

The CHRISTIAN

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

“Christian Civic Engagement: A Dialogue of Hope”

A Special Sunday Morning Forum with Guest Speaker Rev. Bruce Ervin

This Sunday, January 26, 9:00 am and 11:15 am (two identical sessions)

By many measures, this is an alarming time in America. Deep political divisions threaten to tear us apart. Conflicting perspectives about civic issues endanger the kind of conversation and exchange that are so critical to democracy. The Church—especially in times like these—has a significant responsibility to help its people and its country move toward reconciliation.

Historians tell us that division and partisanship are not new in America. Indeed, the father of the U.S. Constitution, President James Madison, reminds us that division occurs when partisans of a few narrow and conflicting political ideologies are able to maintain power because too many citizens are silent. Madison, also a student of theology, believed that unity is more likely when large number of voters from across the political spectrum vote. According to Madison, broad participation encourages broad compromise, and the nation moves forward united.

Voices of Faith is a network of Disciples Women that strives to empower women to engage in dialogue and advocacy. Motivated by a call to help move toward reconciliation and unity, FCC’s Voices of Faith (VoF) has committed its energy to the ideal of broad participation. Voter registration is our focus during the coming election year of 2020. We will be trained to assist in voter registration, and we will work to offer citizens within our community the opportunity to register to vote.

Why should Christians be engaged in this particular form of civic activity? The Rev. Bruce Ervin, an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and pastor of Bedford First Christian Church, will help answer that question. He will lead a conversation about the Biblical call to civic engagement and the historical rationale that demands response from citizens—especially when times are divided and threatening.

Join us this Sunday for this important forum at either 9:00 am or 11:15 am. The sessions will be identical.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday February 9

Immediately following worship

Please plan to be present for an important FCC Congregational Meeting following worship on February 9 when we will vote to approve the 2020 FCC budget. Copies of the budget are in the FCC Office and will be available at the meeting on February 9. Thank you.

Volume 62, number 2 January 22, 2020

Pastor's Pen

A Request from our General Minister and President

"The idea of showing up in and for the world has been on my mind and heart lately." These words were penned by Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in a letter that was mailed to all Disciples congregations last week. In the letter, Terri goes on to implore Disciples to return to a deep theological understanding of the covenantal relationships that hold us together as we build a movement for wholeness, not an institution for self-preservation.

In other words, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is built on an understanding that our "three expressions of church" are in a covenantal relationship with each other, promising to support and encourage and pray for each other as **together** we do the work God has called us to do. The three expressions of church are: 1) the local church, 2) the regional church, and 3) the general church.

As I read between the lines of Terri's letter, I hear a concern about the health of our Disciples covenantal relationships. Terri is concerned that when we neglect to uphold our Disciples covenantal relationships, our call to "show up in and for the world" is hampered, and we are in danger of turning inward and focusing simply on institutional survival. I hear Terri expressing a concern that the three expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are not nurturing our covenantal relationships and that over time, this will lead to misunderstanding, division, and competition for power, money, and influence.

Terri addresses her very valid concerns by calling ALL Disciples into a **2020 season of prayer for the church** in all three of its expressions. Here is what she writes:

Disciples, I call you to a season of prayer for our Church. The presidents and leaders of the general ministries are in prayer for you. You can be in prayer for our regions and our general ministries as all three of our expressions of "church" work together to show up in God's world to fulfill our vision to be a faithful and growing church that demonstrates true community, a deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice."

I am glad for Terri's honesty, her leadership, and her request that we be a church in prayer. To help us honor her request, I am going to do my best to include in each of our newsletters a special "Season of Prayer for the Church" card that lifts up one of our Disciples covenantal partners in ministry. Please seek it out and post it some place in your home as a reminder to pray for our church in all its expressions. And then pray!

FCC would not be--and could not be--the church we are today without our regional and general partners in ministry. And the regional and general expressions of church could not do their work without local congregations. Our covenant is, indeed, to be the church together!

Blessings,


Pastor Helen

A Season of Prayer for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Our General Minister and President, Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, has called all Disciples into a season of prayer for the church. In honoring her request, we begin with this prayer:

Merciful God, hear our prayers for Terri Hord Owens. We give you thanks for her courageous leadership, her love for you, and her commitment to Christ's Church. By the power of your Spirit, strengthen and uphold her as she continues to encourage and challenge us and all Disciples to carry out the vision of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) "to be a faithful growing church that demonstrates true community, a deep Christian spirituality, and a passion of justice." We also pray your blessing on those who work in the Office of the General Minister and President, offering you thanks for their compassion, gentleness, and dedication to the mission and ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In the name of Jesus, hear our prayer. Amen.

(for more information on the Office of the General Minister and President, please go to their website: <http://disciples.org/oqmp>)

Welcome New Member!

On Sunday, January 19, we welcomed Erin Morton into the FCC Community. Erin, a long time Bloomingtonian, came forward during the Hymn of Invitation to affirm her faith in Christ and to commit herself to serving Christ through this church community. Erin is the mother of Milo, a toddler who found immediate joy in our nursery. She was drawn to FCC by our location, our beautiful building, our Facebook page, and our website. She says that she knew she was "home" when she walked through our doors and was received by a gracious welcome. We look forward to the ways she will strengthen us and we will strengthen her in the name of Christ.



PREACHING FROM THE CHOIR By Jan Harrington

This wisdom from theologian Walter Brueggemann in honor of all those who sing – members of the choirs, singers of hymns in church or in the car, those who hum – but not to themselves. Those who proclaim through music – or would like to. If you would like to proclaim through the choir and enjoy the benefits of exploring the beauty and company and prayer of making music with others, you are invited to join the Sanctuary Choir – 6:15 on Thursdays! In any case, do not be silent!

WE WILL NOT KEEP SILENT

We are people who must sing you,
for the sake of our very lives.
You are a God who must be sung by us,
for the sake of your majesty and honor.
And so we thank you,
for lyrics that push us past our reasons,
for melodies that break open our givens,
for cadences that locate us home,
beyond all our safe places,
for tones and tunes that open our lives beyond control
and our futures beyond despair.

We thank you for the long parade of mothers and fathers
who have sung you deep and true;
We thank you for the good company
of artists, poets, musicians, cantors, and instruments
that sing for us and with us, toward you.
We are witnesses to your mercy and splendor;
We will not keep silent...ever again. Amen.

- Walter Brueggemann (b. 1933)
quoted in *Upper Room Worship Book*
© 2003 Augsburg Press

Join us on Friday February 7 at 6:30 pm for First Friday Jazz Vespers!



Friday Game Night at FCC on Feb. 14!

Join us for another fun-filled Game Night at FCC Friday

February 14th at 7:00 pm.

We'll have plenty of games and snacks. You are welcome to bring your own as well. The fun is open to all, including young'uns, friends and neighbors!

Hope to see you there!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

02/03	Allison	Walsh	1478 E. Commander Court	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/03	Malcolm	Wallace	P.O. Box 14	Paragon	IN	46166
02/06	Pamela	Walters	901 S. Hastings #1242	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/07	Maria	Izzo-Walker	1521 E. Clairmont Place	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/07	Ben	Jackson	3693 S. Sowder Square	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/09	Gavin	Hill	8956 W. Rice Rd.	Bloomington	IN	47403
02/13	Marie	Webb	532 Green Road	Bloomington	IN	47403
02/13	Alexandra	Donham	5900 N. Maple Grove Rd.	Bloomington	IN	47404
02/17	Caleb	Dalton	1322 S. Winfield Rd.	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/17	Patricia	Babcock	3742 S. Tyler Lane	Bloomington	IN	47403
02/17	Melissa	Nam	3519 E. Morningside Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47408
02/20	Heather	Godsey	3403 N. Smith Pike	Bloomington	IN	47404
02/21	Frieda	Hoffman	1909 Wilton Court	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/24	Diane	Thrasher	2627 E. Windermere Woods Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/25	Sue	Cull	3144 Eden Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/25	Jackson	Moore	1639 S. Ira Street	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/28	Marilyn	LoCascio	3900 S. Jamie Lane	Bloomington	IN	47401
02/28	Michelle	Walsh	3006 S. Olcott Blvd.	Bloomington	IN	47401

Please let us know if we have left anyone off of the birthday list.

Help Us Update Church Directory

We are in the process of updating our database for a new FCC Directory. This will include names and contact information for all who consider FCC their church home. Draft copies of the directory are available in the Chapel Gathering Space throughout January. Please check to make sure your information is correct and that we have listed all of your family members who would like to be included. Once we have updated the information, new directories will be available. Thank you!

Summer Camp Registration Begins!

It's strange to think about registering for summer camp when it's cold outside, but it is time to sign up! Camp registration has begun. The early bird deadline is **May 15th**. Camp dates are posted in the following link:

<http://indianadisciples.org/commissions/commission-on-faith-formation/#camp>

Church camp is an incredible experience for children and youth where they can grow in their faith and sense of community. There are scholarships available! Please contact Pastor Helen for more information on camp scholarships.

2020 MCUM Challenge

Our 2020 MCUM challenge to donate another 2,000 pounds in food and supplies has begun. Check the list below and see what you might be able to donate this month.

Food Pantry

Baking mixes
Pasta and pasta sauce
Ramen noodles
Condensed soups
Cereal (small/medium boxes)

Cleaning Closet

Laundry soap
Dish soap
All-purpose cleaner
Sponges
Size 5-6 diapers

UPCOMING EVENTS...

Sunday, January 26

8:30 am Mediation Group
9:00 am Christian Civic Engagement Forum
9:00 am Learning Session I
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Learning Session II
11:15 am Christian Civic Engagement Forum
3:00 pm Meadowood Service
4:00 pm Youth Bible Study
5:00 pm Bloomington Bible Study

Tuesday, January 28

1:30 pm Caregivers Create!
5:30 Listening to God meditation

Wednesday, January 29

6:15 pm Deeper Bible Study

Thursday, January 30

5:30 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal
6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Sunday, February 2

8:30 am Mediation Group
9:00 am Learning Session I
10:00 am Worship
11:15 am Learning Session II
4:00 pm Youth Bible Study
5:00 pm Bloomington Bible Study

Monday, February 3

7:00 am Women's Arts & Crafts

Tuesday, February 4

5:30 Listening to God meditation

February 9 - Congregational Meeting

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
205 E. Kirkwood Avenue
Bloomington, IN 47408

812-332-4459
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www.fccbloomington.org
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Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

January 26:
Emmaus Interpreters Class

February 2:
Grades K-12 and Sharing Table

February 9:
Sanctuary and Handbell Choirs

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

January 26
John 2:13-25; Psalm 127:1-2

February 2
John 3:1-21; Psalm 139:13-18

February 9
Congregational Meeting
John 4:1-42; Psalm 42:1-3