

# The CHRISTIAN



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FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
*(Disciples of Christ)*

## Visitor

### Our Lenten Journey in the Shadow of the Cross

Lent at FCC this year will be filled with new opportunities for spiritual growth, reflection, worship and fellowship. As you will read in Pastor Helen's article on page two, this year's theme of the "Season of Tenebrae" allows us to follow Jesus' journey in the shadow of the cross. You will find within this newsletter a purple Lenten insert to post in your home. It contains details of the opportunities that we hope you will participate in as we journey to Easter together.

We will enter Lent this year with a Mardi Gras Feast on Tuesday, February 25th followed by worship that will include the imposition of ashes. Our feast will begin in Great Hall at 6:00 pm and will include time to make a Lent Bag filled with items for use in weekly Lenten devotions. We will transition to the sanctuary at 7:00 pm for a contemplative "Ash Wednesday" style service. Child care will be provided during the service. For those not able to join us on Tuesday, our sanctuary doors will be open from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm on Wednesday, February 26 for anyone who would like to receive the sign of ashes, marking the beginning of Lent.

Our journey will continue throughout the season of Lent with opportunities for families of all kinds to participate in a weekly Lenten Devotional group that will meet following worship on Sundays in the Chapel Gathering Space. Each week the group will focus on the spiritual discipline of prayer through a variety of activities.

Adults may want to consider joining a 4-week Story Circle group that will meet on Wednesday evenings beginning March 11 through April 1. This group will share stories, listen, pray, and (hopefully) experience the Peace of Christ in our midst.

Be sure to look through the events of Holy Week at FCC listed on the back of the Lenten insert. Activities include a traditional Mediterranean meal, a community Good Friday service and a performance of Haydn's *The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross* on Holy Saturday with the Sanctuary Choir, guest cellist Adriana Contino and a string quartet. Easter Sunday will include beautiful music during worship and FCC's annual Easter Egg Hunt. Join us!



*Volume 62, number 4 February 19, 2020*

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## Pastor's Pen

### *Heads Up about What is Coming Up*

As you read this article, I am taking my winter renewal retreat, tucked away in a cozy space where I am spending the days in solitude, immersing myself in the scripture passages that we will engage during the season of Lent. I'll be using the "Deeper Bible Study Method" that was introduced to those who participated in one of the Deeper Bible Study groups we've offered. This study method is both informative and formative. In other words, it engages both head and heart, both mind and spirit. I'll be back home in time to join you for our Mardi Gras event in Great Hall (6:00-7:00 pm) that will be followed by a somber service of Ashes in the Sanctuary at 7:00 pm. (See the purple Lent insert in this newsletter for more information)

Speaking of the Season of Lent, please read this newsletter carefully. It contains information about how we, as a congregation, will journey together into what is also known as a "Season of Tenebrae." Tenebrae is the Latin word for darkness or shadow. Of course, none of us desires to journey into darkness. After all, there is enough darkness in this world already! However, in this Lenten Season of Tenebrae, we are called to acknowledge the reality that when we decide to follow Jesus, we find ourselves in the shadow of the cross.

Of course, even as we journey into that shadow, we'll have some light and hope-filled moments when joy will prevail in our singing and story-telling, and supportive fellowship!

Our weekly scripture readings, taken from the Narrative lectionary, will focus on John's interpretation of the events that took place during Jesus' last days on earth. In other words, we will be delving deeply into those final chapters in John to recount the "Passion of Christ." This means that each week throughout Lent—with the help of scripture, symbols, songs, and sermons—we will be reminded of the depths of passionate love that God has for this world. Our worship will have a slightly different flow as we embrace the season. Because we will be in the season of Tenebrae, each week the cross will be front and center, and one of the seven Tenebrae candles will be extinguished. In addition, each week a new banner will be hanging, each one darker than the one from the previous week. If the season starts to feel too dark and heavy for you, I encourage you to hang in there and just "go with it" as best as you can. Trust me, it will make Easter all the more glorious and light filled! It will be worth it!

See you Sunday!



Pastor Helen

PS. I'll be on my retreat February 17 - February 25. In my absence, our Elders, on-call clergy, staff, and compassionate caregivers will be available to address any pastoral emergency.



## WORDS ON MUSIC

*Preparing for Lent and the Season of Tenebrae*

By Jan Harrington, Director of Music

Consider these words on music in church from early 20<sup>th</sup> century poet and hymn writer Robert Bridges:

*“If we consider what sort of music we should want to hear on entering a church we should surely, in describing our ideal, say first of all that it must be something different from what is heard elsewhere; that it should be a sacred music devoted to its purpose, a music whose peace should still passion; whose dignity should strengthen our faith; whose unquestioned beauty should find a home in our hearts to cheer us in life and death. What a powerful good such music would have.”*

These profound words resonate with me as the Sanctuary Choir prepares music for the upcoming Lenten season. For the choir, our time of preparation becomes more than the rehearsal of notes and words; it allows us to engage through the art of music in an ennobling spiritual journey. In addition to the anthems and hymns that will enhance the themes lifted up in Sunday worship during Lent, two special events will bring us to the climactic moments of the season.

In worship on **Palm/Passion Sunday**, the choir and a chamber orchestra will offer J.S. Bach’s only cantata composed specifically for Palm Sunday, **Cantata 182: King of Heaven Be Thou Welcome** (*Himmelskönig sei willkommen*). The movements of the cantata lead us from the celebration of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem to meditations on the events of his Passion in Holy Week to follow.

At the end of Holy Week – at **7:00 pm on Holy Saturday** – we will be led to contemplate the final darkness of the crucifixion through the sublime music of Joseph Haydn’s *Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross* - the great classical composer’s masterful setting of the seven last “words” or short phrases, that the canonical Gospels record Jesus saying while crucified:

*“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” (Luke 23:34)*

*“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)*

*“Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother.” (John 19:26–27)*

*“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34)*

*“I thirst.” (John 19:28)*

*“It is finished.” (John 19:29-30)*

*“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” (Luke 23:46)*

Many great artists have set these phrases to music, but Haydn’s is almost certainly the pinnacle of such attempts. Originally written as orchestral music to be played in between the priest’s reading of the verses, Haydn later expanded the work to a choral setting in which each word is followed by a selection of meditative poetry. For our performance, the choir and soloists will be joined by a professional string quartet organized by guest cellist Adriana Contino.

From “My God, why have you forsaken me?” to “Father, Forgive them” to “It is finished,” Jesus’ final words before his death bring us to contemplate the moving conclusion of the Lenten journey to the sacrifice of the Crucifixion. Haydn’s aim was to make this work accessible to everybody, regardless of their musical or religious background. He wrote: “Each sonata, or movement is expressed in such a way that even the most uninitiated listener will be moved to the very depths of his soul.”

Contemplation isn’t something that comes easily nowadays, but music like this can help us transition from worldly bustle and digital chatter to meditation on matters of deeper importance and spiritual meaning. We hope you will join us in this journey.



### *Please Pray For...*

Please keep the Knepper family (Mark, Sarah, Noah, Tate, Lilah) as they grieve the death of Sarah's father, Leon Wendholt, who passed away in peace on Sunday, February 9. Cards and notes may be sent to the Knepper family at 3616 S. Kingsbury Ave., Bloomington, 47401

Also, please keep the following in your prayers:

Davis Nam, who is recovering from a serious staph infection. Jason and Melissa Nam are his parents. Their address is 3519 E. Morningside Dr., Bloomington, 47408.

Mike and Cheryl Engber as they seek answers and treatment options for Mike's recent diagnosis of lung cancer which has found its way to his brain. Their address is 2731 S. Silver Creek Dr., Bloomington, 47401.

Bill and Liz Knapp. Liz has recently transitioned to skilled nursing care at Hearthstone. Their address is 3687 Tamarron Drive, Bloomington, 47408.

### *Welcome New Members...*

Welcome Brett and Sarah Lynne Gershon who joined FCC following worship on February 16. Sarah Lynne and Brett, and their children Alasdair and Oliver have been worshipping with us for a number of months, and recently Sarah Lynn joined the FCC staff as Director of Faith Formation and Family ministries. Brett (along with Terry Daugherty and Pastor Helen) will be leading our 4-week adult Lenten series: *Circle Stories*. We are so glad to welcome the Gershons to our FCC Family and are thrilled about the talents that they have already begun to share. Welcome!



### **Special Offering Received February 23**

**“For we are co-workers in God’s service;  
you are God’s field, God’s building”**

**-1 Corinthians 3:9**

As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world. When violence reigns, disaster strikes, or resources are scarce, a future with hope can seem far away. In those times, our communities can act as sources of critical support.

We will receive the *Special Offering for Week of Compassion on February 16 and 23*. Through this offering, we invest in programs that create opportunities, empowering people and communities, and yielding fruit for many years to come. Please consider giving to Week of Compassion.

## Voter Registration Training March 2

The Voices of Faith (one of FCC's Disciples Women's Groups) would like to thank everyone who attended Rev. Ervin's presentation, "Christian Civic Engagement: A Dialogue of Hope!" on January 26. As you may be aware the group's focus this year is voter registration. As part of a faith community pilot outreach program designed by the League of Women's Voters, all members of FCC have been invited to a special voter registration training on March 2, 6-7:30, which will be held at Election Central, 401 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St., STE 100. FCC and partner churches have the first chance to sign up, then it will be opened up to other organizations. So, don't wait! Sign up now by going to <https://tinyurl.com/scg5on2>. This link is easy to use; however, if you prefer, you are welcome to contact Ann Birch (President of League of Women's voters) via email at [annbirch@gmail.com](mailto:annbirch@gmail.com) and she will sign you up. There will be additional training sessions if you can't attend this one in March.

### Spring Youth Assembly in March!

Spring Youth Assembly is **March 27-29th** at **Bradford Woods**. This is open for youth in **grades 6-12th**. The theme this year is Loving Our Neighbor, Earth, and God. Assembly is a great way for youth to have a sort of "check-in" in the middle of the school year. It is planned by the Indiana Youth Council. The Youth will have an opportunity to engage in fellowship and spiritual growth with other youth from across the state. They also might see some of their "camp" friends! Contact Ashlyn Reynolds for more information or if you are interested in going to Spring Youth Assembly. Registration ends March 19th, so don't wait to register! FCC will pay half of the registration fees.

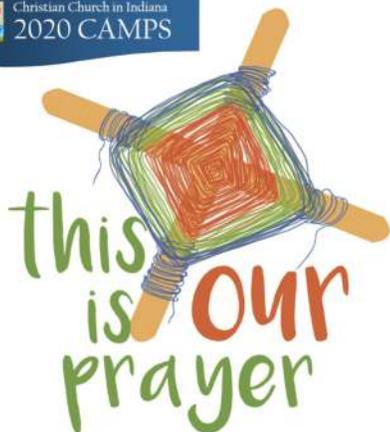


### Register Now for Summer Camp!

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 already 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.





## March Birthdays



03/02	Andy	Stafford	1628 S. Bellemeade Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/03	Jim	Ray	2001 E. Hillside Drive, Stier Park #4	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/06	Bill	Knapp	3687 Tamarron Drive	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/07	Wayne	Johnson	1900 S. Ramsey Drive	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/07	Bob	Orr	1105 E. Regency Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/09	Isabella	Coleman	2911 W. Julie's Way Apt. K	Bloomington	IN	47403
03/09	Jihye	Choi	2100 E. Lingelbach Ln., Apt. 608	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/13	Glenn	Read, Jr.	120 N. Lexington Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/13	Tom	Trippel	1497 E Commander Ct	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/15	Eugenie	Sullivan	8505 Woodfield Crossing Blvd., Apt. 323	Indianapolis	IN	46240
03/15	Janet	Rowland	2455 N. Tamarack Trl. Apt. 134	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/20	Amy	Stafford	1309 N. Edison Place Unit B	Kennewick	WA	99336
03/20	Davis	Nam	3519 E. Morningside Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/21	Casey	Houchins	3821 S. Westmont Ave.	Bloomington	IN	47403
03/21	Charles	Watkins	1144 E. Benson Court	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/22	Helen	Hempfling	1222 E. Tremont Way	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/22	Carol	Isaacs	2959 Ramble Road West	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/23	Marlene	Vass	1009 Waltz Court	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/25	Jan	Parrott	543 Green Road	Bloomington	IN	47403
03/25	Jason	Nam	3519 E. Morningside Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/26	Doug	Cull	3144 Eden Dr.	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/26	Marie	Settle	316 E. Dodds Street	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/27	Nancy	Heimer	2455 Tamarack Trail Apt. 115	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/28	Charlie	Sinn	2559 S. Smith Road	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/28	Brian	Jackson	3693 S. Sowder Square	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/30	Marti	Black	2724 McCartney Lane	Bloomington	IN	47401
03/30	Ashante	Thomas	800 N Smith Rd., Apt. 1Y	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/31	Doris	Brineman	2245 N. Tamarack Trail, Apt. 2	Bloomington	IN	47408
03/31	Brandon	Lee	1028 S. Henderson St.	Bloomington	IN	47401

