

Family Christian Center



Centennial Vision

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100 Years



Family Christian Center
Ellensburg, WA

Centennial Vision

This year, Family Christian Center will begin its 100th year of ministry in our community. A lot can happen in 100 years. Ellensburg was first incorporated as a city in 1884, and by the time Washington became the 42nd state in 1889, the city already had more than 2,500 residents. In that same year, Ellensburg became the home of the Washington State Normal School (which would later become CWU). By the beginning of the 20th century, our community's identity was well forged with a rich agricultural heritage and a burgeoning higher education commission.



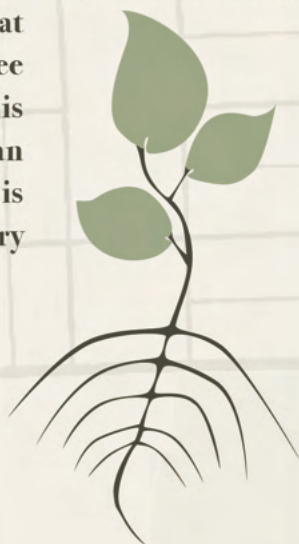
100 Years



Family Christian Center
Ellensburg, WA

As World War I ended and the roaring twenties began, our community was still in a juvenile state in many ways. Ellensburg was serviced by both the Northern Pacific Railroad (1886) and the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad (1909). It boasted a municipal water and sewer system (1889), telephone service (1890), a municipal power supply (1890), and a public library (1910). Snoqualmie Pass Highway was still a two lane, seasonal gravel road that was only open from late May through early December. In 1923, at the base of Craig's Hill, a little event was started that we now know as the Ellensburg Rodeo and Kittitas County Fair. Then, two years later in 1925 the US Secretary of Interior signed a contract to build an irrigation system to amply supply Kittitas Valley farmers with water.

Even still, pictures from that era depict a much smaller and less developed community. In particular, one will notice that Ellensburg seemed to have very few trees compared to today. After all, it wasn't until 1983 that Ellensburg received the designation, Tree City USA, the first city in Washington. This makes one wonder, if planting trees can make such a difference in 100 years, what is the impact of one church planted a century ago in the same community?



Our History

The study of tree rings—or dendrochronology—is a way of peering into the history of a tree. The width of a ring, is a reflection of water availability and tree health. Each ring tells a unique, one year story. Just like the growth rings of a tree, a church's story can be learned by looking back at key factors and events. What are the key moments of Family Christian Center's history since it was planted 100 years ago?



As the story goes, four or five families came together in 1923 and began meeting in a West Ellensburg home. Their plan was to plant the first Pentecostal church in our community. In a short amount of time, they moved to the old Lincoln School and began a Sunday School for children and a prayer meeting. Soon, they moved to an old shoe repair shop, on the corner of 3rd and Pearl, before eventually utilizing rooms in the Odd Fellows Hall on Pine. In those early years the church eventually became known as Glad Tidings Mission.

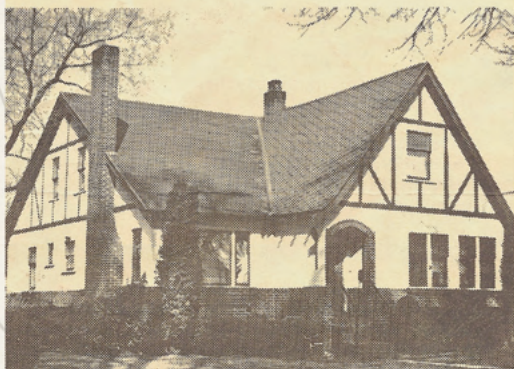
In 1930, the church joined the Assemblies of God and a year later, began to construct its first building on the corner of Washington and Main (today's Johnson's Auto Glass building). This project was completed in 1933 and the church began a season of great growth. At this time, the name was changed to Bethany Pentecostal Church. By 1940, the congregation had grown to about 100 people and a wonderful foundation had been laid. Over the next 15 years, the church thrived, as ministry to the **next generation** continued to be a key focus.





