

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

Join us for the Season of Advent at FCC

FCC will be filled with opportunities to prepare for Jesus birth, as we continue to move through the Advent season. Please consider joining us as we journey to the manger. Advent devotional materials are available at the church, if you haven't already picked them up. Inside this newsletter you will find details on outreach opportunities as well as other activities here at FCC. Our worship will be shaped by the poetry of Maya Angelou, the art and words of Joe Lee, and the intersection of Isaiah's powerful prophecies with the stories of Mark and Luke.



Christmas Eve at FCC will include two services and a Christmas Eve Concert. *Children will help tell the story* during the family service at 5:30 pm. Our Christmas Eve concert at 7:30 pm will be filled with *Early American music*, and at 8:00 pm we will offer a traditional candlelight service of *Lessons and Carols*.

December 5 - PEACE

Advent 2 - Isaiah 40:3-5 & Mark 1:1-8

Message: Joe Lee - "Forgiveness"

Forgiveness is the first step to peace; in our lives and in the world. Joe Lee reflects on how forgiveness changed the life of one who had every reason not to forgive.

December 12 - JOY

Advent 3 - Isaiah 61:1-4 & Luke 1:46-55

Message: Will Jewsbury - "Witnesses to Joy"

Sarah saw it. So did King David, Isaiah, Mary, Simeon, and others. They were all witnesses to joy. And so are we!

December 19 - LOVE

Advent 4 - Isaiah 9:2-7 & Luke 1:39-41

Message: Will Jewsbury

"What Love Looks Like"

This Christmas story is not about tradition. It is all about seeing things differently. Breaking traditional images. Getting outside the box.

It is showing us "What Love Looks Like!"

December 24 - Christmas Eve

5:30 pm Family Service with Candlelight

7:30 pm Christmas Eve Concert

8:00 pm Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

Sunday Worship of Carols, Communion and Cookies on December 26

Take a break from the holiday busy-ness and join us the day after Christmas at 10:00 am for a special worship service of carols, communion and cookies. This informal and fun service is just as it sounds... filled with singing your favorite carols, celebrating Christ's birth with holy communion and sharing cookies! Bring your favorite cookies to share and a container to take home a variety!

Advent Edition - Volume 63, number 21 December 1, 2021

Will Writes

Boldly Playing Your Part during the Season of Advent

In a blog that I follow, the writer talked this week about grief. She wrote:

There was a news story recently about a young woman who'd finished treatment for Hodgkins' Lymphoma and had her port removed. School picture day came around and the scar was still clearly visible. This was not bothersome for her at all, but, and perhaps with the best of intentions, a photo editor "touched up" her photo to make the scar invisible. This did not set well with Allison. For her, the scar was testament to survival. She had no desire to cover it up, to hide it -- she wore it proudly.

Scars bear witness to where we have been. What we have known or experienced or lived through. They are sacred. And they matter. Because they say, "This happened. And I will never be exactly the same because of it." (from Someone Stole My Coffee 11/29/21)

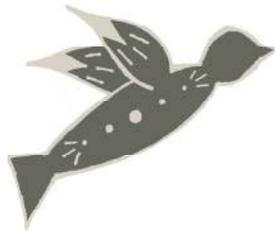
She then goes on to speak of the collective grief we bear as we look back on the past 18-20 months and what (and who) we have lost.

It is not easy to talk about grief and loss at Christmastime. We think we should be focusing on joy and hope and the giving and receiving of gifts. It is a time for children, laughter, and hot chocolate. But each of us carries with us stories and memories of those we have loved who are not with us. We recognize that many around us cannot celebrate as they struggle with life. We know deep within that Black Friday sales and extravagant gifts will not bring us healing after so many months of worry and isolation. We bear scars that we dare not hide away or cover up.

As we worship over the next few weeks, may we feel the anticipation and wonder at the coming of the Christ child yet once again into our lives and into our world. And, as we do, may we honestly and reverently express our pain, our frustration, our anger, and our fear before God. May we lift prayers that name the challenges of life. May we find comfort in the words of Isaiah who wrote so long ago: *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.* (Isaiah 9:2). As we acknowledge the darkness, we will have ever greater appreciation of the light.

I look forward to seeing you in worship. And, if you cannot be present in the sanctuary, join us for worship on-line as we wait and watch for the light to be among us.

Grace and Peace,



**MUSIC NOTES:*****Christmas Eve Concert of Early American Music***

The Sanctuary Choir is excited to be able to return to present our traditional live concert on Christmas Eve at 7:30 pm – preceding the 8:00 pm Candlelight Communion Service. This year our program will include music from Early America – Music from Colonial Composers, Shape Note Songs, Shaker Hymns, Appalachian Folk Carols, African-American Spirituals, and music from the Moravian Community. This promises to be a joyful musical experience as we celebrate the birth of Jesus with unusual music from our heritage. Anyone interested in participating in the choir for the special concert is invited to join us in rehearsals on Thursday nights 6:15 to 7:30 in the Great Hall. For more information about participating please contact Jan Harrington at harringt@indiana.edu or after a Sunday service. Traditionally the choir has been augmented on Christmas Eve with visiting members from returning folks, community members, as well as FCC congregants who like to sing, but have not been able to commit to regular Sunday service. Come join in the singing!



Join us on Dec. 17 for Third Friday Jazz Vespers with **The Garrett Spoelhof Trio and vocalist Wynton Gage**. As we journey through the season of Advent, we will explore the topic of Commitment with jazz, scripture, readings and meditation.

Since returning to in-person worship, this series has taken us on a journey of renewal with topics beginning with Welcome (September), then moving us through Reflection (October) to Connection (November) and finally this month to Commitment.

Join us for this wonderful evening, bringing family and friends to this contemplative service. If you missed November's service with Rachel Caswell, you can view it on the FCC Website until Dec. 19.

**A SEASONAL CONCERT: BLOOMINGTON CHAMBER SINGERS PRESENT
MUSIC OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 AT 3:00 PM AT ST. MARK'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

On Sunday, December 5th, 2021, the Bloomington Chamber Singers will present a program of seasonal works by English composer, Benjamin Britten. Culminating with Britten's dramatic oratorio, *Saint Nicolas*, Op. 42, the program will also feature one of Britten's best-known and most-performed works, *A Ceremony of Carols*, Op. 28. Conducted by musical director, Gerald Sousa, the concert will take place at 3:00 pm at St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

Sharing Christ's Inclusive through Serving and Welcoming FCC Outreach Ministries

Middle Way House Advent Donation Box

During Advent FCC will be filling a collection box with gifts for families at Middle Way House. If you would like to help make someone Christmas a little more bright, consider picking up a gift for someone at Middle Way House. You can scan the QR code on the side of the box for a wish list, or Sarah Lynne Gershon can provide one. They would appreciate personal care items, children's clothes, robes, diapers and toys for infants and toddlers. Just place your gift in the box when you come to worship.



Holiday Shopping for MCUM



FCC families will be wrapping gifts for MCUM families this Sunday (Dec 5) following worship. This tradition is supported through our Sunday School class offering, but since classes haven't been meeting in person much lately, we are also asking for financial support for this project. You can place your donation in the Sunday offering tray (marked "MCUM Shopping") or mail it to FCC or use the MCUM Shopping button on the homepage of our website. Thank you!!

Faith Formation and Family Ministries Update

FCC Families! The season of Advent is here! We are featuring Worship & Wonder stories for our Children's Moment during worship on Sundays. We have already shopped for MCUM families and will be wrapping those gifts this Sunday, Dec. 5. We are preparing for FCC's Family Christmas Eve service, and it's not too late to join us! We are looking for readers and soloists for our Family Christmas Eve service at 5:30 pm. Below, you will find a calendar of family events to participate in. All of the events take place following worship, EXCEPT those noted otherwise. Contact Sarah Lynne Gershon or the church office with questions. Please join us and bring a friend too!

Dec 5: MCUM present wrapping

Dec 12: fittings and rehearsal for FCC's Family Christmas Eve Service

Dec 19: fittings and rehearsal for FCC's Family Christmas Eve Service

Dec 24 at 5:30: Family Christmas Eve Service. Bring a friend!!

