

# We Will Rejoice



Stewardship Sunday is November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019

## We Will Rejoice

*"In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed." (1 Peter 1:6-7)*

Dear Fellow Disciple,

The theme of being tested by fire is prevalent throughout the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. We at First Christian Church have certainly been tested by fire. Although we were not in the Camp Fire burn zone, we have spent the last 11 months dealing with the consequential fallout. During the response phase, we opened our facility to our sister Disciples church in Paradise so that they could have a place to worship. We also opened our facility, particularly the Bethany Room, to folks who needed temporary shelter, including members of our own congregation who lost their house in the fire. For close to two decades, we have been on Red Cross' list of possible emergency shelters. They called on us to provide shelter in December when heavy rains caused a flood at a fire evacuation camp near Wal-Mart.

As we transitioned into the Camp Fire recovery phase, we experienced our own crises. Some of our families who lived in the burn zone as well as families that were displaced because of the resulting housing crisis had to move away from the area. Then, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, five inches of rain fell on Chico in three hours. Our gutter and drainage system was overwhelmed and the resulting floodwaters damaged almost all of our classrooms and our main offices. For close to five months we operated with no phones or internet at the church. We've only recently been able to move our stored furniture and equipment back into the rooms but still have not been able to sign off on the restoration project because of problems that have yet to be resolved. The long and short of it is that we've taken some hard hits this past year.

The great news is that throughout these crises, we've been able to maintain most of our ministry endeavors. We have been able to continue our outreach to the Jesus Center, Torres Shelter, Shalom Free Clinic as well as provide space for Iglesia de Cristo Agua Viva. We continue to offer ministries that educate, enlighten and feed our members' spirit. The Fun Timers, our seniors' ministry, continues to offer several events and dinners throughout the year and raised money to send three campers the Community of the Great Commission. Our youth also attended Feb Camp at CGC and the annual post-camp lock-in Sacramento. Sacred Grounds, our adult faith formation class, continues to provide enlightening and lively discussions on matters of faith and culture on Sunday mornings between services. Faith in Films continued with a bi-monthly program where folks can watch and discuss movies from a faith perspective. We've also been able to offer mid-week Bible study classes. Disciples Women are active and busy as always. We have also tabled at community-wide events and partner with local organizations like CHAT and Stonewall Alliance.

These ministries and others we haven't mentioned are all made possible by your generous gifts of time, talent, and resources. We thank you in advance for your continued support. Although we have literally been tested by fire and water, we remain faithful because God is faithful. By filling out the enclosed estimated giving card we are able to determine the course of ministry for 2020. It would be most helpful to have your estimates by our Annual Business Meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Thank you again!

Blessings

Lori Adrian,  
Administrative Ministry

Jesse Kearns,  
Pastor

Gary Cantwell,  
Moderator

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## First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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I/we covenant my/our intent to give for God's work in the 2020 year through First Christian Church, Chico.

\_\_\_\_\_  weekly  monthly  annually, and will support in prayer the leadership, ongoing ministry and outreach of First Christian Church, Chico.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this portion to church in envelope provided.**



### For Your Records Estimate of Giving 2020

I/we covenant my/our intent to give for God's work in the 2020 year through First Christian Church.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  weekly  
 monthly  
 annually