In 1950, the name was changed to Ellensburg Assembly of God, and by the mid 1950's the church had purchased property at the corner of Capitol and Walnut where they began building the current facility. After the completion of this new facility in 1956, the church continued to thrive. By the late 60's and early 70's, the church followed the leading of the Lord and begin doing ministry on campus at Central Washington State College. By 1971, the church had helped plant campus ministry and purchased the Chi Alpha ministry house, underwriting this new endeavor in many ways.

COLLEGE MINISTRY



CHI ALPHA HOUSE

1009 D STREET

In 1973, First Assembly of God celebrated its Golden Anniversary and burned the mortgage. Growing in number to over 200 people, the church was well established in the community and effective at moving the mission of Jesus forward. However, by the end of the 70's the church experienced a major financial crisis along with other challenges, and growth seemed to stall. Over the next few decades, health was never truly restored and decline began to set in. By the year 2005, the rate of attrition began to equal that of new growth and vitality was slipping. In 2011, long-time member Paul Bennett—whose parents were a part of that original plant team—said, “I don’t believe that God put us on this corner for us to sit here and die.”

Now, over the last 10 years, the decline has leveled out and the church has returned to some level of stability. Nevertheless, growth like that of the church’s first half-century has not yet been experienced since.



10 Year Review

On January 1 of 2012, there was less than \$5,000 in all accounts and the building was in desperate need of updating. The congregation of about 50 people was largely senior citizens, and resources and energy to make changes were limited. During the next four years, approximately one quarter of the congregation went to be with Jesus. Times were urgent, but God was faithful.

Over time, the savings account grew little by little and small projects were undertaken, starting with the women's restroom and fresh paint. One estate gift was given to the church, along with two memorial gifts. This, along with maturing savings bonds, purchased by attenders 20 years earlier, became a huge blessing of about \$20,000.



With little man-power in the early years of these projects, work crews from other churches blessed the church along with the consistent help of two retired traveling volunteers. Now, over the last 10 years many areas of the church, and church-owned house, have been updated in necessary ways.

During this period of time, nearly \$64,000 has been invested in church owned properties. The house has received a new roof, kitchen makeover, exterior paint, new landscaping, furnace, and air conditioning. Much of the inside of the church building has had a makeover, including the newly renovated auditorium and kid zones, new flooring and trim, refurbished women's restroom, and new exterior paint and doors. These projects have been an important investment in the facilities God has blessed us with.

