



FruitFUL Faith

A Spirit-filled Life!

2023 CAMPS

Geneva

- June 12-14 **You & Me 1** (age 5+ and an adult)
- June 12-17 **Explorers** (completed grades 4-5)
- June 15-17 **New Beginnings** (completed grades 1-3)
- June 19-21 **You & Me 2** (age 5+ and an adult)
- June 19-24 **M.A.D.** (Music Art & Drama - completed grades 6-12)
- June 26-July 1 **High School Traditional** (completed grades 9-12)
- June 26-July 1 **Middle School Traditional** (completed grades 6-8)
- June 26-July 1 **C.R.O.S.S.** (Christian Recreation and Outdoor Sports Skills - completed grades 6-12)

*In essentials, unity;
In non-essentials, liberty;
In all things, love.*



Dated Material: Please Deliver By Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Address Service Requested

1507 Glendale Blvd.
Valparaiso, IN 46383



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Permit # 225

The Bell Tower



OFFERING HOPE AND WELCOME TO ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

All Are Welcome!

As an open and affirming church, ALL are welcome into our family. The Good News of God's grace is for everyone regardless of age, abilities, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, income, physical and mental health, education, or strength of faith. There is nothing we do, have done, or will do that can separate us from God's love. And since God makes no exceptions, neither do we.



Burns Night January 25th 5:30 PM

Each year, the Trussell-Smith family celebrates the Scottish tradition of Burns Night, on January 25th, and this year we want to invite our church family and others in our community to enjoy this fun, literary, and jubilant event. It's also going to be delicious! The event centers on a meal as well as the songs, poetry and ideals of Robert "Rabbie" Burns – the "Bard of Scotland." It is a celebration of his vibrant, brilliant and soulful life and work, but also of Scottish culture and heritage.

Prices: Adult \$25; Couples \$45; Child under 13, \$15; or Sponsor a Table of 8 for \$160. Adult tickets include a beverage token for Non-Alcoholic "Mocktails." Any proceeds will be donated 50/50 to



Haggis

Growing Hope Globally and the FCC Building Fund in memory of George Armstrong. Contact Rev. Tim for tickets.

Leadership Workshop January 14th

Saturday, January 14, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, we will be holding a leadership workshop at the church. Training for our deacons and elders will be

available at this workshop. If you are a first-time deacon or elder, the training you will receive will be extremely helpful to you and will aid you in being confident and comfortable as you serve in your new position.

Everyone is invited to come and listen to the information presented at the workshop regarding each of our church's servant groups. You will learn what each group does and for what they are responsible. Whether it be Facilities, Worship, Outreach, Membership, Stewardship, or Education, you will hear the outline of duties that each group is responsible for and how they relate to the church, community, and beyond.

So that we have enough supplies and food for everyone attending the workshop, please RSVP to the church office by January 12th either by phone or by email.

Boots on the Ground

Our church was very proud to help Dr. Paul Sommer collect warm boots, coats, and gloves for the people of Ukraine through Boots on the Ground. Dr. Sommer decided to create Boots on the Ground after constantly hearing about and seeing Ukrainians who have been impacted by the ongoing conflict with Russia. Dr. Sommer generally participates in fundraisers each year but wanted to do something other than just raise money for a cause this year.

Stephen Boles, executive director of Mission to Ukraine, said that most people had been donating hats and mittens. No one had thought about boots until Dr. Sommer had the idea of collecting warm boots. Over 500 pairs of boots were collected and were shipped December 10th to Zhytomyr, Ukraine.

Dr. Sommer encourages you to visit "Boots on the Ground" on Facebook to see the donated boots, now on Ukrainians' feet.

Thank you to everyone at FCC as well as in the community that donated to Boots on the Ground.



(219) 462-5615

JANUARY 2023

Vol. 32 No. 1

The 9:30 in-person services will continue to be live-streamed and will be available for viewing later from our website.

Servers for January

January 1

Deacons: Penny Pysh, Linda Farris
Greeters: Donna Koehler, Terry Pickering
Scripture Readers: Dave & Sheri Gow
Sound Technician: Chris Clifford
Building Monitor: John Springsteen
Elders: Beth Ingram, Carol McCreery

January 8

Deacons: Carol Kuznicki, Berna Hurley
Greeters: Rita DeMan, Norma Armstrong
Scripture Readers: Bob & Michele Hurst
Sound Technician: John Springsteen
Building Monitor: Larry Biggs
Elders: Cheryl Girman, Martha Schweizer

January 15

Deacons: Diane Yeager, Becky Springsteen
Greeters: Kathi Thompson, Katy Hardwick
Scripture Readers: Kae Howell, Sally Oestreich
Sound Technician: Jim Pysh
Building Monitor: Tom Wheele
Elders: Rugh Lang, Dave Gow

January 22

Deacons: Tom Clark, Mickey Koehler
Greeters: The Weitzel Family
Scripture Readers: David & Diane Yeager
Sound Technician: John Springsteen
Building Monitor: Al LeBio
Elders: Dave Yeager, Sue Mowbray

January 29

Deacons: Linda Farris, Joyce Knauff
Greeters: Martha Schweizer, Kadence Colage
Scripture Readers: Sharon Crowder, Linda Farris
Sound Technician: Chris Clifford
Building Monitor: Allen Hamilton
Elders: Doug Ross, Kae Howell



Worship Attendance

12/04/22: 105 at 9:30 Worship
12/11/22: 103 at 9:30 Worship
12/18/22: 122 at 9:30 Worship
12/24/22: 62 at 4:00 Worship
12/24/22: 49 at 11:00 Worship
12/25/22: 53 at 9:30 Worship

Prayer Concerns

Members and extended church family who are dealing with illness, recovery, or other prayer-worthy matters:



**John Doyle; Brian Harmon; Dick Massom;
Roy Moutaw; Barb Wheele;
Carol Steinbach;
Chuck & Marian Worden;
Amayah (Diane Yeager's great-niece);
5-year-old Corbin
(family of Lori Timm);
Steve Nickles (Sal Oestreich's brother);
Pat Nickles (Sal Oestreich's sister-in-law)
Evelyn Swiney & Christine Fields
(Sal Oestreich's sisters);
Unspoken Requests;
Our Homebound Members;
Our Church Ministries;
The People of Ukraine
and
The Family of Leroy Ritter
(Alta Mae Frobish's brother)**



Staff and Council

**Pastor: Rev. Tim Trussell-Smith
Office Administrator: Terry Pickering
Director of Music: Dan Pritchett
Communications Coordinator:
Lani Januchowski
Council President: Ruth Lang
Vice-President: Becky Springsteen
Council Secretary: Susan Mowbray
Treasurer: Mickey Koehler
Assistant Treasurer: Kae Howell
Nursery Coordinator: Nikki Lawrence**

Office Information

**Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Church Phone: (219) 462-5615
Office email: sec@fccvalpo.org
Website: valpo.church**

2023 Giving Envelopes Are Available

For those of you who would like to take advantage of the ease that comes with using giving envelopes in 2023, please decide which of the three samples below best suits your contribution needs. The frequency of giving will determine how many envelopes you receive. After you have let Terry know your preference, they will be printed and ready for you to pick up in the narthex or you can ask that they be mailed to you. Descriptions of each envelope are listed below. Simply email or call the office with your preference or just send a text message to Terry (219) 406-7925. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex that you can also use to order your envelopes. Your envelopes will be printed and ready for you in the narthex the following Sunday. Thanks!

000 January _____, 20

Regular	Outreach	Building	Other - (write amount & fund)
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
			\$ _____

Please bring or send your offerings regularly, and thank you for your support.

Name: Christian Steward



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
1507 Glendale Blvd.
Valparaiso, IN 46383

The top envelope is available as a monthly, bi-monthly, or weekly giving envelope. Extra blank envelopes will be included in your pack. Your name and giving number will appear on each envelope.

*When ordering, refer to this envelope as a "monthly" or "weekly" envelope.

Giver Code: 000

Happy Giver
1000 Heavenly Way
Valparaiso, IN 46385

Stamp

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
1507 Glendale Blvd.
Valparaiso, IN 46383



The middle envelope is a mailer. Your giving number will appear as well as your return address. All you will need to do is place a stamp on the envelope and drop it in the mail. Extra blank envelopes will be included in your pack.

*When ordering, refer to this envelope as a "monthly mailer" or "weekly mailer" envelope.

Giver Code: 000 _____, 20

Name: Faithful Giver

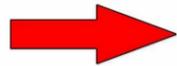
Offering to First Christian Church




This last envelope is a privacy envelope, listing only your name and giving number. No other information regarding your giving appears on the envelope. Extra envelopes will be included in your pack.

*When ordering, refer to this envelope as a "monthly privacy" or "weekly privacy" envelope.

**PLEASE RING
DOORBELL**



When the Doorbell Rings

Those last two weeks before Christmas, the doorbell seemed to ring every 20 minutes. I say "seemed" because it really didn't ring quite that often; but as busy as the office was, it just seemed like interruptions were happening that often.

It was the week of the children's Christmas program and there was a lot on my plate. My neck felt stiff as a board and the clock on the wall seemed to spin at high speed. There weren't enough hours in the day to get everything done that I needed to do. So when the doorbell rang, yet again that busy day, I have to admit my stress level hit a new peak and I grumbled on the inside all the way to answer the door.

When I got to the door, I saw it was a man and a woman, probably in their thirties with pleasant smiles and bags in their hands. I greeted them and they stepped inside out of the very cold and damp day. That's when they explained why they had come.

They had been determined (and inspired) to do twelve acts of kindness during Advent, giving back to others the love and "gifts" that they knew God had provided to them. In other words, they were "paying it forward." They had shoes for Share Your Souls, food for the Food Pantry, bras for Free the Girls, and heavy socks for Boots on the Ground. They had just dropped off dog food at the Humane Society, and when they left me, they were on their way to the Salvation Army with a few coats.

When they were gone, I returned to my desk. I had a different attitude about this busy season. That couple made my heart smile by demonstrating the true spirit of sharing God and Christmas... and making a difference.

Terry Pickering

The Minister's Musings

As the New Year begins, it is natural for us to stop and wonder, "What do I want to do differently in the coming year?" Or we may think about taking up a new activity or hobby. Do we want to eat better? Start or improve an exercise routine?

Are you wondering at all about what to do to grow in your faith life? One area of discipleship that often gets overlooked is service to our own congregation. Sometimes people think they aren't qualified or they have had a bad experience with volunteering at church in the past. But in many cases, people just don't know what the opportunities are and how to get involved. And, more importantly, they don't get asked. Well, consider this you being asked; because if you are reading my "musings," I know you have gifts that could serve our congregation; and I know that that service could be a meaningful path of growth on your spiritual journey.

For several months, we have had the "Growth through Service" Board displayed in our narthex. Have you taken a moment to look over the cards hung on this board and consider ways you could serve here at First Christian? Suggestions include writing to a homebound member of our community or even a friend, and other simple acts that will touch people's lives. But the board also contains invitations to serve in various roles here at the church. Getting involved in the life of the church beyond Sunday is one of the most consequential ways to deepen your connection to your congregation; and it usually helps us learn more about our faith as we think about the tasks we do from a Christian perspective. Serving is also a chance to get to know others from our church, which also deepens our connections. All of this leads to growth as disciples – hence, "Growth through Service."

Another opportunity to learn about ways to serve here at FCC will be on Saturday, January 14th from 9-12 at our Leaders' Workshop. See the article on the front

page for more details about this event that gives you the chance to join one of our servant groups or ministry teams.

You don't need to wait to be asked. Sometimes those who are already serving as volunteer leaders get busy and don't stop to think about others who would love to help out with the ministry they are involved with. Stop by the "Growth through Service" board and see who to contact if you'd like to help in one of the suggested areas. You can also ask Rev. Tim or our office administrator, Terry Pickering, or any of the Elders.

We aren't "desperate" for volunteers – although help is always nice. The reason I'm writing on this topic is that I know from my own experience that getting involved at church really does connect us more deeply and lead to spiritual growth in all sorts of ways that we can't even anticipate before we get involved. So take this as your invitation, if you haven't gotten one yet, to step into service here in our church.

Peace,
Rev. Tim

2023 Regional Camps FruitFULL Faith

The schedule for our regional camps is out (*see the back page*)! Spending a few days to a full week (depending on the age group) with other young people and fun adults who love God and want us to grow in faith, all in a beautiful natural setting, is a profound experience.

The kids who went to camp from FCC last summer raved about it. Rev. Tim is a co-director of the High School camp and has years of experience in camping ministry. He will happily answer any questions you might have concerning any of the camps.

If the cost of camp is an issue for your family, please let Rev. Tim or Terry know. We are determined that everyone who wants to attend will be able to.



FCC's Mailbag

Dear FCC Members,

What a delightful surprise I had Sunday evening, January 11th. I heard a knock as I was getting ready for my ride, and I found several faithful FCC carolers who came to sing for me!

I truly enjoyed the carols AND the carolers. They even gifted me with a Christmas bag of treats packed by someone very thoughtful.

Thank you to all who made that a joyful visit for me. The Christmas spirit is alive and well!

Sincerely,

Thelma McKibben



Dear First Christian Church,

Thank you so much for all of the get well wishes and prayers sent to me. May God richly bless each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Swiney
(Sally Oestreich's sister)



Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank all of you who donated to the Christmas gifts we received this year. We both feel very blessed to have you all in our lives, and we feel that it's quite a privilege to serve this church and our congregation. We look forward to the brand new year in which we will continue to serve in our positions as your pastor and your church secretary.

*With much love and
appreciation,*
Rev. Tim and Terry



To the Congregation:

Thank you for your support, love, and trust over the last two years while I served as your council president.



In that time, I believe we have accomplished a lot, including bringing in a new pastor to guide our flock and installing a new A/V system to improve the worship experience. By working together, we have made all these good things happen. We built on a strong foundation, laid by previous leaders, to make all these things a reality.

Under Ruth Lang's leadership as council president, I expect our church to accomplish even more.

Again, thank you for your support, love, and trust over the past two years. Please extend the same to Ruth and her team.

Doug Ross

Council President, 2021-2022

**Winter
Youth
Retreat**

Youth from all over Indiana will be gathering over President's Day Weekend, February 17-19, at Camp Bedford. Anyone in our youth group is invited to attend this event where we'll talk about God, the challenges facing young people, and also experience joy and community. More information about price and schedule will come out early in January, but hold the dates. As always, our church does its best to not let cost be a barrier to children and youth activities. Rev. Tim is planning to help out at this event, so we can even travel together.

Music Department News

Happy New Year!! I cannot believe that it is already 2023. The Music Department is always busy getting music prepared for worship, but Christmas always provides the opportunity for doing a "little more" and then January provides time to



sit back and relax a little bit. We hope you enjoyed our music during Christmas as much as we enjoyed preparing and performing it.

We had 16 people join us for Christmas Caroling on December 11th. We divided into two groups and were able to sing at 13 or 14 homes, mostly to members of our congregation. It was fun to revive this tradition after a couple of years of not being able to, due to Covid. Thanks to all who participated.

As I write this, I am preparing to start listening to music to present in worship for the remainder of winter and into spring. Preparing a new music order is one of the things that I really enjoy about being a music director! I have my own little system of doing it, and I end up listening to most of the tunes I purchase four or five times before I order them. Plus, I also go through music that is already in the library to see what we can use for the year. So here's hoping to finding some great music for 2023!

Blessings!
Dan Pritchett

After-Worship Bible Study

Beginning in January (date to be determined), I would like to facilitate weekly discussions on the book "Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount" by Richard Rohr. This will be a continuation of our study of the Sermon on the Mount with a different perspective.

This won't be a traditional study with videos and questions to answer posed by the author. Instead, I would like to treat it more in line with a book club, where we read one or two chapters during the week and then discuss them.

If this interests you, there will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex that you can add your name to so I will know how many books to order. I hope to see your name on the list and see you in class!

John Springsteen

New Beginnings

"I have always been delighted at the prospect of a new day, a fresh try, one more start, with perhaps a bit of magic waiting somewhere behind the morning...."

Joseph Priestly 1733-1804

After the holidays, we all find ourselves crying out for a change, overstuffed in some areas and underfed in others. Whether it be diet, exercise, lifestyle, or something else....leave empty space for your soul. No matter what you do, make it a priority to taste the joy of fulfillment.

Decide to respond in ways no one expects and be creative... somewhat like an obstinate three-year old. When you're urged to say yes, say no. When you habitually stand back, jump in...or vice versa. Keep silent if you're generally bold or be bold if you're generally silent. Taking the opposite path from the one you normally follow, you will notice ways in which your life opens up. If you're right-handed, use your left. The perspective is amazing. I am ambidextrous and use both, so this last one doesn't quite work for me. But I have covered both my eyes to see how I would function if I didn't have my vision; and, the perspective is very amazing. Going through the house totally in the dark, you hope everything is where it should be, so that you don't trip on something, or that someone hasn't moved something and it falls in your pathway. Like the dog's squishy, squeaky police ball. Oh my.

Just like there is no place for more furniture in a cluttered room, there is no room for ideas in a cluttered mind. Take an inventory of your mental attic, examining those habitual responses and attitudes that you've been storing. Do they fit the person you really are or want to be in the life you wish to aspire to? Listen for your inner voice telling you what to modify or eliminate.

The New Year offers an exciting vista of possibilities and a fresh start for clearing away clutter,

cleaning rooms, downsizing, starting fresh.....AND nothing helps better than moving. WHAT even possessed me? But, I have discovered many items that I don't need or use. Recycle unwanted items if possible or give to charity. As you work through it all, be conscious of old, stale energy and allow space for new, just like breathing.

Dear God,

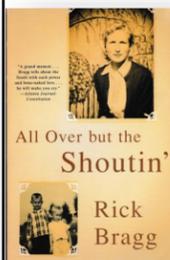
As we begin a New Year, we are walking into mystery: facing the future, not knowing what the days and months will bring to us or how we will react. Be the love in us as we journey and may we welcome all who cross our path. Deepen our faith to see all of life through your vision. Thank you for the gift of being able to greet each new day, with the assurance of Your presence walking with us. Amen.

**Submitted by
Annie MacDonald**

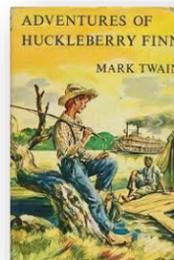
FCC Bookies

Bookies meet at 7:15 PM the fourth Tuesday of the month in the church library. Every attendee gets to choose one or two books each year to be read. Book discussions are lively and often lead to some good lessons for life. Winter is a good time to curl up with a good book. These are chosen books for the next three months.

**January 24
All Over But
the Shoutin'**
by
Rick Bragg



**February 28
Huck Finn**
by
Mark Twain



**March 28
The Midnight
Library**
by
Matt Haig



Mary Circle Pecans

There are still pecans available for sale in the narthex. Chocolate-covered (milk and dark) pecans are a steal at \$9; Pecan halves are \$11/pound and are great for decorating baked goodies or for out-of-hand eating; large pecan pieces (\$10/pound) are also ideal for recipes or eating out of the bag.



Our traditional homemade Sugar 'n' Spice pecans are still available too.

Thanks for supporting the Mary Circle with your pecan purchases. Happy New Year to all!

Basic Beliefs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

How can we describe our denomination to others? The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) does not have much "brand name" recognition, and to a degree that's intentional. Our founders set out to be not a denomination, but a movement that would focus on the essential things Christians have in common. They wanted to promote Christ instead of a denominational agenda. Nevertheless, we evolved into a distinct group within the universal church; and as such, we have a particular identity and culture. Here is a list – based on one offered by our Regional Minister, Rev. Rick Spleth - of ten attributes that, in combination, are unique to the Disciples.



(Note: many of these apply to other denominations, but the combination is distinctive.) The underlying assumption is that – first and foremost – as Christians we accept Christ as Savior and Lord. Nothing takes precedence over following His lead.

1. The weekly observance of the Lord's Supper

Disciples' life is centered on the table. Through communion we are

connected to one another and to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Communion is so central that we made the chalice our symbol.

2. Believer's baptism by immersion

Following the earliest tradition of the church, we demonstrate our commitment to God by dramatic action, letting the waters of our baptism give witness to God's grace upon us.

3. Open membership

Recognizing that the traditions of the whole church are many and varied, we do not insist that our baptismal practice is the only one that is valid. We know that baptism is God's action far more than our own.

4. An attitude of tolerance and a rejection of creeds as test of faith

We celebrate diversity as strength rather than weakness, and do not expect everyone's interpretation of the Bible or the Christian life to be identical. An early Disciple motto said, "No creed but Christ." It meant we feel the only absolute requirement for becoming a Christian/member is the acceptance of Christ as Lord.

5. The importance of scripture

We believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and is best heard and understood within the community of faith with all the diverse insights that such a fellowship provides.

6. Congregational yet voluntarily connectional

We give local congregations authority over their lives and ministries and yet they share resources freely with a connected church, our denomination, knowing that the mission of the church is not just local.

7. The inclusion of women in positions of leadership

We believe God gives spiritual gifts to all; therefore we do not place gender (or race or class) restrictions on any office or role in the church.

8. An emphasis on lay leadership

Aside from performing weddings which is regulated by the state, lay persons in our church are permitted and encouraged to do all things, including presiding and offering the Eucharistic prayers at the Lord's Table.

9. An educated clergy

We set educational and professional standards for ministers, licensed and ordained, and hold our clergy to ethical accountability through denominational oversight.

10. A priority on ecumenical life

Disciples earnestly pray and strive for the unity of the church and attempt to work in ways that bridge the separation of Christ's body.

In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity

Respectfully Submitted by

Cheryl Girman

We are extremely proud to be the host church for this series of six meetings at FCC offered by Porter Starke Services for folks 50 or older. This is a free program that will touch on topics about health and wellness for older adults.

Register for this series by contacting Angela Wehner as soon as possible. Her contact information is on the brochure.

This is also a wonderful way to meet new people and share information.

Saturday Evening Worship

Meal at 5:30

followed by Worship

Saturday, January 14th, we will enjoy a meal at 5:30, and then have a low-key interactive and intimate worship service in the Fellowship Hall, starting around 6:00. If you haven't attended our Saturday Worship Services, come and give it a try. We hope you'll join us.

Men's Fellowship Dinner



ALL men of the church are invited to attend the monthly Men's Dinner, Tuesday, January 10th at 6:30 PM. This month Dave Yeager will be providing the meal. If you'd like to bring a dish or dessert to share, that's always welcomed but not required to attend. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall and enjoy the meal and lively discussion. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mickey Koehler, (219) 840-1730



- Are you 50 or older?
- Looking for ways to stay healthy?
- Want to meet new people?

The WISE Program is for you, and it's FREE!

WISE Program

Host: First Christian Church Valparaiso
Location: 1507 Glendale Blvd.
Dates: January 4th - February 8th, 2023
Day/Time: Every Wednesday from 1 pm - 3 pm

The WISE educational program includes six lessons that cover a wide range of topics about health and wellness for older adults. Join us for this fun and engaging program. You'll meet new people and:

- Learn about the **aging process** and how to make **healthy lifestyle choices**
- Celebrate this **exciting stage of life** and all the **benefits** that come with it
- Discuss **risk factors and behaviors** you should avoid to stay healthy
- Examine how **alcohol, prescription medications and over-the-counter medications** affect seniors differently and how you can avoid problems
- Learn how to use **simple tools** to help you feel **more empowered** about your health and the healthcare you receive
- Receive **giveaways** for participating in the program

Register for WISE today! Contact:

Angela Wehner, BSW
Older Adult Grant Project Director, Porter-Starke Services
219.706.1044 • awehner@porterstarke.org



Funding provided by the State of Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction.