



THE LINK

SEP-OCT
2021
NEWSLETTER



We are excited to announce that Pastor Erwin Goodwin has been called as Commissioned Minister by the congregation of the First Christian Church in Lehigh Acres, Florida. We will miss Erwin and Randy greatly but are so happy for them and their new church. Erwin has

already begun serving in Lehigh Acres and his formal Installation as their minister by the Regional Minister of the Florida Disciples Regional Church is scheduled for Sunday September 26th. Pastor Ken and Bernadette will attend representing our church and bringing our best wishes for Erwin and his new church. Pastor Ken will be delivering the sermon for that Installation Service.

Erwin is currently attending Phillips Theological Seminary. He had been serving as our Ministry Associate, working with Pastor ken over the last couple of years. Before that our congregation had called him in 2018 as our Worship Minister. Erwin preached many sermons for us during times of transition when we were without a settled pastor. He has been a member of Central Christian Church since October 2016 and also was called as an Elder of our church and served in several Church Board roles, including Moderator and Treasurer.

We thank Erwin and Randy for their service and commitment to our congregation and the love they shared with all of us.

Weekly Ministries

Bible Study

- Mondays at 10 a.m.



Celebrate Recovery

- Mondays at 6:15 p.m.

NA Meeting

- Wednesdays at 6:30 pm

Choir Rehearsal

- Wednesdays at 6 p.m.



Prayer Team

- Thursdays at 4 p.m.

Movie Night

3rd Friday of
Each Month



Pastor's Pen

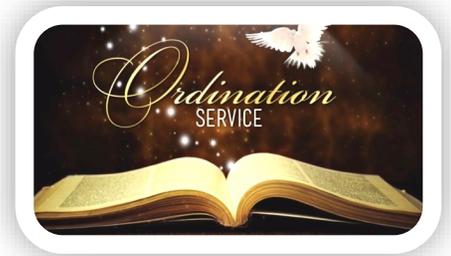
Ordination Announcement

The Commission on Ministry (COM) for the Florida Disciple Regional Church has unanimously recommended Pastor Ken Gregson for Ordination within the Christian Church Disciples of Christ. This humbling honor, responsibility and commitment is the next step in Pastor Ken's calling into ministry. The difference between being a commissioned minister and an ordained minister is significant.



1. Ordination is a commitment to a life-long call into ministry. With commissioned ministry, you have to get recommissioned every year, and many move back into secular careers after serving at one or two churches.
2. Ordination is valid within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) throughout the United States and Canada as well as with our affiliated denomination, the United Church of Christ. Commissioning is only valid at the one church where the minister is currently called.
3. Ordination requirements are significantly more involved than just being a commissioned minister. For example, Ordination requires more theological and pastoral training, such as the Clinical Pastoral Education program Pastor Ken is currently enrolled in. As well as greater vetting by the Commission on Ministry, for example, a more in-depth background check and psychological evaluation.

In addition, Pastor Ken had to update his growth and development on the 16 competencies and 10 qualifications for being a minister, as outlined by the COM. He also had to write extensive theological papers explaining things like his Theological Basis for Ministry, his Practice of Ministry and his Personal Readiness. We've included excerpts from the Ordination Papers Pastor Ken had to write to prepare for his final ordination interview.



Theological Basis for Ministry

My understanding of faith keeps evolving as does my understanding of God. I am more aligned with James' teaching on this matter than Paul's, although I also do not see them as that different. *"Show me your faith apart from your works, and I, by my works, will show you my faith"* (James 4:18b). *"For in Christ Jesus, ...; the only thing that counts is faith working through love"* (Galatians 5:6b). And 1 John 3:18, *"Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."* Faith IS doing.

Various passages from Isaiah have had a profound impact on my theology, for example, Isaiah 1:11-17 which speaks about the meaninglessness of religious rituals if there is no presence of actions for those who need help. Isaiah uses strong action words; *seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow, seek, rescue, defend, plead*. It is not just preaching about faith that God wants, God wants action from the faithful. Specifically, action for the ones who need it the most.

Another influential Scripture for my theology is Isaiah 56:1-8 where the Lord tells Israel that God is open and available and invites all people, including eunuchs and foreigners, not just those who consider themselves "the people of God." The Lord will gather the outcasts of Israel and it is our job to gather the outcast of Christianity and make them feel invited and welcome and at home with faith in God.

Pastor's Pen... continued

My lived experiences, along with those of whom I now serve, have led me to feel more aligned with Liberation theology than any other interpretation of God's will for humanity. Using John Wesley's Quadrilateral in determining how we understand and relate to God and God's will, I value lived experience to interpret Scripture. God first interacted with humanity, long before any Scripture was written. Likewise, faith in Christ and following the Way of Jesus happened and grew long before the "New Testament" was canonized. Humanity's lived experience is the primary lens with which I interpret Scripture. Likewise, I also place a high value on reason, science, and our God given ability to use our minds to make sense of the realities of the physical universe as well as interpreting the divine and spiritual realms.

One last word about my approach to Scripture. While each book must stand on its own and we should interpret the Hebrew Scriptures first and foremost on their own merit without influence from the New Testament, I believe it is critical to also interpret the canon as a whole.

In my personal studies, my sermons, and Bible studies, I constantly look for, and include reinforcement of my interpretations from multiple Biblical, as well as extra-biblical sources.

Practice of Ministry

We do ministry together and more for others not in our congregation than for ourselves. Together we discerned great need for spiritual care among those in our community with developmental, intellectual, and mental health challenges. Having several members in recovery from various addictions, obsessions, and similar life challenges, we expanded our ministry to those in our community trying to recover from hurts, habits and hang-ups, through Celebrate Recovery and partnerships with Narcotics Anonymous. Our most recently called Elder, came to us through our partnership with Downtown Ministries as a recipient of our services to the homeless.

Our Elders include members with autism, recovering addicts, persons who've personally experienced homelessness and from the LGBTQ+ community. We live out the identity of the Disciples of Christ and welcome all persons to the table of Christ's communion and to full life and leadership of the Christian Church.

Personal Readiness

For me, ordination is making a life-long commitment to God's calling for my life. The past two years at Central Christian Church Bradenton has affirmed and confirmed God's calling as well as God's equipping me for that service. God continues to equip me.

For example, currently I am going through Clinical Pastoral Education and receiving some of my applied hours by volunteering as a chaplain at Manatee Springs Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Being part of fulfilling the spiritual needs of people who have been isolated for the better part of a year and a half has been extremely personally rewarding and revealing. There was one woman who felt that she was there against her will and was extremely vocal and angry about it. She had alienated much of the staff and her fellow residents, leaving her even more isolated and angry. After a few conversations, she joined a small group Bible study we had started there. Afterwards she played "*There's Something About that Name*" beautifully on a piano in the activity room where we were studying. Several other residents clapped, and a few went up to introduce themselves to her. The smile on her face told me I was right where I was supposed to be - doing what God called me to do.

Introducing: The Stevens Family!

We are so pleased to have Doug, Cindy and Colton Stevens joining us for worship and various ministries of the church like Movie Night. Doug and Cindy have lived in the area for many years and were familiar with some of our members because Doug is Christine Steven's brother and Eric Garvin's uncle. Over the last few months they have been joining us more frequently because the amount of gratitude felt in the church and with the church members is something they have been searching for in a church family. It is so great adding another young family to our church family. We love Colton's energy and enthusiasm! Both Cindy and Doug are quick to pitch in and help out when we have a community event like our outdoor barbeques.



Please join us in welcoming them to our church family!

SATURDAY - OCTOBER 30TH - 6-8 PM



UPCOMING EVENTS:



Men's Retreat - September 17th - 19th

Men's Retreat is planned for Friday, Sept. 17 - 6 p.m. through Sunday, September 19th - 11:30 a.m. Cost is: \$110 - 50% being paid by church and includes all meals & lodging. Please contact Rick Session if you are interested for more details.



In partnership with



4304 32nd ST W
Bradenton, FL 34219
<https://www.cccbradenton.org/>
941-748-3130

Monthly Movie Night



Central
Christian
Community
Services

Joyful Friends and family

- Autism spectrum
- Down syndrome
- Intellectual / developmental & physical differences

Sept 17th
6:15 PM
+ It's FREE

Where EveryONE is Welcome



A safe place where you can be yourself – talking, walking around, making noise, etc. all are okay.

Sept Servant's Schedule

SUNDAY - 9/5

1st Scripture: A.J. Stevens

2nd Scripture: Wendy Vanlanot

Elder: Sue Fitzgerald

Deacons: Lesa Canterbury & Terrie Frazier

Greeter: Wendy Vanlanot

SUNDAY - 9/12

1st Scripture: Dave Gregson

2nd Scripture: Terrie Zieber

Elder: Anita Haisch

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Billie Laird

SUNDAY - 9/19

1st Scripture: Barbara Allender

2nd Scripture: Rick Session

Elder: Barb Abbring

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Terrie Frazier

Greeter: Sherri Lee

SUNDAY - 9/26

1st Scripture: Sue Fitzgerald

2nd Scripture: Anita Haisch

Elder: Wendy Vanlanot

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Wendy Vanlanot



Oct Servant's Schedule

SUNDAY - 10/3

1st Scripture: Dave Neas

2nd Scripture: Micki Baker

Elder: Rick Session

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Wendy Vanlanot

SUNDAY - 10/10

1st Scripture: Lynn Wolske

2nd Scripture: Bernadette Gregson

Elder: Anita Haisch

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Billie Laird

SUNDAY - 10/17

1st Scripture: Tammy Jacobs

2nd Scripture: Rick Session

Elder: Sue Fitzgerald

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Terrie Frazier

Greeter: Sherri Lee

SUNDAY - 10/24

1st Scripture: Barry Allender

2nd Scripture: Sherri Lee

Elder: Barb Abbring

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Wendy Vanlanot

SUNDAY - 10/31

1st Scripture: Billie Laird

2nd Scripture: Cindy Stevens

Elder: Wendy Vanlanot

Deacon: Lesa Canterbury & Billie Laird

Greeter: Wendy Vanlanot

SEPTEMBER



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 LABOR DAY CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED!	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 CAT LEWIS BIRTHDAY MOVIE NIGHT MEN'S RETREAT →	18
19 ← MEN'S RETREAT	20	21 AIMEE PRATT BIRTHDAY	22	23	24 TODD BROWNFIELD BIRTHDAY	25
26	27 SUSAN MORGAN BIRTHDAY	28	29	30		



OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4 JAMIE MCPHERSON BIRTHDAY	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 BARB ABBRING BIRTHDAY	12	13 BILLIE JO LAIRD BIRTHDAY	14	15 MOVIE NIGHT	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 MICKI BAKER BIRTHDAY	27	28	29	30 TRUNK N TREAT 6-8PM

31

