

# The CHRISTIAN



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FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
*(Disciples of Christ)*

# Visitor

## Fasting and Feasting during this Lenten Season

For centuries Christians have focused on three practices during the Lenten season: **prayer, fasting and almsgiving**. In the coming weeks, you'll notice extra effort in our worship - in the songs that we sing, the words we use, the colors that adorn our sanctuary. While we look forward to our time together in worship, it is important to continue that preparation at home.

As we travel through the final days of Jesus' life and his ministry, consider the act **of fasting AND feasting** in your preparation. Fasting is an incomplete practice without the feast that proves the goodness of God's gifts and the joy that comes from sharing them. We can do this in simple ways, such as giving up time with technology to spend time playing a board game with family, or using money that would have been spent on a cup of coffee at Starbucks and setting it aside for the Habitat CommUNITY Interfaith Build.

To help with your preparation, please pick up a copy of our **Lenten booklet** to use as weekly guidance within your household. It includes a reading, discussion, prayer and activities designed for all ages. You'll also find activities we can do as a congregation, including drives for MCUM, Church World Service and fundraising for the Habitat Build. Dates for those drives can

be found in the Lenten calendar on this page. You can get your copy of the FCC Lenten Booklet at church or call the office to have an electronic copy emailed to you. It is our hope that this small booklet will enrich your journey to Easter.

### FCC Lenten Calendar

#### **Sunday, March 5**

*Bluegrass Gospel Music Service*

#### **Sunday, March 19**

*MCUM Food Drive*

#### **Sunday, March 26**

*Hygiene kits for Church World Service*

#### **March 31 - April 2**

*CommUNITY Interfaith Community  
Build for Habitat for Humanity*

#### **Sunday, April 2**

*Opportunity House - Clothing and  
Houseware drive*

#### **April 13, 7:00 pm**

*Maundy Thursday Worship*

#### **April 14, 12:05 pm**

*Community Good Friday Service  
at First United Church*

#### **Sunday, April 16**

*Easter Sunday*

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**PASTOR'S PEN**  
**More Fasting and Feasting!**

After Tuesday's delicious meal of pancakes, sausage, some of the best toppings I have ever tasted, and some fun pancake flipping games, our Pancakes and Ashes event transitioned into a time when we began to reflect on what it means to fast as well as to feast. During the season of Lent, we'll continue to explore the twin disciplines of fasting and feasting. Please use the meditation below (along with the more extensive resource that is described on page 1) to guide your fasting and feasting. Originally attributed to Pope Francis, I have adapted it for our use.

**Fast from hurting words and feast on saying kind words.**  
**Fast from complaining and feast on gratitude.**  
**Fast from anger and feast on patience.**  
**Fast from pessimism and feast on hope.**  
**Fast from worries and feast on trusting in God.**  
**Fast from pressures and feast on prayer.**  
**Fast from bitterness and feast on joy.**  
**Fast from selfishness and feast on acts of compassion.**  
**Fast from grudges and feast on reconciliation.**  
**Fast from speaking and feast on listening in silence.**

Many people helped to make our Pancakes and Ashes Event fun as well as meaningful. A special word of thanks goes to Connie Myers and the team of folks who created and led the meaningful reflection stations that were set up throughout the church. Thanks also: to Carie Johann and her team for the delicious pancakes, as well as the rubbery ones that were used for the games!; to Jo Weddle and her team for the set up of Great Hall; to all who contributed to the evening's events. During the evening, as I sat in the sacred silence of the sanctuary, and as I prayed with and for those of you who came to receive ashes, my heart was filled with gratitude to God for you, a truly remarkable community of faith. I count it a privilege to serve as your pastor.

Blessings,  
Pastor Helen

PS. See you Sunday! Scott Cripe and his bluegrass band will be our worship leaders. The question of the day will be Peter's "Lord, how often should I forgive?"



## About Our Organist Nicole Simental

Nicole is a busy organist these days! Earlier this year she was invited to Louisiana to play the challenging organ part for the beautiful Duruflé *Requiem*, and last week was the guest organist at her undergrad alma mater Wooster College for a big performance with orchestra and chorus of Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* Symphony. And the next two weekends she will be returning to Moscow for the recitals related to her winning of the IV International Goedicke Organ Competition at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory. (Cleverly, on her way home she has scheduled her flight to connect in Spain where she will spend two days visiting with our former administrator Evelyn and Juan Carlos Zamudio in time to celebrate Evelyn's birthday!)

As has already been announced Nicole will be leaving us at the end of April to take the next step in her life. I would like to share the following note from Nicole that she sent about her new appointment:

"It is with excitement, nervousness and sadness that I am letting you know that I have accepted a job at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Columbus Ohio as the Principal Organist/Assistant Director of Music. My job will begin this coming June. I am beyond blessed that God has opened the door for this great opportunity to serve Him in the church.

While I am excited about a new adventure, it brings me sadness at the thought of not only leaving Bloomington but FCC as well. It has been such a joy and pleasure to serve the FCC community and to be a part of a beautiful church family. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement. I will miss all of you dearly and I look forward to the next few months together!!

Sincerely,  
Nicole"

## *Thank you Andi!*

Andi Fletcher has faithfully led FCC's youth for the past 5 years, starting with a "baptism by fire" when she stepped in at the last minute to oversee a youth trip to New York City. Since then, She has attended countless concerts, games, tournaments, recitals, and other events that have involved our FCC youth. She's planned and supervised trips to Holiday world, Tennessee, regional youth assembly, and other far off places. We can't count the hours of lost sleep at lock-ins and retreats. We also have Andi to thank for game nights, bible studies, reflection groups, and service projects. She's celebrated graduations, birthdays, and baptisms, prayed with, played with, worshiped with, worked with, served with, and shared life with the precious youth of our church. And this long list barely scratches the surface of her ministry over the last five years!

**Most of all Andi has loved our youth unconditionally**, "being there" for them in mind, body, and spirit, as she has modeled an authentic life of faith and vulnerability. I have been grateful for her faithful leadership over these years.

Andi now works full time with the Richland Bean Blossom School system, which--along with her family--keeps her life full and busy. Although she has chosen to let go of her "official" responsibilities with our FCC youth, she will remain an active member of First Christian Church.

Join us in the Chapel Gathering Space after worship on Sunday, March 5th, as we celebrate Andi Fletcher's ministry and thank her for her love and care for FCC's youth!



 **Habitat for Humanity**  
of Monroe County

### *The CommUNITY Interfaith Build for Habitat for Humanity is just around the corner!*

The countdown to this year's Habitat Build is on! How will you contribute? Can you give time to swing a hammer? Can you contribute financially toward our goal of **raising \$5,000?**

We have a ways to go with our fundraising goal. **So far, we have raised \$585 of the \$5,000 that we have committed to raising to make this build happen!**

**You can donate to FCC's campaign online** by going to FCC's website, [www.fccbloom.org](http://www.fccbloom.org), and clicking on the blue and green *CommUnity Interfaith Build* logo. That will take you to the FCC page to donate. **You can also write a check** and place it in the offering tray on Sunday or bring it by the church office. Checks should be made out to First Christian Church with "Habitat Build" on the memo line.

*Thank you for supporting FCC's sponsorship of this great event!*



## A Bluegrass Worship Service on March 5

For worship on March 5, Scott Cripe and his fellow bluegrass band members, *The Kerosene Cucumbers*, have generously volunteered to offer a worship experience based on music of the bluegrass tradition...immediate, heartfelt and spiritually invigorating...which will lead our congregation into the Lenten season.

The Kerosene Cucumbers have been playing Bluegrass music for over 30 years. The group started as a duo of Steve Woods – banjo and Scott Cripe – bass, entertaining guests during Happy Hours at the Fourwinds Resort before their nightly house band show. Cary Weaver - guitar and John Gates - mandolin joined the group a few years later and Steve's four piece Bluegrass vision was complete.

From festivals to fish fry's all over southern Indiana, and now at FCC you can experience the Cucumbers and their unique and energetic approach to classic Bluegrass music.

“For the love of that Bluegrass music and the joy it brings” would be the reason this group continues to pick and explore this wonderful music and tradition. We hope you enjoy our music. - Steve, Scott, Cary & John

THE KEROSENE CUCUMBERS

## World Day of Prayer

Church Women United, a group of women from area churches, is presenting its first celebration of 2017 on Friday, March 3rd. We urge you all to attend!

Church Women United is a co-founder of Monroe County United Ministries and also owns and operates Opportunity House, a thrift store located on West 11th Street in Bloomington. Church Women United is currently working on a project designed to aid foster children in Monroe County.

To this end, items such as backpacks, fleece blankets, size 7 underwear, pajamas, socks, books and stuffed animals are being collected. **Collection will continue through May 3rd.** Please contact Rae Ann Tibbs at 812-322-8213 or Mary Polk at 812-339-4194 with questions.

**Celebration: World Day of Prayer**

**Location: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**

**4235 W. Third Street, Bloomington**

**Date: Friday, March 3**

**Time: Program at 11:00 am & Lunch at 12:00 pm**

**Topic: “Am I Being Unfair to You?” Presented by the Women of the Philippines**



## You are here in Guatemala

*By Alex Morse, Growing Projects and Latin America Programs for Foods Resource Bank*

Beginning in the 1980's, the Evangelical Conference of Churches of Guatemala (CIEDEG) began working with a group of Ixil - Maya communities near the city of Nebaj. At that point Guatemala had already experienced nearly 20 years of conflict, but the worst suffering for the Ixil people was only starting.

President Efraim Rios Mott had taken power through a coup and he believed that the Ixil people were secretly supporting the armed groups in the mountains. Rios Mott's army was unable to eliminate the armed groups, so he ordered his soldiers to eliminate the Ixil communities he believed were supplying them with food. In communities like Pulay, soldiers entered the villages, took adult men prisoner, killed livestock, burned the crops in the fields, and turned homes to ash. Most prisoners were never heard from again.

Ixil families fled high into the mountains and began living as "communities of resistance." When asked what this meant, they said "to resist at this point just meant surviving; it meant not letting the Ixil people disappear."

In 1996, the government signed peace accords, committing to helping indigenous communities rebuild. Those commitments were never kept. Today, 80% of indigenous children in Guatemala are malnourished, one of the highest rates of child malnutrition in the world.

When the Guatemalan the Ixil community was suffering from the neglect of the Guatemalan government, you were here, providing assistance. Through your support of Week of Compassion, CIEDEG has been able to continue supporting the needs of Ixil communities near Nebaj.

In a partnership with Church World Service and Foods Resource Bank, CIEDEG has been providing sustainable agricultural training to some of the communities most affected by the conflict. CIEDEG not only teaches people to grow more food, but also works to help reweave the social fabric of the communities after more than 40 years of violence.

CIEDEG helps families produce more food through the use of greenhouses. Groups of five to six women build and then work in a greenhouse together. Families provide most of the materials, and CIEDEG provides them with the plastic greenhouse covering and training. These greenhouses allow families to grow enough to feed themselves, and allows for them to earn an income by selling their vegetables at market. In an area where jobs and land are scarce, tomatoes, cucumbers, and bell peppers can be transformational.

Each year, CIEDEG is able to train new groups and reach new families with their work. CIEDEG has built more than 100 greenhouses, and this month four more are being constructed. This is community transformation and it is happening because you are here through Week of Compassion.

# BBQ

## Youth & Families BBQ 4:00-7:00 pm on March 5

*If you are in middle school or high school OR the parent of a middle or high school student...*

Plan to join us at **Max Fettchenhauer's house** for some great food and the opportunity to share ideas for a memory-making and FUN youth group!



## MCUM Challenge

**Amount Donated: 213 lbs.**  
**2017 Goal: 2,000 lbs.**  
**Last Trip: 61 lbs.**

### March Items Wanted:

canned tuna, chicken, canned fruit, canned soups, laundry detergent, all-purpose cleaner, dish soap

*Thank you for showing how much you care.*

### UPCOMING EVENTS...

#### March 5

10:00 am, Blue Grass worship service

11:00am, Reception for Andi Fletcher

4:00 pm, Youth & Family BBQ

#### March 6

6:30 pm, Jesus Before the Gospels book study

7:00 pm, Women's Arts & Crafts

#### March 9

5:30 pm Handbell choir rehearsal

6:15 pm Sanctuary choir rehearsal

#### March 10

5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

#### March 12

10:00 am Sunday worship  
(No Sunday School)

### FCC Scrapbook

If you would like your church event featured in the FCC scrapbook, please provide information and copies of pictures to Jane Zebendon.

### Book Bunch Date Change

The Women's Book Bunch will meet on March 23rd at 4:00pm. The book for this meeting is *The Red Notebook* by Antoine Laurain. It's a short, easy read. The Guardian calls it, "As entertaining as it is original, this is a story to enjoy like a chocolate with a surprise centre."



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**Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule**



*Don't forget to  
Bring Goodies!*

**March 5: Sanctuary Choir &  
Handbell Choir**

**March 12: Grades K-12 & Sharing  
Table**

**March 19: Emmaus Interpreters  
Class**

**Scripture Readings  
for Sunday Worship**

**March 5**  
Matthew 18:15-35

**March 12**  
Matthew 20:1-16

**March 19**  
Matthew 22:1-16

**March 26**  
Matthew 25:1-13