

The CHRISTIAN

 FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH *(Disciples of Christ)* *Visitor*

Memories of Cuba in 2016 as We Prepare for the 2018 Thanksgiving Journey *By Mark Knowles*

Thanksgiving Dinner 2016 in Cuba we celebrated by eating... what was it? Don't get me wrong, it was certainly tasty—as was everything at the *Centro Memorial Martin Luther King* in Havana. But culturally we seemed at a loss to explain exactly what it was, and it's a debate that rages to this day.

One theory—the one probably most commonly accepted now—is that it was a sort of white sauce for the pasta that was on the table. That would make sense, though the fact that also on the table there was a big vat of red sauce seemingly meant for the pasta (or a hot dog) did muddle things a bit. Another theory was that it was some sort of creamy potato soup to go with the bread. This theory was especially espoused by someone who will remain nameless (though his name rhymes with *faux key*) who dipped his pinky in the vat, tasted it, and declared that it was potato soup—and that it was delicious! Others suggested it was a secret Cuban dish, and one person even that it was an elixir for long life. The possibilities seemed endless. And our rough attempts at asking our hosts (in Spanish) what it was for were met with a confused smile and the answer: “Well, it's for... eating!”

So, we ate it. Some ate it out of a bowl with a spoon, some sipped it from a mug, some dipped their bread in it, some poured it on the pasta, and some poured both it and the red sauce on the pasta. But we ate it, we enjoyed it, and we were grateful. In fact, it was one of the best Thanksgiving food memories I've ever had.

So this year, while we're not sure of what we'll be eating, or what memories we'll be creating, please know one thing: we will still be grateful for many things, and chief among them is you. You will be with us in spirit. Likewise, we hope we will be with you in Spirit. (And if you haven't picked up a copy of the group's devotional to join us in thought, please do so on Sunday.) This is a sacred time of gratitude, and we will be sharing it with you, and others, all over the world. *Gracias!*

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Pastor's Pen *Green Light, Go!*

“Green Light, Go” was the subject line of an email message that Mark Knowles and I received last week. The message shared the good news that FCC has been accepted as an NBA XPLO host congregation! This initiative, which is reflected in our FCC Story, is both huge and exciting, and it will require your support, prayers, energies, focus, and effort, starting *now!*

In a nutshell, NBA XPLO is a faith-based, 10-month, congregationally hosted residency program designed to help young adults explore lives of care and service — giving them the opportunity to unleash their own potential, while positively impacting their community. The residency provides professional and spiritual development and vocational discernment opportunities for 21-30 year olds to live simply in community and engage in direct service and justice work. XPLO is one of the key initiatives of the National Benevolent Association (NBA), established in 1887 as the health and social services “arm” of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). For more information, see <https://www.nbacares.org/xplor>.

So, beyond **celebrating**, what does this mean for us, dear church? Well, because four young adults will arrive in Bloomington in late August, it means we roll up our sleeves and get to work! This includes:

Rehabbing some of our lower level rooms into a decent apartment for four young adults. We’d like—as much as possible—to do this work ourselves. The space doesn’t have to be “fancy,” but it does need to be self-contained and lend itself to the creation of a healthy Christian Community. Alternatively, if you own (or know somebody who owns) an empty 2+ bedroom house/apartment that you might donate to the

“cause,” please call me.

Furnishing the space so that it is completely “move-in” ready with all the basics: furniture, bath and bed linens, kitchenware and cooking equipment, including a can-opener and a set of decent knives!

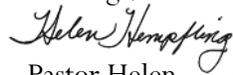
Securing meaningful internship positions for our residents. Mark Knowles has already had a number of conversations with Social Service agencies that we feel will be excellent placements. Each resident will work 30 hours a week in the community.

Offering interns 4-6 hours per week of ministry/leadership opportunities within the congregation. We will seek to match the gifts of our interns with the needs of this congregation.

Surrounding our interns with support, and love, and a strong and caring Christian Community. They will be “ours” from August 2019-through June 2020, and we want for *them* what we would want for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren: a purpose in living, a passion for serving, and a place where all can experience and share the inclusive love of Christ.

Like I said, this is HUGE and one of the most exciting initiatives this congregation has claimed in years! If something about XPLO tweaks your interests, please contact me! We will need *your* leadership, *your* gifts, *your* commitment—for the sake of Christ’s church in the world and on the corner of Kirkwood and Washington.

