



FIRST CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

WELCOME to First Christian Assembly, an independent church whose mission is articulated by Jesus in Mark 16:15 when he said "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature". Following this great commission, First Christian Assembly preaches and teaches the gospel of Jesus Christ. In so doing, we trust that God, working through His Holy Spirit will draw souls to salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord.

VIRGIN BIRTH

The doctrine of the virgin birth is crucially important (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:27, 34). First, let's look at how Scripture describes the event. In response to Mary's question, "How will this be?" (Luke 1:34), Gabriel says, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35). The angel encourages Joseph to not fear marrying Mary with these words: "What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:20). Matthew states that the virgin "was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18). Galatians 4:4 also teaches the Virgin Birth: "God sent His Son, born of a woman."

From these passages, it is certainly clear that Jesus' birth was the result of the Holy Spirit working within Mary's body. The immaterial (the Spirit) and the material (Mary's womb) were both involved. Mary, of course, could not impregnate herself, and in that sense she was simply a "vessel." Only God could perform the miracle of the Incarnation.

However, denying a physical connection between Mary and Jesus would imply that Jesus was not truly human. Scripture teaches that Jesus was fully human, with a physical body like ours. This He received from Mary. At the same time, Jesus was fully God, with an eternal, sinless nature (John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14-17.)

Jesus was not born in sin; that is, He had no sin nature (Hebrews 7:26). It would seem that the sin nature is passed down from generation to generation through the father (Romans 5:12, 17, 19). The Virgin Birth circumvented the transmission of the sin nature and allowed the eternal God to become a perfect man.

Thereby, Jesus was able to be the perfect sacrifice, the Lamb of God, who bore our sin upon the cross satisfying the righteous requirement of God, so that all who in faith receive His finished work would be saved. (2 Corinthians 5:21) (John 3:16)

Ministry Highlights

Announcements:

- ⇒ Philadelphia Access Center – FUNDRAISING DRIVE - A corporate sponsor will match every donation dollar for dollar through December 31.
- ⇒ All audios of the Missions Conference are on the fcaphila.org website.

Missionaries – John Koehler

Dear friends,

This is one of the more difficult newsletters I have had to write. Many of you probably saw on the news that there was another incident in Afghanistan last Saturday. But for me it was not just another incident of violence in a far off country. For me, the murder by the Taliban of Werner Groenewald and his son and daughter were the death of three friends and the death of the leader of the organization I was going to be joining and partnering with in January...

I recalled Werner's words when days after the death of three missionaries last April, he said that the appropriate response to tragedy was worship. Not worship for the sake of worship, but worship because we know that the cross on which Jesus died says that our God does not prevent evil but in His love overcomes it and redeems it. It was not easy, but as I thought of that, I worshipped with all of my heart and sang of His redeeming powerful love.

I know this season of Christmas was in the original story, a story of Hope birthed amongst great upheaval. I am trusting that during this season of upheaval the radical grace, love and hope of our Savior will be more than enough to overcome the evil of this age.

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 (PAC) Philadelphia Access Center, 1832 S. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148

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The Philadelphia Access Center is a ministry of First Christian Assembly. Our mission is *revealing Christ through compassionate service*. Services available at PAC include social services information and referrals, biblical counseling, support groups, volunteer training, and community outreach. All services are free of charge and available to anyone. To learn more, visit us in person (across the street from FCA) or online at www.philaccess.org or www.facebook.com/philaccess.

WEEKLY SERVICES /MEETINGS

	FCA	PAC
Sunday	9:45 AM <i>Bible Study</i> 11:00 AM <i>Worship Service & Children's Sunday School</i>	
Monday		7:00 PM <i>Stepping Stones</i>
Tuesday	6:30 PM <i>Prayer (Sanctuary)</i> 7:00 PM <i>Worship (Sanctuary)</i>	
Wednesday	6:30 PM <i>Men's Fraternity (on hiatus)</i>	1:00 PM <i>Women at the Well</i> 1:00 PM <i>Coram Deo</i>
Thursday		6:00 PM <i>Prayer Service</i> 7:00 PM <i>Bible Study</i>
Friday		7:00 PM <i>Right Path</i>

- *Coram Deo*: A men's Bible study and Christian fellowship.
- *Right Path*: A Christ centered support and recovery group for people whose lives have been affected by drug and alcohol addiction. In a warm and friendly atmosphere, we provide loving support and fellowship; in genuine confidential sharing, coupled with a Biblical twelve step model of recovery.
- *Stepping Stones*: A Christ centered support group for men and women impacted by a loved one's addiction. In a warm and friendly atmosphere, we provide loving support, fellowship, confidential sharing, and intercessory prayer.
- *Women at the Well*: This group is Biblically based and promotes hope, healing, and fellowship for women impacted and struggling with brokenness.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Ministries (present and future) at First Christian Assembly and the Philadelphia Access Center
- Christians around the world being persecuted for their faith.
- Our supported missionaries
- For our Pastor and his family.

This and That

“Salvation is worth working for. It is worth a man's going round the world on his hands and knees, climbing its mountains, crossing its valleys, swimming its rivers, going through all manner of hardship in order to attain it. But we do not get it in that way. It is to him who believes.”

~ Dwight L. Moody, preacher, evangelist, Christian educator