

The Christian Visitor July 2022



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

Our Life Together in July

Search Committee

Our new minister, David Massey-Brown, and his wife, Lisa, will be with us beginning August 14th. They have a buyer for their current home, have a home lined up to purchase in Rantoul, and the search committee has secured a moving company to help them get moved. Included in this newsletter is a letter from the new pastor to help introduce him to the church.

Worship Leaders

Please consider serving as worship leader in July. A sign up sheet is posted at the church.

Church Board

The Church Board will meet on Sunday, July 10th immediately following worship.

If you have any items to add to the agenda, please notify the church office.

ATTENDANCE		SUNDAY WEEK					
		1	2	3	4	5	AVG
2022	JAN	33	30	23	23	36	29
2022	FEB	35	28	28	30		30
2022	MAR	38	33	30	33		34
2022	APR	33	43	62	28		42
2022	MAY	43	37	21	43	29	35
2022	JUNE	37	41	31	44		38

Serving Schedules

Serving Schedules for the new church year 2022-2023 will be available for pickup on the table in the narthex beginning Sunday, July 3rd. Thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve.

Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for the new church year beginning July 3rd are available to pick up in the narthex. Please put your name on the sign-up sheet by the number corresponding to your box.

Communion Bread

We rely on home bakers to provide our communion bread each week. A sign-up sheet for the new church year has been posted in the narthex. Sign up to provide the communion bread for a month. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered in the past year.

Grape Juice

Gifts of Welch's Grape Juice to be used in communion are always welcome.

Sunday School

Sunday School is on a break for summer and will return in the fall.

From the New Pastor

Greetings, First Christian Church! Thank you for offering me this opportunity to help you get to know me. First of all, I am so excited to become your pastor and to share the journey with you! This will be like “coming home” for me; I was born in Champaign and lived in Rantoul until age 3. I spent many happy times growing up visiting my grandparents in Arcola and Mattoon. In fact, even though my grandparents, aunts and uncles are gone, I still have cousins who live in both towns. It’ll be nice to (finally) be closer to them.

My wife, Lisa, and I are “empty nesters” at this point in our lives. This is a second marriage for both of us. Between us, we have 3 children who are grown. My daughter, Jennifer, is 32 years old. She is expecting our second grandchild (a girl!) this September. My son, Ari, is 30 years old and still single. Lisa’s son, Sean, is 31 and is the father of our first grandchild, Ian (age 9). Jenny and Sean live in Springfield, MO. Ari lives in Kansas City.

Lisa is what I call a “Jill of all trades.” Her professional background is in surgical technology. She’s worked in general surgery, but specialized in plastics and reconstruction, ophthalmic, and OB/GYN, and has held a position as a rural clinic manager. Since “retiring” from that field, she has branched out into museum work, having managed the bourbon exhibit for the Kentucky Gateway Museum in Maysville, KY, and worked in the museum’s large genealogy library. Right now, she is a paralegal for a local attorney. Lisa’s interests include genealogy, antiques, and playing guitar, and she loves taking care of the plants in the yard. Lisa received a certificate in the four-year theological program, Education for Ministry, through the Seminary of the South at Sewanee. She has served as elder in four congregations.

I come from a long line of clergy. My grandfather was a pastor in Mattoon for 36 years. My mom is an ordained minister. My father was an ordained minister. I didn’t intend to “go into the family business;” my undergraduate degree is in music education. I played trumpet and French horn in college and euphonium in community band later on. I have also, in younger years, played bass in 3 or 4 “bar bands,” and I play guitar, too. I also play the Native American flute and the Irish whistle. Additionally, I have taught music in school and also built and maintained pipe organs.

I’ve been a member of the clergy for 20 years now. I received my M.Div. From Phillips Theological Seminary, and was ordained in the Region of Mid-America. Additionally, I also have a certificate from the EFM program, I’m a certified Reiki practitioner and study native Peruvian spirituality. My specific areas of interest in ministry are in Spiritual Direction, spiritual formation, and spiritual healing. I have taught contemplative prayer and meditation, as well as energy work for self-healing. I’m also passionate about justice issues and the radical hospitality of Jesus.

My outside interests include music, of course. I’m an amateur radio operator and have enjoyed bowling in the past. I’ve also enjoyed flying and have some flight instruction under my belt. I’m a Freemason as well, and plan to stay active in lodge.

