

# The Christian Visitor September 2019



*We are called to share our Christian Faith and Christ's Love with all people.*

## Our Life Together in September

### Youth Sunday School September 8th

We will be launching our Sunday School Fall Programming on September 8th at 9:00am. It'll be a fun time for the youth as they grow and learn more about God. Come ready to learn and worship!



### Nursing Home Worship Sunday, September 15th

First Christian Church is in charge of leading worship at both the Gibson Area Hospital Annex and Heritage Health Care on Sunday, September 15th.

Worship at the Annex begins at 1:30pm, with the Heritage worship to follow at 2:15pm.

Come and join residents in worship.

### Faith Foundations Class Beginning September 8th

We are beginning a Faith Foundations Class for youth who are ready to be baptized starting on September 8th at 9:00am. The class will explore the foundations of the Christian faith and run for 10 weeks, leading to a Baptism Sunday.

The world is constantly telling our kids who they are, who they should be, and what they should believe. Let's together give them the spiritual tools they need to know and believe who God says they are!

Sign up in the narthex or contact Pastor Mat if you are interested.

### Sound System Help

We are looking for people interested in running the sound system during Sunday service. It's very easy to run, and most everything is preset. The main responsibility is starting the CD during the choir music. Please contact Tim if you are interested.

### Seekers Sunday School

The Seekers Sunday school class will meet for the first time this fall on September 8th at 9:00am. At this meeting, they will be preparing cards to send out and distributing lessons. Everyone is welcome!

### Church Board

The Church Board will meet on Tuesday, September 10th at 6:30 pm. If you have any items to add to the agenda, please send them to the church office.

Copies of the Board Minutes and Treasurer's Report are available on the table outside of the Church office. Please take and read.



### Reconciliation Offering September 29th & October 6th

The Reconciliation Special 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 to promote healing, relationship and restoration in the whole family of God are enlivened by funds from this offering. Through it we are able to provide programs for leadership development, curriculum for dialogue and learning, and partnerships within the Church and our communities.

## Pastor Mat's Musings

Usually August is full of excitement as the nation eagerly awaits the coming of fall. Families return from their final summer vacation, spring graduates begin their “adulting,” teachers finalize their semester curriculum, communities prepare for the onset of football season, and most of all, we ready ourselves for the cool air and colorful leaves of the season. This August, though, was different. August of 2019 will not be marked by the excitement of the coming fall. Rather, this August will be marked by tragedy, confusion, hate, and fear.

The tragedies that occurred in El Paso and Dayton earlier this month left the nation afraid and confused, but we were not surprised. Mass tragedies have become a common occurrence for a modern American. There have been over seventeen mass shootings in 2019. This number is for mass shootings alone. This isn't mentioning the physical and economic devastation of this year's California wildfires. Or what about the low yields predicted for the US corn-belt? Americans are becoming accustomed to disaster, and so often our first response is to post on social media, complain about politics, and play the blame game.

Christians should have a different first response though. Jesus' words found in Luke 13: 1-5 give us a guide as to what our first response to tragedy (of any type) should be. Notice, I am saying first response. This is not the only task of Christians in the face of tragedy. We are also called to be agents of hope and change. Before we can be these agents, we must do something else first.

So what should a Christian's first response to tragedy be? We look to the words of Jesus found in Luke 13: 1-5 for the answer:

*13 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*

Jesus here in this passage is asked about two separate tragedies. The first tragedy is a man-made one. Pilate was upset with Galilean Jews for some reason (the text does not give a reason). Weapons were not allowed in the temple. Pilate attacked them as they worshipped, knowing they were at their weakest moment. Therefore, Pilate “mingled” or mixed their blood with that of their sacrifices. The second tragedy was a natural calamity. A tower fell. Ancient architecture was not as sturdy as ours today. Simply, a tower with eighteen people collapsed killing them all.

Jesus' response to the people was trying to convey two messages. The first is that sin is not the cause of tragedy. This was a common view of the time. If something bad happens to you, it must be because you messed up. This was a faulty theology that Christ was condemning here.

The second message is where we find the truth relevant to us today. Your first response to tragedy should always be repentance. The crowd wanted to blame. Christ called for repentance. Repentance is simply the turning of one's self towards God. Many times this turning towards God is in relation to our sin. Sometimes, though, repentance is taking the time in our busy day to acknowledge that God is God.

When tragedy strikes (and it will strike), turn to God. The answers on how to fix the world are BIG. They will not be solved in a short amount of time. They will not be solved in a Facebook post. They will not be solved easily. They will only be solved if you first turn to God. Turn to the creator to fix the creation.

# More in the Life and Witness of the First Christian Church

## September Serving Schedule

**Communion Bread Baker—Sue McClard**

### Sunday, September 1st

**Greeters:** *Ron & Melanie Warfield*

**Elders:** *Sue Walker, Marilyn Tjardes, Angie Barnard*

**Deacons:** *Ryan Iverson, Janet Iverson, Mary Alice McRae  
Ed Hopkey, Mike Finis, Adam Kincaid*

**Worship Leader:** *Tim Ricks*

**Communion Preparation:** *Mary Alice McRae*

**Home Communion:** *Angie Barnard and Mary Alice McRae*

### Sunday, September 8th

**Greeter:** *Barb Meyer*

**Elders:** *Arlen DeWall, Don Eberly, Carol Hutchcraft*

**Deacons:** *Sue McClard, Beth Tabor, Leah McClure  
Jay Kristensen, Gary Reiners, Ruth Reiners*

**Worship Leader:** *Cathy Hagan*

**Communion Preparation:** *Gary Reiners*

**Home Communion:** *Arlen DeWall and Beth Tabor*

### Sunday, September 15th

**Greeters:**

**Elders:** *Melanie Warfield, Cheryl Elder, Sharon Higgins*

**Deacons:** *Katy Neal, David DeWall, Kristine Medler  
Jeff Elder, Ruth Neal, Emily Elder*

**Worship Leader:**

**Communion Preparation:** *Emily Elder*

**Home Communion:** *Melanie Warfield and Emily Elder*

### Sunday, September 22nd

**Greeters:**

**Elders:** *Sue Walker, Marilyn Tjardes, Angie Barnard*

**Deacons:** *Ryan Iverson, Janet Iverson, Mary Alice McRae  
Ed Hopkey, Mike Finis, Adam Kincaid*

**Worship Leader:**

**Communion Preparation:** *Ryan Iverson*

**Home Communion:** *Sue Walker and Ryan Iverson*

### Sunday, September 29th

**Greeters:**

**Elders:** *Arlen DeWall, Don Eberly, Carol Hutchcraft*

**Deacons:** *Sue McClard, Beth Tabor, Leah McClure  
Jay Kristensen, Gary Reiners, Ruth Reiners*

**Worship Leader:**

**Communion Preparation:** *Ruth Reiners*

**Home Communion:** *Don Eberly and Ruth Reiners*

## Elders Breakfast

September 8th  
Host: Don Eberly

## Hustlers

Sunday, September 22nd 7:00pm  
Host/Hostess: Don Eberly & Sallie Hutton  
Co-Host: Mat Bowen

## Disciples Women's Ministry

Tuesday, September 17th 7:00pm  
Hostess: TBA  
Location: TBA  
Study Leader: TBA

## Young Women's Bible Study

The Young Women's Bible Study will continue to meet every other Tuesday at 7:00pm. This month's meetings will be on September 3rd and September 17th. We are currently going through a video series on the book of James.

## Greeters / Worship Leaders

Please consider serving as a greeter or worship leader in the coming months. Sign-up sheets can be found in the narthex.

## Outreach

**Food Pantry:** 17 items were received in August for the Shepherd's Closet Food Pantry.

2019 year to date: 120 items received

Next Pantry Sunday: September 1st

## Memorial Gifts

Memorial Gifts to First Christian Church have been received in memory of

**Jim McClard**

These gifts are added to our Memorial Fund for current and future projects, furthering our shared ministry and mission.

**Office Hours:**  
 Mon—Fri: 9:00 am—1:00 pm  
 Church Phone: 217-784-5460  
 gcfcdoc@yahoo.com  
 fcdocgc.com

# September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 10:15 AM Worship	<b>2 Labor Day</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>3</b> 9:00 AM Prayer 7:00 PM Young Women's Bible Study	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Preschool Screening	<b>7</b> 8:00 AM City Recycling
<b>8</b> 8:00 AM Elder's Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9:00 AM Prayer 6:30 PM Church Board	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14 Poured Out Church</b> 9:00 AM Food Pantry
<b>15 Poured Out Church</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship Nursing Home Services	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:00 AM Prayer 7:00 PM Young Women's Bible Study	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 8:00 AM City Recycling
<b>22</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship 7:00 PM Hustlers	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00 AM Prayer	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 9:00 AM Food Pantry
<b>29</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Worship	<b>30</b>					

## Poured Out Church Community Outreach Weekend September 14th & 15th



This year's Poured Out Church will take place the weekend of September 14th-15th.

This activities for this year span the entire weekend, with opportunities for service on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

We will have our normal worship service on Sunday morning at the church at 10:15am. Following worship, everyone will gather at the park for lunch before "pouring out" into the community to continue participating in a variety of outreach opportunities.

Activities for this year's event include:

### Friday, September 13th

- Assembling cookie plates (3-5pm)

### Saturday, September 14th

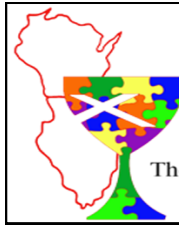
- Home projects throughout the day
- Volunteering at the Food Pantry
- Bagging and Carrying groceries at County Market

### Sunday, September 15th

- Washing windows at gas stations
- Making cards at Hollybrook
- Tying quilts
- Collecting bags with supplies
- Praying throughout the community
- Delivering cookies
- Finishing home projects
- Recording church/community memories
- Singing hymns at Nursing Homes and Hollybrook
- Helping at Shepherd's Closet
- Bagging and Carrying groceries at County Market
- Driving golf carts

To sign up for a project, visit [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com). Once on the website, click on the search icon (magnifying glass in upper right corner). Under 'search for a sign-up' type in the email address [mammyd2@gmail.com](mailto:mammyd2@gmail.com). This should bring up all the sign-up sheets with times for the events listed on each sheet.

Come and be a part of this community-wide effort to serve our town.



## Sister Congregations in Our Prayers

The Christian Church in Illinois - Wisconsin  
*Together Making Disciples of Christ*

- Sept. 1-7 Korean Christian, Springfield; Living Stone CC, Evanston; Chicago Christian Church, Des Plaines
- Sept. 8-14 Grace Myanmar CC, Moline; Happy Christian Church, Northbrook; Heavenly Gate CC, Skokie; Victory Church, Wheeling
- Sept. 15-21 Chapin CC, Hometown CC Chicago, Jackson Blvd. CC Chicago
- Sept. 22-28 FCC Canton, FCC Carbondale, FCC Virden

## *In Our Prayers*

The Prayer Group gathers in confidence at 9:30 am each Tuesday to honor prayer requests and remember those with on-going needs.

Harold Stimmel  
Harriet Farney  
Patty Benz  
Evelyn Fawver  
Irene Schaefer  
Mike Lorenzen  
Lindsey Graham  
Adam Elder

ATTENDANCE		SUNDAY WEEK					AVG
		1	2	3	4	5	
2019	JAN	69	34	26	37		42
2019	FEB	57	36	42	34		42
2019	MAR	42	43	40	54	53	46
2019	APR	83	67	86	67		76
2019	MAY	67	73	63	63		67
2019	JUNE	47	44	54	57	40	48
2019	JULY	57	48	46	62		53
2019	AUG	53	60	70	42		56
	AVG	59.4	50.6	53.4	52.0	46.5	

**LOCAL  
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES  
September 2019**

3 Harold Baize  
Audrey Iverson  
5 Adam Elder  
7 Bonnie Schutte  
10 Linda Provin  
11 Mary Alice McRae  
16 Arlen DeWall  
Nancy Gambill Westfall  
18 Tara Mouser  
Debbie Parsons  
Dennis & Pat Farris '71  
David & Carrie DeWall '01  
20 Terri Jordan  
Tim & Joan Ricks '86  
21 Chet McClure  
22 Lori Kristensen  
24 April Warren  
25 Freda Poe  
Jalene Medler  
27 Thelma Rhodes  
29 Noel & Carol Hutchcraft '63  
30 Ralph & Freda Poe '61



**Navigator's Survey**

We are launching a navigators / family bible study this coming fall. We will meet every other week for bible study here at the church. Child-care will be provided at the church for the young children. There is a survey at the church for marking which nights of the week are best for you. Please write your name and indicate which days of the week would be best. This is just a survey to see if we have a good time to meet this fall.

**Box Tops for Education**

A collection for box tops has been placed in the narthex. Each box top is worth 10 cents and the money goes towards student and teacher programs! If every kid at GCMS elementary (460 students) brought in ONE box top for the 10 months the kids are in school that would equal \$460!!!!



**Pastor** - Mat Bowen  
**Administrative Assistant** - Jennifer Hagan  
**Choir Director** - Tim Ricks  
**Church Pianist** - Joan Ricks  
**Custodians** - Jeff and Cheryl Elder

9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
10:15 a.m. Worship Service  
Church Phone 784-5460  
Email address: [gfcceoc@yahoo.com](mailto:gfcceoc@yahoo.com)  
Website: [fcccogc.com](http://fcccogc.com)

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
P.O. Box 10  
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED