

FIRST COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



open church. open hearts. open minds. open lives.

During the month of August Pastor Ray has invited guest columnists to contribute to the weekly enews. Each has been given the option to provide commentary on any topic of their choosing.



Elizabeth Sherley Graham

Vocation:
Special Educator

Length of FCC Membership:
3 years

Favorite Part of FCC:
FCC's commitment to radical inclusivity

“When you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a higher fence.”

Making room at the table has become my personal mission statement. Making room at my literal and proverbial family table, making room at the tables of church and education and community for people who have historically been "othered."

But here's the thing. Making room at the table cannot just look like pulling up a folding chair to the corner where your knees hit the table leg. It can't look like everyone rolling their eyes and sighing as they scoot a little closer, but not really enough to make the newcomer comfortable, much less be able to reach the food.

No no no.

Making room at the table means setting the table in a way that is carefully, beautifully prepared for everyone.

It means pulling that extra leaf out of storage and making the table bigger. It means thinking about how to arrange the chairs for accessibility and comfort, leaving space for those whose chairs come to the table with them or for whom sitting in the dark under the table is most comfortable. It means making sure the food is safe for everyone and within arms reach of all people.

It means planning for voices to be heard and uplifted that might have previously been spoken over; shushing the voices who seek to speak hate over truth. It may even mean leaving the table where you have always been comfortable and working with others to build a new table or taking your seat somewhere unfamiliar. And that kind of table, the one where there is room for everyone, requires first bearing witness, seeing the flaws of the old table, the old system, and then being brave enough to rebuild.

Let's stop expecting people to be thankful that they got that wobbly chair on the corner and start the work of remaking the whole meal experience.

Elizabeth has been a member of FCC since 2020 when she was looking for a radically inclusive faith community. Elizabeth is a mom to many, a veteran educator in Dallas ISD, and a doctoral student.



UPCOMING EVENTS

*Save
the date*

In-Person Worship
"Back-to-School Sunday"

August 13
@ Hope Cottage

**BACK TO
SCHOOL
SUPPLY
DRIVE**



In August, we'll meet for in-person worship on August 13 (2nd Sunday) to celebrate **Back-to-School Sunday**. During this service we'll collect school supplies and offer prayers for students, parents and educators returning to the classroom!

If you'd like to participate in the School Supply Drive, please click [HERE](#) or the image above to view the suggested list for DISD elementary students. ***Any and all items are welcomed!***



MISSION-CENTERED
church-without-walls

CONNECT & GROW



open hearts

Jesus declared, "my house shall be called a house of prayer" (Matthew 21:13). Below, are some of the prayer needs of our faith community. Simply whispering them aloud, lifts them as a prayer to God.

- We pray for spiritual and personal transformation.
- We pray for Pat Fugate as she recovers from surgery.
- We continue praying for Mason, the grandson of Nancy White.
- We pray for those suffering from extreme heat and recent storms.
- We pray for all those suffering from gun violence and for national gun control.

- We pray for traveling grace for those traveling this season.
- We give thanks for First Community Church, its members, leaders and those we seek to serve. We also pray for our growth (spiritually, numerically, financially).
- We pray for racial justice.
- We pray for those seeking asylum and refuge at our Southern Border and all those personnel and policymakers seeking a remedy.
- We pray for those serving as caretakers for those who are aging, ill or disabled.

- We pray for those serving as caretakers for those who are aging, ill or disabled.
- We pray for those navigating mental health challenges.
- We pray for the political divisions, anger, and violence increasing in our nation.
- We pray for our ministry partners at Owenwood Farm and Neighbor Space!
- We pray for the people of Ukraine.

