



# 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.*

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## Maranatha

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"*Maranatha* is an Aramaic word that means "the Lord is coming" or "come, O Lord." The early church faced much persecution, and life for a Christian under Roman rule was not easy. The Romans required everyone to declare that Caesar was god. The early Christians knew that there is only one God and one Lord—Jesus Christ—and in all good conscience they could not call Caesar "Lord," so the Romans looked upon them as traitors, persecuted them, and put them to death.

Living under those adverse conditions, the believers' morale was lifted by the hope of the coming of the Lord. "*Maranatha!*" became the common greeting of the oppressed believers, replacing the Jewish greeting *shalom* ("peace"). The followers of Jesus knew there would be no peace because Jesus had told them so ([Matt 10:34](#); [Luke 12:51](#)). But they also knew the Lord would be returning to set up His kingdom, and from that truth they drew great comfort. They were constantly reminding and being reminded that the Lord is coming ([Luke 21:28](#); [Rev 22:12](#)). Jesus taught several parables on this same theme of watching and waiting and being prepared for His return ([Matt 25:1-13](#); [Luke 12:35-40](#)).

Today, believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ live our lives in the light of the knowledge that He can come at any time. We are to be ready when the call comes. Every day we should expect Him to come, and every day we should long for Him to come. *Maranatha* reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Spirit. To dwell on material things is to be in constant mental turmoil. Looking down, we see the earth; looking around, we see earthly things. But looking up, we see the hope of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To those who are discouraged today, *Maranatha!* To those who are worried today, *Maranatha!* To those who are filled with anxiety over the problems they are facing, *Maranatha!* Our Lord is coming

## Missionary Highlights

### Lois and Neal - PNG

One of the security guards on the adjacent compound has a wonderful testimony as to how God delivered him from a wicked life. He now is seeking to serve the Lord and recently took in a street kid. His lives outside Mount Hagen and has gardens. The boy was discovered by a missionary in town and now he has a home.

Naison, who was badly beaten up across the street, has been improving, but today is expected to have surgery on her head. She does not have strength or relief from the dizziness. I have visited her several times.

During this week's hospital outreach, Lillian and I came across a small boy who had been savagely attacked by a security guard dog at a mine in Enga Province. Both his arms were bandaged all the way up and his head also was bandaged on top. His parents kept saying over and over to me that is was a dog of a white man. I told them I had been bitten by a PNG dog. So sad for the boy. I asked if the dog owner knew of the attack and they said he did. I do not trust dogs here. Fortunately up here there is no rabies.

In the hospital we also came across an elderly man with two rods in his leg. He could not speak Tok Pisin or English, but fortunately he spoke Lillian's mother tongue. He asked her to pray with him, which she did. He said no one has been visiting him. I went back the next day with some food for him, but he and his bed were not there, only his personal belongings. The staff member did not know where he was, maybe in surgery.

The election nominations took place yesterday and I was told town was full of vehicles and people, carrying knives and so on. There is real animosity towards the man who has been in charge of Mount Hagen as he has stolen money and paid out tons of money in bribes. He also has some legal troubles with the national government involving accusations of having stolen some millions of kina. So of course he is running. Publizing the election, vehicles blasting music and talk go down our street now.

This week the children in the primary school across the street have been discharged early each day as there is no town water. This is so strange as we have had rain every afternoon and night. Of course, that means the hospital has no water as well. I was told water has been turned off as some group wants compensation. We have two water tanks so we are ok for now. The other problem is that the water system has antiquated equipment that has not been properly maintained and replaced as needed. Independence is fine, but the aftermath of winning it are situations like this. Count it all joy. Lois

May 7, 2017

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**Philadelphia Access Center,** 1832 S. 11<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.philaccess.org) or [www.facebook.com/philaccess](http://www.facebook.com/philaccess).

## **WEEKLY SERVICES /MEETINGS**

	<b>Meets at FCA</b>	<b>Meets at PAC</b>
Sunday	9:45 AM <i>Bible Study</i> 10:00 AM <i>South Jersey Worship Service</i> 11:00 AM <i>Phila Worship Service &amp; 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 (Fellowship area)</i>	
Wednesday		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 (on a hiatus)</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 at First Christian (Phila.& NJ) and the Philadelphia Access Center
- Christians around the world being persecuted for their faith
- Our supported missionaries
- For our Pastor and his family
- Paula Grazulis

The apostolic church thought more about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ than about death and heaven. The early Christians were looking, not for a cleft in the ground called a grave but for a cleavage in the sky called Glory. --Alexander MacLaren (11 February 1826 – 5 May 1910)