



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.

HYPOCRISY

"Hypocrisy" refers to the act of claiming to believe something but acting in a different manner. The word is derived from the Greek term for "actor"—literally, "one who wears a mask"—in other words, someone who pretends to be what he is not.

The Bible calls hypocrisy a sin. There are two forms hypocrisy can take: that of professing belief in something and then acting in a manner contrary to that belief, and that of looking down on others when we ourselves are flawed.

The prophet Isaiah condemned the hypocrisy of his day: "The Lord says, 'These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men'" (Is 29:13). Centuries later, Jesus quoted this verse, aiming the same condemnation at the religious leaders of His day (Matt 15:8-9).

During Jesus' earthly ministry, He had many run-ins with these religious leaders, the Pharisees. These men were well versed in the Scriptures and zealous about following every letter of the Law (Acts 26:5). However, in adhering to the letter of the Law, they actively sought loopholes that allowed them to violate the spirit of the Law. Also, they displayed a lack of compassion toward their fellow man and were often overly demonstrative of their so-called spirituality in order to garner praise (Matt 23:5-7; Luke 18:11). Jesus denounced their behavior in no uncertain terms, pointing out that "justice, mercy, and faithfulness" are more important than pursuing a perfection based on faulty standards (Matt 23:23). Jesus made it clear that the problem was not with the Law but the way in which the Pharisees implemented it (Matt 23:2-3).

It must be noted that hypocrisy is not the same as taking a stand against sin. For example, it is not hypocrisy to teach that drunkenness is a sin, *unless* the one teaching against drunkenness gets drunk every weekend—that would be hypocrisy.

As children of God, we are called to strive for holiness (1 Peter 1:16). We are to "hate what is evil" and "cling to what is good" (Rom 12:9). We should never imply an acceptance of sin, especially in our own lives. All we do should be consistent with what we believe and who we are in Christ. Play-acting is meant for the stage, not for real life.

Ministry Highlights

Announcements:

- Six Weeks of Prayer began the week of Aug. 2. Please see FCA's website for details & prayer lists. (www.fcaphila.org)
- Sunday morning and Thursday night Bible studies will resume on 9/10 and 9/13.
- **SAVE THE DATE: Pray America event.** September 19, 9 AM to Noon, Independence Mall area.

Missionaries

John & Joy Cutts, Indonesia

Little did I know that within a couple of days, I would see first-hand a glimpse of the kind of trauma these families face back in their villages. Two of the couples at the seminar told of being attacked, their belongings destroyed, and their families chased from their homes. Their church had also been taken over by a cult or splinter group and now their four separate attempts to build a new church had each ended with the destruction of the structures. They invited me to trek to their village, several hours away, and see first-hand the site and their preparations to start building their church a FIFTH time!! As I walked into the village that morning, tears were cascading down many of the faces of the crowd that was beginning to gather. It was a miracle I had even made it to the village as I had a ripped hamstring from playing soccer a day earlier. The most astounding miracle was to witness God's gift of faith and endurance evidenced by the tears of joy on the faces of so many who had endured personal loss and trauma. We stood together on a little knoll overlooking their "ground zero" site of destruction and together, with trembling voices, prayed a bold prayer for another place in which to worship peacefully and in unity, knowing they would all make personal sacrifices in the months ahead to bring it to fruition. My words of encouragement in parting sounded pretty wimpy when considering the caliber of character and endurance of these giants of faith.

To be continued...

(FCA) First Christian Assembly, 1900 S. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148
 (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

From: Voice of the Martyrs

Jul. 17, 2015 | Egypt: Pray for Family of Soldier Possibly Killed by Fellow Soldiers

The family of Bahaa Gamal Mikhael, a soldier in the Egyptian Army, recently received news that their son had committed suicide. The family strongly doubts the alleged cause of death, as it's unlikely he would have been able to shoot himself in the heart twice. The family believes Bahaa's outspoken Christian faith motivated someone to kill him. A VOM worker said Christian soldiers in the Egyptian Army have previously been killed by fellow soldiers for refusing to convert to Islam.