Blessings,



Pastor Helen

I'm Inspired: Place, People, Promise

A Presentation by Sandy Bate

Never (and I have a rich imagination), never did I suspect that someday I would be standing here talking about inspiration. But I came to visit once, and I became – over time – inspired. So I stayed.

This Place inspires me. The People here inspire me. And the Promise of this church inspires me.

First – and always—there is the place. From the moment I first entered this sanctuary, I have loved this space. That night, I remember wanting everyone around me to be quiet, because I had such a feeling of peacefulness. That impression lingers to this day. Friday night I was here for Jazz Vespers, and I felt the same awe I experienced back then.

Each time I enter FCC, I say a prayer of thanks for the people of this church. People who greet me at the door, people who lead groups here, people who make wonderful music, people who plant flowers and landscape to make this such a beautiful site.

The people here I've gotten to know . . . Doug, Amy, Mary, Kate, Pastor Helen, Jan, Judith, Susan, Betsy . . . I could go on. But these are good people who are faithful, true, committed. And I am grateful for the inspiration they prompt in my life.

Lastly, I find a remarkable sense of promise in this place. What began as an exercise in envisioning possibilities has evolved so beautifully to new ministries like Jazz Vespers; to new groups like Voices of Faith; to new members and to new plans to use our space best and fully.

I am at this church by the grace of God.

To me, this place is Holy Ground. Here, we join together in spirit and in mind and in body – to welcome others, to learn, to serve, to grow. That, to me, is inspired work that deserves my best support.

I'm glad I came to visit four years ago.

(Sandy Bate shared this presentation during Sunday Worship at FCC on November 4.)





*Preaching from the Choir -
The Music of Advent
By Jan Harrington*

Even before we enter December, the familiar carols of Christmas begin to fill the air - in the car, in the shopping mall and elevators, on TV and, yes, in our heads. For the church, however, the four Sundays before Christmas actually are observed as the season of Advent (which is derived from the Latin word meaning "coming"), and become a season of preparation - of prophesy, contemplation, awaiting, and preparing the place and heart to receive the coming of Christ. Even the theme of our **First Friday Jazz Vespers on December 7th** will be "Anticipate."

Advent offers its own music of preparation - songs, carols and hymns sung perhaps only once a year, but which are part of the great tradition of hymnody that illuminate the season. Some of these can be found in the *Chalice Hymnal* between numbers 119 and 142, and many also appear in traditional Christmas carol collections. Their texts and music offer much to our meditation and understanding of this wonderful season. As an introduction, we can consider a few of the most familiar that come from different musical traditions and periods in the hopes that a reminder of the poetry and music of these Advent hymns will enrich your time of meditation preparation this Advent season.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 2
SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS AROUND THE "O ANTIPHONS"

Perhaps the most iconic of the Advent hymns is *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* (#119) with its mysterious melody from a French 15th-century chant and with words translated from the Latin hymn *Veni Emanuel*. The text of this Advent song is based on the so called "**O Antiphons**" - an ancient set of 7 texts sung at subsequent Vesper services from December 17th to 23rd. Each begins with the petition "O" followed by a different title for the Christ - Wisdom, Lord, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Dayspring, King of Nations, and Emmanuel God With Us. Each English verse of *O Come Emmanuel* begins with one of these petitions. The texts of the "O Antiphons" themselves can be found in the *Chalice Hymnal* #120 on the page opposite the hymn. **This year, on the First Sunday of Advent, December 2, we will worship with an Advent Lessons and Carols Service.** The seven lessons and seven carols at this service will be chosen and organized around these so-called "Great O Antiphons," with congregational singing of *O Come Emmanuel*, and scripture, prayer, and anthems relating to each lesson. Here is a link to a recording of *O Come Emmanuel*:

You can find some other popular hymns for advent on page 8 of this newsletter.



In Our Prayers

Amy Robinson, who continues to battle a rare form of cancer, is in the hospital following a stroke. While stable, her condition remains fragile. Cards may be sent to her and her family (Ryan, Maely and Graedan) at 4694 Viola Drive, Bloomington, 47403.

Fatima Enari, who suffered a traumatic head injury while visiting family in New Zealand, has been moved out of intensive care and into a neurology unit where she will begin her rehab as soon as possible. On your behalf, Pastor Helen has told the family that FCC is holding all in our prayers.

Julie Donham and family (Mike, Allison, Andrew, Alexandra) continue to grieve the passing of Julie's mother, Jetta Allison. Services were held last week. Cards may be sent to them at 5900 N. Maple Grove Rd., Bloomington, 47404.

Please also pray for our group traveling to Cuba that they have a safe journey filled with meaningful experiences as they continue to build bridges of understanding across cultural boundaries and strengthen relationships with Centro Martin Luther King, Jr. and the community that this organization serves.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration

*Caring for All
Kind Words Are Spoken Here*

Join the Bloomington Interfaith Community
for this special service of Thanksgiving.

**Tuesday, November 20
7:00 pm
Congregation Beth Shalom
3750 E. 3rd Street**

2019 Stewardship Campaign

Thank you to all who have already returned your pledge cards for our 2019 Stewardship Campaign "I'm In."

It is helpful as our board finalizes the budget to have your pledge card returned. You can return your card by bringing it with you to worship on Sunday or by mailing it to our office. If you don't have or can't find your pledge card, additional pledge cards are available at FCC. Thank you!

Living The Story is on hiatus

FCC's Tuesday Bible Study "*Living the Story*" is taking a hiatus. Please contact Connie Myers if you would be interested in joining a study in the new year. Thank you.

Your Input Needed for Parking Survey

We need your help. As many have experienced and expressed, finding adequate parking has become a concern for many of us. When the Graduate Hotel was built and the courtesy parking was no longer available to us, parking became a larger concern. We feel adequate parking is key to FCC's mission. A Parking Task Force was created by the FCC Board and tasked with finding a solution for our downtown parking needs. Our task force is comprised of David Schilling, Chip Welch, Katherine Homer and Scott Cripe. Please be on the lookout for the FCC Parking Survey to arrive in about a week.

We are requesting that you complete our parking survey. Our preferred method is the Survey Monkey Link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FCCparkingsurvey>

If you use the Survey Monkey link, it is much easier to compile our results. We are also mailing the survey to those who receive a hard copy of the newsletter and providing hard copies to complete before or after worship. Please feel free to distribute the survey or link to all friends, members and attendees of FCC. You can stop by the office to pick up a survey if you would like. Surveys needs to be returned by November 18th.

Meet the Architect on December 2

On Sunday December 2, David Allen, the architect whom we have been working with, will be with us throughout the morning. Following worship, David will make two back-to-back identical presentations. The first presentation will begin at 11:15 am and the second will begin at 12:15 pm, following our Learning Session.

In addition to sharing a little bit about himself, his own spirituality, and his understanding of sacred space, he will share some of the work he has done for other religious communities, including the Abby of Gethsemani in Kentucky (home to Thomas Merton), the Dome for the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana, and the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville. The purpose of David's presence will be for you to get to know him and his fine work with historic places of worship.

November 18 and 25
Sunday Worship at 10:00 am

Join us this Sunday, November 18 for part two of Pastor Helen's mini-sermon series that she's calling the three "J's" (Jonah, Joel, Jeremiah). On November 25, Heather Godsey will preach from Jeremiah. See you in Church!



The Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, November 25 at 11:15 am (following worship)

Join us on November 25, as we prepare FCC's sanctuary for the Season of Advent! All are welcome to help decorate FCC for the season. We will gather in the sanctuary following worship. We hope you'll join us for this wonderful FCC tradition.

Upcoming Special Events at FCC

December 2:

- Service of Advent Lessons and Carols around the "O Antiphons" at 10:00 am
- FCC's Youth and Children will go *Christmas shopping for MCUM* families after worship.
- Architect David Allen will be our guest in worship. There will be an opportunity to get acquainted with him during the 11:15 hour.

December 16:

- Commissioning service for Mark and Danielle Murry Knowles with guests from Global Ministries, followed by an all-church celebration.
- FCC friends gather to go caroling at 4:00 pm.

December 24: Join us for Christmas Eve services at 5:30 pm and 8:00 pm.

Christmas Eve Yard Signs

We are trying something new this year in an effort to get the word out about our very special worship opportunities on Christmas Eve at FCC. Instead of advertising on the Herald Times' "Christmas Cross" page (a very expensive advertising purchase), we have decided to design and print yard signs that can be placed in neighborhoods around town. **Do you live in a busy neighborhood? Would you like to let your neighbors know about Christmas Eve at FCC by placing a sign in your yard?** If your answer is **YES!** Please contact Katherine Homer at khomer@umail.iu.edu, so we can order a sign for you. You can also fill out the card in your bulletin at Sunday worship. Please let us know by December 2 so that we will have plenty of time to order the signs. We would like to have all of the signs in place by December 16. Thank you for helping us spread the word about these special services.



The Thanksgiving Special Offering - November 11 & 18

The Thanksgiving Offering benefits the Colleges, Universities, Seminaries, and Divinity Houses affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These learning communities are an extension of the church, challenging students to understand and respond to God's call to serve.

From the very beginnings of the movement, Disciples have founded institutions of higher learning, encouraging students in their intellectual pursuits. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is still committed to higher education. Your gift to the Thanksgiving Offering helps underwrite the education of students attending one of our 14 undergraduate institutions and our seven seminaries or divinity houses. You are investing in our students and helping keep education costs down.

The Thanksgiving Offering also provides scholarship and support for those pursuing theological education at one of our seven seminaries or divinity houses. Consider the many generations of pastors, who, if not for the support of faithful congregations and individuals over the ages would not have flourished as our pastors, teachers and leaders. You can thank them by supporting the Thanksgiving Offering.



MORE POPULAR HYMNS FOR ADVENT (shared by Jan Harrington)

An Advent hymn from a later period is the energetic *Comfort, Comfort You My People* (#122) which is a metrical (rhymed) 17th century version of the prophesy of Isaiah 40:1-8 sung to the compelling and singable tune from the 16th century Genevan Psalter of the Reformed tradition.

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=EVg_4zVSgqA

The equally positive Wesleyan hymn *Come, O Long-Expected Jesus* (#125) from the Methodists is now traditionally sung to the stirring Welsh hymn tune HYFRYDOL.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=bt68JbPSAYs>

On the more mystical and contemplative side are those Advent texts translated from Medieval Latin texts, whose melodies are based on Gregorian chant or chant-like old French carols, such as *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* (#124) and *Creator of the Stars of Night* (#127).

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=pNdtO-UT3-U>

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=83U-pVhnUIM>



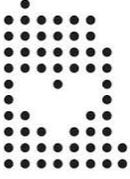


First Friday Jazz Vespers

Anticipate

The Lenthe Trio
with guest vocalist
April Varner

Join us on December 7 at 6:30 pm



2018 MCUM Challenge

2018 Goal: 2,000 pounds
Most recent trip: 45 pounds
Year-to-date: 1,829 pounds

November Pantry Needs!

MCUM is in need of canned carrots, canned potatoes and canned mixed veggies, canned tomatoes or pasta sauce, canned fruit, pasta, baking mixes (Jiffy, Bisquick), men’s deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, all purpose cleaners, lotion, Kleenex, laundry detergent.

MCUM also reuses plastic grocery bags to distribute items from their cleaning and hygiene closet. Keep them separate from the paper bags used in their food pantry.

Thank you for showing how much you care.

UPCOMING EVENTS...

November 17-25
Cuba People-to-People Pilgrimage

Sunday, November 18
Thanksgiving Special Offering
8:30 am Meditation group
9:00 am Learning Session I
10:00 am Worship
11:15 Learning Session II
11:15 am Handbell rehearsal

Tuesday, November 20
5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

Wednesday, November 21
7:00 pm Men’s Book Group

Thursday and Friday, Nov. 22-23
Happy Thanksgiving 
Church Offices Closed

Sunday, November 25
8:30 am Meditation group
9:00 am Learning Session I
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Hanging of the Greens
11:15 am Learning Session II
11:15 am Handbell rehearsal
3:00 pm Meadowood Service

Tuesday, November 27
1:30 pm Caregivers Create
5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

Thursday, November 29
4:00 pm Book Bunch
6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

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Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

November 18:
Campbellite Class

November 25:
Book Bunch & Men's Book Club

December 2:
Emmaus Interpreters Class

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

November 18
Joel 2:21-27

November 25
Jeremiah 36: 1-8, 21-23, 27-28;
then 31:31-34

December 2
Advent Lessons and Carols
(see page 4)