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



Join us at 6:30 pm on March 6 for First Friday Jazz Vespers at FCC featuring the Ellie Pruneau Trio and vocalist Jared Griffin.

**Missing Something?  
Check our Lost & Found Box!**

Our Lost & Found box is overflowing! Perhaps there's something in there that you left behind? Check and see! We've placed the Lost & Found box in the reception area on the pew. Unclaimed items will be donated soon.

**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, February 23**

8:30 am Meditation 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

**Tuesday, February 25**

1:30 pm Caregivers Create!  
5:30 Listening to God meditation  
6:00 pm Mardi Gras Feast  
7:00 pm Worship with Imposition of Ashes

**Wednesday, February 26**

11:00 am - 1:00 pm Ashes to Go

**Thursday, February 27**

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

**February 28-29**

Children's Worship and Wonder training

**Sunday, March 1**

8:30 am Meditation 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, March 2**

6:00 pm Voter Registration training  
(Bloomington Election Central)  
7:00 pm Women's Arts & Crafts

**Tuesday, March 3**

5:30 pm Listening to God meditation



## Join us for *Mardi Gras* and the Imposition of Ashes on February 25

Come prepare for Lent with us! FCC is planning a "Fat Tuesday" (or *Mardi Gras* in French) Pitch-In Feast in Great Hall on **Tuesday, February 25th at 6:00pm**. Bring your favorite sweet or savory baked items and finger-foods to share. Participants can also make a Lent Bag, which will include items for use in weekly Lenten devotions. Following our **Feast, we will transition to the sanctuary for a contemplative "Ash Wednesday" style service at 7:00 pm** that will include the imposition of ashes. Childcare will be available during the service at 7:00 pm. **RSVP by completing the form on the back of the attendance card during Sunday worship or calling the FCC office.**

## Ashes To Go Wednesday, February 26 from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

The Sanctuary doors will be open on Ash Wednesday from 11:00 am-1:00 pm when Pastor Helen will be offering "Ashes to Go." This opportunity is open to all who want to receive the sign of ashes to mark the beginning of Lent and to be reminded that "from dust we have been made, and to dust we shall return."

### Lenten Devotional (families of all kinds, intergenerational)

Using coloring pages and brief reflections, an *Illustrated Lent: Reflections on Prayer* invites families to focus intentionally on the spiritual discipline of prayer during the Lenten season. By exploring different Gospel passages of Jesus engaged in prayer, we will be encouraged to learn new ways to expand and enrich our experiences of prayer, individually, as families, and in community. *Every week there will be activities, coloring pages, a short reflection, and closing prayer.* Some of the activities include making prayer boxes, prayer beads and a Lord's Prayer booklet. On Sundays following worship at 11:15 am.

### Lenten Pretzel Making Sunday March 29 at 11:15 in the Chapel Gathering Space

Come participate in our annual Lenten Pretzel making tradition! The crossed arms of the pretzel represent the Lenten focus on prayer. We will each make a pretzel to eat and a pretzel to give away. Join us, make a pretzel and write a card expressing gratitude for someone to brighten their day. **Please RSVP** so we make sure we have enough dough for everyone.

### Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Story Circles Wednesdays March 11 - April 1 at 6:15 pm (with a simple meal served at 5:30 pm)

Every Sunday morning, you pass the peace with those sitting near you. You know their faces. Perhaps you know their names. But what else do you know about them, and what do you wish they knew about you? Our four week Lenten Series will invite us into a time of deeper peace, giving us opportunity deepen the ties that bind us together as a community. Join us for a fun and meaningful time of sharing, listening, praying, and (hopefully) experiencing the Peace of Christ in our midst. Led by Pastor Helen and with the help of trained facilitators Terry Daugherty and Brett Gershon, we will meet in the Chapel Gathering Space. Childcare for children will be provided from 6:15 - 7:30 pm. Sign-up at the Reception Desk!



## *Holy Week at FCC*

### **Palm/Passion Sunday - April 5**

Join us for worship at 10:00 am as children lead us into Holy Week with a palm procession. FCC's Sanctuary Choir and a chamber orchestra will present J.S. Bach's *Cantata 182: King of Heaven, Be Thou Welcome*. The movements of the cantata will lead us from Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem to meditations on the events of Holy Week.

### **Maundy Thursday - April 9**

#### ***Mediterranean Banquet at 6:00 pm and Worship at 7:30 pm***

We will gather for a First Century Mediterranean Banquet on Holy Thursday. We will share a meal representative of a traditional meal that would have been prepared during the time when Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples. Andy and Peggy Stafford will host this special event that will begin at 6:00 pm on April 9th in the Great Hall. Reservations are required so that we can adequately prepare for the meal. You can make reservations by signing up at the reception desk or calling the church office.

Join us for worship in FCC's Sanctuary at 7:30 pm on Maundy Thursday as we reflect on that Passover meal when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, and commanded them to do the same for each other.

### **Good Friday - April 10 at 12:10 pm**

We will join our friends at First United Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church and First United Church for the annual Community Good Friday Service at 12:10 pm. This year, services will be held at First United Church. Worship will begin at 12:10 pm in their sanctuary located at 2420 E. 3rd Street.

### **Holy Saturday Concert - April 11 at 7:00 pm**

#### ***Joseph Haydn's The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross***

Plan to attend a very special concert that will provide a time of meditation and contemplation as we end the Holy Week observances in preparation for Easter. FCC's Sanctuary Choir and soloists will be joined by a professional string quartet organized by guest cellist Adriana Contino to offer Joseph Haydn's *The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross* on Saturday April 11 at 7:00 pm.

### **Easter Sunday - April 12**

#### **Worship at 10:00 am and FCC's Easter Egg Hunt at 11:15 am**

Christ is Risen! Join us on Easter Sunday for worship as we celebrate with special music from our Sanctuary Choir. The celebration continues following worship with our annual Easter Egg Hunt. FCC's youth will be filling oodles of eggs with all sorts of sweet confections for children to find! Be sure to bring your basket!

**A Season of Prayer**  
for  
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

*(Disciples of Christ)*

BLOOMINGTON, IN



DIVERSE IN THOUGHT | UNITED IN FAITH | CALLED TO SERVE

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 offer this prayer:

*God of all creation, hear our prayers for our Week of Compassion ministries. For the tireless efforts of its staff— tiny in number but mighty in impact— and their ability to leverage resources that help alleviate suffering in this world that you so love. For the individuals and congregations who support its work through their generous and compassionate giving. For the partner organizations that allow us to be among the first to arrive when disaster strikes and the last to leave after recovery efforts have begun. For the vulnerable we serve through the Week of Compassion: those who live in refugee camps, those who are victims of natural disasters, those who need the basics of life in order to live. Because you are a God of Compassion, help us be people of compassion. Hear this our prayer. Amen*

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

First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
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*The Christian Visitor*

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**Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule**

**February 23:**  
Book Bunch & Roger Heimer  
Book Group

**March 1:**  
Emmaus Interpreters Class

**March 8:**  
Grades K-12 and Sharing Table

**Scripture Readings  
For Sunday Worship**

**February 23**  
John 9:1-41; Psalm 27:1-4

**March 1**  
John 11:1-44; Psalm 104:27-30

**March 8**  
John 13:1-17; Psalm 51:7-12