S
TAP HOUSE & GRILL

DEC 3, 2023 FROM 12 PM TO 4 PM
AND
DEC 6, 2023 FROM 5 PM TO 7 PM

HELP BRING JOY TO
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
IN NEED



LEGEND'S WILL BE GIVING AWAY A FREE
KIDS TREE FOR ANYONE DONATING A
TOY OR 3 CANNED FOOD





SELMA COMMUNITY CHURCH CHOIR
presents the Christmas Cantata...

Images of Adoration

Reflections of Christ in Symbols of the Season

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023
2:30 PM

First Christian Church
2026 Arrants St., Selma, CA 93662

COCOA & COOKIES WITH
Santa
FOLLOWING EVENT
PHOTOS WITH SANTA - DONATIONS ONLY
(SUGGESTED: \$5)



Christmas & Advent 2023

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Selma, CA

The church has a lot going on in December! What a blessing!!!
Don't be overwhelmed—here's a handy flyer with everything.
Mark your calendars and invite your family and friends!



Sat., December 2, 5:00 PM

Church hosting SHS/ALMS Bands for cookies and hot chocolate
Contact Charlotte Thompson if you'd like to contribute items.

Wed., December 6, 6:30 PM

SHS/ALMS Choirs Winter Concert @ Church
Come support Jorge Flores (director), Jessica Williams (pianist), and students!

Sat., December 9, 2:00 PM

Happy Sound Music Winter Recital @ Church

Our neighbors across the street will be holding their annual Winter Recital with us.
They are inviting us and the public to support their vocal, guitar, and piano students!

Sun., December 10, 2:30 PM

Community Church Choir Christmas Cantata: Images of Adoration

(Reception to follow - "Cocoa and Cookies with Santa")

Join us for a special service with amazing music shared by the choir and guest instrumentalists! Then, stay for a bit in the Hospitality Lounge for a special reception with Santa!

(Photos with Santa for a small donation—suggested: \$5)

Fri., December 15, 7:00 PM

Jordan and Jessica Williams' 18th Annual Christmas Concert

A special annual event we are very happy to host! Come hear music shared by Jordan, Jessica, and friends of the church! A dinner (a Filipino meal!) will be held in the Fellowship Hall at 6:00 PM. RSVP with Jordan! Donations raised will benefit Music Ministry and Church Outreach.

Wed., December 20

Blankets needed for Christian Café!

They will be passed out to those who need a little more warmth this season! Contact Liz Martinez for more info.



Thurs., December 21, 7:00 PM

Service of the Longest Night

The holidays aren't always a happy season for everyone. This short, special service of music and prayer is designed to give hope and comfort to those who experience grief in December.

Sun., December 24, 9:00 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (with Communion)

Join us for a special evening service in collaboration with our neighbors from the First United Methodist Church!

THE CALLER

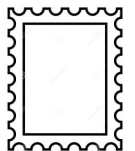
NEWSLETTER OF THE
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)



EDITION #LXVII
DECEMBER 2023

First Christian Church
2026 Arrants St.
Selma, CA 93662
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www.selmadisciples.com
www.facebook.com/selmadisciples
www.youtube.com/selmadisciples



TO:

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.
Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

The Caller
Your monthly newsletter