

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

Sharing Christ's Inclusive Love

FCC's Stewardship Emphasis Begins as We Consider the Ways We Share Christ's Love

A number of years ago, FCC engaged the Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation in a congregational revisioning process that resulted in FCC's Future Story. Somewhere along the way, we began to center our missional work around the statement that, "***FCC exists to share Christ's inclusive love through serving, welcoming, learning, and offering spiritual connection.***"

We have lived this statement as a church community through our classes and programs, our outreach and fellowship. You can see this in the way we welcome folks coming to a service at FCC for the first time or in handing out a bottle of cold water on a hot summer day at Bloomington PrideFest. You can experience this in participating in our book studies, our art classes, and our special interest groups. There's no hesitation at FCC when called to fill a need in the community, whether it's providing a hot meal at Beacon, supplying masks to help keep others safe and healthy, or by helping citizens register to vote.

Our sermon series this fall will explore this "WHY" statement. We will look in-depth at what it means for FCC to serve, to welcome, to learn, and to offer spiritual connection. Here is the outline for the next three weeks:

October 10: We serve.

Scripture: Mark 10:17-31 Sermon: *Just One More Thing!*

October 17: We welcome and learn.

Scripture: Mark 4:26-34 Sermon: *Planting Good Seeds*

October 24: We offer spiritual connection.

Scripture: Mark 10:46-52 Sermon: *Sarah Lynne Gershon preaching*

We hope you will join us for worship at 10:00 am each Sunday (in-person or online) as we consider how we share the inclusive love of Christ as a community of faith. Consecration Sunday will be October 24 when we will each have the opportunity to dedicate our resources anew to the ongoing support of this church's mission to share the inclusive love of Christ.

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Will Writes

...Over All These Things Put on Love...

On Sunday, several of our youth, guided and supported by Ashlyn Reynolds, led us in worship. Using the words of Colossians 3:8-17 they invited us to come to the communion table setting aside anger, rage, and malice and putting on a new nature of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. They did this through simple questions about when we have felt excluded, how we might include others, and how forgiveness can reshape us and our community.

After each question was posed, pairs of people throughout the sanctuary shared their thoughts with one another. It was a rich and meaningful time of worship. I am thankful for the gifts of our young people and their willingness to share.

Our Stewardship Emphasis theme is "Sharing Christ's Inclusive Love." This theme comes from a statement developed several years ago seeking to encapsulate a vision of why our congregation exists. It is challenging for us, asking us to "share," to be "inclusive" and to "love" in the name of Jesus. The statement speaks of welcoming, serving, and seeking spiritual connection. Underneath those broad ideas are the more direct and difficult challenges that our youth lifted before us. I want to include everyone at the table of our Lord, but come to that table with a lifetime of my own experiences, biases, and fears. What needs to change in me to make that welcome real? How do I offer forgiveness and, equally important, receive forgiveness? Can I (can we) sense the presence of the Spirit that helps us "put on love" as we seek to be church in this time?

This month the church asks us to consider what we will share in the coming year. This is about much more than meeting a budget. The invitation to generous giving is first an invitation to consider what it means to be people who "share the inclusive love of Christ." As you and I reflect on our level of giving, we are deciding how our congregation will live out this vision. We are deciding what kind of community First Christian Church will be. Stewardship is never just about money; it is a reflection of who we are and how we live our faith. It is one way we try to answer those questions our youth were asking us on Sunday.

Paul says to the Colossians "over all these things put on love." May we see that our very real concerns about money, buildings, and the health of the church do not shape who we are. They are simply how we declare our love for one another, for our neighbors, and for God.

Grace and Peace,



Will

Join us for Third Friday Jazz Vespers
October 15 at 6:30 pm

With The
Garrett Spoelhof Trio
Featuring Wynton Gage, Vocalist

Third Friday
Jazz
VESPERS
— reflection —

Come on Out on Oct. 15 for a Little Jazz at FCC
It's the Best Show on Kirkwood!

The third Friday in September the town was crowded. No parking, restaurants full, crowded sidewalks marked "Parents Weekend" at IU, not to mention the big game the next day. And FCC had a renewed beginning of its great "Jazz Vespers!"

My wife was participating in what was "the best show on Kirkwood" that night! Well, it was far more than a show, with meaningful worship, silence, and liturgy that Linda Abe and Jan Harrington put together. Our exciting new soloist, Wynton Gage, added "Autumn Leaves" at the end of the program, and it was perfect. Except for the crowd! Jazz Vespers is a great opportunity for you to bring your neighbors, friends, and family and introduce them to FCC. Let's fill the house--or at least have a better showing on the Third Friday in October! Jazz Vespers is a great and good thing--let's support it!

