

«BAG» «ZIP_COUNT»
«NAMELINE»
«STREET»
«CITY», «STATE» «ZIP» «PLUSFOUR»

THE CRUSADER (USPS139220) published bi-weekly except the week after/of Christmas by First Christian Church,
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Anniversaries:

5 – Tom & Rosemary Humphrey
26 – Chris & Stacie Admire

Birthdays:

4 – Ryan Oehlert
6 – Travis Stecher
10 – Cooper Wilt
11 – Michael Johnson
12 – Gene Johnson
15 – Jessica VanVelsor
16 – Janet Christiansen, Missy McLaren
17 – Noah Nalley
18 – Jack David Esters
20 – Richard Reno
25 – Aaron Kelley
26 – Stacie Admire
31 – Tina Burns



... for those anticipating tests for health concerns. Give them patience and peace as they wait for test results.

... for **Jim Musolf**, former music director here at First Christian. Jim's wife Jean passed away last week. Funeral arrangements are pending.

... for **Janet Christiansen** as she grieves the loss of her 2-year-old great-grandson Jaxon who died on Friday, the 15th. Funeral services for Jaxon will be held at 11am on Dec. 20, with the visitation 2 hours earlier.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Thank you for your generosity towards FCC in 2023! Finish the year strong with a year-end donation. Please turn in your offerings **no later than noon on Dec. 28th** in order to be recorded for 2023 giving.



Crusader

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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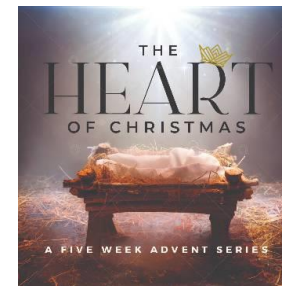
Director of Music – Steve Jackson sjackson@sandburg.edu

Co-Pastors: Gregory S. and Martha-Jean Fitch

pastorgreg02@gmail.com & pastormj02@gmail.com



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Dec 24, 2023 at 10am

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Message by Pastor Martha-Jean Fitch

"The Heart of Christmas is Love"

Scripture: John 1:14; 1 John 4:7-12

AS WELL AS

Candlelight/Communion Service at 7:30pm

"The Heart of Christmas is Jesus!"

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDELIGHT/COMMUNION SERVICE

"The Heart of Christmas is Jesus"

Sunday, December 24th at 7:30pm

Invite your family and friends to join us as we celebrate our dear Savior! The offering taken at this service will be donated to our own Good Samaritan Fund.

The Good Samaritan Fund was initiated by long-time faithful member, Jim Rowe, prior to his death in 2010 to help members of FCC with their needs at the discretion of the pastors. Over the years, the Fund has evolved to also help those in the community who are seeking help. Money is kept in its own account and given directly to utility companies, bus companies, landlords, or gas cards, rather than directly to the individual asking for help.





Merry Christmas from your Church Staff

Pastors Greg & MJ
Steve Jackson
Lorraine Stone
Carlos Juarez

Dec 31, 2023

Message by Tracy Jackson

"All Things New"

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17

There will no Sunday School



Jan 7, 2024

Message by Pastor Greg

"The Wise Still Seek Him"

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Worship will be in-person and on Facebook Live at 10am

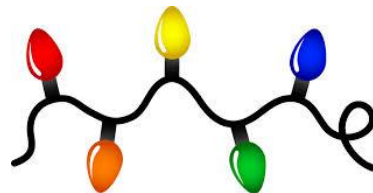


CHRISTMAS OFFICE SCHEDULE AND PASTORS' VACATION

The church office will be closed from **Dec. 25th** – **Dec. 27th** and on **Jan. 1st**. Lorraine will be in the office on the mornings of Dec. 28th and Dec. 29th. There is **no** **Crusader the week of Dec. 25th or Jan. 1st.**

Pastors Greg and MJ will be on vacation the week of **December 25th through January 1st** and back in the office on **January 2nd**. While they are gone, if there is a pastoral need, please contact the elder of your shepherding group.

On **December 31**, we will be blessed to have Tracy Jackson filling the pulpit. You won't want to miss hearing her message.



WORSHIP SERVING SCHEDULE

Dec 24 – Diaconate Serving: Marge Patterson and Sharon Carnes

Lead in Communion: Pastor

Offering Message: Tina Burns

Prayers: Chris Mowrer

Greeters: Marge Patterson and Sharon Carnes at North St.; Kaleb Brown at Broad St.; Raeleen Brown at canopy door

Dec 31 – Diaconate Serving: Janet Foster and Jan Unger

Lead in Communion: Jan Luallen

Offering Message: Neill Unger

Prayers: Tracy Jackson

Greeters: Janet Foster and Jan Unger at North St.; Marge Patterson at Broad St.; Sharon Carnes at canopy door

Jan 7 – Diaconate Serving: Kim and Aaron Barton

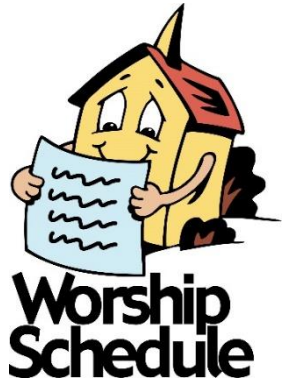
Lead in Communion: Steve Jackson

Offering Message: Tina Burns

Prayers: Pastor

Greeters: Kim and Aaron Barton at North St.; Janet Foster at Broad St.; Jan Unger at canopy door

Elders Serving Out: Neill Unger and Jan Unger




JANUARY BIRTHDAYS – Jan. 7th

During Coffee Fellowship on **January 7**, we will celebrate January birthdays. If you have a birthday in January, you are invited to bring treats to share.

Youth group will meet on **Dec. 20th** for a Christmas party. There will be no meetings on **Dec. 27th or Jan. 3rd** for Christmas break, **Jan. 10th** will be the first meeting in the new year. Enjoy your break!

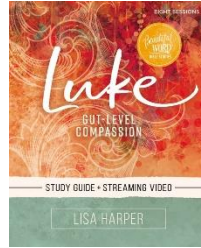


January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1  Office Closed	2 1:30pm – Caring Ministers	3 9:30am and 5:30pm – Bible Study	4 9am – Staff meeting 6:30pm – Worship Committee	5	6 10am – De-Hanging of the Greens
7 8:40am – Coffee House Theology Sunday School conference room 9:30am – Coffee Fellowship – Celebrate January birthdays 10am – Worship 11:30am – Finish De-Hanging of the Greens	8 5pm – Narcotics Anonymous 6pm – Council meeting 7pm – Elders meeting Newsletter week	9	10 9:30am and 5:30pm – Bible Study 5:30pm – Youth Group	11	12	13
14 8:40am – Coffee House Theology Sunday School in conference room 9:30am – Coffee Fellowship 10am – Worship 11:30am – Disciples Sun. School	15 5pm – Narcotics Anonymous 6:30pm – Trustees Office Closed	16 10am – Naomi Circle	17 9:30am and 5:30pm – Bible Study 3pm – Worship at Hawthorne Inn 5:30pm – Youth Group	18 9am – Staff meeting 2pm – Worship at Knox County Nursing Home 5:30pm – Men’s Night Out at Pizza Ranch and Ladies’ Night Out at Jimmy’s Pizza	19	20 9:30am – Planning Day for Council
21 Week of Laity 8:40am – Coffee House Theology Sunday School in conference room 9:30am – Coffee Fellowship 10am – Worship – Guest speaker BLANKET SUNDAY 11:30am – Disciples Sun. School	22 5pm – Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter week	23	24 9:30am and 5:30pm – Bible Study 5:30pm – Youth Group	25 9am – Staff meeting	26	27
28 8:40am – Coffee House Theology Sunday School in conference room 9:30am – Coffee Fellowship 10am – Worship - BLANKET SUNDAY 11:30am – Disciples Sun. School	29 5pm – Narcotics Anonymous	30	31 9:30am and 5:30pm – Bible Study 5:30pm – Youth Group		<i>Note: Worship services are in-person as well as Facebook Live</i>	<i>Note: Disciples Sunday School and Wednesday Bible Study are both on Zoom and in person.</i>

NEW WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY BEGINS JANUARY 17TH

You are invited to join our next Bible Study starting on **January 17, at 9:30am and 5:30pm**, for 8 weeks. We will have an in-depth look the Gospel of Luke – led by DVD teacher Lisa Harper. If a student book is desired, they are \$15 and must be ordered by **January 5**. Come and join us as we learn more about the Bible and grow in our faith.



THANK YOU FROM DISCIPLE WOMEN COUNCIL

The Disciple Women Council would like to thank everyone who participated in our “Cookie Cutter Christmas Exchange” last Saturday afternoon. Pastor MJ was a wonderful emcee and all who came had a great time. AND the cookies were fantastic! Delicious! Thanks also to Lorraine for making the booklets.

*Dear Church Family,
“You Took The Time”
You took the time to stop and chat
As you passed by today,
To jest a bit in pure delight
Before you went away*

*You took the time to lend a hand,
When I was faced with care.
To give the strength of fellowship
To comfort and to share.*

*You took the time to send a note
In your own special way,
A birthday card, a valentine
A wish for Christmas day.*

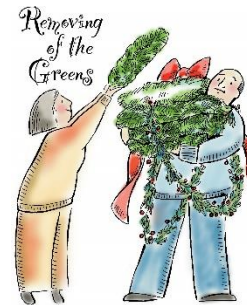
*You took the time for words of praise
That warmed me through and through,
You took the time to be a friend
Just when I needed you.*

God’s blessings – Carole Batterton



GIVING TREE

You still have time to bring in items this week for the Giving Tree in the Sanctuary to benefit our own Blessing Box. Suggested items to purchase: personal hygiene (deodorant, toothpaste and brush, feminine hygiene products, soap, razors, shampoo); food items (individual crackers, individual tuna, chicken salad, etc., juice boxes (not in can), Ramen type noodles, breakfast biscuits); clothing (socks, gloves, underwear, winter hats, hand warmers); toilet paper. You can also give cash donations to the office and we will purchase items for you. We are so grateful for your support of this important ministry!



DE-HANGING OF THE GREENS

A special thanks to all who helped decorate the church building so beautifully. Please mark your calendars now for take down on **January 6th and 7th**. We will start the process at **10am on January 6th** and finish after worship on **January 7th**. Thank you!

NEW SERMON SERIES BEGINS JAN. 14

2024 – a new year - a Better you!

The greatest question of all that we must ask ourselves is whether we are putting Jesus first in our lives. If we seek first the Kingdom of God this year then every other area of life will fall in line.

It’s a new year that comes with a chance at a fresh start...a new beginning to change some old habits and renew and reset your discipleship and growth in faith. Join us for this 4 week series and “resolve” to be a better you in 2024.

