The FCC Story is Unfolding
Two New Ministries Now Underway at First Christian Church

The FCC Story (formerly known as “Future Story”) is taking shape. We’ve welcomed outside groups such as The Ripple Effect from South Bend and Story Church from First Presbyterian Church in Bloomington to our beautiful sanctuary while also beginning new ministries of our own. We introduced a First Friday Jazz Vespers service earlier this month, and in October we will host the first in a new series of events to take place on our front lawn, a Blessing of the Animals.

If you missed the inaugural First Friday Jazz Vespers service, you won’t want to miss the next one on October 6 at 6:30 pm. This unique service combines the reading of Psalms and poetry with jazz music played by the Will Bernard Trio with vocalist Kathryn Sherman. Those who attended in September said it was the perfect way to end the work week. This short and informal service is also a perfect way to introduce friends and neighbors to FCC. First Friday Jazz Vespers takes place at 6:30 pm on the first Friday of each month, and coincides with the downtown Bloomington gallery walk.

Join us on October 15 at 4:00 pm on the front lawn as we honor our animal friends with a Blessing of the Animals. This service is typically held in early October, on or near the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of Animals. The Monroe County Humane Association will be on hand with therapy animal teams from the VIPaws program and a fun craft for families to enjoy. You can support this important local organization by bringing donations of dog and cat food, treats and toys for their Low Income Pet Food Pantry.

Come with your pet, or a picture of your pet and join us on the front lawn as we celebrate and bless our animal friends. We do ask that all pets are kept on a leash to ensure everyone has a good experience. A craft station and information about the work of the Monroe County Humane Association will be available following the service. This is the first of a series of events on our front lawn. We are so fortunate to have a green space in the middle of downtown. What a great opportunity to share FCC’s inclusive love with our greater Bloomington community. See you there!

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Twelve years ago (when the Curry family discovered that on Sunday mornings people experiencing homelessness had no place to eat or read the newspaper or regain strength for another day) our breakfast ministry was born. With the Shalom Center being open seven days a week starting in October, there is now another option for those who are hungry and/or needing a place of welcome and respite on Sunday mornings.

Therefore, on Sunday September 17, after much discussion, personal prayer, and faithful discernment, our breakfast volunteers recommended to the board that that we let go of serving breakfast at FCC and instead offer a hot breakfast and warm hospitality at the Shalom Center on one Sunday each month. Their recommendation was approved unanimously by a very appreciative board.

To help Shalom with the transition, our FCC breakfast volunteers will serve every Sunday in October. October 1 will be the final breakfast here at FCC. On October 8, 15, 22, and 29, FCC will serve breakfast at Shalom. After that, we will move to serving one Sunday a month, with the Sunday yet to be determined.

The decision was not an easy one! Some expressed the desire that our breakfast continue “as is,” except for the fact that it would have been a duplication of services and it would not have been part of a collaborative community-wide effort. Others mourned the sense of loss that our guests will feel because of this change. Still others would have preferred that we move away from serving breakfast all together and allow Shalom to oversee Sunday morning breakfast. All of us will experience feelings of grief that come when we “let go” of a way of doing ministry that we have cherished for years.

All that being said, I celebrate that we will still have the opportunity to connect with our breakfast friends a minimum of once a month when we host “FCC Breakfast at Shalom.” My hope is that our monthly presence at Shalom will allow us to stay connected with our guests as we export our authentic FCC hospitality and share the inclusive love of Christ at Shalom through: serving a delicious hot breakfast, creating a welcoming space, and connecting with folks in ways that bring a sense of wholeness, dignity and worth to all. I also hope that some of you will serve at Shalom more than one Sunday per month. Our consistent and ongoing presence at Shalom will help maintain and strengthen our FCC connections with our community.

I wonder what God has in store for us next?

Blessings,

Pastor Helen
More News from Pastor Helen

Dear Friends of FCC,

I write to share good news and to invite your participation in decision-making about the continuing implementation of the FCC Story.

In the very near future, we will be making an enhancement to our sanctuary to offer greater comfort, accessibility, and flexibility.

Here’s what is planned: the two front pews and modesty rail (closest to the piano) will be moved to storage. In their place will be several commercial samples of high quality moveable church seats. We invite you to sit on the chairs to evaluate their comfort, flexibility, and appearance. As you try them out, keep in mind that you are sitting on samples, not final, custom-built products.

Once we receive your feedback and determine which sample works best in the space, we will work closely with the company that will custom build seating for this small area. The seating will blend well with the traditional style and colors of our beautiful sanctuary.

The enhancement of this area will allow us to use the space in a variety of ways that will support and strengthen the ministries envisioned in our FCC Story, including small group prayer and meditation, music ensembles, intimate worship experiences, and inclusion for those in wheelchairs.

The Cornerstone team has visited other churches to study and compare alternative seating possibilities to maximize use of our sanctuary while providing a beautiful space that is accessible for all. The team members will provide a comment box to receive your feedback about which samples you think will best serve FCC. They are: Mike and Sandy Rampley (chairs), Amy Cheek, Doug Cull, Connie Daugherty, Natalie Garshaw, Fay McIntyre, Charlie Sinn, Peggy Stafford, and Kathy Street.

Thank you for having a seat and sharing your opinion as we move forward!

Blessings,

Pastor Helen

P.S. Please read the special note below. I strongly encourage your participation! I’ll even provide the special tea-bags (see page 5)!

How’s it been going?

We’ve completed the first four weeks of our congregation wide Spiritual Practices for a Fragmented World. How has it been going for you? Do you need help with your practice? Can you offer support to someone who is struggling with their practice? Do you have an experience to share? Would you like to hear from another seeker as they engaged in the practices we’ve been introduced to?

You are invited to participate in a gathering of seekers as we share our experiences from our expeditions into a closer relationship with God. Please join us for the Journeying Together Through a Fragmented World Sharing Circle at 9 a.m. this Sunday, October 1, in room 14 in the lower level. Come and share, come and listen, come and engage in this Faith Community.
Interfaith Winter Shelter Concert on October 20

This year our benefit concert for the Interfaith Winter Shelter will be in collaboration with instrumentalists and singers from all over the community, including members of our Sanctuary Choir, First Presbyterian, the Universalist -Unitarian Church as well as other community musical organizations. The concert, organized by and featuring the music of local classical guitar virtuoso Sulaiman Zai, will be a combination of delightful vocal and choral music and interesting chamber music, including multiple guitars, strings, solo trombone, and a solo cellist David Pereira from Australia. A freewill offering to benefit the Interfaith Winter Shelter will be taken, so come out and enjoy this unusual and entertaining evening while supporting the important continuing work of the Shelter.

Interfaith Winter Shelter Benefit Concert
Friday October 20 at 7:00 PM
St. Thomas Lutheran Church
3800 E 3rd Street

Fauré. Requiem, Op. 45

Worship on All Saints Day - November 5th - will include the profoundly serene and beautiful Requiem, Op. 45 by the French Composer Gabriel Fauré. One of the most beloved commemorative works in the repertoire, the Requiem, will be performed by the Sanctuary Choir and soloists with orchestra. Our service will lift up those who have gone before us and especially honor those who have suffered and died in recent natural disasters in Houston, Florida, the Caribbean, and Mexico City. Extra singers are needed for this special project, so if you have been contemplating singing with the choir, but hesitating because of an inability to keep the commitment of singing every Sunday, know that you are welcome to sing in this short term project. Simply contact Jan Harrington (harringt@indiana.edu) and commit to Thursday night rehearsals beginning next week. The choir rehearses from 6:15 to 7:30 with work on the Requiem beginning at 7 each evening.
Reconciliation Sunday on October 1

The Reconciliation Offering is used to fund our Church’s mission imperative to become a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church utilizing experiential education, inclusive worship and intentional dialogue. Our efforts promote healing, relationship and restoration in the whole family of God are enlivened by funds from this offering.

During General Assembly this past July, Reconciliation Ministry launched a new initiative, “One Bag of Tea, One Conversation, One Relationship.” This campaign is founded in the principle of “Oneness in Christ.” In our endeavor to work for racial and social justice and to ensure radical welcome for all, we can only accomplish this if we know each other better.

This Sunday, FCC will have special packets of tea for those who would like to join the movement towards wholeness. The idea is simple:

One bag of tea,
one conversation,
one relationship.

1. Take a bag of tea.
2. Invite someone or another congregation to have tea with you.
3. Share your stories over the questions in the tea wrapper.
4. Take another bag of tea and extend the challenge to keep the conversation going.
5. Commit to become One in a Thousand member or congregation to give $100 per year to the Reconciliation Ministry Annual Fund. This is to broaden the conversation and strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship.
6. Next year, host or attend a Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism training event.
7. Plan a community action with your new friends and relations!
Join us (and bring a friend) for First Friday Jazz Vespers Balance

A Service of Music, Reflection, and Meditation

Will Barnard Trio featuring vocalist Kathryn Sherman

Friday, October 6 | 6:30 pm

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Join us for…

The Blessing of the Animals
On FCC’s front lawn
October 15 at 4:00 pm

Bring your pet (on a leash) or bring a picture of your pet and join us for this special service. The Monroe County Humane Association will be on hand with their VIPaws therapy animal teams and a fun craft for families. We are also looking for volunteers to help set up and manage the crafts. Call the church office (812-332-4459) if you’d like to help.

MCUM Challenge

FCC has long supported Monroe County United Ministries. FCC’s MCUM 2017 Challenge is to donate a TON of items to help fill their food and supply pantry. So far, we’ve donated 1,439 pounds! We have four months to donate 561 pounds and meet our goal!

Needs are great. You can find a list of needed items posted at different places around the church (near the water fountains and on the bulletin board near the staircase). Won’t you take a list and shop for MCUM?

They are especially in need of cleaning products right now, including laundry soap. Canned soups and meats are also needed. Bring your donated items in paper grocery bags (they are stronger) to FCC.

Thank you for caring!

UPCOMING EVENTS...

Friday, September 29
5:30 pm Listening to God meditation

September 29-30
Lotus Festival (FCC is a venue)

Sunday, October 1
Reconciliation Sunday
10:00 am Worship with Children
Worship & Wonder
11:15 am Learning Session II

Monday, October 2
6:00 pm Garshaw book study

Tuesday, October 3
6:30 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal

Thursday, October 5
7:30 pm Choir celebration
6:15 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Friday, October 6
5:30 pm Listening to God meditation
6:30 pm First Friday Jazz Vespers

Sunday, October 8
9:00 am Learning Session I
10:00 am Worship with Children
Worship & Wonder
11:15 am Learning Session II
3:00 pm Meadowood Service

Coming up soon...

Sunday, October 15
4:00 pm Blessing of the Animals
Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule

October 1: Sanctuary & Handbell Choirs

October 8: Grades K-12 & Sharing Table

October 15: Cambellite Class

Scripture Readings for Sunday Worship

October 1
Exodus 1:8-14; 3:1-10

October 8
Deuteronomy 5:1-21; 6:4-6

October 15
Ruth 1:1-17