Dec 26, 10:00 am Worship - *Carols and a Cookie exchange!* (Send Sarah Lynne your favorite carol request, or fill out the form on the back of the Poinsettia Order card in this newsletter!)



Christmas Gift Contributions for our FCC Staff

If you would like to make a special monetary Christmas gift to our dedicated FCC staff, please mail it to the church (205 E Kirkwood, 47408). Be sure to mark your donation **"staff gift."** This is your opportunity to thank our wonderful staff who keep the ministries, mission, and day-to-day operations of FCC alive and well every day of the year!





Joe Lee Talks about His Book *Forgiveness* on December 5 at FCC!

Joe Lee will be sharing stories of forgiveness during worship this Sunday, December 5. Joe's new graphic novel *Forgiveness: The Story of Eva Kor* chronicles the life of young Eva Kor, who survived the Nazi death camps as well as torture by Nazi doctor Josef Mengele during WWII. Everyone is welcome to come hear Joe Lee's message during the 10:00 am service on Dec. 5. After worship Joe will be available in the Chapel Gathering Space where you can ask questions, purchase a book and have it signed. Please come out, bring a friend, and let's celebrate this achievement from Joe Lee and the wisdom we gain from Eva Kor's story.

Thank You...

The family of Doris Brineman would like to thank the following people for all their generosity in helping with the visitation for our mother Doris Brineman: Kate Kroll, Kathy Street, Diane Thrasher, Jane Zebendon, Jennifer Fetteshauer and the Campbellite class. The food and decorations were perfect. We would also like to thank Will and Linda for the wonderful service. We received such kind words from our FCC family. Please enjoy the poem Bob Orr wrote about our mother's role at FCC. She will be missed.

Thank you,

The Brineman girls: *Barbara Council, Martha Taylor and Joanie Breedon*

November 11, 2021

So, we began our Christian search
 For a large Disciples Church.
 A church in which we could get lost
 And just attend with little cost.
 That was about ten years ago.
 FCC looked large enough... so
 We thought next Sunday we would go.
 We'd just slip in, no one would know.
 Inconspicuous our goal
 We sat in back, knew not a soul.
 And then we saw her in the aisle,
 Walking toward us with a smile.

"Doris Brineman, who are you?"
 Hand extended at our pew.
 "We are the Orr's," we softly said.
 And smiled and quickly turned our head.
 She was persistent, though, you see
 And the rest, dear friend, is history.
 From that day on she knew us well.
 And we soon learned how she could sell.
 And so, the Church on Kirkwood stands
 Because of folks like Brineman.
 We'll miss her thoughts and miss her smile
 But she'll be with us all the while.

-Bob Orr

Please find inside this newsletter the order form for Poinsettia plants and to make a donation to the Permanent Fund in memory or honor of a loved one. The deadline to order is December 12!





CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Purchase a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one to be placed in the chancel during Advent and Christmas for \$12.00 each. Poinsettias will be available for pickup following the 8:00 pm Christmas Eve worship service. You may also make a donation to the Permanent Fund in lieu of or in addition to flowers. The order deadline is Sunday, December 12.

I wish to order _____ **poinsettias** at **\$12.00** each = \$_____.

I wish to make a donation to the **Permanent Fund** of \$_____.

My gift is to be listed in Dec. 15 *Christian Visitor* (**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY**):

In **Memory** of: _____

In **Honor** of: _____

Purchased by: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ payable to First Christian Church.

Completed card must accompany payment.

Order deadline is Sunday, **December 12.**





Favorite Carols for December 26 Worship Service

Please include the titles of your favorite Christmas carols to be sung at our special Sunday Worship Service of *Carols, Communion and Cookies* at 10:00 am on Dec. 26.

Following worship we will gather for a cookie exchange. If you would like to participate in the fun, bring a batch (or more) of your favorite Christmas cookies to share and an extra container to take a variety back home with you to enjoy.

Favorite Carols



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812-332-4459
fcc@fccbloomington.org
www.fccbloomington.org
Return Service Requested

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Permit #217



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ACTIVELY WAITING

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**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

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Isaiah 40:3-5 & Mark 1:1-8
Advent 2 - PEACE
Message: Joe Lee

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