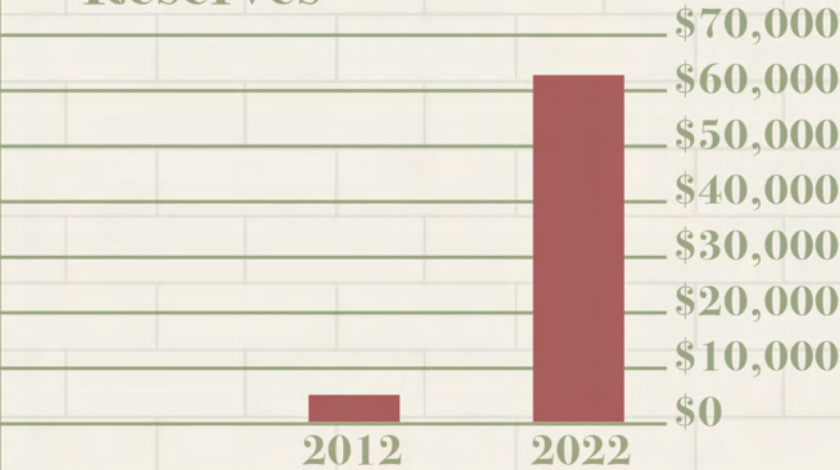




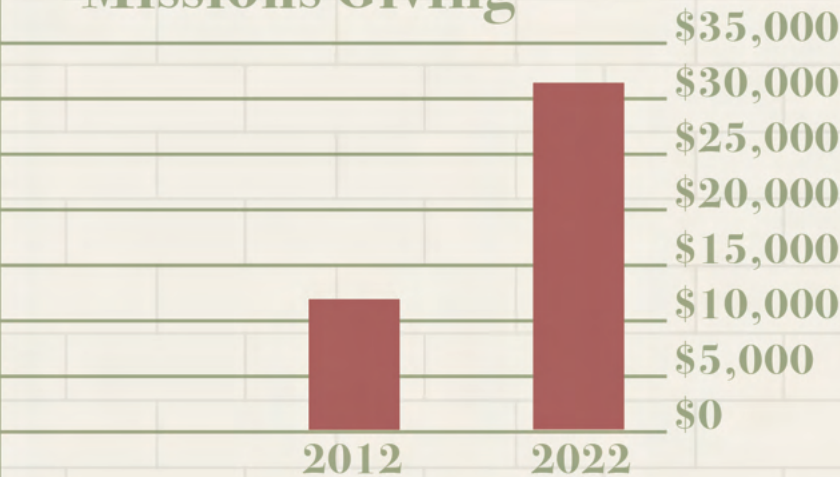


During this same 10-year period, we have budgeted, spent wisely, and built our savings account; enabling us to build our reserves to over \$63,000. We see this as wise stewardship and minimum reserves for healthy and sustainable operations.

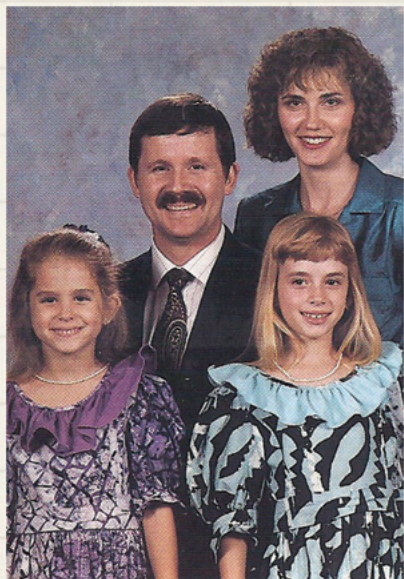
Reserves



Missions Giving



In the background of all of this, has been the church's missions support. Family Christian Center, has always been a strong missions giving church, so our conviction was, "How can we weather the storms of attrition without letting our missionaries down?" In 2012, the church gave \$12,400 to missions work around the world. This totaled 15% of the overall income that year. Over the next few years, missions giving stabilized and then slowly began to increase. Now, over the last four years, missions giving at FCC has averaged over \$34,000 per year. Ten years later, in 2021, our missions giving of \$32,600 totaled over 26% of the church's overall income. This is just part of the story of what God has done over the last decade.

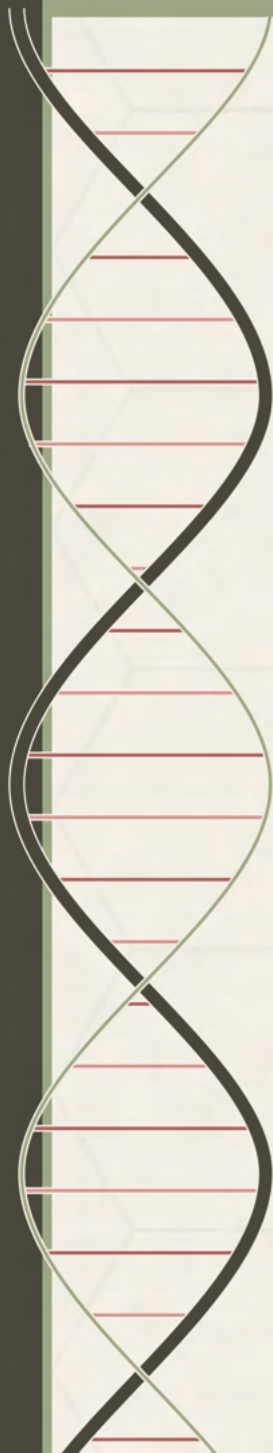


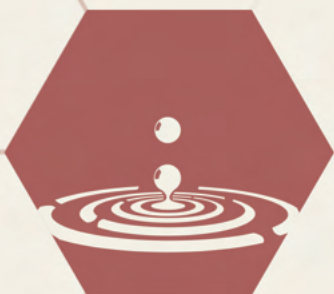
What's Next

As we look to the church's 100th year and beyond, there are two questions that must be considered. First, why did those four or five families originally plant the church in 1923? And second, what keys made it thrive for more than a half century? To answer those questions, let us first consider trees once again. In 1949, the US Forest Service began a genetic conservation program to build and maintain healthy forests. With raging disease and wildfires, the forests of the Northwest were becoming less and less durable to withstand these challenges. In this effort, seeds and saplings have been collected from thousands of healthy, durable trees. Now, since 1978, the forest service has replanted 182,000 acres of white pine forest with healthy disease resistant trees.

As we have looked through the history of Family Christian Center, what are the key factors that made it thrive for so many years? Or in other words, what was the original DNA of this church that positioned it to grow and impact the community? Just like the white pine forests where the climate has changed over the years, there is a genetic code that when preserved can restore vitality. As we cultivate ministry into the next season at FCC, we are recommitting to the DNA of that original church plant. What is that DNA?

Ministry Focuses







Spirit Dependent

Records show that Ellensburg already had about ten churches in town at the time, but no Pentecostal church. As people were stirred in the revivals of the day, it is clear that our founders believed that the Holy Spirit was given, not just as a **seal of salvation** but also for the empowering to share Christ with others. Like them, we believe that God can do things that we cannot and we are fully dependent upon the Spirit's leading and empowering every day.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- Acts 1:8

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

- Acts 2:38-39

Next Generation

Within weeks of that home group's first meeting in West Ellensburg, they moved to the old Lincoln School where they started a Sunday School. As early as the 1930's, they gave much attention to ministering to youth. By 1950, they purchased a bus as they continued to make a serious emphasis on reaching children. By late 1960's, they expanded their focus to also reaching college students by setting up Chi Alpha ministry at CWU. From the very beginning, and over its first fifty years, the church was heavily focused on reaching the next generation. This is something that we must make a top priority.



Since my youth, God, you have taught me,
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.
Even when I am old and gray,
do not forsake me, my God,
till I declare your power to the next generation,
your mighty acts to all who are to come.
- Psalms 71:17-18



Outward Focused

This was another defining characteristic of the church from its beginning. Our founders were committed to reaching people for Christ and extending His love, even to those from different backgrounds and walks of life. By 1941, and possibly earlier, the church was doing a service in the jail every other Sunday afternoon. Outward focus was also evident in 1950, when the church held a vacation bible school with 60+ children in attendance. What was the church doing? Just ministering to their neighborhood.

It's the same outward focus that compelled our predecessors, in the late 1960's, to begin working to develop ministry to college students at Central Washington State College. So much so, that the church underwrote ministry and the purchase of the Chi Alpha ministry house, across from campus, by 1971. At the time, there were about 7,500 students on campus and the church felt a responsibility to help reach them. All throughout the church's history, thriving seasons were marked by focusing outward. Developing and maintaining an outward focus is something we must do all the more moving into our next 100 years.

Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.
- John 4:35

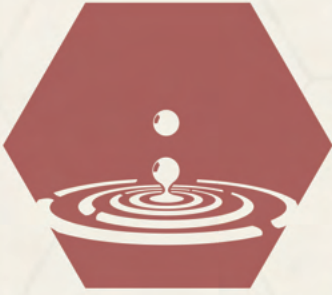
All In

As we think about our early pioneers at FCC, another thing that stands out is their commitment level. Not only did they lead services themselves off and on throughout the first decade, they were all heavily involved in leading their age specific discipleship programs. Then when they started building their first building, one of the original members Bessie (Bennett) Skellie said that everyone helped. It's noted that both buildings were built almost entirely by volunteer labor. One story was even told of a long-time member, named Erwin Bennett, shimmying up the beams precariously as they built the current auditorium. Our predecessors invested their lives and even their families in the work that God was doing through this church. It's this same type of commitment that will lead us again into our second century.



He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

- Luke 10:27



Make Disciples

Throughout the years here at Family Christian Center, it is clear that making disciples was their prime objective. When the current building was complete in 1956, they proudly boasted enough Sunday School rooms for every age. Sunday School was the primary disciple making tool of the day, and it was clear they wanted to disciple everyone. Discipleship was a focus throughout all age groups, including youth, college ministry, and seniors.

As we continue to move forward, making disciples must continue to be our prime objective. In our quest to help people discover God and live to their full potential, we will focus on three key objectives. Root, Cultivate, and Reproduce. First of all, we will help people become established in the faith. This comes by getting people grounded in the Word of God and connecting with other believers. Cultivating is when we grow in accountability to one another and service to Christ. Reproducing is all about making more disciples and producing lasting fruit. Every follower of Christ, should be actively seeking to make more disciples of Christ. As we commit to these discipleship objectives, we will see the church continue to grow in accomplishing Jesus' mission.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20





ASSEMBLY OF GOD



Capital Vision



As we consider the vitality of the church moving forward, one area that cannot be ignored is the ongoing investments in the church's physical assets. Our predecessors made courageous decisions and investments that we still enjoy the benefits of today. Both the church building and adjoining house, are amazing blessings that give FCC an important beachhead in our community. While God's presence is in no way reserved to 701 E Capitol Ave, it should serve as a key epicenter for the ongoing work of God through this congregation in our community.

The Church is not a building. We are the Church, and each one of us takes our piece of God's presence everywhere we go. Our facility is a tool, and we will use it exhaustively for God's glory. It's also a place for mobilization, inspiration, and training of the people of God. Lastly, it's a lighthouse that we intend to let burn brightly by blessing our community.

With that in mind, we recognize that there are significant capital expenses that we must undertake in the next five years, so that these assets do not begin to become a liability. As we move into our 100th year, we know that there are over \$100,000 in capital investments that we must prepare to make. Some of these investments, have been on our radar for a few years while with others, such as our roof, the urgency has just recently become known. These may seem like massive obstacles, but we know that God is more than able. As you can see, we have seen many miracles over our first ninety-nine years, and in the last ten years God has shown us many with our own eyes. It's with great expectation, as each of us does our part, that we know God has more miracles to come.

Capital Investments

—Next 5 Years

Roof:
\$53,000

Concrete Work & Front Entry:
\$15,000

HVAC Replacements:
\$12,000

Men's & Handicap Restrooms:
\$2,000

Parking Lot:
\$60,000+

Partner With Us

Now that we know the 100-year story of Family Christian Center and have looked at the vision for our next season, how can you be a part? Our mission to “help people discover God and live to their full potential” is as urgent today, as any time in the church’s history. For FCC to be propelled into our 100th year and beyond, we need every person to step in at a whole new level. The way that we relaunch as a church will be the same way we were planted a century ago. In 2022 our theme is “Together” and that is truly what this effort will take.

What can you do? Where can you plug in? What is God calling you to sacrifice? How is God calling you to serve? We would not be here on the corner of Capitol and Walnut in this community if it weren’t for the faithfulness and sacrifice of those who have gone before us. Now it’s our turn.

The following are a number of ways that you can be a part of the Centennial Vision at Family Christian Center. Everyone can do something. Where is your place?

Membership

One key step is to become an official voting member of the church. In an era where church membership seems to be viewed as less important, this is still one key aspect of church life and vitality. Only members can serve in certain areas of leadership and we need every person ready to serve. For those who are “All In” membership is a great place to start.

Serving

Kids & Nursery Ministry

Be a part of a team that provides vibrant ministry to kids and their families during our services. This team is also looking for opportunities to connect with kids and their families outside of our church context.

Youth & College Ministry

Disciple and reach young people. Hundreds of middle and high school students go past our building every day. Many struggle with identity, abandonment, anxiety, and general hopelessness. Help us provide meaningful environments to see their world changed.

Women's, Men's, & Senior Ministries

Help us provide environments where adults, in every walk of life, can connect with Jesus, grow in their faith, and live to their full potential.

Worship & Arts Ministry

Providing meaningful environments, where people can encounter Christ through the arts.

Sound & Media

Serve on a team that provides clear and helpful programming of our in-person and online environments.

Prayer & Visitation Team

Help carry the burdens of others through prayer. Be prepared to serve in our gatherings, or with special requests as they arise.

Recovery Ministry

Help us provide hope for those stuck in cycles of addiction, abuse, and pain.

Community Outreach

Extending the love of Christ through our actions. Serving the poor or marginalized with one of our local partners. Blessing Lincoln Elementary School. Supplying hope to our community.

Hospitality

Creating wonderful environments every time we meet. Through amazing food, service, and other refreshments. This team also helps us maintain a decor that is inviting and relevant.

First Impressions

Be the welcoming, helpful person to meet people as they first arrive at one of our gatherings. We all remember what it feels like to be new. Help us make the guest experience amazing.

Janitorial & Cleaning

This team helps us look good. They see things others might miss and make sure that every experience in our building is a pleasant one.

Landscaping & Facilities

This team helps us create an inviting street appeal and maintain our facilities function.

Sacrifice

In 1956, when our predecessors completed our current building, it was valued at \$125,000. Taking into consideration 60+ years of inflation and this equates to a little over \$1,250,000 today. Miraculously their indebtedness was only \$25,000 or a little over \$250,000 today. How was this possible? Sacrifice. They gave sacrificially of their resources before and during the building project, thus making their initial principal much lower than it would have been. Not only that, they also gave sacrificially of their time, talent, and energy working on the building. The building that we now enjoy, was built almost entirely by volunteer labor, thus becoming sweat equity. These two areas of sacrifice gave them 80% equity right from the start. But their sacrifice was not over. They continued to give sacrificially and just 17 years later paid off the remaining debt in full, and underwrote Chi Alpha college ministry. In short, they invested their time and treasure in the work of God through this place, unrelentingly for decades and we are now experiencing the fruit of their sacrifice.

Now the question comes down to you. What can you do? Can you give sacrificially above your tithe for a season to move the mission forward? Can you write the church into your estate (we've experienced this blessing once in recent years)? Can you set aside tax returns for the work of God? Can you sell a vehicle or property and give generously to God (this happened at least once in 1956)? Can you intentionally budget a percentage extra to God through the church's centennial year? Every amount is important, and should be given directly to the church's Capital Fund.

Sacrifice also means investing our time, talent, and energy in the work of God. One new believer and a friend, donated all of the landscaping work on our current building in 1956. As projects begin, there will be plenty of opportunities to serve the Lord in this way. There will be work parties to join, clean up to be done, and hungry workers to feed. There will be a need for skilled workers, and also for those who have never swung a hammer.

Influence and Resourcefulness

One final area of involvement is through influence. In the 1930's, when the initial building was constructed, the congregation tore down an old building and used the lumber in starting their new project. Will you join us in praying for the favor of God to receive products at cost and below? Perhaps you know people who would be open to investing in the Kingdom in this way. Also pray with us for contractors who will allow us to do some of the work ourselves. This will save the church tens of thousands of dollars throughout the work. Beyond this, there are many other creative ways that God wants to bless His church and move the mission forward.



100 Years



Family Christian Center
Ellensburg, WA

If you are ready to partner with us, as we celebrate Family Christian Center's 100th year, click on the tree below.



And all the trees will know that it is I, the Lord, who cuts the tall tree down and makes the short tree grow tall. It is I who makes the green tree wither and gives the dead tree new life. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do what I said!"

- Ezekiel 17:24

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