

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

Special Commissioning Service During Worship on December 16 Pitch-In Celebration Meal to Follow in Great Hall

It is not easy to say farewell to people who have touched our lives, and who have made a positive and lasting contribution to the FCC community that many will continue to benefit from after they have gone. This Sunday, December 16, we will do just that while also celebrating the continued ministry of Mark and Danielle Murry Knowles as they prepare to share their gifts through Global Ministries (the mission arm of the Disciples church) with their assignment to Lesotho, Africa.

Join us in worship at 10:00 am for a special commissioning service for Mark and Danielle and their new calling as missionaries. A representative from Global Ministries will join us for the commissioning and also after in Great Hall for an all-church celebration and pitch in meal. A short program will give us the opportunity to reflect on Mark and Danielle's time here at FCC while also celebrating their next journey to Lesotho.

Please join us for this special service of worship at 10:00 am on Sunday, December 16 and after at 11:00 am for the celebration and pitch-in meal. Be sure to bring dish to share. Ham and beverages will be provided. FCC is known for its hospitality... and delicious pitch-ins! So, you won't want to miss this celebration. See you Sunday!

Stories and Pictures from Cuba This Sunday at 9:00 am

The group from FCC who traveled to Cuba over Thanksgiving will be sharing their stories from the people-to-people pilgrimage this Sunday, **December 16th at 9:00 am in the Chapel Gathering Space**. You will have the opportunity to hear stories, ask about the trip and also see great pictures from their week in Cuba. Join us this Sunday as we share our stories from Cuba.

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Pastor's Pen

New Leadership, Plus Next Steps with our FCC Story!

At Sunday's **very significant** Board meeting, the board voted unanimously to approve the following persons into leadership positions.

First, **Rev. Chuck Jones** has been hired as our new Director of Service Ministries. Chuck, who recently relocated to Bloomington from Georgia, has already been meeting with Mark Knowles to get up to speed on our multi-faceted service ministries. A Disciples of Christ minister whose experience includes working with congregations in transition, operating a non-profit organization, and working for a marketing firm, Chuck also enjoys preaching and teaching. He will be a great addition to our staff! You can learn more about him on page 10. Please take the opportunity to welcome him as the newest member of our FCC staff!

Second, **Shari Sprinkle** will be our new treasurer. When Jean Thompson announced a few weeks ago that she will be letting go of her role as treasurer to focus on other ministries, Shari was more than willing to step in and serve in this capacity. Because Shari, a CPA, served as FCC's treasurer a number of years ago, she is familiar with our culture, accounting system, and finances. She and Jean have already been working together, so the transition will be smooth! Thank you, Jean, and thank you, Shari!

Third, **Bob Bernacki**, with his extensive related professional experience, will be coordinating our media technology ministries, especially as they relate to supporting worship services and other events that take place in the sanctuary. He will be working with some of our own members as well as other experts in the field (including former member Barrie Zimmerman) to make sure our current media equipment in good working order. I am very grateful!

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Perhaps the **most exciting thing** that happened at Sunday's board meeting was a joint presentation by Mike Rampley (co-chair of the Cornerstone Committee) and architect David Allen, who updated the board on the extensive progress that has been made over the past 20 months with the goal of implementing the mission of the church as defined by our 2016 Future Story Visioning Process. (Please email me or the church office, and we will send you the original Future Story that has helped us stay focused on our mission to *share the inclusive love of Christ, through serving, welcoming, serving, and offering avenues for spiritual connection.*)

Following their informative and detailed presentation, the board unanimously agreed that the work of the Cornerstone Team, with the help of David Allen, reflects a well thought out design that will allow our building to be used as an important resource and beautiful tool to help us carry out FCC's mission. In 2019, there will be ample opportunity for congregation (that means you!) to discuss, vet, tweak, and offer feedback for this preliminary design concept. So, stay tuned!!!!

In the meantime, please take the opportunity to say thank you to the members of the Cornerstone Team for their focused and faithful work. Current members are: Doug Cull, Connie Daugherty, Fay McIntyre, Mike and Sandy Rampley, Charlie Sinn, Peggy Stafford, Kathy Street, Betsy Watson.

I hope to see you on Sunday!

Blessings,

*Helen Hemphill*  
Pastor Helen



**Sunday, December 16**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

*Commissioning Service for Mark Knowles  
and Danielle Murry-Knowles*

*Text: Luke 2:15-18*

**Sunday, December 23**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*Text: Words and Phrases from  
"Silent Night"*

**Monday, December 24**

**Christmas Eve**

*5:30 pm Family Service with Candlelight*

*7:30 pm Seasonal Concert:  
Vivaldi - "Magnificat"*

*8:00 pm Candlelight Service with  
Communion*

***Please join us this Advent season as we prepare for the birth of Christ  
through worship, reflection, music and celebration.***



**Christmas Special  
Day Offering  
December 16 & 23**

**Disciples Mission Fund Special Day Offerings** provide an opportunity to highlight specific ministries as part of our faith celebrations **The Christmas Special Day offering that will be received on December 16 and 23 supports the many important ministries of our regions.** [Please give generously to this year's Christmas Offering.](#)

**Special Events at FCC on December 16**

- 9:00 am Cuba pilgrimage participants will share pictures and stories from their journey at 9:00 am in the Chapel Gathering Space.
- Commissioning service for Mark and Danielle Murry-Knowles with guests from Global Ministries, followed by an all-church celebration, including a pitch-in meal.
- 4:00 pm FCC friends gather to go caroling.



**Christmas Eve Concert - 7:30 pm**  
**featuring**  
**Vivaldi's *Magnificat*, RV610**

*My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*

Hearing the music of the Baroque is always a part of the joy of the celebration of the Christmas season – think Handel's *Messiah*; Vivaldi's orchestral *Concerto Grosso "Winter"* from the "Seasons" and his setting of the *Gloria*; the concerti and pastorale music of the Italian string composers such as Corelli and Torelli depicting the shepherds abiding in the fields on the Holy Night when the angels appear; and J.S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* telling the story with its beautiful chorales, arias, and choruses in cantatas intended for the 6 holy days of the Christmas season through Epiphany. This year, for our annual concert before Candlelight Communion at First Christian, the Sanctuary Choir, soloists, guest oboist Rebecca McGuire, a quintet of strings, and our organist Jihye Choi will offer music from the Baroque period.

The centerpiece of the concert will be Antonio Vivaldi's first setting of the *Magnificat* text: Mary's song of praise (Luke 11: 46-55) spoken by her on her visitation to her cousin Elizabeth after Elizabeth praised Mary for her faith when it is realized that the child Mary is carrying is Jesus, the Promised One. This canticle<sup>1</sup> has been a source of inspiration to Christians for centuries. There are many musical settings of this text since, throughout the history of the Christendom, the Magnificat has been the canticle sung every evening during Vespers or Evensong in liturgical traditions. The name "Magnificat" given to Mary's canticle refers to the first word of the Latin Vulgate Bible translation of this text by St. Jerome: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum* - "My soul magnifies the Lord."

This setting by Vivaldi was composed for the Ospedale della Pietà, a residential home for foundling girls in Venice where he was music director. The Pietà maintained a strong choir and orchestra, and was well-known for the skill and musicianship of the women there.

In this piece, Vivaldi follows the general principle of setting each biblical verse as an independent movement. The settings range from grand chordal statements, to buoyant solos and contrapuntal choruses. Exceptionally, the second movement sets three verses, each one of which is assigned to a different soloist so that the verses maintain their individual identity. The third movement is an especially beautiful slow movement setting the words *Et misericordia ejus* – "and his mercy continues from generation to generation."

Also on the concert will be a movement from a concerto for oboe by Marcello, a short scene by Heinrich Schütz depicting the Gabriel's Annunciation to Mary that she will become the mother of Jesus, and an organ piece by J.S. Bach. All are welcome to this joyous 7:30 concert to celebrate Christmas Eve at First Christian and prepare for the Candlelight Communion service at 8:00.

<sup>1</sup>Canticle: a song-like text drawn from Scripture other than the Psalms that usually has a significant regular place in the liturgies of the church. Many of the traditional canticle texts come from the book of Luke.



## Stories from the Journey

### Saying Thanks

Any Thanksgiving event should probably start with thanks. So thanks to all of you who helped make this journey happen, or who joined us in spirit; thanks to our wonderful Cuban partners, who offered us hospitality and warmth that we can never forget; thanks to family members who allowed us to be away on a holiday; thanks to support staff at Global Ministries and at FCC; thanks to God for the goodness of life; thanks for the wonderful spirit of everyone on the trip, and those in the group who provided leadership in whatever form; and on and on and on.

Out of that thankfulness we wanted to share with you a little more of the trip, and you will see that in the pages that follow. First is a journal entry from our youngest traveler, Jetta. Each day a traveler would record the group's events in a journal, and Jetta asked to do so on Thanksgiving—the day she started to feel better after some sickness. Then you will see a highlights from all 15 travelers, some with pictures. These are shorter versions of what group members will be talking about on Sunday, December 16 at 9:00 a.m.—all of which will be displayed with (bigger) pictures from each person, and on display in the Chapel Gathering Space for the next several weeks.

We hope you will enjoy, and know that this is our way of saying thanks for a truly great experience!

#### *Thursday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 (journal entry from Jetta)*

*Today is Thanksgiving and I have so much to be grateful for. I'm in a beautiful place with wonderful people and I'm having the time of my life. After being sick yesterday I was so thankful I felt well enough to do the art workshop this morning. I loved watching people's faces light up when they see what they made and that brought me so much happiness. Everyone here is so kind and loving and I think that is amazing.*

*Later in the day we went to the Muraléandó community project. It is placed at an old water tank which was once a dump. The entire place was just garbage. Then they started to clean it up and cover it with beautiful murals and ceramics. The place holds classes for music, painting, sculpture, dancing, and even movie-making. No one ever marks on it or puts garbage on it because it has done so much for the community and you can have a party there for free.*

*At the end of the day was the workshop for the younger people. They just did watercolors and everyone was so talented. They were so creative and they looked like they were having a great time. They were so into it that they could have stayed there all night. At the very end a man sang for us and it was truly amazing. Overall it was a great day and I'm so thankful I got to spend my Thanksgiving there with these amazing people.*

## *Building Relationships*

### Olivia

“The first time FCC went to Cuba in 2016 we met and got to know some of the elderly people from one of the churches. At that first meeting I danced with Omar, and I got to see him again on this 2018 trip. It was amazing being able to see him again because that’s what these trips are for, building relationships with the people of Cuba.”

### Michelle

“Liv and I so looked forward to reuniting with old friends like Sixto who was our driver in 2016. When we reunited in 2018, Olivia was running a high fever. Within hours, Gladys, Sixto’s partner and the IT Director for the MLK Center, went home to fetch a mercury thermometer and mango juices for Liv. Both of them checked-in constantly, offering to help in countless ways. In the end Liv was finally well and so happy to be able to hug Sixto and Gladys, and Gladys and I were able to geek out over tech.”



### Elma

“It was on the second art-sharing day with the senior citizens and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center that we all introduced ourselves. We heard each of our Cuban friends tell about their life, their work, their accomplishments. It was a wonderful way to begin know the individuals, to hear the pride in their voices, and to offer a cheer for each one! My lack of Spanish and my natural shyness had made me more an observer than a cross-cultural conversationalist, so this introduction time was very special for me.”



### Joe:

“Here I am a small conduit, a bridge, between worlds. Actually, I should say “we” because this People to People pilgrimage was all about the connections between people of lands so near but so far. And as can be seen...I was a very small part of it.”

### Mark:

“I didn’t catch one older woman’s name as she introduced herself, only that she was grieving the loss of a loved one. And while others enthusiastically jumped into marbleizing (artwork), she was struggling. But then she asked for help, and we made a picture together. That’s faith in a nutshell.”



## *Creating Community*

### Bess:

“A young Cuban, Jak, made a painting that (when translated) just says it all for me: “Long live Americans and Cubans...Hooray!” With the help of all the wonderful American friends and the connection with our eager Cuban friends, I was hoping that creating together would bridge a feeling of unity, create joy by working on art together, and cause a wonderful synthesis of understanding would happen naturally. I think it did.

### Jim:

“It isn’t often in a lifetime that you meet someone and, despite language barrier, KNOW somehow that you are in the presence of a great man. Reverend Suarez, founder of the MLK center in Havana, was a very humble person who as a member of the Cuban National Assembly testified openly for human rights and earned Fidel Castro’s respect. An amazing story that was first and best told on FCC’s first Cuba trip. “

### Rachel:

“Reverend Raúl Suárez, founder of the Martin Luther King Center in Havana, told us his wife asked him recently if they were poor. After a moment of thought, he replied, ‘Yes, we’re poor, but we’re not marginalized.’”

### Tim:

“We took a trip out into the "country" to a small (building size) Pentecostal Church where we interacted with the pastor, his family, and members of the congregation. Such joy, enthusiasm, appreciation of God's "signs and wonders" even in the midst of a country that is struggling economically and where religious excitement is not encouraged. Young people fervently using their talents to the glory of God!”

### Lauren:

“This is a little boy from the second church we visited. After the meet and greet, I was babbling with him and shaking his hand and then he started reaching for me. At first I thought it was a fluke, but I then I realized that he really wanted me to hold him.”



## Reflections on the Journey



### Danie:

“In my normal life, I spend a lot of time shuttling people from place to place, taking charge of the route and schedule, but not taking much note of the world around me. I grew quite fond of our (albeit bumpy) bus, and very skilled driver Esteban. I loved being able to travel as a group without a worry about how we were getting there, wind in my hair, open to the sounds, sights and smells of Cuba.”

### Casey:

“There were a lot of pleasant memories from Cuba, but I’ve chosen this one because after a few days of rather unpleasant illnesses, everyone in the group was finally healthy again. We started off on a high note, dipped a bit, and by the time this photo was taken, the group was relaxed and happy again.”



### Carmie:

“Weeding carrots at the Alamar Organopónica farm, and talking to Isis, an expert on organic farming in Cuba, about their organic farming methods was interesting, eye opening, relaxing, and rewarding. I hope to apply some of their methods in our vegetable garden this summer.”

### Jetta:

“One of the most fun moments was when we went to the community project and we got to listen to the band. People were dancing and having fun and just letting loose after the first art workshop from that day. I had such a fun time and I loved being there.”

### Betsy:

“Muraleando’ was a former garbage dump in the midst of a poor neighborhood. Over the years, the dump was transformed into an eclectic arts center for the community. Now the entire city block is a place of beauty, color and hope. In my mind, Muraleando is in many ways a microcosm of Cuba and the Cuban people: they are beautiful, creative, and colorful; champions of recycling and re-purposing everything. They persevere through hardship and poverty yet retain a spirit of generosity and warmth for others.”



### **Support FCC's Advent Food and Supply Drive for MCUM**

For nearly 80 years, we at FCC have helped support Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM) with donations of money from the church and our congregants, and with food drives for their emergency pantry.

Each year during the Sundays in Advent, we mound together canned goods and cleaning supplies for MCUM on the chancel. It is fun watching the pile grow as we go through the month of December. Please help us have a banner year by bringing in a gift each Sunday to place on the chancel (see a wish list below). Monetary gifts are also accepted. You may make out a check to First Christian Church and write MCUM on the memo line. Please be generous as the need in Monroe County continues to escalate.

#### **MCUM List of Current Needs**

Canned Foods: vegetables, tomatoes, pasta sauce, fruit Other Food: Pasta, Baking Mixes (Jiffy, Bisquick, etc.) Personal Items: razors, men's deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, lotion, tissues  
Cleaning Supplies: All-purpose cleaners, laundry detergent Childcare: Christmas/winter crafts, tissue paper, paper plates, old calendars with pictures, glitter, pine cones, cotton balls, clean plastic ornaments



#### **Class/Group Christmas Parties**

**All are welcome to these events. Call the FCC office for more information.**

**December 12 at 11:30 am:** Disciples Women's Group "Voices of Faith" meeting and pot-luck

**December 19 at 5:30 pm:** Book Bunch Christmas gathering. Contact Betsy Watson for details.

**December 21:**

- Campbellite Class at 6:00 pm at the home of Kate Kroll
- Emmaus Interpreters Class at 6:30 pm at the home of Andy and Peggy Stafford



#### **Youth Group Update**

*By Ashlyn Reynolds*

I have enjoyed getting to know the youth and adults of First Christian Church Bloomington this past fall! We have some smart, kind, and all around wonderful young people who are full of God's grace here at FCC Bloomington. The youth enjoyed a trip to Holiday World in October. During the month of November we spent time focusing on gratitude. Three of our youth, Lauren Johann, Jetta Norris, and Olivia Walsh, were apart of the Cuba trip and all have told me they had an amazing experience. For the season of advent, the youth are participating in a unique devotional. Each week the youth create posts for social media based on the corresponding advent themes, hope, peace, joy, and love. The youth were also able to take part in the Christmas shopping for MCUM this year!

### January Birthdays

|       |         |                |                              |              |    |       |
|-------|---------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|----|-------|
| 01/01 | Victor  | Gasana         | 4199 Innisbrooke Dr.         | Bloomington  | IN | 47408 |
| 01/07 | Eric    | Griffin        | 3830 Woodhaven Drive         | Bloomington  | IN | 47403 |
| 01/09 | Judy    | Schmid         | 108 E. Temperance St.        | Ellettsville | IN | 47429 |
| 01/11 | Chip    | Welch          | 930 W. Second Street         | Bloomington  | IN | 47403 |
| 01/14 | Loretta | Orr            | 1105 E. Regency Dr.          | Bloomington  | IN | 47401 |
| 01/17 | Maia    | Duffy-Paiement | 260 S. Lori Lane             | Bloomington  | IN | 47401 |
| 01/17 | Cormac  | Duffy-Paiement | 260 S. Lori Lane             | Bloomington  | IN | 47401 |
| 01/20 | Adam    | Watson         | 3000 Spout Run Pkwy.<br>A512 | Arlington    | VA | 22201 |
| 01/24 | Holly   | Biddle         | 9456 N. Ingram Rd.           | Solsberry    | IN | 47459 |
| 01/28 | Jetta   | Norris         | 3194 N. Dahlia Lane          | Bloomington  | IN | 47404 |

*Please let us know if we have left anyone off of the birthday list.*

#### **A Note from Chuck Jones, FCC's New Director of Service Ministries**

Greetings, FCC! I am honored to have been called as your new Director of Service Ministries. I know I have big shoes to fill, and I look forward to the challenge. Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am retired from both a career in ministry and one in marketing. I grew up in the Southern, a capella Church of Christ, attending church related undergraduate and graduate schools—I have a BA in communication from Freed-Hardeman University and an MA in religion from Harding School of Theology. I began my working years as a youth minister, then church pastor, then Executive Director of a social services ministry. In 1995 I began what would become a 20 year career in marketing, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I joined the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 2002 and received ministerial standing (credentials) in the Disciples in 2010. I have enjoyed being active in the Georgia Region, doing supply preaching and interim ministry, teaching at regional assemblies, and providing in-depth biblical seminars to local churches. Along the way I discovered and have been blessed by progressive Christian theology, in which I've been able to be active, including serving in 2010 as the the Interim Executive Director of the Jesus Seminar. I began attending FCC when I moved here (to be with family) from Atlanta in August, and I joined a few weeks later. I am impressed by the quality of FCC's ministries, and by the obvious, sincere hunger I see in you to experience the divine and to pursue service, compassion and justice. I pray that I may be able to contribute to these strengths as we find our path in ministry together. Thanks, Chuck

#### **Staff Christmas Gift Contributions**

If you would like to make a special monetary Christmas gift to our dedicated FCC staff, you may place a donation in the offering or mail it to the church and mark it "staff gift." This is your opportunity to thank the wonderful staff who serve us at FCC!

### Special Request from the Board Regarding Finances

At Sunday's board meeting, Jim Watson (Chair of the Finance Commission) shared this news:

*First:* A number of us need to get "caught up" with our 2018 pledged giving. We are a little over \$60,000 behind in our budgeted pledge giving. If you are among those who can help us by year end, we would more than welcome your gift!

*Second:* We are still waiting for a number of us to turn in our 2019 estimate of giving pledge cards. It is very difficult (and nerve racking!) for the board to bring a budget to the congregation without an accurate estimate of pledged giving. If you have not yet turned in your card, please do so as soon as possible!

### FCC Security Update

With the approval of the FCC trustees and the Property Committee, locks to the FCC exterior doors have recently been changed in the continuing effort to make FCC a safe place for our staff, members, friends and guests. Please contact the FCC office if you need a code to enter the building after hours. Thank you.



### FCC Holiday Office Hours

Monday, December 24: 9:00 am-Noon  
 December 25 & 26: Closed  
 December 27 & 28 Limited hours, please call  
 Monday, December 31: 9:00 - Noon  
 Tuesday, January 1: Closed  
 Wednesday - Friday: Normal hours resume

### UPCOMING EVENTS...

**Sunday, December 16**  
 Third Sunday of Advent  
*Special Commissioning Service*  
 8:30 am Meditation group  
 9:00 am Learning Session I  
 10:00 am Worship and Children's  
 Worship and Wonder  
 11:15 Learning Session II  
 11:15 am Handbell rehearsal  
 11:15 am All-Church Celebration for  
 Mark Knowles and Danielle Murry-  
 Knowles  
 4:00 pm Caroling

**Tuesday, December 18**  
 5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

**Wednesday, December 19**  
 5:30 pm Book Bunch Christmas Party

**Thursday, December 20**  
 6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

**Friday, December 21**  
 6:00 pm Campbellite Class Christmas  
 Party  
 6:30 pm Emmaus-Interpreters Class  
 Christmas Party

**Sunday, December 23**  
 Fourth Sunday of Advent  
 8:30 am Meditation group  
 9:00 am Learning Session I  
 10:00 am Worship and Children's  
 Worship and Wonder  
 11:15 am Learning Session II  
 11:15 am Handbell rehearsal

First Christian Church  
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**Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule**

**December 16:**  
All-Church Pitch In Reception

**December 23:**  
Choir and Handbell Choir

**December 30:**  
Campbellite Class

**Scripture Readings  
For Sunday Worship**

**December 16**  
Luke 2:15-18

**December 23**  
Excerpts from Matthew and Luke  
with reflections on "Silent Night"

**Christmas Eve Services**

**5:30 pm** Family Service with  
Candlelight

**7:30 pm** Seasonal Concert

**8:00 pm** Traditional with  
Communion