

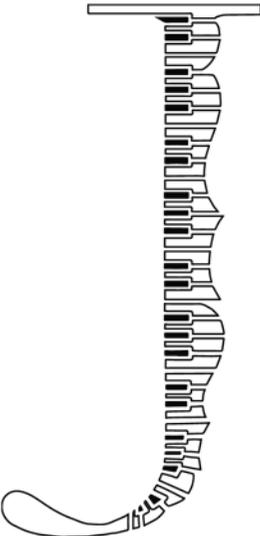
The CHRISTIAN



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

Visitor

 Third Friday
Jazz
VESPERS

Third Friday of the Month at 6:30 pm
Beginning September 17

with The
Garrett Spoelhof Trio

Featuring Wynton Gage, Vocalist

Join us in FCC's sanctuary in-person or via livestream
as we celebrate the gift of WELCOME!

Volume 63, number 15 September 8, 2021

Will Writes

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, I have long been a supporter of our **Week of Compassion** ministry. The work they do every day in places where disaster has struck or development work is ongoing is inspiring. No, they are not the biggest agency around, but they are highly effective and represent the best of who we are as church. So, I encourage your giving for relief work in Haiti and disaster response after Hurricane Ida in addition to our annual giving each February.

But Week of Compassion can't be everywhere and is not able to meet every need. Each day, it seems, I receive an email, text, or mailing asking me to support some worthy cause. And I often respond. But I am cautious and try to research the efficacy and purpose of the group I support. Right now, we are getting all sorts of requests to help with the situation in Afghanistan. There is little we can do as individuals. Much of what is needed there will require large government to government funding and coordination. However, one of our members sent me a list from another congregation of groups that have a track record of service and caring in Afghanistan. So, I share that list with you. I am not offering a recommendation since I have not worked with any these groups. But, if your heart is leading you to reach out, these may be good ways to do so.

The International Rescue Committee is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to aiding people displaced by war, persecution, or natural disaster. The organization has worked in Afghanistan since 1988, providing "displaced families with shelter, clean water, sanitation, and other basic necessities," according to its website, as well as education and cash assistance.

The **International Medical Corps** has operated in Afghanistan since 1984, providing medical training and services in the country.

Women for Afghan Women, the "largest women's organization in Afghanistan," is also accepting donations to help provide "safe shelter, resources, and aid to the thousands of women, children, families, and staff."

The **Child Foundation**, which helps impoverished children access education, created the Afghanistan Crisis Fund for Emergency Assistance in the Balkh province, where about 800 children supported by the foundation live. According to its website, it has raised \$15,000 to feed 300 families.

Another way we may be able to help in coming weeks is with the resettlement of refugees arriving at Camp Atterbury. May we be the church loving our neighbor near and far.

Grace and Peace,



Will



The Return of In-Person Jazz Vespers on Third Fridays – 6:30 pm
An Evening Service of Meditation, Scripture, Poetry and Jazz

What Are Jazz Vespers?

Since we are returning to Jazz Vespers service in person (and streamed online) on September 17, here is a reminder from our website of the origin of the Jazz Vespers and a description of what to expect if you attend. Those in attendance will be asked to follow current COVID-19 protocols including wearing masks and social distancing, like our Sunday morning services.

Vespers is an ancient form of communal evening prayer that has been observed for at least 15 centuries, when the fading of the light of day inaugurated the time when lamps were lighted. The Jewish tradition accompanied this transition in time with a blessing prayer and a service in the synagogue, and Christians continued the custom. A liturgical vesper service in the Christian tradition contains prescribed prayers, the reading or chanting of Psalms, hymns, and celebratory responses. In some protestant traditions this service is also known as Evening Prayer.

Jazz is a uniquely American musical expression, rooted in the soil of slavery and oppression, that gave voice and strength to a marginalized people.

Jazz Vespers, with its blending of these two very different forms of expression, offers a balm that has the power to heal and inspire even as it does not back away from naming its impatience with the injustices of our day. As a concept worship service and as an outreach ministry, Jazz Vespers began in New York City in the 1960's when Pastor John Gensel of St. Peter's Lutheran Church befriended the city's musicians and designed a service of prayer and jazz for folks who couldn't make it to Sunday morning services after playing late night gigs on Saturday night. The idea of such a service has spread beyond St. Peter's to churches of many denominations throughout the world.

Our **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.

ONE LAST JAZZ VESPERS MOMENT RE-RUN POSTED THIS FRIDAY AT 6:30

September 10 (First Broadcast March 26, 2021)

Theme: Embracing

Embracing the Future

Wear God like a cloak and stride forth with confidence.

You won't know where you're going. . .

*Trust that what you carry will sustain you
and take the first step out the door.*

- Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

Congratulations Jan and Gerry!

Jan Harrington and Gerry Sousa are excited to announce that after nearly 45 years together they were officially married on Friday September 3rd.

We are grateful for the love and support of all our friends over these many years.



SANCTUARY CHOIR REHEARSALS RESUME THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 at 6:15-7:45 pm

At last, the **Sanctuary Choir** will begin rehearsing again on Thursday, September 16 at 6:15 pm! Rehearsals will be held in the Great Hall on the second floor of the annex. Old members are urged to return and new members are always welcome. Everyone in the choir will be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and rehearsals will be held with the singers masked and socially distanced.

Our **Sanctuary Choir**, conducted by FCC Music Director Dr. Jan Harrington, provides an anthem and leadership in hymnody during Sunday morning worship. While this is primarily a choir for adults, enthusiastic singers under the age of 18 may be accepted into the choir, after consultation with Dr. Harrington. The Sanctuary Choir rehearses on Thursday nights from 6:15pm to 7:45pm. There are also opportunities for short-term involvement with the Sanctuary Choir in one of their concerts with orchestra, or for seasonal music during Advent or around Easter. Rehearsals will begin immediately for future anthems and for excerpts of the *Requiem in d minor* (K.626) by Mozart to be performed in the service on All Saints Day at the end of October. For more information contact Jan Harrington at harringt@indiana.edu.

FCC Handbell Choir to Return to Rehearsals Thursday, September 23



After a long hiatus because of the pandemic, the Handbell Choir will begin rehearsing again on September 23 at 5:15 pm - socially distanced and masked in the Sanctuary.

FCC's **Handbell Choir** presents music in worship four to six times a year, taking a break over the summer months. The group plays on four octaves of Schulmerich handbells and two octaves of Malmark handchimes. We are always looking to add new ringers to our ensemble. No previous experience is necessary - Only a commitment to attend rehearsals regularly! The Handbell Choir meets for rehearsal on Thursday nights from 5:15 pm to 6:00 pm. Our Organist Jihye Choi is the director. For more information contact Jihye at organist.jihye@gmail.com

Faith Formation Update

By Sarah Lynne Gershon, Student Associate Pastor

It's Time to Register for Fall Small Groups and Classes!

We have several small groups and classes that have a solid group of members and are ready to get started for the fall! These are the *Campbellite Class*, *Faith, Friends, and Films*, *Sunday Meditation*, *Roger Heimer Book Group* (for men), and *Book Bunch* (for women). If you are interested in joining that group for the first time please reach out to get connected.

But there are also four new classes you might be interested in: Progressive Christianity with David Garshaw (Mondays 6:30-8:00 pm), Racial Trauma Healing (using *My Grandmother's Hands*) with Sarah Lynne and Erin Kelley (every other Monday 6:30-8:00 pm), Move This Mountain: A Study on Mark with Brett Gershon (Sundays 11:15 am), and Pastor's Lectionary study (Tuesdays at 10:00 am). If you are interested in these classes, call the church office (812-332-4459) or email SarahLynne@FCCBloomington.org ASAP. These classes will not run if there isn't interest. We *would love to help any parents who want to join with childcare!* Childcare is already available for the Racial Trauma Healing group and during the 11:15 am Sunday learning hour.

Do you love storytelling?

Do you often wonder about God in creative ways? Or do you just wish you could have fun playing foosball with some kids downstairs once a week?

This opportunity might be a good fit for you!

We need volunteers to work with FCC kids. Right now we would love to train some curious, young-at-heart adults (and youth!) to be Storytellers for our Worship and Wonder program. This is a good fit for people who love children and like having the structure of a calm, worshipful, creative space and a script for storytelling. *We have had to put our Worship and Wonder program on hold because we do not have enough Storytellers. If you are interested in this please contact Sarah Lynne for training. We want to start offering this program again during Advent.*

Are you the kind of person who can run silly games, like explaining big ideas in kid-accessible ways, or have crafts and activities in mind that can help get kids interested in God and the Bible? Then our Children's moment or FCC Kids learning hour might be a good fit for you. We are using various *Spark* curriculums for our kids' programming that will help guide your time with the kids. *Sarah Lynne is working with 4th and 5th graders and Jo Weddle is working with K-3rd grade. We would both appreciate volunteers who could work with us or sub in if needed.*

FCC's newly formed Faith Formation Commission members Debbie White, Andi Fletcher, and Lisa Autry along with Student Associate Pastor Sarah Lynne Gershon appreciate your prayerful consideration around how God is calling you to "Share Christ's Inclusive Love" whether through learning, spiritual connection or in serving and welcoming. We believe there is a good fit for you at First Christian Church Bloomington. Contact Sarah Lynne Gershon for more information or to get connected.

Youth Group News

Youth Sunday at FCC is **October 3**. This special worship service is an amazing opportunity for FCC's Youth Group to stretch their skills and deepen their faith. So mark your calendars and plan to support our youth by attending Youth Sunday (in person or online) on October 3.

If you are the parent of a child (6th grade through high school) who would like to participate, contact Ashlyn Reynolds! We will need youth who are interested in audio/visual, writing, singing, and public speaking. Even if your child is a little too nervous to do anything in front of the church, *we still need them!* There are plenty of things (writing, working the sound) that are behind the scenes that they can be involved in. **Planning and practice with the youth will be on Sundays after church beginning Sunday, September 12th.**

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH BLOOMINGTON

COLLEGE MINISTRY

SUNDAYS | 1PM

HALEY NORRIS | hjnorris@iu.edu

FALL SEMESTER: CHRIST'S INCLUSIVE LOVE

Sep 5, 2021 - Why?
2 Peter 3:13

Nov 7, 2021 - When?
Luke 19:1-10

Sep 19, 2021 - Why?
Galatians 3:26

Nov 21, 2021 - When?
Romans 12:15-18

Oct 3, 2021 - How?
Acts 10 / Romans 15:7

Dec 5, 2021 - Final Blessing
Bring a Scripture Day!

Oct 17, 2021 - How?
Luke 10:25-37

Family Ministries Update

Children's Moments are Back!

This Sunday we will be starting to offer a short Children's Moment for young children that are attending in-person worship. When she is able Sarah Lynne will also be taking elementary-aged children to the Chapel Gathering space after the Children's Moment. She will have activities prepared for them that engage one of the Revised Common Lectionary scriptures for the day. Please contact Sarah Lynne if you are interested in leading these activities when she is not available, and please keep an eye on your email where she will let you know if a children's activity will be offered that Sunday.

This Sunday (Sept. 12) FCC Will Also Be Resuming "Church School" and Our FCC Kids Learning Hour Groups

Jo Weddle will be helping young children up to the 3rd grade meet Bible characters through Spark's Holy Moly curriculum. This week she is introducing them to Abraham and Sarah. Sarah Lynne will be working with 4th and 5th grade children. We will be using Spark's Connects curriculum to help kids understand the overarching narrative in scripture of how God loves and heals the world through Jesus. We will be starting this Sunday with the Genesis creation story.

Please email Sarah Lynne and let her know if your kids will be attending these small groups.

Covid Precautions: Universal masking is required and we ask that all leaders and volunteers working with children confirm they have received COVID-19 vaccinations.

FCC Outreach Update

FCC has a long tradition of outreach and service. Even a pandemic didn't stop FCC's commitment to the community. We continued to serve up breakfast at Beacon and continue support for MCUM through food and supply drives as well as continued service on their board.

As we continue to find ways to resume our activities safely, FCC's newly formed Outreach Commission is working to provide opportunities to continue our tradition of giving back. The commission includes Ashante Thomas, Joe Lee, and Linda Abe along with the leadership of Student Associate Pastor Sarah Lynne Gershon. Below are ways to connect and to serve with your FCC family.

Masks for Beacon Guests

Last week FCC women connected to our *Voices of Faith* group donated bags full of masks to the Shalom center. This group is no longer meeting monthly, but they are staying connected to community needs and sharing opportunities to serve and advocate for justice through email updates. Last week one member noticed a call-out for masks by Beacon and we were able to donate two big bags of fabric masks (and more!). If you are interested in staying in the loop, email sarahlynnne@fccbloomington.org to get added to the google group emails.

Habitat for Humanity Women's Build on Sept 28th

Some of our members are financially supporting or working with an innovative Women's Build team started by Kathleen Sobeich (from Sacred Heart ECC) and Jennifer Benton (from Bethel AME church). These two women wanted to start a team made up of new builders from diverse backgrounds that would support people who might worry that they don't have good fundraising contacts. Usually members of these teams fundraise as individuals, but we are fundraising as a team and are only \$600 away from meeting the \$10,000 goal needed for everyone on the team to build. Many thanks to everyone at First Christian Church who is making this happen! You can support this team by donating at <https://www.classy.org/team/364542>

Card Donations

Do you like making beautiful greeting cards? Many of our members are not able to come back and worship in person right now. We would love to have a stash of FCC handmade cards to give out to other members and help support encouraging communication with one another. If making cards sounds like a joy for you, please contact sarahlynnne@fccbloomington.org or just drop them off to the front office with a note that they are for Sarah Lynne. When we get enough we will distribute them with suggestions for who to write to.

What are you up to?

We would love to share what FCC members are doing to serve our wider community. Seeing the way others are joyfully serving can be an encouragement to all of us! Please feel free to submit a short paragraph to Sarah Lynne for future newsletters that state the need, name the group that you are working with, why it is meaningful to you, and how to get connected. We are so grateful for all the ways our members share Christ's inclusive love in Btown!

All-Church Retreat Update

The All-Church Retreat is on, but we will be limiting overnight guests to 10 family units. Only people who are in the same household will be able to share rooms. Our programming this year will be outdoors and more casual--focused on enjoying nature and re-connecting.

For our craft this year Bess Lee will be helping us make beautiful icons to help us remember the Saints who have inspired us (and since we are Disciples of Christ, yes, your grandma totally counts!). You just need to bring a black and white image, about the size of a grapefruit, of the person you want to remember. If needed, Sarah Lynne can help you make a photocopy of a picture if you bring it to church on Sunday.

Please RSVP now if you would like to spend the night or join us Sunday. All registrations need to be returned to FCC by this Sunday, September 12.

Updated Schedule

Saturday Sept. 18th

5:00 pm Check-in Begins

6:00 pm Campfire dinner

7:30 pm Campfire and Singing*

Optional Late Night Lodge Time: board games, cards, etc. ****masks required****

Sunday Sept. 19th

8:30 am Morning Watch or Meditation

9:00 am Breakfast (for overnight campers)

10:00 am Worship around campfire

11:30 am Break

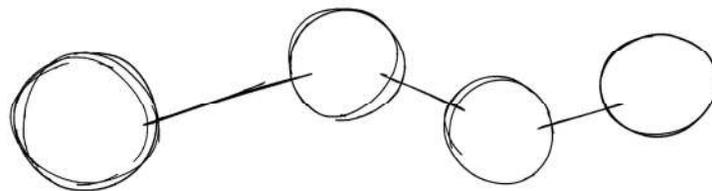
12:30 pm Outdoor Lunch & clean up (bring a potluck side or dessert if able)

2:00-4 pm Renewal Activities + *Icon-Making craft with Bess Lee*

4:00 pm Final camp clean up

5:00 pm Sharing, blessing & sending

* if you would like to help lead singing please let us know when you register



Important Changes to Online Giving at FCC

FCC has moved to a new platform for online giving. This new product works more smoothly with our database, allowing our financial secretaries to more easily record giving and produce end of year statements and reports. This means changes for people who **Give Online** or who **Text to Give**.

If you prefer to make your tithe for FCC online, you will need to go to the new website and create a new account with a new password. You can find that link on our website, www.fccbloomington.org. Click on the red "GIVE" button at the top of the page. Then click on the "Give Online" blue box. That will take you to the new platform where you will click on "Sign Up" and follow the instructions. Like the former online platform, there is a small fee for online giving that comes out of the amount that you give. If you prefer to use "Text to Give," please note that the phone number has changed. The phone number that you will text to is **844-298-8978**. Both of these options include fees that are taken out of your donation.

If you would prefer that 100% of your gift go to FCC (without fees taken out) but like the convenience of not having to write a physical check, another option is to contact your bank directly and inquire about setting up an automatic payment for your regular giving. These types of payments are generally free from charges or fees. You can also mail a check directly to FCC or bring your gift with you to Sunday worship if you are worshipping in person. Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Bloomington.

FCC Welcomes Community Groups Again

Prior to the shutdown caused by the spread of COVID-19, FCC hosted several community groups for their regular meetings, special events, and workshops. Later this month, we will begin welcoming some of those groups back to FCC.

The Bloomington Watercolor Society will host a workshop this weekend and will resume monthly meetings beginning this month. They will meet in Great Hall where they can be socially distanced more easily. We are so glad to be able to welcome this wonderfully creative group back to FCC.

Two NA/AA groups are ready to return to our meeting space in the basement. The "Fifth Traditionist" AA group will resume meetings on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and the "Ask It Basket" NA group will be meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. We anticipate additional groups will return to FCC as they are ready to return.

COVID safety protocols including masking and social distancing will be in place for all meetings at FCC. We continue to monitor COVID cases in Monroe County and may change protocol and/or building availability if it becomes necessary.

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

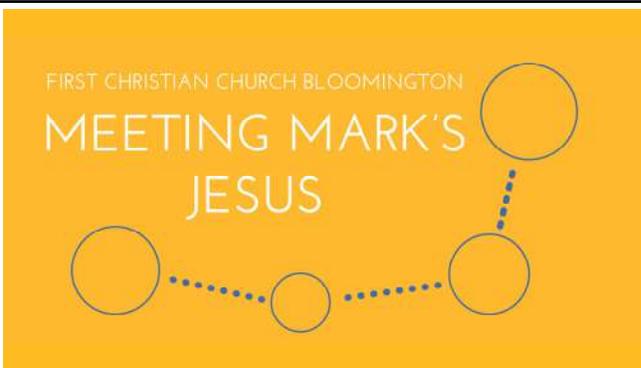
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The Christian Visitor

Vol. 63, no. 15



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH BLOOMINGTON
MEETING MARK'S
JESUS

In Mark's gospel Jesus is always on the move. In September's sermon series, we will join Jesus on his journey through Galilee and toward the cross.

**Scripture Readings
For Sunday Worship**

September 12
Mark 8:27-38
Who is Jesus for You?

September 19
Mark 9:30-37
Come Join the Circle

September 26
Mark 9:38-50
No Roadblocks!