

The Christian Visitor March 2023



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

Our Life Together in March



Lenten Worship Series

Our Lenten worship series, Gifts of the Dark Wood continues each Sunday morning at 10:15am through Palm Sunday. This is a series designed to help us “see life through new eyes.” What if, in our messy lives, we saw uncertainty, failure, emptiness, and loss, not as problems to be solved, but rather as gifts?

February 22nd **Ash Wednesday**
Where We Find Ourselves

February 26th **1st Sunday in Lent**
The Gift of Uncertainty

March 5th **2nd Sunday in Lent**
The Gift of Emptiness

March 12th **3rd Sunday in Lent**
The Gift of Being Thunderstruck

March 19th **4th Sunday in Lent**
The Gift of Getting Lost

March 26th **5th Sunday in Lent**
The Gift of Temptation

April 2nd **Palm Sunday**
The Gift of Misfits

Leadership Retreat Saturday, April 1st

We are planning a Leadership Retreat for Saturday, April 1st at the old Percfection building, 205 E 8th St. The schedule for the day is as follows:
8:30am-9:00am: Gathering and Fellowship
9:00am-12:00pm: Planning
12:00pm-1:00pm: Lunch
1:00pm-3:00pm: Planning
Anyone who is interested in the strategic planning of the church is welcome to attend.

Holy Week Schedule

Thursday, April 6th Maundy Thursday
Service at 7:00pm

Friday, April 7th **Good Friday**
Service at 7:00pm

Saturday, April 8th
Chain of Prayer 6:00am-6:00pm



Sunday, April 9th **Easter Sunday**
Breakfast & Egg Hunt at 9:00am,
Easter worship at 10:15am



Easter Flowers



Flowers to be shared for display on Easter Sunday may be ordered by filling out a form in the narthex. Lilies cost \$11 and tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils each cost \$9.

Chain of Prayer Saturday, April 8th



Our 12-hour chain of prayer will run from 6:00AM-6:00PM on Saturday, April 8th. Please consider signing up in the narthex for a 30-minute (or longer) timeslot.

Bible Study



We are planning to start a bible study in the coming weeks. Please fill out a survey indicating the best times to meet if you are interested in participating.

More in the Life and Witness of the First Christian Church

A PASTOR'S PONDERING

Here we are in the middle of Lent — a word that means “spring season.” Being surrounded as we are by farms, we know that spring is a season when new growth begins. The soil is fertilized, turned, and seeds planted. It’s during spring when things are prepared to come to new life.

It’s that way for our faith-life, too. Lent is the time for us to take stock of our lives, to prepare ourselves for resurrection — newness of life. It’s in the midst of this time of reflection, introspection, and contemplation that First Christian Church will turn our soil to prepare for new life together.

Our Leadership Retreat will happen in just three weeks, the day before Palm Sunday. This is when our imaginations, hopes, and dreams (fertilized by our creativity and an active prayer life!) will plant the seeds for our future together. All officers, board members, and elders are requested to be in attendance. Other church members are, of course, welcome to attend and weigh in.

I’ve often thought that the best thing a church can do in planning and implementing programs, ministries, and its common life, is to learn to say, “Yes!” No matter what. In saying “Yes,” we create a positive energy shift that’s welcoming, warm, and genuine. It’s an energy that’s hospitable and inviting. It’s an energy that says, “We crave connection with you.” It’s an energy that seeks to build true community through right relationship. It’s an energy that honors the “other.” It’s an energy that encourages us to give up the best of ourselves in ministry to others, creating safe space where questions can be asked, and where hopes, fears, and dreams can be shared.

I wonder: to what things can we say, “Yes?” What ideas might be nourished if we did so? What closely-held wants, needs, and wishes might be fostered if we did so? What visions and dreams might be birthed if we did so? As we meet together to see visions and dream dreams, I hope the spirit of “Yes!” will energize our creativity, and embolden our hearts.

As we prepare ourselves for this vital event, I hope you’ll spend time in contemplating one important question: “Why?” Why are we here? Why do we do what we do? Why do we seek to form holy community? Why do we seek to minister to others? Why does this town need us? Why do we gather around the Table each week to learn, and sing, and pray, and celebrate, and contemplate? Why is this spiritual household important? Once we entertain the “whys,” the “whats” for which we plan will come into much better focus.

I hope you’ll contemplate the “why” as we prepare. If you have an answer that resonates with you, communicate that answer to our leadership, either in writing, or with your presence with us on April 1. Together, we will have the mind of Christ as we discern our future.

May it be so! May it be so for us!

More in the Life and Witness of the First Christian Church

Easter Breakfast & Egg Hunt Sunday, April 9th

Our annual Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt will take place on Sunday, April 9th beginning at 9:00am. Everyone is invited to join us for breakfast, followed by a devotion and Easter Egg Hunt for the kids in attendance. Please consider joining us for this morning of fun and fellowship. Our Easter morning worship service will follow at 10:15am.

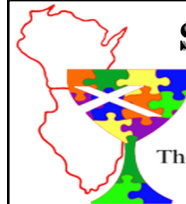


Elders Breakfast

There will be an Elders Breakfast before church on Sunday, March 19th in the fellowship hall hosted by Angie Barnard.

Men's Breakfast

There will be a Men's Breakfast at 8:00am on Sunday, March 12th in the fellowship hall.



Sister Congregations in Our Prayers

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

- March 5 Pine Creek CC Polo, FCC Pontiac, FCC Princeton; Central CC, Grand Rapids
- March 12 FCC E. Moline, Eureka CC, Frederick CC; FCC, Paw Paw
- March 19 Sunnyland CC, Washington; FCC Lawrenceville
- March 26 Illinois St Lewiston & Ipava CC, Mackinaw CC; United Church of Wayland

Easter Special Offering to be Received April 2nd & 9th

It's time to think about our Easter Special Offering. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), through Disciples Mission Fund, provides for six "Special Offerings" at pivotal seasons of the church year. Each Special Offering is designated for a particular recipient. The Easter Special Offering supports the general ministries of our denomination. Your gift will support college students in leadership development programs, global mission partners, health and social service ministries, the formation of new congregations, support for pastors and chaplains, and more!



Some of the ministries that benefit from this special Offering include:

- Center for Faith and Giving
- Communication Ministries
- Christian Unity and Interfaith Ministry
- Disciples of Christ Historical Society
- Disciples Home Missions
- Disciples Women
- Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
- National Benevolent Association
- New Church Ministry

Our denomination does so much for us and for others through missions. You — right here in Gibson City — can be a vital part of that, and draw tangible ties with the larger expression of church through your kind gift. We will receive this Special Offering beginning **Sunday, April 2**, and continue through **Sunday, April 9**. Please be generous with your gift.

**LOCAL
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
March 2023**

- 4 Dennis Jordan
- Mike Finis
- John and Nancy Westfall '12
- 5 Irene Schaefer
- 7 Karen Long
- 9 Rick Rinehart
- 10 Nan Clements
- Devin Back
- 11 John Westfall
- 14 Jacob Mott
- 15 Melanie Warfield
- 18 Pat Provin
- Eleanor Baize
- 21 Will Provin
- 23 Eric Tjarks
- 29 Ida Wahls



Worship Leaders

Please consider serving as worship leader in March. A sign up sheet is on the table in the narthex.

Church Board

The Church Board will meet on Sunday, March 12th immediately following worship.

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

Note Time Change



Daylight Saving Time Begins

Set clocks forward by Sunday morning,

March 12th

Pastor - David Massey-Brown
Administrative Assistant - Jennifer Hagan
Choir Director - Tim Ricks
Church Pianist - Joan Ricks
Custodians - Jeff and Cheryl Elder

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

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
P.O. Box 10
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217-784-5460
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED