

The Christian Visitor July 2023



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

Our Life Together in July

New Leadership 2023-2024

Board Officers

These have been nominated and will be elected by the new board on Sunday, July 9th.

President: Janet Iverson
Vice-President: Cheryl Elder
Secretary/Treasurer: Beth Tabor

Elders, Deacons, Trustee

These were elected by the Congregation on Sunday, June 25th.

New Elders: Ryan Iverson
Jeff Elder
David Hagan
Sue Walker (1 year term)

New Deacons: Sue McClard
Don Batson
Ida Wahls
Cathy Hagan
Genna Kincaid
Ginger Kincaid

New Trustee: Jeff Elder
Recorder: Jeff Elder

Serving Schedules

Serving Schedules for the new church year 2023-2024 are now available for pickup on the table in the narthex. Thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve.

Welcome Table Wednesday July 19th



This month's Welcome Table Wednesday will take place on July 19th, with a meal at 6:00pm in the fellowship hall, followed by a short lesson. We are looking for people to provide the meal for these evenings. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Church Board

The Church Board will meet on Sunday, July 9th following worship.

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

Sympathy

We express sympathy to Tara Mouser and family upon the death of Tara's mother, Harriet Farney, who passed away on June 16th.

Memorial Gifts

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

Colin Kristensen

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

More in the Life and Witness of the First Christian Church

A PASTOR'S PONDERING

The General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will meet in Louisville July 29-Aug 1. The General Assembly meets every two years. We've missed being together in person the last two years, due to Covid restrictions. We're excited about being able to gather with friends again to renew church ties. Lisa and I will be in attendance as your voting delegates. I hope you'll pray, not only for us, but for the Assembly and the Church, and for the business we'll conduct that week.

The theme this year is, *Kindom of God Within Us, Among Us*. No, that's not misspelled! It's intentionally spelled "Kin-dom" rather than "kingdom." We are increasingly referring to God's realm as a "kindom" in our congregations, because we want to emphasize the unity, the equity, and the kinship of all God's people. Many congregations and ministers have substituted "kin-dom" for "kingdom" in the Lord's prayer. We pray, "Thy kin-dom come." In other words, we pray for the health and expansion of the family of God. I'm excited to see what resolutions we will pass in the general church to further that kinship!

You all know by now that I often emphasize that "God dwells in the spaces between us." If we want to find God in our lives, we must look to the right relationships we form, because it's within those relationships that we may most fully see God. Right relationships are those that are built on a foundation of love. We understand God to be love and so, if it's true that we're created in God's image, we are created in, through, and for love, and it is love that we most fully reflect in the world, and our relationships are "right" when they foster love.

Did you know that "love" appears over 700 times in the Bible? Love is an important spiritual concept. The preponderance of the 613 Levitical Laws are based on love for family, love for one's community, love for the stranger and the vulnerable, and love for God. It's only because of love that we're able to form and maintain relationships that feed us. That's why I believe that God is the head of a "kin-dom." Because love doesn't build a hierarchy, love builds equitable relationships. Jesus said, I don't call you "servant" any longer, but "brother." When asked what was the most important Law, Jesus replied, "Love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend upon these two." Love is important to Jesus. He hoped that, as the church grew, people would say of it, "See how they love each other!"

So, when we Disciples gather, we often consider and debate issues centering around justice, peace, equity, and inclusion. It's important to us to build and foster the kind of relationship in the world in which every person is seen and respected as a beloved daughter or son of God. In our denomination, outward appearances aren't cause to be excluded, but rather to be celebrated. We consider civic initiatives that seek to hinder that diversity and inclusion, and we speak out against them. And we join with other denominations in the efforts to build a more equitable and welcoming world.

The driving force behind my own ethics is what I call "playground politics." I believe that everyone should be allowed to join in the game. Each one should be treated fairly and should be given the same consideration as everyone else. That's one reason why I love this church. That's why I use inclusive language. That's why I speak of God in non-sexual terms. That's why I promote right relationship so often. Because I believe that it grieves God's heart when people are excluded — for whatever reason! I believe that God loves each one unconditionally, and offers grace to each one unconditionally. So, know that I will vote for inclusive policies and initiatives. I will support actions that promote equity and unity among humankind. I will always err on the side of unconditional love.

As General Assembly time draws near, I hope you'll consider the nature of God, the nature of love, and seek ways in which we, as a community of faith, can best reflect the love of God in our community and in our world. I hope we'll find ways to establish the "kin-dom" of God within us and among us.

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

July 2023

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							1
2 10:15 AM Worship	3		4 4th of July Office Closed	5	6	7	8
9 10:15 AM Worship 11:30 AM Church Board	10		11 6:30 PM Bible Study	12	13	14	15
16 10:15 AM Worship	17		18 6:30 PM Bible Study	19 6:00 PM Welcome Table Wednesday	20	21	22
23 10:15 AM Worship	24		25 6:30 PM Bible Study	26	27	28	29
30	31						
General Assembly							

**LOCAL
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
July 2023**

- 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



Worship Leaders

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

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.

Bible Study



A weekly bible study meets every Tuesday evening at 6:30pm.

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: fcdocg.com

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED