

The CHRISTIAN





FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

FCC's Spring Classes and Groups Include Something For Everyone

Here in Bloomington, we are not quite done with winter yet, but signs of spring are already here. Even the beloved groundhog Punxsutawney Phil has predicted an early spring this year. And after leaving the winter coat in the closet and instead firing up the BBQ grill over the weekend, I believe his prediction may be right this year.

At FCC, preparing for spring means diving into a new group or class or continuing with one of our many beloved groups. Inside this newsletter, you will find an **FCC Connects** brochure filled with details designed to help you learn, grow, and deepen your life of faith. We have designed our programs to include a variety of formats and topics. We hope there is something for everyone.

On Sunday mornings at 8:30 am, you can start the day with meditation. Each session includes readings from teachers such as Thich Nhat Hahn or Richard Rohr. No previous experience is necessary. Another mediation group (also open to all) is offered on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 pm.

Other Sunday our adult classes include the **Emmaus-Interpreters** Bible study and the **Campbellite Class** (a study/discussion group). Film sets the tone for the **Faith, Friends & Films** group that discusses and reflects on videos featuring modern theologians.

Our youth meet for activities and discussion following Sunday worship and meet again in the afternoon (at 4:00 pm) for a deeper discussion of scripture and issues of importance to them. Younger children meet following worship for **Pathfinders** and **Young Explorers** where they are introduced to Bible stories and begin developing Bible study skills.

Let's not forget the young adult and college crowd. They meet on Sunday afternoons for **Bloomington Bible Study**, an opportunity for discussion of Biblical topics while also finishing up homework. It's a really unique combination that works for this crowd!

Two new opportunities will begin as we move into Lent. An intergenerational **Lenten Devotional** group for families of all kinds. A four-week series **Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Sharing Christ's Peace** for adults will invite us into a time of deeper peace, giving us opportunity to deepen the ties that bind us together as a community.

Consider joining a class or group at FCC!

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FCC Connects - Spring Classes & Groups

Volume 62, number 3 February 5, 2020

Pastor's Pen

Living in the Church

I wish you could have seen the expressions on our children's faces on Sunday when (as we began the Time with Children) I told them that Mr. Adrian and Mr. Miche and Ms. Kristen "live in our church!" Their eyes got as big as saucers and their mouths formed a silent "wow!" It is, indeed, pretty cool that these three fine young people do, in fact, "live in our church!" We know them as our XPLOR residents.

Since we are a little over the halfway point of their XPLOR residency, I'd like to give you a quick update. First, a quick review: Deeply rooted in the mission of the National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), XPLOR is a "faith-based, 10-month, congregationally hosted residency program designed for 21- to 30-year-olds looking to explore lives of care and service — giving them the opportunity to unleash their own potential, while positively impacting their community."

Each resident has a 30 hour per week paid internship. Adrian works for the ReStore of Habitat for Humanity. Kristen works for New Hope for Families. Miche works for Monroe County United Ministries. Because they are confronted by issues of poverty, homelessness and injustice, their work is intense and at times overwhelming. Which is why, by design, Fridays are set aside as days of reflection and renewal.

Each Friday morning, I meet with the residents for a time of meditation and prayer. My time with them includes introducing them to a spiritual practice, giving them homework assignments that encourage them to practice one of the spiritual disciplines both individually and as a community, and spending some time reflecting on the previous week's assignment.

Following my time with them, Bruce Ervin (serving in the role of Spiritual Companion) meets with them to help them "unpack" the prior week's experiences. Sometimes the conversation centers on the joys and challenges of living in intentional community (e.g. sharing in meal prep and clean up, living with a single budget, leading each other in daily devotions, keeping up with the daily chores, etc.). Trust me, they are not simply roommates! Other times, they reflect on the justice issues that they are exposed to as a result of their internships. Yet other times, they help each other name and address the personal issues that are impacting their lives. In the coming weeks, they will be completing a spiritual gifts inventory and begin to discern longer term vocational decisions. At the end of each two-hour session, they reflect on the question, "Where did you see God this week?"

In the meantime, they are enjoying "living in the church" in their lovely apartment tucked away in the lower level. Not only do they do a nightly security check (including turning off lights and checking the doors), but they greatly strengthen us through their emerging leadership on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. I encourage you to reach out to them so they can enjoy not just "living in the church" but living in Bloomington! Invite them into your homes for a meal. Take them to an event, whether it be a ball game, a theater production, a concert, or an afternoon in Brown County. You'll be glad you did!

See you Sunday!



Pastor Helen

Indiana Disciples Head to US-Mexico Border in April

FCC's Betsy Watson Joins Group for Pilgrimage to Los Fresnos, Texas

A delegation of Indiana Disciples including FCC's Betsy Watson will travel to the Texas-Mexico border in April to work with Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, a Disciples of Christ ministry, in Los Fresnos, Texas. Founded in 1985, this ministry has assisted over 20,000 refugees and asylum seekers primarily from Central America. They work closely with the Department of Homeland Security and Church World Service to provide housing, food, clothing, legal aid, transportation, family reunification and counseling to immigration detainees at the Port Isabell Processing Center.

Members of the Indiana delegation will have the opportunity to participate in the services being provided to asylum seekers. Participants in this pilgrimage will engage with and have the opportunity to better understand the root causes of immigration, and the complex legal, social, and humanitarian call to accompaniment and solidarity for our nation and our church.

Betsy Watson will join a group of 13 from all across Indiana for this Mexico Initiative trip to Los Fresnos on April 22-27. Please pray for Betsy and the twelve others who will be traveling.



Special Offering February 16 and 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.



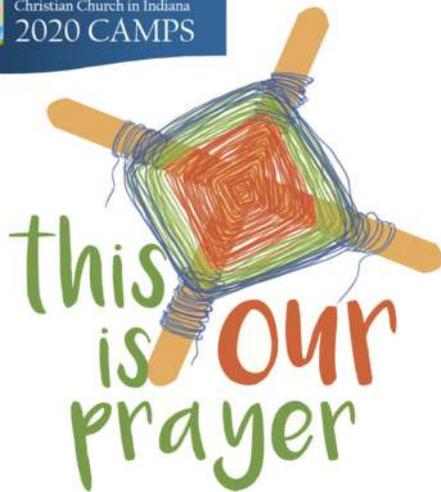
Please Pray For...

Please pray for the family and colleagues of a beloved member of the Global Ministries family, Jeanette Salley (who passed away on January 18, 2020) whose passion for your people will not be forgotten, and whose presentation at FCC opened our eyes to the work of the wider church.

Connie Gross would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and the lovely prayer quilt during her stay in the hospital and Bell Trace rehabilitation. Connie is happily back home, and feeling stronger all of the time.

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!

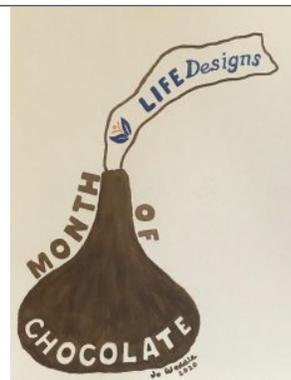
It's strange to think about registering for summer camp when it's cold outside, but it is time to sign up! Camp registration has already begun! The early bird deadline is **May 15th**. Camp dates are posted in the following link:

<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.

Congratulations Jo Weddle!

Jo was recently announced the winner of the 2020 T-shirt design contest for LifeDesigns "Month of Chocolate" event! This popular event happens during the month of February and supports various non-profit organizations in the Bloomington community.



FCC's **Jazz Vespers Service** offers an informal, contemplative, candlelit time to reflect, meditate, or simply "be" as you listen to the music, take in the beauty and peace of the sanctuary, and experience the authentic warmth of a faith community that gently welcomes ALL.

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



**Bring Someone Special to FCC's Game Night
and Celebrate Valentine's Day with some Real Fun!**
February 14 at 7:00 pm

Anyone up for a game of Hearts? February's Game Night will be Extra Sweet, so bring someone special to celebrate with! You don't have to spend a lot of money to celebrate in style at FCC. We will have plenty of snacks (feel free to bring a snack to share) and we'll also have slices of a decadent chocolate cake available for a small price.

Join us, and bring a friend... or a sweetheart. FCC's Game Nights are legendary... and this special Valentine's edition will not disappoint. FCC XPLOR Resident Adrian Griffin has brought this tradition back on the second Friday of each month! This is open to all, including young'uns, friends and neighbors. See you on February 14th for the sweetest Game Night in FCC history!



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.

For the latest newsletter, upcoming church events, or to give a financial gift online, visit our website: www.fccbloomington.org



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.



Mardi Gras and Imposition of Ashes
Tuesday February 25

Mark your calendars for a family-friendly Shrove Tuesday (also known as Fat Tuesday) celebration followed by worship and the imposition of ashes on February 25. We will begin at 6:00 pm with a light dinner and activities for all ages in the Great Hall. At 7:00 pm we will move to the sanctuary for a short service including the imposition of ashes in preparation for Lent. Childcare will be provided.

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...

Friday, February 7
 6:30 pm *First Friday Jazz Vespers*

Sunday, February 9
 8:30 am *Mediation Group*
 9:00 am *Learning Session I*
 10:00 am *Worship*
 11:15 am *Learning Session II*
 11:00 *Congregational meeting*
 4:00 pm *Youth Bible Study*
 5:00 pm *Bloomington Bible Study*

Tuesday, February 11
 12:00 pm *Voices of Faith*
 1:30 pm *Caregivers Create!*
 5:30 *Listening to God meditation*

Wednesday, February 12
 6:15 pm *Deeper Bible Study*

Thursday, February 13
 5:30 pm *Handbell Choir rehearsal*
 6:15 pm *Sanctuary Choir rehearsal*

Friday, February 14
 7:00 pm *FCC Game Night*

Sunday, February 16
 8:30 am *Mediation Group*
 9:00 am *Learning Session I*
 10:00 am *Worship*
 11:15 am *Learning Session II*
 12:00 pm *FCC Board meeting*
 4:00 pm *Youth Bible Study*
 5:00 pm *Bloomington Bible Study*

Tuesday, February 18
 5:30 *Listening to God meditation*

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
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The Christian Visitor

Vol. 62, no. 3



Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

February 9:
Sanctuary and Handbell Choirs

February 16:
Campbellite Class

February 23:
Book Bunch and Roger Heimer
Book Group

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

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

February 16
John 6:1-21

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

FCC Connects...

through small groups and classes



—2020 Spring Semester—

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Spring 2020 Small Groups & Classes

Before Worship

Sunday Meditation Group (spiritual practice)
This group practices silent meditation to cultivate peace and joy. Each session includes discussion of readings from teachers such as Thich Nhat Hahn, Richard Rohr, and others. No previous experience in meditation practice is required. (A different meditation option is available on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.) **Meets at 8:30 a.m. in Room 1 on the lower level.**

Contact: Tom Walsh

Emmaus-Interpreters Class (Bible study)
Where did the book of Revelation come from? What do its strange visions and apocalyptic images of the end of times mean? And why were other books of revelation discarded while this one survived? Brilliantly weaving scholarship with a deep understanding of the human needs to which religion speaks, Elaine Pagels' *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation* presents a profound exploration of the Bible's strangest and most controversial book. **Meets at 9:15 a.m. in the Campbellite Room, 2nd level.**

Contact: Andy Stafford

After Worship

Campbellite Class (study, discussion)
As thinking persons who love God and each other, we think together about how we should live as part of God's family. This term we will share our thoughts about the issues that cause conflict in our culture and our own lives. Lively discussion as part of our lifelong learning. We invite you to join us at **11:15 a.m. in the Fireside Study on the main level.**

Contact: Jane Watkins

After Worship (continued)

Faith, Friends & Films
(discussion, spiritual practice)
When this group gathers, film sets the tone for diving deep into our shared faith journey. The dialogue begins with brief and engaging videos featuring modern theologians. Some weeks the group learns about or engages in a spiritual discipline and practices it together. Join us in sharing the discoveries and challenges that arise as we more deeply connect with God, self, and others. We meet at **11:15 a.m. in the Campbellite Room on the 2nd level.**
Contact: Lisa Autry, Amy Hoover, Sharon Robinson

The Sharing Table (discussion group)
Join this lively, unstructured dialogue as participants review the morning sermon and discuss various meditational writings through the lens of a personal relationship with the sacred. Conversation begins at **11:15 a.m. in the sanctuary on the main level.**
Contact: Thomas Thompson

Pathfinders and Young Explorers
(children's study: PreK-grade 5)
Each Sunday after worship, children are invited to go deeper into the Bible stories introduced during children's worship. Younger children remain in the classroom throughout the lesson, while older children join church staff 2-3 times each month to develop their Bible study skills. During Lent this group will participate in the Lenten Devotional group. **Meets at 11:15 a.m. in Room 7/8 on the lower level.**

Contact: Jo Weddle, Sarah Lynne Gershon

Spring 2020 Small Groups & Classes

After Worship (continued)

Youth (project-based activities and discussion)
Youth (grades 6-12) meet weekly following worship for discussions about life and faith. Discussion begins at **11:15 a.m. in the Youth Room (#13) on the lower level.**
Contact: Ashlyn Reynolds

Sunday Afternoon/Evening

Youth Bible Study (study, discussion)
Youth gather again on Sundays at 4:00 pm to engage in scripture and spiritual practices. Time is dedicated to covering topics the youth are interested in as well as exploring and pushing their horizons. This spring we will focus on self-care and self-love, discussing everything from basic life skills to affirming ourselves as beloved children of God to relationships to community love and care.
Contact: Ashlyn Reynolds

Bloomington Bible Study (study, discussion)
FCC's college ministry focuses on studying with the Bible. This means that students are encouraged to bring homework to do while we discuss our weekly theme and how it relates to our faith journeys. The group consists of young adults who are college-aged, but you do not need to be in college to attend. Everyone 18-30 is welcome! Join us on Sundays beginning at **5:00 p.m. in the Fireside Study on the main level.**
Contact: Haley Norris

Weeknights

Listening to God (spiritual practice) Cultivate the practice of silent meditation as a means of deepening faith and improving conscious contact with God. No previous experience in meditation practice is required. All are welcome to join our practice on Tuesdays from **5:45-6:45 p.m. in the Fireside Study.**
Contact: Thomas Thompson

Special Opportunities for Spiritual Growth during Lent

Lenten Devotional (families of all kinds, intergenerational)
Using coloring pages and brief reflections, an *Illustrated Lent: Reflections on Prayer* invites families of all types 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. On Sundays at **11:15 a.m. in Great Hall.**
Contact: Sarah Lynne Gershon

Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Sharing Christ's Peace (4 week series for adults)
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. A light supper will be served at 5:30 pm with the study beginning at 6:15 pm. Childcare will be provided from 6:15 - 7:30 pm



Spring 2020 Small Groups & Classes Groups Meeting Monthly

Caregivers Create

If you are a caregiver, personal or professional, who would like a bit of respite time to take a creative adventure, this is for you! No experience necessary for this FREE opportunity. Each class is led by a professional artist or experienced crafter. All materials and light refreshments are provided.

Meets **1:30-4:00 p.m., 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, in the Chapel/Gathering Space on the main level.** Reservations are required. Save your spot by emailing CaregiversCreate@gmail.com or call the FCC office at 812-332-4459.

Women's Arts & Crafts

Create unique hand-crafted items and enjoy fun company. Past crafts include jewelry making, ribbon bookmarks, washcloth bunnies, and seasonal wreaths. Feel free to bring your own project or participate in our monthly activity. We gather on the **first Monday of each month from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Chapel/Gathering Space.**

Contact: Susan Jenkin

Voices of Faith (Disciples Women)

This network of Disciples Women strives to connect and empower women to engage in dialogue and advocacy as we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. We would love to hear *your* voice as we learn together where our deep gladness and our community's deep hunger meet.

Contact the church office for the schedule and more information.

Youth Group

Youth meet monthly for fellowship and/or service activities including Holiday World getaways, Christmas shopping for families in need, lock-ins, and game nights. **For information about upcoming activities, contact Ashlyn Reynolds,** director of youth ministries.

Roger L. Heimer Book Group (for men)

Big thoughts and open minds meet in FCC's book group for men. The current booklist is available in the church office. Meets the **third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Study.**

Book Bunch (for women)

This fun group of readers gathers every five weeks to discuss books from a variety of genres. **A booklist with meeting dates and locations is available in the church office.**

M Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)

This group of moms gathers on the **first Wednesday of each month** to embrace the journey of motherhood. Whether you are a soon-to-be mom, an adoptive mom, young mom, seasoned mom, foster mom, stepmom or any other type of mom, you are welcome to join us!

Learn more on our Facebook page:

[@fccbloomingtonmops.](https://www.facebook.com/fccbloomingtonmops)

Contact: Andrea Dalton

*For more information on FCC's Spring Classes and Small Groups, please contact Sarah Lynne Gershon, Director of Faith Formation and Family Ministries.
sarahlynn@fccbloomington.org*

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:

Almighty God, whose deep love for this world is beyond measure: hear our prayers today for those who witness to your love for the world through Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. We give thanks for the ministries of Mark Knowles and Danielle Murry-Knowles, Mission Co-workers with the Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa. Grant them strength and joy and a sense of peace and purpose in their ministries of service and justice. We also give thanks for the life of a beloved member of the Global Ministries family, Jeanette Salley (who passed away on January 18, 2020), whose passion for your people will not be forgotten, and whose presentation at FCC opened our eyes to the work of the wider church. Hear now our prayers for all those who serve your world through Global Ministries, that they might live out the vision that "all people and creation share in your promise of abundant life." Hear also our prayers for Global Ministries' Co-Executives, Julia Brown Karimu and Karen Georgia A. Thompson as they lead your church in carrying out its mission "to receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global and local partners to work for justice, reconciliation, and peace." We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus, who shows us your way of love. Amen

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