-Tim Jessen

Inspiring Concert Opportunity This Weekend
Bloomington Chamber Singers to present
"Considering Matthew Shepard"

The Bloomington Chamber Singers will perform *Considering Matthew Shepard* on October 9-10 at the Buskirk Chumley Theater. Gerald Sousa will conduct the Bloomington Chamber Singers and soloists in the multi-media performance of Craig Hella Johnson's powerful reflection on the events surrounding the 1998 beating and death of Matthew Shepard, a gay college student in Wyoming. This "fusion oratorio" speaks with a fresh and bold voice, incorporating a variety of musical styles seamlessly woven into a unified whole. Tickets are available at the BCT box office or online at www.bctboxoffice.org. Saturday's performance will also be livestreamed on Mandolin.



Thank You FCC Youth for Your Leadership on World Communion Sunday!

We'd like to thank FCC's youth, led by Ashlyn Reynolds, and congratulate them on a meaningful and thought-provoking Youth Sunday on October 3.

Once a year, our youth plan, practice, and lead us in worship, and each year they do a wonderful job. We are so fortunate to have such a great tradition of youth providing leadership here at FCC. They lead on our board, they lead in worship and they lead in so many other ways throughout the year. Thank you Ashlyn and the FCC Youth Group!!



Youth Halloween Party on Oct. 31

Mark your calendars Youth Group members and plan to come to the Halloween Party in the youth room from 4:00-6:00 pm on Oct. 31. We will have dinner, play games, and make candles! Bring friends too! Just RSVP to Ashlyn so she will have enough food. See you there!



BLESSED WHILE BLESSING

The intention of the Sunday afternoon animal blessing service was to offer a blessing for the animals that grace our lives, but the real blessing came for those who attended as we shared stories and pictures of our pets and families. Six dogs received a blessing "in person" along with cats, a tortoise and fish who were present in pictures. While short and simple, our animal blessing is a wonderful opportunity to connect with our neighbors. Thanks to all who prepared the service and those who braved the rain to join in.



Congregation Survey Deadline Oct. 10th

Survey Results will Help Pastoral Search Committee Process

The Pastoral Search team has been working on the process of the search for a new Senior Pastor since January 2021. The first part of that work was to find an Interim Pastor, Will Jewsbury. We are now trying to gather information about our church and congregation. Part of the information that we need to gather is what our congregation thinks about the current offering that is important, what programs we would like to see, and finally what we should be looking for in our next Senior Pastor. In order to do this, we have a Congregational Questionnaire that we would like for you to fill out. The information collected will be anonymous. It will then be aggregated and used to guide some small group discussions to clarify how our congregation's mission informs who we are looking for to be our Senior Pastor.

The Link below will lead you to the questionnaire. Paper copies are available at FCC. We will keep this questionnaire open until October 10. Please fill it out and participate when asked in the follow-up small group meetings. Thank you!

Copy and Paste this Link into your web browser:

<https://forms.gle/oW3hdJvecLW4xU3JA>

Family Ministries Update

Sarah Lynne Gershon, Student Associate Pastor

Hello Families!

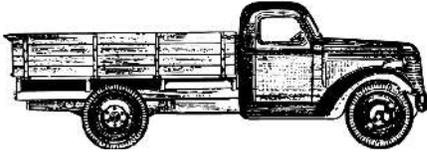
There were some nice cool days last week, which brought out my sweaters, a “flannel” scented candle, and some pumpkin spice syrup for my morning coffee (Brett likes the “pumpkin cheesecake” syrup and I liked the “caramel pumpkin spice”). It also got me thinking about the holidays.

Pastor Will and I are talking about the Christmas Eve family service (already!), Advent, and MCUM family Christmas shopping. I'd love to hear from you about what your family would be able to participate in and enjoy over the holidays. I realize everything is not back to normal and yet everything isn't totally shut down either. Give me a call, reach out for a walk or cup of coffee, or just send me an email if you would like to chat about this.

In the meantime, save the date for Sunday, Oct. 31! This will be a special Requiem All Saints Day service and I will take the kids out for a fun All Saints Day activity in the Chapel Gathering Space. There will be candy, candles, and I can't imagine anyone would complain about costumes either. If there is anyone, family member or otherwise, that has passed that your kids would like to remember, please bring photos or write down their names. Black and white photos for decorating (much like Bess Lee's icon craft) would also be welcome.

I truly look forward to this season every year and will appreciate celebrating with you and your children!

PACK THE PICKUP FOR MCUM



Join Us in Supporting Our Partners in Ministry
at Monroe County United Ministries

*Food and Supply Drive Begins Oct. 10 with the
Pack The Pickups Event on Oct. 24 from 1:00-3:00 pm*

It's time to pack MCUM's pantry by packing Pastor Will and
Toni Pittman's pickups!

In our last drive for MCUM, we gathered 1,015 lbs and filled Toni's pickup to the brim. Let's beat that
this year and fill both trucks with supplies for MCUM families.

We will be collecting non-perishable food and cleaning supplies for MCUM October 10th-October 24.
You can bring your donations to worship on Sunday mornings and leave them in the Narthex.

We will be completing our drive Sunday Oct. 24 from 1-3pm. If you weren't able to drop off donations
during worship, this is your chance! We will be out in the alley (between FCC and Habitat) with the
pickup trucks accepting donations October 24th from 1:00-3:00pm. So, drive through the alley and drop
off your donations. We will take all the donations to MCUM that day.

MCUM Supply Closet and Food Pantry Needs

Food Pantry Needs

- Reusable/Cloth Bags
- Canned Meat (Tuna, chicken, beef)
- Peanut Butter
- Dried Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Cereal
- Ready to eat soups / chili / pasta
- Frozen meat (1-2 pound ground beef, whole chickens)
- Canned vegetables (carrots, greens, potatoes)

Cleaning & Hygiene Closet Needs

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Razors
- All-purpose cleaner
- Wipes
- Dish Soap
- Diapers, sizes 5 & 6
- Laundry Detergent
- Shaving Cream
- Sponges

Come out and help support MCUM families!



Week of Compassion Responds to Crises Around the Globe

The past month has been heavy with crises: the desperate situation in Afghanistan, which continues to unfold; the earthquake in Haiti, which killed more than 2,200 and left tens of thousands more without a home; Hurricane Ida, which caused widespread damage in Louisiana and Mississippi, and even as far north as New York and New Jersey; and wildfires that continue to spread rapidly across the western U.S.

Just as these disasters continue to ripple across our awareness and our world, so your generous responses keep coming in waves. Individuals, families, and congregations are sharing so much, so willingly. In the midst of these ongoing responses, we wanted to take a moment and say thank you, and share a word about the impact of your support and partnership through these difficult days.

- Support for Afghanistan is reaching Week of Compassion partners with long-standing relationships in the region. They are working to meet immediate needs among those who are unable to leave the country. Meanwhile, Week of Compassion, along with Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries and other partners, is working to support Afghans arriving in the United States. Many Disciples congregations are stepping up to help welcome families resettling in their local communities.
- Recent gifts for earthquake relief are providing relief to the people of Haiti as they navigate yet another devastating event. Week of Compassion partners responded immediately, deploying volunteers to help with rescue operations and assess the damage. In the weeks since, they've been working to provide things like temporary shelters, emergency power generators, hygiene kits, food and water, as well as first aid kits. Week of Compassion will continue to support long-term responses including construction, community-based psychosocial support and trauma recovery, as well as rebuilding of damaged water infrastructure.
- Disciples congregations in Louisiana continue to assess damage from Hurricane Ida. Week of Compassion is supporting congregations as they work to serve their neighbors. Just Love Your Neighbor-Northshore Disciples are working with other local organizations to meet basic needs like food and water. Two churches in the greater Houston area have also been helping with supplies. We continue to plan for long-term recovery needs, as well as share information to help those affected navigate the process of seeking FEMA assistance. Meanwhile, your presence is also being felt to the northeast. Week of Compassion provided support to Park Avenue Christian Church in Orange, New Jersey to help with flood damage at the church and among members' homes; and to Park Avenue Christian Church in New York City, supporting the church as they reached out to members and neighbors who were without power, providing hot meals as well as gift cards to meet additional needs.
- It is shaping up to be another record year for wildfires. Week of Compassion is in touch with church leaders and partners in the affected regions, and sharing support for congregations like First Christian Church Redding, who opened their doors and offered shelter to neighbors who were displaced.

Disciples have answered the call in a powerful way, acting out of love and mercy rather than fear and hopelessness. Please continue to hold all of these people and places in prayer in the weeks and months ahead. Thank you for your part in this work that changes lives around the world, around the year.

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SHARING CHRIST'S INCLUSIVE LOVE
SERVING | WELCOMING | LEARNING | SPIRITUAL CONNECTION

Our stewardship emphasis this fall will focus on the theme:
Sharing Christ's Inclusive Love through Serving, Welcoming, Learning, and Offering Spiritual Connections.

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

October 10
Mark 10:17-31
Just One More Thing!

October 17
Mark 4:26-34
Planting Good Seeds

October 24
Mark 10:46-52
Sarah Lynne Gershon preaching