

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

The FCC Story Continues with New Art Ministries *Create a Beautiful Page with Two New Workshops at FCC*

As the FCC Story unfolds, we continue to explore and embrace different ways to experience spiritual growth. The creation of art, in its many forms, has long been a means of exploring and expressing one's spirituality. This spiritual practice can be experienced through the creation of art as well as witnessing and reflecting on art.

FCC's Art Ministry has grown over the past couple of years with opportunities to learn a new technique or to simply ponder and pray while creating art independently. You may have participated in our art station during Jazz Vespers, or contributed to our Easter Cross banner that now hangs in our sanctuary. Perhaps you found meaning in witnessing the creation of art during our Resurrection Sunday service as an Easter image emerged from a canvas that Joe Lee painted for the congregation.

In the coming month, we will have two new opportunities brought by members of the FCC family. On Saturday, May 18th, Bess Lee, Rachel Rosalina and Michelle Dalmau-Walsh will share an art project they led while on their pilgrimage to Cuba in November of 2018. Come and create at this inter-generational art workshop on marbled paper. It's incredibly fun, and incredibly beautiful. The workshop will begin at 9:00 am and end by noon. Please call the FCC office to reserve your spot by Sunday, May 12. You won't want to miss this great workshop that's suitable for ages 6-96!

Our second workshop will be offered on Saturday, June 8, from 10:30 am - 2:30 pm. Rachel Rosalina and Lesley Bolton, who have 36 years of experience in publishing and several publications between them, will lead a writing workshop. Rachel will guide participants in creative nonfiction exercises from 10:30 am to noon and, after a lunch break, Lesley will do the same with fiction from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. Join us!

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Volume 61, number 9 May 1, 2019

Pastor's Pen

Some Words About Life.

Easter—with its affirmation of life—was glorious, indeed! And now that we are into the liturgical season of Easter, we continue to affirm and give thanks for life in a variety of ways. Our worship themes will be drawn from the book of Acts, which ranks in my “top three” favorite books of the Bible. Because Acts was written by the same author who wrote Luke, you will recognize some of the same themes that have emerged this year as we have immersed ourselves in Luke’s “take” on the Good News of God’s living and life-giving presence in the world.

This Sunday (May 5), we will affirm life in Christ through the sacrament of baptism. I have been working with Kayla Simon for the past year as she prepares for her baptism. Kayla is the granddaughter of the late Rev. Ron Parker, whose 17-year ministry here at First Christian Church helped us become the warm and welcoming congregation that we are today. As we join with her family in celebration of her baptism, we will give thanks for the ways that Christ’s church will be strengthened for ministry.

The following Sunday (May 12) we will affirm life in Christ as we receive, bless, and dedicate Jackson Cull into First Christian Church. Jackson is the son of Sam and Michelle Cull and grandson of Sue and Doug Cull. I don’t believe he has missed a single Sunday at church since he moved to Bloomington with his parents earlier this year!

Speaking of life—with its many turns—my father (88) suffered a stroke a couple of weeks

ago. While we remain hopeful for a good recovery, the rehabilitation process is slow going. Bruce and I have decided to travel to Lynchburg later this month to be with my parents. Please keep Bob and Nita Floe Hempfling and my family in your prayers, that we may continue to hold on to God’s promise of life during these challenging days.

My current plans are to be with you each Sunday in May; however, on May 26 (the day that follows our late night return from Lynchburg) our own Ashlyn Reynolds, our Director of Youth Ministries, will bring the morning message. Ashlyn has real gifts for ministry, and you will want to be present in worship to encourage this thoughtful, faithful, and gifted young woman. I give thanks for Ashlyn.

And I give thanks for all of our wonderful staff. FCC has an amazingly gifted staff who are able to simultaneously lead, adapt, serve, support, challenge, and walk alongside you and each other as we navigate life on and beyond the corner of Kirkwood and Washington. If you haven’t thanked them lately, I encourage you to do so in the coming days.

See you Sunday!



Pastor Helen



Interfaith Friends: Saving the Earth!

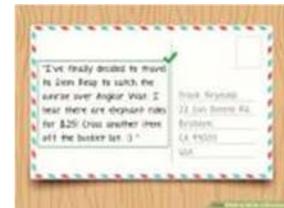
Are you concerned about our environment, but not sure what you can do about it? Join us for “*Saving the Earth*” an interfaith collaborative community event! This one-day event will provide you with information on everything from earthworms to solar energy! Come learn from experts and then take that knowledge to make a difference in Bloomington and on our planet.

This spectacular event is brought by Interfaith Friends. “What is Interfaith Friends,” you ask? It’s a collaborative group of faith communities that includes First Presbyterian, Beth Shalom, Trinity Episcopal, Unitarian Universalist, and FCC! You may recall the collaborative interfaith event last summer when we created a “neighborhood” in FCC’s Great Hall. Well, this group now has an “official” name, **Interfaith Friends**.

