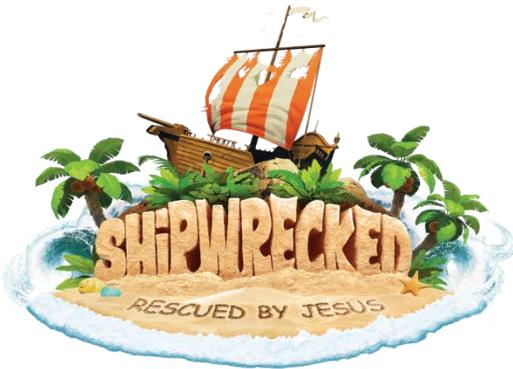




The MESSENGER

Shipwrecked - Rescued by Jesus Vacation Bible School



Sunday, June 3 - Thursday, June 7
6:00-8:30 PM

Optional Meal: 5:30 PM

(\$3 per person or \$15 family meal maximum)

with Centennial Christian Church
and St. Luke Union Church
at First Christian Church

Online registration for children
is available on our website.

Please also see www.signupgenius.com
to donate/lend needed supplies.

Help is needed to paint, cut out palm leaves, cut cardboard into thatch, and a thousand other things to transform FCC into a deserted island. You are invited to come help on:

Saturday, May 26, 9:00-1:00 PM

Friday, June 1, 6:00-9:00 PM

or Saturday, June 2, 9:00-11:00 AM.

➤ *Open House* - The congregation is invited to



Carol Kline's 95th birthday Open House this Saturday, May 26, 2:00-4:00 PM, at Westminster's Social Center. Carol requests no gifts, please.

➤ *Summer Break* - Our children/youth Sunday School classes and youth group have begun their summer break.

➤ *Gifts for Another Table* - This is the last Sunday to bring gifts for St. Vincent de Paul. If you have not brought something this month, why not bring some items from the following list: canned fruits & vegetables, cereal, soup, crackers, cookies, Hamburger Helper, and instant mashed potatoes. Gifts next month will be given to Salvation Army.

➤ *Block Party News* -

- Block Party T-shirts are available on Sundays at the Information Center for \$15 each. Proceeds help to buy school kits.



- Thank you for the great turn-out for the 2018 Bake Sale for School Kits! Between all the baked goodies and donation checks, we received \$1,336.

➤ *Greetings from the Legacy Circle* - We happily announce another individual has joined the Legacy Circle at First Christian by designating a future gift to our church. Thank you, *May Jackson*, for your faithful stewardship and for extending a gift to future generations. If you are considering such a gift, please contact one of the Church Trustees (Alan Chapman, Linda Lehmann, Don Mahannah, Marty Sallee, and Becky White). We will be happy to meet with you, listen to your wishes, and discuss various possibilities.

A long obedience in the same direction...

Thriving Churches



Carey Nieuwhof is the founding pastor of a large, multi-site church outside of Toronto, Ontario. I subscribe to his daily emails, and I recently received one titled “Five Significant Attitude Differences that Separate Growing and Declining Churches.” Nieuwhof is an astute observer of the contemporary church scene in North America, and he articulates well the characteristics of thriving churches. (I prefer to use words like thriving, faithful, healthy, vital, and effective to describe these churches. A thriving church is one that is faithful to Jesus Christ and is making a difference in the world. Simply because a church is growing numerically does not mean it’s thriving, faithful, healthy, vital, and effective.)

One characteristic of thriving churches is that they have a “We Can” attitude. These churches look at the possibilities before them and say, “We can do it.” Instead of rehearsing the twenty reasons why a particular idea cannot work, they find twenty ways to make it happen. Sometimes their ideas flop, but that’s okay. The mission of the church is important enough to take significant risk.

Another trait of these churches is that they are outwardly focused. They don’t concentrate on themselves and the needs and wants of their members. Instead, they emphasize the church’s mission to reach beyond the walls of the church. These churches are constantly finding ways to minister with people who have not yet encountered Jesus Christ and found a church community.

Thriving churches also want to reach new people. They aren’t focused on responding to member’s preferences and trying to please everyone. They’re more interested in what they need to do to reach out beyond themselves and spread the good news of God’s love found in Jesus Christ.

These churches are also decidedly proactive, not reactive. They choose what they will do and quickly act on issues that can impact their future. They don’t wait around and simply react to problems as they arise.

