



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.

Knowing Jesus

Adoring fans of movie, TV, music, or sports stars buy thousands of dollars' worth of information, photos, and juicy tidbits. After poring over such material, the fans feel as if they really know their heroes. But do they? They may know certain facts about their chosen hero. They may be able to cite birth date, favorite color, and childhood pets, but, does the fan really know them? Jesus sponded to this question in [Matt 7:21-23](#): "*Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"*

There were people in Jesus' day who thought they were friends of His because they knew the Law, and listened to His teaching. They followed Him, applauded the miracles, and liked some of what He said. But Jesus calls them "*evildoers*" and states, "*I never knew you.*"

Today there are thousands who know *about* Jesus, they know some facts about Him, commit Bible verses to memory, and perhaps attend church regularly. They hold knowledge in their heads without allowing the truth to penetrate their hearts. Jesus explained the problem: "*These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules*" ([Matt 15:8-9](#)).

We easily substitute religion for a real relationship with Jesus. We often think that, if we are doing "Christian things," that's all that counts. We can appreciate the facts of Jesus' death and resurrection, but until we have made Him our Lord, the facts do us no good ([John 3:16-18](#); [Acts 10:43](#); [Rom 10:9](#)). There is a difference between intellectual assent and saving faith. Knowing Jesus means we have accepted His sacrifice on our behalf ([2 Cor 5:21](#)). We ask Him to be the Lord of our lives ([John 1:12](#); [Acts 2:21](#)). We identify with Him in His death and consider our old selves to have died with Him ([Col 3:3](#); [Rom 6:2, 5](#); [Gal 6:14; 2:20](#)). We accept His forgiveness and cleansing from sin and seek to know Him in intimate fellowship through His [Holy Spirit](#) ([John 17:3](#); [Phil 3:10](#); [1 John 2:27](#)).

When we repent of our sin and surrender our lives to Him, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit ([Acts 2:38](#); [John 14:26](#); [16:13](#)). The Holy Spirit comes to live inside us, changing us forever ([1 Cor 6:19](#); [1 John 3:9](#)). Jesus is a Person. To know Him is to enter into a relationship. The Christian life is about continually [seeking Him](#), learning more about Him, and enjoying His fellowship ([Jer 29:13](#); [Phil 3:8](#)).

Missionary Update PNG

While sharing Scriptures with the prisoners this week, I almost broke down as I shared how Jesus took upon Himself our shame, taking on our sin on Himself so we could know God's forgiveness. He took my shameful sins upon Himself and suffered in my place. I noticed one prisoner looking down as I shared this. Jesus had no shame to hang on that tree in my place. He doesn't want anyone to miss out on this great gift of reconciliation with the God Who loves them and sent His only Son to win them back. Well, this week, I am so happy to report that two prisoners prayed with us to receive this give of salvation personally.

Along with the weekly hospital outreach, going to the prison for outreach is a highlight each week for me. God has been providing English Bibles and Tok Pisin Bibles in unexpected ways. One Bible we have that was obtained from the US is especially designed for prisoners. Another tool used is sharing written testimonies of other prisoners who have had their lives changed by the Savior.

The prisoners are put in cages with no blankets, no beds, only a hole for a toilet and no steady supply of water. They often have only the clothes they came in wearing. As we have been able, we have tried to address some of the needs for blankets, clothes, soap, Bibles, tracts, reading glasses, a scone (yeast roll) and a sweet treat. We were told not to bring fruit as the peels are disposed in the toilet and clogged toilets are then a problem.

The prisoners are given rice once a day. Sometimes the prisoners come from places very far from here, so no one can help them with personal needs.

The children in my Friday group in our apartment sometimes make cards or pictures for the prisoners or for those hospitalized.

The number of prisoners varies from maybe 50 to as many as 70. The population is constantly changing. Some are in and out right away and others are in for a while awaiting resolution of their court situation. We do not ask them what their charges are, respecting their privacy. However, sometimes we hear from other sources, such as newspaper reports and so on, why a particular group is incarcerated.

It has been my joy to have former prisoners at times stop me in town and tell me that I had visited them while they were incarcerated. Some have surrendered their lives to Jesus and their whole lives have turned around.

I feel like dancing in praise to the LORD! Lois

First Christian Assembly,	1900 S. 11 th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148	215-389-6721
First Christian So Jersey,	1960 Delsea Drive, 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 & 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>Discipleship class (Fellowship hall)</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>Free Indeed</i>

- *Coram Deo*: A men’s Bible study and Christian fellowship.
- *Free Indeed*: Is a Spirit led Men’s Fellowship that emphasizes godly counsel, leading to spiritual growth, healing and deliverance.
- *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

Christianity is not a doctrine, not truth as truth, but the knowledge of a Person; it is knowing the Lord Jesus. You cannot be educated into being a Christian.
T. Austin-Sparks