

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

Volunteer Appreciation Sunday May 21

It is estimated that about 62.6 million Americans volunteer nearly 7.7 billion hours of their time each year. The estimated value of this volunteer service is nearly \$173 billion. Volunteers in our community play a vital role in supporting and providing much needed services. Many of those services would not be possible without those who give of their time and talents.

The ministries of First Christian Church thrive because of the generosity of a dedicated and joyful congregation filled with this volunteer spirit. It is your service that keeps FCC moving forward.

Volunteers at FCC provide breakfast on Sunday morning to our community, and a warm place to sleep on a cold winter night. Volunteers welcome all who enter our doors, and deliver cookies to visitors. They prepare our newsletter and our bulletins. They answer our phones and water our plants. They keep the building maintained and the grounds beautiful. They host gatherings, teach our children, and lead our adult groups. Volunteers sing and play music, they prepare and serve communion and they pray for our world.

Join us on Sunday, May 21, as we show appreciation for our volunteers. We will lift up their service during worship at 10:00 am and celebrate with a reception in the Chapel Gathering Space following worship.

All-Church Picnic

May 28 at Karst Farm Park

FCC's Annual All-Church Picnic is just around the corner! Join us at **Karst Farm Park (Shelter #5) at 4:00 pm on Sunday, May 28th** for fun and great food. FCC's youth group will provide the fun and games, including water balloons and a piñata! All you need to do is bring something to throw on the grill, your own dinnerware and a side or dessert to share. *Please note, This is a new location! Karst Farm Park is at 5200 W. Airport Rd. The entrance is on S. Endwright Road, just south of Grandview Elementary School.*



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PASTOR'S PEN

Fill in the Blanks!

I wonder how many of us can fill in the blanks for the sentences below. Here is a hint: they all have to do with the history and identity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

We are Disciples, a _____ for _____ in a fragmented world. No creed but _____; no book but the _____.

Christian _____ is our _____ star.

If you can't fill in the blanks, no worries! My guess is that most of us can't! That's because the majority of our members/ participants were "raised up" in churches other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Because of this, our congregation has within it a rich diversity of perspectives and opinions about what it means to be "church," including how we understand: 1) worship, 2) our relationships with God, Christ, each other, and the world, 3) the nature of service, 4) our physical space, and 4) so much more!!

All this has led me to develop a series on that highlights who we are as part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and I'm starting to get very excited about it! Starting June 4, we'll begin the five week series. This will be a "refresher" course for some and an introductory course for others. And (very importantly!) as we move forward with our Future Story, it will ground us with a common understanding and deeper appreciation of who we are as "part of the One Body of Christ" on the corner of Kirkwood and _____!

The series will include a sermon as well as a presenter(s) during the 11:00 am summer forum.

Below is the overview. Please note that we have some excellent guest preachers and presenters!!

People of The Parentheses: Our History and Identity as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

June 4 (Pentecost)

Sermon: How Big is Our Church? (Identity)
Guest Preacher: Rick Spleth, Regional Minister.

Forum: Overview of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including information on the General Assembly and introduction of the new candidate for General Minister and President.

June 11

Sermon: How do we worship? (Spirituality)
Preacher: Pastor Helen
Forum: FCC Future Story Update
Presenters: Future Story Steering Committee

June 18

Sermon: What is our Authority? (The Good Book)
Preacher: Pastor Helen
Forum: Disciples Roots in Historical Context
Guest Speaker: Bruce Ervin

June 25

Sermon: How do we reason? (Faithful Minds)
Guest Preacher: Bruce Ervin
Forum: 50 Years later: Is it time to restructure again?
Guest Speaker: Bruce Ervin

July 2

Sermon: What Holds us Together? (Table)
Forum: Issues, Resolutions, Speakers, and Celebrations related to the upcoming General Assembly

New Summer Series to Begin June 4

Regional Minister Rick Spleth to Deliver Pentecost Sunday Message

Join us for worship at 10:00 am on June 4 as Regional Minister Rick Spleth kicks off our summer sermon series examining who we are as part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Rev. Spleth's sermon will consider "How Big is Our Church?" He will also lead our forum following worship that will include information about the General Assembly (July 8-12 in Indianapolis) and an introduction of the new candidate for General Minister and President, Rev. Teresa Hord Owens.

Rev. Owens was chosen from a field of more than 40 people recommended last summer. Nine were screened, and four were interviewed in person by the search committee. Rev. Owens is widely sought after as a preacher, speaker and workshop facilitator. Her ministry and intellectual interests include a theology of reconciliation, cultural intelligence, developing inclusive and multi-cultural congregations, and the mentoring of youth and young adults.

Graduation Recognition Sunday, June 4

Each Spring First Christian Church looks forward to honoring our high school and other graduates during worship. We will recognize the accomplishments of these hard working young people on Sunday, June 4.



Please, send information about your graduate (including name of high school, honors received, sports or activities, and post-high school plans) to Connie Myers.

We want to be sure to recognize all graduates. So, please let us know if you are graduating.

Did you know that you can raise funds for FCC while you shop?



If you shop at Kroger or online at Amazon, those shopping dollars can also mean contributions to the ministries of First Christian Church. If you have a shopping card with Kroger, you can choose FCC to receive contributions. Just log in with your shopping card and go to the Kroger Community Rewards page. Our organization number is 45408.

The Amazon Smiles program also allows you to contribute to FCC while shopping. Simply go to smile.amazon.com and choose First Christian Church to receive support while you shop.



There is NO additional cost to use these programs.

Director of XPLOR Program to Visit FCC

As indicated in the Future Story, we are moving ahead in the application process to be a host site for the National Benevolent Association's (NBA) XPLOR program. This program is a residency that "provides 10-month professional development and vocational discernment opportunities for young adults (age 21– 30 year-olds) to live simply in community and engage in direct service and justice work."

The Rev. Bonnie Osei-Frimpong, Director of NBA XPLOR, will visit FCC on May 21-22. She will be here for an initial visit in this application process. It's a chance to meet us and to consider possible future steps. Rev. Osei-Frimpong will attend worship, meet the Board, meet with FCC church leaders as well as regional church leaders, and tour our building and town. Please, welcome Rev. Osei-Frimpong as together we explore the possibility of hosting the NBA's XPLOR program.



Do you need a ride to worship on Sunday morning or know someone who does?

We are looking into the feasibility of developing a ministry that could provide rides for homebound members to attend church on Sunday morning. Currently, we are surveying the FCC membership to identify those who would benefit from a ride and those who could give a ride. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please contact the church office or Holly Biddle at hollybiddle@mwcbk.com.



After worshipping with us for a little over a year, we are so glad that Amy Wardlow has decided to join our FCC family.

Amy grew up in Columbus where she was active in the Missionary Alliance Church. She has a passion for and experience in advocating for older Americans. She has enjoyed the warm welcome she and others receive here at FCC.

Please, extend a warm welcome to Amy Wardlow.

Music in This Sacred Space

By Jan Harrington

Alleluia!

Did you ever wonder what Alleluia and Amen really mean?

So, “Alleluia” isn’t just for Easter Day, as you can tell if you’ve been in church the weeks since Easter! “Alleluia” or “hallelujah,” comes from the Hebrew word meaning, “praise Yah,” short for Yahweh, the name approximating the mysterious name of God. Alleluias are sung and said many times in today’s liturgies and remain prominent throughout Eastertide. In the medieval church, alleluia was sometime “buried” on the last Sunday before Lent (and in some modern liturgies it is never sung during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent to this day). Bishop William Duranti, in the thirteenth century, explained, “We part from Alleluia as from a beloved friend, whom we embrace many times and kiss before we leave him. At Easter, we are reunited. The alleluia rises from the ground, symbolizing Christ’s resurrection from the tomb.” So during Eastertide this year tucked into the service you have (and will continue to hear) alleluias sung loudly, softly, majestically, and prayerfully. With each alleluia, we praise God for the love that is stronger than the grave, the love that raises us into eternal life.

Amen!

So what about “Amen”? We say it a lot – at the end of prayers and when Helen shouts out “Let the People say – “ Well Wikipedia has a definitive answer abbreviated here.

The word is a declaration of affirmation found in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament and the Koran. It is found in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim worship as a concluding word or response to prayers. Common English translations of the word *amen* include “verily” and “truly”. It can also be used colloquially to express strong agreement, as in, for instance, *amen to that*.

So how many ways do we pronounce it? In English, the word *amen* has two primary pronunciations, *ah-men* (/ɑːˈmɛn/) or *ay-men* (/eɪˈmɛn/), with minor additional variation in emphasis (the two syllables may be equally stressed instead of placing primary stress on the second). In North America the *ah-men* pronunciation is used in performances of classical music, in churches with more formalized rituals and in liberal to mainline Protestant denominations, as well as almost every Jewish congregation, in line with modern Hebrew pronunciation. The *ay-men* pronunciation, a product of the Great Vowel Shift dating to the 15th century, is associated with Irish Protestantism and conservative Evangelical denominations generally, and is the pronunciation typically used in gospel music. In Arabic and in the Russian Orthodox tradition the pronunciation *ah-meen* (ʾĀmīn) is used. And as we have discovered from our Amen sung prayer response for Eastertide “amen” in the South African Xhosa dialect is *Bawo!*

The word Amen occurs 30 times in the Hebrew Bible, 52 times in the Synoptic Gospels and 25 in John. The use of “amen” has been generally adopted in Christian worship as a concluding word for prayers and hymns and an expression of strong agreement. The liturgical use of the word in apostolic times is attested by a passage from 1 Corinthians, and Justin Martyr (c. 150) describes the congregation as responding “amen” to the benediction after the celebration of the Eucharist. Its introduction into the baptismal formula of the Eastern Orthodox Church where it is pronounced after the name of each person of the Trinity was probably later. All of Paul’s letters end with “Amen”, and “Amen” concludes the New Testament at Rev. 22:21.

To find lots more interesting details and history of the use of the see the whole article at quoted here at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amen> . In the meantime – continue to shout out “Alleluia, Amen” with gusto and devotion in all of our acts of worship!



Lauren Johann and Olivia Walsh attended the Regional Spring Youth Assembly in Rochester, IN the last weekend in April. When you see either of these young ladies in the hallways at church, be sure to ask them what memories they took away from the event. Many thanks to Andi Fletcher for volunteering her time as driver and chaperone.

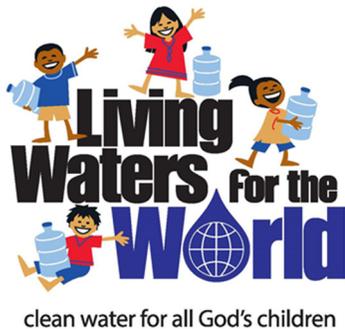
All middle and high school youth and their families are invited to a POOL PARTY at Lauren Johann's house on Sunday, May 21, from 4-7 p.m. Burgers and hot dogs, drinks, and tableware will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

On Sunday, May 28, the youth will provide water balloons, a piñata, and games for the kids at the all-church picnic at Karst Farm Park. See Lily Hoover or Kate Myers for details.

Register Now!

**Downtown Vacation Bible
School May 30-June 2
9:00 am-Noon**

Registration deadline is May 15.
Registration forms can be picked up after
worship in the Chapel Gathering Space.



Do you have a favorite church camp song or memory? It's time to register for camp! We encourage everyone to attend, and make memories of their own.

Register now at indianadisciples.org.

Camp scholarships are available.

Bedford Christian Camps:

June 19-24: High School Camp (Gr. 9-12)

June 26-July 1: Middle School Camp (Gr. 6-8)

July 5-7: You and Me (Ages 5+ with adult)

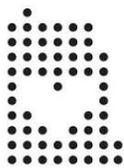
July 13-15: New Beginnings (Grades 1-3)

July 17-22: Explorer Camp (Gr. 4-5)

Volunteer for The Gathering Place

FCC's Gathering Place breakfast has been serving the Bloomington community for more than 10 years. Each Sunday FCC volunteers prepare and serve breakfast to more than 100.

Volunteers work in the kitchen, visit with guests, help procure food during the week, or bring fresh fruit to share on Sunday morning. If you would like to join this ministry, please contact Mark Knowles or Connie Daugherty.



MCUM Challenge

2017 Goal: 2,000 lbs.
 Amount Donated: 874 lbs.
 Last Trip: 55 lbs.

May 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...

May 12

Noon Executive Committee
 5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

May 14 (Mother's Day)

10:00 am Worship
 11:15 am Learning and Fellowship opportunities

May 16

5:30 pm Made to Create! Water Color and Spirituality class

May 17

7:00 pm Men's Book Group

May 18

6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

May 19

5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

May 21

10:00 am Worship
 11:15 am Learning and Fellowship opportunities
 Noon Board Meeting
 4:00 pm Youth Group pool party

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Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

*Don't Forget to
Bring Goodies!*

May 14: Book Bunch & Men's Book Club

May 21: Choir and Handbell Choir

May 28: Grades K-12 and Sharing Table

**Scripture Readings
for Sunday Worship**

May 14
Romans 1:1-17

May 21
Romans 5:1-11

May 28
Romans 6:1-14