Saving the Earth will be on **Monday, May 27 from 10:00 am-1:00pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church**. This interfaith event is also INTERGENERATIONAL. All are welcome!

You will learn about the importance of decomposers, like worms, and how bees contribute to a healthy environment from experts at the IU Biology Department. We will make seed balls that produce plants that bees and butterflies love. Climate expert Ben Brabson will talk about solar power, and you will learn how much energy is consumed in your home. You’ll also have the opportunity to inform our elected officials through a writing campaign. We’ll provide the postcards and stamps. And last, but certainly not least, a picnic lunch will be provided.

Plan to join your FCC friends for a day of focus on “Saving the Earth!” For more information and to RSVP, please contact Connie Myers.



Another Fun Day on FCC’s Lawn!

We hope you were able to join us last Sunday for fun on our lawn during the Bloomington Street Fair. It was a really wonderful day. The weather cooperated and fun was had by all who attended. It was a great opportunity to welcome people to FCC and share Christ’s inclusive love with the Bloomington community.

These great events are not possible without volunteers who set-up, welcome, and clean-up after! **Thank you to all who helped make this day a success.** Of course these events require a lot of preparation and planning. **Thank you to Jean Thompson** for leading the FCC efforts and coordinating our Block Sponsorship of the Street Fair, and creating such a fun and welcoming presence to share with our community.

FCC Welcomes New Member Mackenzie Colston!

Please extend a warm FCC welcome to **Mackenzie Colston** who joined FCC on April 28th. Mackenzie grew up in Bloomington, and was raised Lutheran. She has enjoyed attending FCC and appreciates how gracious everyone has been toward her. She participates in several FCC small groups including “Faith Friends and Film” and Bloomington Bible Study.



In Our Prayers...

Please hold the Jackson family (Brian & Melissa, David, Maya, and Ben) in your prayers as they mourn the loss of Melissa's brother, Lucas Edwards (37). Cards and notes may be sent to Melissa and family at 3693 S. Sowder Square, Bloomington, IN 47401.

Preparations for XPLOR Residents Begins

The construction of our basement XPLOR apartment has begun! The rooms have been emptied and prepared for the (very minimal) demolition needed prior to remodeling. The building materials have been purchased and are on site. Cindy Welch is heading up the volunteer schedule for this project. We are working on a timeline for “work weekends” and we will share that information and provide a sign-up as soon as we can.

Meanwhile, we have received word on who some of our XPLOR residents will be. In August we will welcome Kristen Valentine, Adrian Griffin and Miche Andre. Kristen is graduating from the University of Lynchburg (an historic Disciples-related school) this May with a Bachelor of Arts degree, major in Criminology and minor in History. Her home church is Christ Temple Apostolic in Danville, Virginia. Adrian is from Fayetteville, Arkansas where he grew up in the First Christian Church of Fayetteville. Adrian is very active in his church, singing in the choir and participating in the praise band. Miche is an artist from Naples, Florida. He has been a long-time member of the Naples New Haitian Church of the Nazarene, serving as a Sunday School teacher to children and also a member of the Habitat for Humanity team. He will graduate from Hope College in Michigan this June.



Graduation Recognition Sunday, June 2

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 2.

Please, send information about your graduate (including name of school, honors received, sports or activities, and post-high school plans) to Connie Myers by May 23. We want to be sure to recognize all graduates. So, please let us know if you are graduating.

Many Thanks to Those Who Made Easter Sunday Special for Everyone!

The Easter Cross banner that hangs above the communion table, has a story behind it! Perhaps some of you remember how, throughout the season of Lent, we had opportunities to write our prayers on the purple paper that was on a table in the sanctuary. Using colored chalk, we wrote many prayers over the course of the Lenten Season, until by the end of the week, the banner was filled. During Holy Week, Linda Abe "smudged" your prayers together, transforming them into the Easter Cross banner that adorns our sanctuary. Thank you, Linda, for your creative vision.

We also thank Joe Lee for his creative work on Easter Sunday morning. People of all ages were mesmerized as they watched an Easter image mysteriously emerge on the large canvas that Joe painted from the other side. Bob Bernacki designed and built the frame and the structure for the work of art.

So many people helped make Easter Sunday special at FCC for all ages and stages. Thanks also to the Sanctuary Choir and guest musicians, under the direction of Jan Harrington, who beautifully communicated the mystery and joy of Easter in the universal language of music.

We are also thankful for the youth of FCC, led by Ashlyn Reynolds. Our Youth started Easter Sunday extra early by leading the sunrise service at Camp Bedford. They then headed back to Bloomington to hide hundreds of Easter eggs (they had stuffed with treats earlier) for the annual Easter Egg Hunt!

You've probably heard the saying, "Many hands make light work." Well, there is no shortage of helpful hands at FCC. It is all of these "hands" working together that create meaningful experiences and life-long memories here at FCC. Thank you!



Do You Sew or Quilt?

Please join the Women's Arts & Crafts Group for a day of stitching fun THIS Saturday, May 4, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. in the Great Hall. (You can pick up any flowers you ordered from the spring sale before you come and stitch.) We'll be creating quilted finger labyrinth squares for use in our children's activity bags this summer and—if we can make enough—at the General Assembly this July.

The labyrinth, an ancient symbol, offers us a metaphor for life's journey. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has but one path; you follow the path in to the center and out again. Christians most often walk a labyrinth in prayer or as a contemplative exercise. Finger labyrinths engage the sense of touch during prayer and may help wandering minds find a calm center.

If you would like to join or support this creative process, contact Susan Jenkin or Connie Myers.



Cyclone Idai Response

“Water just wouldn’t stop falling. Our house was on the verge of collapse, so my wife and I picked up the kids and left for high ground. It was awful to see our lifelong efforts, our home, wash away like that. But we are lucky, at least our whole family is safe.” – João 34, father of four (*name changed for anonymity).*

These are the words of a survivor. After [Cyclone Idai](#) wrought havoc on Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, not everyone was as lucky as João. The intense tropical storm left more than 1,000 dead, thousands still missing, and hundreds of thousands displaced.

For many reasons, including the difficulty of travel to that area, this disaster has received little coverage in mainstream media. But the needs in that region are urgent. Even in the ongoing search for the missing, the rush to meet basic needs for survivors is overwhelming relief organizations. And, as is often the case, pre-existing infrastructure issues make those efforts even more challenging. With little power, few roads, and limited communication, getting resources to all the locations in need proved almost impossible. Now, several weeks after the initial event, complications begin to arise and create secondary crises. Contaminated water sources mean that cholera is beginning to spread throughout some communities. And now, with over a million acres of crops lost to flooding, hunger is a growing concern.

With support from Week of Compassion, ACT Alliance is providing clean water, food, health services and basic shelter to those who most desperately need it.

Meanwhile, the United Church of Christ in Mozambique headquarters were located in Beira, the community in the center of the cyclone and the hardest hit area. In addition to taking part in the efforts to mobilize relief to those who need it, UCCM is using their own headquarters-- which was severely damaged--as the hub for organizing supplies. Through [Global Ministries](#), Week of Compassion has provided emergency grants to support these efforts to bring relief in spite of overwhelming challenges. Working closely with Global Ministries and our partners, we help provide support wherever there is need in the world, and lift up communities in prayer in times of suffering.

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We seek to equip and empower disciples to alleviate the suffering of others through disaster response, humanitarian aid, sustainable development and the promotion of mission opportunities. Thank you for your continued support for Week of Compassion.

Children’s Learning Hour Room Change

Due to remodeling to create the XPLOR residents’ apartment on the lower level, the children’s FaithSteps group will move from Room 2 to Room 7/8.



Join us at 6:30 pm on May 3 for First Friday Jazz Vespers with the Elena Escudero Quartet.

Flower Sale Pick-Up This Saturday!

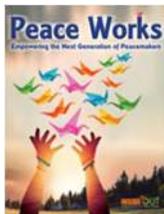
If you ordered flowers from FCC's Annual Flower Sale, please plan to pick up your order on Saturday, **May 4 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm at the Solution Tree parking lot located at 555 Morton Ave.** Extra flowers will be available to purchase on a first come, first served basis.

If you have questions or would like to help unload and sort the orders, please arrive by 9:00 am or contact Diane Thrasher with questions.

Thank you to all who made this fundraiser a success! Sales were over \$3,000!

Early Bird Registration for Church Camp Ends May 15

Our prayer is that YOU will have a "PEACE-filled" summer at camp (but first you must register). Go to the Indiana Disciples website to complete your registration, or fill out a form and bring it to church. We will pay up to 100% of your child's camp fees. See Pastor Helen for more information.



UPCOMING EVENTS...

Friday, May 3

6:30 pm First Friday Jazz Vespers

Saturday, May 4

11:00 am - 1:00 pm Flower Order Pick-up

1:00 pm Women's Arts & Crafts Finger Labyrinth Project

Sunday, May 5

8:30 am Meditation group

9:00 am Learning Session I

10:00 am Worship

11:15 am Learning Session II

1:00 pm Bloomington Bible Study

Monday, May 6

7:00 pm Women's Arts & Crafts

Tuesday, May 7

5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

Wednesday, May 8

11:45 am Voices of Faith

Thursday, May 9

5:30 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal

6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Sunday, May 12

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

1:00 pm Bloomington Bible Study

Tuesday, May 14

1:30 pm Caregivers Create!

5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

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The Christian Visitor

Vol. 61, no. 9



Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

May 5:
Grades K-12 & Sharing Table

May 12:
Sanctuary Choir & Handbell Choir

May 19:
Campbellite Class

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

May 5
Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60

May 12
Acts 8:26-39

May 19
Acts 15:1-18