The final characteristic of effective churches is that they act now. They don’t wait around and hope the problem will go away. They act when they need to and seek to resolve their issues quickly. I would also

add that these churches exercise patience as well. They act in God’s time, not theirs.

As I surveyed these five characteristics, I thought of First Christian Church and where we fit in. Like almost all churches, we are a mix of these traits. We do better with some of them than we do with others. We, like every other church, have room for growth.

Our current discernment process is an excellent example of First Christian at its best. You can read elsewhere in this newsletter what our next steps in the process will be. We entered this process knowing that, with God’s help, we can continue to be a thriving and effective church. Many issues have converged to bring us to this time, issues such as a changing North American religious context and the need for significant physical repairs to our building. If we faithfully listen for God’s guidance, we will be well poised to enter our next season of life together.

Where do you see First Christian Church right now? Where do we show evidence of being a thriving, faithful, healthy, vital, and effective church? Where do we need to be more faithful? What do *you* need to do to ensure that we become more effective?

— Jim Warren

Sandhya Jha, founder and director of the Oakland Peace Center (a collective of 40 organizations creating access, equity, and dignity for all in Oakland and the Bay Area), will be speaking Saturday, July 14, 1:00 PM, at Centennial Christian Church. Event cost is \$5. Register online at: <http://cciwdisciples.org>. Raised in an interracial and multi-faith family and witness to the ways racism and xenophobia show up in our society, Sandhya’s career has been marked by work to effect public policy change and to build what Dr. Martin Luther King called *Beloved Community* (at the Oakland Peace Center). She is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and serves as an anti-racism/anti-oppression trainer with Reconciliation Ministries for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is the author of *Room at the Table*, the history of people of color in the Disciples of Christ; *Pre-Post-Racial America: Spiritual Stories from the Front Lines* on the subject of race and spirituality in America; and *Transforming Communities: How People Like You are Healing Their Neighborhoods*, which focuses on concrete ways regular people are creating change community-by-community in an era where positive change can feel impossible.

➤ *Disciples Women's Ministries News ~*



- **The May 5 DWM Spring Event** was very well attended and very well received. We had a delicious brunch followed by a program presented by the "Tea Ladies." It was most interesting and fun. Each of the tables was individually decorated in spring colors with flowers, tea cups, and "friend" related items. The theme of the program was "Treasure Thy Friends" which is something we all should do. Thank you to all who helped to make our event such a pleasant morning.
- **Our next regular meeting** will be on Thursday, June 7, at 1:00 PM in the Conference Room. Please be prepared to discuss Chapter 4, "What the Spiritual Gifts Are" in our book "Rediscovering our Spiritual Gifts." If you would like, please bring a friend.

➤ *Discernment Update ~*



Since our last congregational meeting on discernment on April 8, the team has been looking for a potential path forward with outside assistance. The team met with three authors of books we have studied and Scott Woolridge, CCIW Associate Regional Minister. The team has been discussing how effective our congregation has been in carrying out the plans we have made as a necessary part of the process to successfully take First Christian into its next chapter.

With this as a guiding principle, the discernment team is proceeding to work with Scott Woolridge. Scott brings a wealth of experience in helping congregations. He is capable of providing all the assistance we need. We are going to start with a process called Healthy Congregations. Healthy Congregations uses the insights of family systems theory to help church leaders and members become more effective stewards of their congregation's health. This training has the potential to help us develop more effective ways of working together to carry out our mission for Jesus Christ – for the board, elders, trustees, and the congregation as a whole.

It is expected the discernment planning team will start our work with Scott immediately, expanding to the Official Board as it begins its new year on July 1. After that, we will want to involve representation from the entire congregation in the Healthy Congregations training. As we have discussed with Scott, he has many more tools in his toolbox and is willing to bring them to bear as we discover the need. However, we also remain open to the possibility that we may yet find it best to engage one of the other consultants as well.

Working together to determine God's call for our congregation is important work. We want to be clear that no decisions have been made. We would ask that every member and friend of First Christian Church pray for our future as a congregation -- that our calling will become clear as we move forward together to serve Jesus Christ.

Welcome New Members

Welcome to Randy & Nancy Phillips who joined our church family on Pentecost, May 20.

Witness of the Faithful

Attendance -- 5/13/18: 176, 44 5/20/18: 135, 28
Offering -- \$14,612.07

Prayer Concerns

Aftercare: Helen Joyce Barclay, Wannie Beard, Betty Beer, Jim Fry, Rita Hensley, John & Connie Lindenbaum, Peggy O'Neal, Sid & Mary Smart, Martha Smith, Art Taylor

Hospice: Harold Goyen, Virginia Warren

Assisted Living: Mickey Armstrong (Luther Oaks), Alma Samuels (Taylors' home) **Treatment:** Sharon Warren

Nursing Homes: Blm. Rehab – Marilyn Thompson

Heritage, Blm. – Merle Murray, Virginia Warren

Heritage, El Paso – Sonna West

Heritage, Nrm. – Harold Goyen

Liberty, Clinton – Corena Meyer

Martin Health – Myrna Cable, Dave Dungan,

Marlyn Mahannah, Lois Murray, Barbara Thatcher

McLean County – Darlene Bethel

Military: Chris Kavanaugh (Marines, CA);

Harley Scott (Phillis niece/Navy, VA)

Other: Luke Pool (Fire Academy Blm. Fire Dept., Glenview, IL)

Sympathy to: ... Dave Dungan family on the April 14 death of his brother, Harold Dungan ... Ted (Trish) Logan family on the May 14 death of his aunt, Marta Logan

Thank You

Posted on the Centrum bulletin board are notes received from: Jean Snyder (flowers), Sharron Wright (prayers).



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bloomington's Oldest Continuing Congregation - Founded 1837



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Serving Sunday, May 27

Acolyte: Calen Kiesewetter
Child Care: Trish Logan, Michelle Kiesewetter
Deacons: 9:00 Stacey Erickson, Libby Nussbaum
10:15 Scott & Valerie Fisher
Jr. Deacons: Sadie Newton, Averie Kiesewetter
Drivers: Rich Crusius, Frank Lipscomb
Elders: Kathie Chapman, Naomi Kosier
Homebound Elders: Marla McElroy, May Jackson
Fellowship Hosts: Betty Steinlicht, Susan Hinrichsen
Fill Candles: Kathie Chapman
Greeters: Art & Camille Taylor; Bill, Susan, and Tom Chaney
Information Center: Teri Arvik
Scripture: Holly Rocke **Time for Children:** Jim Warren or Holly Irvin
Sound Tech: James Nussbaum **Video Tech:** Nate Damery
Pulpit: Jim Warren – Isaiah 6:1-8 “Here I Am; Send Me!” After experiencing the absolute holiness of God, the prophet Isaiah responds to God with a strong, “Here I am; send me!” When we experience the depths of who God is, we similarly assent readily to taking on God’s mission.

Mailed: May 23, 2018

Serving Sunday, June 3

Acolyte: Khloe Nussbaum
Child Care: Trish Logan, Marcia Christensen
Deacons: 9:00 James & Libby Nussbaum
10:15 Scott & Valerie Fisher
Jr. Deacons: --
Drivers: Darrell Arvik, Ryan Newton
Elders: John Hensley, Becky White
Homebound Elders: Kathie Chapman, Naomi Kosier
Fellowship Hosts: John & Kathy Dailey
Fill Candles: Marla McElroy
Greeters: Brian Metz, Austin Metz, Mark & Michelle Gramley
Information Center: Mary Helen Haskell **Recycle:** Marty Sallee
Scripture: Camille Taylor **Time for Children:** Heather Damery
Sound Tech: Dave Phillis **Video Tech:** Todd Chapman
Pulpit: Jim Warren – Summer series on the parables of Jesus: “Did You Hear the One About ... the Lawyer?” Luke 10:25-37. A lawyer sought to justify himself before Jesus and asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answered with the Parable of the Good Samaritan and said a neighbor is someone in need.

Sunday Traditional Worship 9:00 AM
One and All Worship 10:15 AM
Sunday School for Adults 10:15 AM

Senior Pastor

James Warren.....212-6873
jwarren@blmfcc.org

Minister Emeritus

John Trefzger

Music

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hirvin@blmfcc.org.....1-864-921-4874
Lou Ann Fillingham, organ/piano
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Bill West, One and All Music Coordinator
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FAX 829-2865

Website & Calendar www.blmfcc.com