Lisa and I will be nesting in Rantoul with our “cat family,” but plan to become active in Gibson City. We are currently closing out our ministry here, finalizing the sale and acquisition of two houses, and planning logistics for our move (Phew!). Along with this letter, we both send our well-wishes to you all, hoping that it finds you in good health and good spirits. We’re counting the days until we join you in ministry and in life!

All our best until we see you on August 14!

Pastor Dave and Lisa

More in the Life and Witness of the First Christian Church

From the Interim Minister

I served two churches in Indiana. Two at the same time. Two for the price of one. One of them, a Disciples of Christ church, was in town and the larger of the two. The other church, a UCC congregation, was at the end of a gravel road, on the edge of a cornfield. It was much smaller. Every Sunday morning, I would first drive to the end of that gravel road to preach and then back into town to preach again.

It was at the smaller of the two that I learned that a pastor has, in his or her pocket, three powerful words to use when needed. Three very powerful words.

I had just started as the pastor of that small church. It was only a few months into my tenure there that I was asked why I had not made a call on the husband of one of the church's members. He wasn't, himself, a member, but his wife was and she was the church's pianist. "Why haven't you made a call on him? He has cancer, you know." And I didn't know. I said, "I didn't know that." "But we told you," was the response. And I couldn't remember. It isn't like me to forget something like that. I honestly couldn't remember . . . But it was possible, possible that I forgot. I'm not God. I guessed it was maybe possible, but . . .

I decided on a cross of action. The next Sunday morning, I drove out to end of that gravel road. Before worship started, I stood before the people of that small congregation, and spoke those three powerful words. I said, "I am sorry." I apologized. I apologized and, of course, made amends as soon as I could.

Those three words made all the difference. I look back and think maybe my willingness to apologize demonstrated that I did really care about the people of that church and that I really did care about the relationship between them and me. Maybe that's the reason why they forgave me. And they really did, much to my relief. They forgave me. After that day, my relationship with the people of that church was strong. My pastoral relationship with the people of that church was perhaps stronger than the relationship I have had with the people of any other church I have served.

I forgive you. Three more very powerful words.

And maybe you were thinking that those three powerful words, words that a pastor has in his or her pocket, were "God loves you." Those words are powerful too. God does love you. God forgives you. Now, it isn't that God just "lets go". All too often we think of forgiveness as a kind of letting go, letting the past go, letting go of the hurt others have caused. As important as it may be for a person's mental health to let go, forgiveness is something else besides. The people of that little church, with their forgiveness, restored their relationship with me. They didn't just let go. God doesn't let go, either. God grabs ahold of us works to restore the relationship we have with God. God doesn't let go of us. And God forgives us even before our mouths can form the words, I am sorry.

Pastor Neal

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

July 2022

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1	2
3 10:15 AM Worship	4 4th of July						
10 10:15 AM Worship 11:30 AM Church Board	11	12	13	14	15		16
17 10:15 AM Worship	18	19	20	21	22		23
24 10:15 AM Worship	25	26	27	28	29		30
31 10:15 AM Worship							

**LOCAL
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
July 2022**

- 1 Dennis & Sharon Higgins '06
- 2 Carol Hutchcraft
- 3 Matt Poe
Tyler Mott
Jerry Wahls
- 7 Janet Hoffman
- 15 Griffin Johnson
- 18 Margaret Meers
- 20 Ralph Poe
- 21 Wyatt Higgins
Peter & Kate Provin '12



**Blood Drive
Tuesday, July 5th**

The Gibson City Lutheran Church is hosting a blood drive Tuesday, July 5th from 1:00-6:00pm in their fellowship hall. Blood is urgently needed this summer, so please consider donating if you are able. Appointments can be scheduled online at RedCrossBlood.org or you can call or text 309-830-4280, and an appointment time that works for you can be made. A confirmation text/call will then be sent back to you.
Thank you.



Interim Pastor - Neal Kentch
Administrative Assistant - Jennifer Hagan
Choir Director - Tim Ricks
Church Pianist - Joan Ricks
Custodians - Jeff and Cheryl Elder

9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship Service
Church Phone 784-5460
Email address: gfcdoc@yahoo.com
Website: fcdocg.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED