

The Christian Visitor January 2024

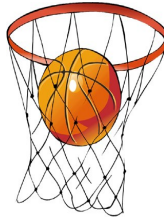


We are called to share our Christian Faith and Christ's Love with all people.

Our Life Together in January

Noel Hutchcraft Memorial Open Gym

Beginning Sunday, January 7th we will host a series of Open Gyms in memory of Noel Hutchcraft. We will gather at the GCMS Middle School each Sunday evening January 7th-February 11th from 4:00-6:00pm. Come join us for these fun evenings together!



Church Board

The Church Board will meet on Sunday, January 14th following worship.

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

Elders Breakfast

There will be an Elders Breakfast on Sunday, January 21st at 8:30am in the fellowship hall.

Taking Down Decorations Sunday, January 7th

We will take down the Christmas decorations following worship on Sunday, January 7th. Please consider staying after worship for a few minutes to help with this task. Many hands make light work.

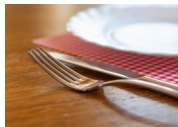
Bible Study



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

Welcome Table Wednesday January 17th

This month's Welcome Table Wednesday will take place on January 17th, with a meal at 6:00pm in the fellowship hall, followed by a short lesson.



ATTENDANCE		SUNDAY WEEK					AVG
		1	2	3	4	5	
2023	JULY	29	40	47	30	33	36
2023	AUG	27	30	30	31		30
2023	SEPT	34	35	37	40		37
2023	OCT	34	32	31	32	42	34
2023	NOV	23	36	30	32		30
2023	DEC	31	40	34	42	28	35

Memorial Gifts

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

Irene Schaefer

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

Here we are in January 2024. Even though the new church year began last month with Advent, we can't escape the allure of a new *calendar* year, nor can we wholly remove ourselves from the more secular understanding of "New Year."

With the coming of a new year, we anticipate a new beginning — the past is gone, and everyone gets a brand new start. It's sort of the secular version of grace. The Jewish faith of the Bible celebrated Jubilee every fifty years. It was a time when old debts were forgiven and debt-slaves were set free. It was "the year of the Lord's favor." It was a reminder that all things belong to God. We tend to think of *every* new year as a "jubilee" of sorts, although debts are rarely forgiven and those in bondage rarely set free.

As I was looking at my church calendar for January, I noticed that National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is January 11. I also noticed a reminder to us that Week of Compassion comes up next month. As you know, Week of Compassion is our denomination's relief agency, sending funds and help to people in need around the world. Those are important things for us to be aware of. Additionally, January 15 is Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This has become an important day of observance in the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and other denominations — as well as many civic organizations.

All of these observances seek to bring to our attention that there are still, in the 21st century, and in the United States ("land of the free"), many people who are still in debt and in bondage in some way that severely diminishes their humanity. And we, as followers of Jesus, are called to address that unhappy fact. It's up to us to declare Jubilee to all who are held in bondage, whether to monetary debtors, or to social stratification, or to those who take advantage of one's race or sexual identity. We are called by the Spirit to "bring good news to the poor." We are anointed to "proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

A new year is always an opportunity for us to set some new goals, to resolve to effect some kind of transformation in our lives, so that this new year is better for everyone than the last. There are still so many voices of fear, intimidation, division, discrimination, and privilege in our world. I hope we, as individual people of faith and Gospel, and as a united people that form the body of Christ, resolve to let our light shine in the world this year. We can do that through our financial support, through our words, and especially through our actions as we seek to fulfill our call to proclaim Jubilee. It begins now. No more waiting!

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

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

January 2024

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 6:30 PM Bible Study	3	4	5	6
7 10:15 AM Worship 11:30 AM Taking Down Decorations 4:00 PM Open Gym	8	9 6:30 PM Bible Study	10	11	12	13	
14 10:15 AM Worship 11:30 AM Church Board 4:00 PM Open Gym	15	16 6:30 PM Bible Study	17 6:00 PM Welcome Table Wednesday	18	19	20 Fellowship Hall Reserved	
21 8:30 AM Elders Breakfast 10:15 AM Worship 4:00 PM Open Gym	22	23 6:30 PM Bible Study	24	25	26	27	
28 10:15 AM Worship 4:00 PM Open Gym	29	30 6:30 PM Bible Study	31 February Newsletter Articles Due				

**LOCAL
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
*January 2024***

1	Alex Barnard	21	David Ricks
2	Ed Hopkey		Blake Warren
5	Stan Rinehart	22	Janet Glascock
6	Matt Barnard		Trey Van Winkle
	Jay Kristensen	23	Katie Ricks
8	Marilyn Hopkey	27	Steve Parsons
11	Billy DeWall	29	Gary & Ruth
14	Karen Rankin		Reiners '72
16	Mary Ellen McClure		
	Ava Rylan Rexroat		
19	Desiree Mouser		



Worship Leaders

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



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: gcfccdoc@yahoo.com
 Website: fccdocgc.com

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 P.O. Box 10
 Gibson City, IL 60936-0010
 217-784-5460
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED