



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.

Thanksgiving

The Bible is filled with commands to give thanks to God ([Ps 106:1](#); [107:1](#); [118:1](#); [1 Chron 16:34](#); [1 Thess 5:18](#)). Most verses go on to list reasons why we should thank Him, such as "His love endures forever" ([Ps 136:3](#)), "He is good" ([Ps 118:29](#)), and "His mercy is everlasting" ([Ps 100:5](#)). Thanksgiving and praise always go together. We cannot adequately praise and [worship](#) God without also being thankful.

Feeling and expressing appreciation is good for us. Like any wise father, God wants us to learn to be thankful for all the gifts He has given us ([Jas 1:17](#)). It is in our best interest to be reminded that everything we have is a gift from Him. Without gratefulness, we become arrogant and self-centered. We begin to believe that we have achieved everything on our own. Thankfulness keeps our hearts in right relationship to the Giver of all good gifts.

Giving thanks also reminds us of how much we do have. Human beings are prone to covetousness. We tend to focus on what we *don't* have. By giving thanks continually we are reminded of how much we *do* have. When we focus on blessings rather than wants, we are happier. When we start thanking God for the things we usually take for granted, our perspective changes. We realize that we could not even exist without the merciful blessings of God.

[1 Thess 5:18](#) says, "In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." We are to be thankful not only for the things we like, but for the circumstances we don't like. When we purpose to thank God for everything that He allows to come into our lives, we keep bitterness at bay. We cannot be both thankful and bitter at the same time. We thank Him for His promise that "all things will work together for the good, to those who love God and are called according to His purpose" ([Rom 8:28](#)).

We can have thankful hearts toward God even when we do not feel thankful for the circumstance. We can grieve and still be thankful. We can hurt and still be thankful. We can be angry at sin and still be thankful toward God. That is what the Bible calls a "sacrifice of praise" ([Heb 13:15](#)). Giving thanks to God keeps our hearts in right relationship with Him and saves us from a host of harmful emotions and attitudes that will rob us of the peace God wants us to experience ([Phil 4:6-7](#)).

Missionary Update PNG

This morning on the radio news, I heard the Prime Minister had issued a statement opposing witchcraft (sanguma) practiced here in PNG. He said this is a Christian country and sanguma has no place here. He made reference to the torture of a 6 year old girl in Enga Province who has been accused of witchcraft and tortured.

Well, I saw this girl here in Mount Hagen. She had been rescued by Anton Lutz, the Lutheran missionary. Apparently her mother had been tortured and killed some years ago due to being accused of witchcraft. A relative had been looking after the girl, but the torturers seized her and blocked the relative from having any outside contact. I was told the child had been cut by a knife all down her back. Anton is working on getting her to Port Moresby and is getting statements that the child has been relinquished to him to do so. Prayerfully a new home will be located for her.

Please continue to pray for Anton Lutz. He still does not have his visa straight. His mother is still being blocked from being able to return to PNG. His deceased father had been a doctor here and had founded a hospital. The list of accomplishments here for Anton is long. He is a champion in fighting sanguma.

There was another rock fight on our street the other night. An MAF employee was injured when a rock was thrown that landed on his jaw. Fortunately, the jaw bone was not broken. The fighters are from Enga Province and the employee is from Mount Hagen. Last night his wantoks (members of his clan) came along with an MAF employee who is a community leader here, and they hammered out terms of compensation. The guilty will need to come up with K10,000 and 6 pigs as this is the 6th time that compound has been attacked. If they do not do so, their houses will be burned down.

The guilty did not know what MAF was about and they thought that it was ok to fight us as we are foreigners and have money. During the negotiations it was explained to them that MAF is a mission that flies into remote areas and does medical evacuations and provides transportation and so on. Pilots and employees sleep on the MAF compounds and if they are out of commission, then their service is not available to remote isolated areas. Tomorrow I will be going to the prison here in town. I expect some of the fighters will be among those behind bars. Interesting.

I did get a chance to speak at the church I attend down the street and challenged those attending to get involved in prison outreach. The prison chaplain is part of this church and he is starting an outreach to the police. Lois

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First Christian So Jersey,	123 Egg Harbor Rd. Sewell NJ 08080	
Philadelphia Access Center,	1832 S. 11 th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148	215-389-1985

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

	Meets at FCA	Meets at PAC
Sunday	9:45 AM <i>Bible Study – Phila -location</i> 10:00 AM <i>South Jersey Worship Service</i> 11:00 AM <i>Phila Location Worship Service</i> & <i>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
- Operation Christmas Child

"We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction." – Harry Ironside