



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.

Watching and Praying

"Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25). This verse tells us that although Christ's work to secure the salvation of the elect was completed on the cross, as evidenced by His cry *"It is finished!"* (John 19:30), His care for His redeemed children will never be finished.

After Jesus ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of God the Father (Acts 1:9; Col 3:1), He returned to the glory He had before His incarnation (John 17:5) to carry on His role of King of kings and Lord of lords—His eternal role as the second Person of the triune God. While this old earth continues to be "won" for Christ, Jesus is the Advocate for Christians, meaning He is our great Defender. This is the intercessory role He currently fulfills for those who are His (1 John 2:1). Jesus is always pleading our case before the Father, like a defense lawyer on our behalf.

Jesus is interceding for us while Satan (whose name means "accuser") is accusing us, pointing out our sins and frailties before God, just as he did with Job (Job 1:6-12). But the accusations fall upon deaf ears in heaven, because Jesus' work on the cross paid our sin debt in full; therefore, God always sees in His children the perfect righteousness of Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, His righteousness (perfect holiness) was imputed to us, while our sin was imputed to Him at His death. This is the great exchange Paul talks about in 2 Cor 5:21. That took away forever our sinful state before God, so God can accept us as blameless before Him.

Finally, it is important to understand that Jesus is the *only* human mediator between God and man. No one else—not Mary, not any previous Christian saints—has the power to intercede for us before the throne of the Almighty. No angel has that position. Christ alone is the God-man, and He mediates and intercedes between God and man. *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5).*

Today's Update

Witchcraft is thriving in the US, with an estimated 1.5 million Americans now identifying as witches - more than the total number of Presbyterians. As Christianity declines across the country, paganism has swung to the mainstream, with witchcraft paraphernalia for sale on every high street and practices normalized across popular culture. In the past two years, it has also become darkly politicized.

Dakota Bracciale, a 29-year-old transgender/queer witch and co-owner of Catland Books and witch shop in Brooklyn, is pleased with the outcome of the ritual hex placed on US Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh in October. The curse, carried out from Catland Books, was well attended by witches, atheists, humanists - and was followed around the country on social media.

Millennials, says Bracciale, are looking for spiritualism outside traditional religion. "The hex centers on the notion that we live in a universe of chaos, entropy, destruction, death, decay with a final ending of oblivion - scientists are telling us. So the witch does everything for themselves - there is no other help in this universe of decay and chaos. If you don't get in the driver's seat things will just get worse," the witch said.

In a wide-ranging discussion with the Telegraph, Bracciale, who described the interview questions as "sensationalist", talked about political hexes and witchcraft in general. Bracciale is "absolutely" willing to cause physical harm through a hex - "no issue with that". And while Bracciale would have been just as pleased with the new Supreme Court Justice's death, resignation or physical disfigurement, the main goal of the Kavanaugh hex, and the three hexes on President Donald Trump from Catland Books this summer, was to "let them be exposed for who they are - especially as impotent men". The curse began with a recitation of the Biblical scripture Psalm 109: 8: "let his days be few, let another take his office." Catland Books is replete with Christian images including the Archangel Michael, Christian defender against the demonic, and the Virgin Mary. Bracciale, a self-described sexual abuse survivor, who grew up in a born-again-Christian evangelical cult in Arizona, takes umbrage at the notion that witchcraft and Christianity are mutually exclusive. Witchcraft "has a ton of roots in Christianity", the Brooklyn witch says. Indeed, in Bracciale's view, the Bible is a spell book, particularly the Book of Psalms. Witchcraft is powerful, according to Bracciale, because of the "intersectionality of feminism, sexuality, gender, the fight for freedom, eschewing the patriarchy and having sort of a vitriolic response towards it".

(Ray, "Witchcraft moves to the mainstream in America as Christianity declines - and has Trump in its sights," The Telegraph Online, 12/21/18).

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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

	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.

Important Dates;

- **Youth Group meets tonight**
- **Evangelism class continues on Tuesday, 7:00 PM**
- **Sunday morning Bible Study begins a new series in Genesis**

"Jesus Christ carries on intercession for us in heaven; the Holy Ghost carries on intercession in us on earth; and we the saints have to carry on intercession for all men." – Oswald Chambers