



# The MESSENGER

*A long obedience in the same direction...*

## *Bear Bells and Bear Spray*



I recently travelled to Montana to officiate at my niece's wedding. It was an outdoor wedding, and the setting was magnificent, with snowy mountains and fall-colored trees in the background.

It was at West Glacier, MT, which is the entrance to Glacier National Park. It was a beautiful wedding.

I spent a couple of extra days in Montana and went hiking in Glacier National Park. This is a good time of year to go hiking because the temperatures are cooler, the colors are changing, and the animals are more active. I was able to see some moose, a cow, and two calves, from a distance.

But hiking with more active animals has its downside because among those more active animals are bears: brown bears and grizzly bears. The bears are hungry and getting ready for their winter hibernation, and hikers are advised to take precautions.

I carried "bear spray" with me. Bear spray is a can of pepper spray designed to be used on aggressive bears. Of course, for the bear spray to be effective the bear has to be fairly close, and you hope you don't come across a bear that likes its food hot and spicy. There's not much that can be done if the bear spray fails.

A much better way of dealing with bears is to avoid them altogether. People who know about bears have told me that bears don't want to have a confrontation with a hiker. If a bear knows someone is coming, the bear will leave the area. So, in addition to the bear spray, I had a "bear bell." The bear bell was a small bell I attached to my hiking stick. It jingled as I walked, thus alerting nearby bears to my presence and encouraging them to leave the area. Locals, however, will tell you that bears hear bear bells not as warning bells, but as dinner bells.

So, the best way to handle bears is to be pro-active and keep a safe distance away from them. Wear a bear bell and make noise so that you don't startle them. Plan ahead, keep vigilant, and don't lull yourself into thinking you'll never encounter a bear.

That's a good lesson for life. Rather than waiting until it's too late, waiting until the bear is upon you and all you have left is bear spray, it's better to be prepared and handle the problem before it becomes a crisis. It's better to avoid the bear altogether.

That's the approach we're taking with the discernment process. We're planning ahead and being pro-active. We're not waiting until the bear is charging toward us before doing something.

Don't take this analogy too far. I don't think we're talking about a problem as life threatening as a hungry, charging bear, but I do believe we have some substantial issues we need to face. The American religious landscape is shifting rapidly, and we're caught up in that shift. We also have some major concerns with our building, and we need to figure out how best to address those concerns.

It's time to put on our bear bell and acknowledge that significant challenges are lurking around us. We need to do what we can to attend to those challenges *now* and not ignore them until they're bearing down on us. We need to look to our future and ask what is God's vision for our church.

***I encourage you to join the conversation about our church's future. This Sunday, October 29, and again Sunday, November 12, (1:00-5:00 PM) the Trustees are holding two sessions to explore what God is asking of our church in this time and place. Please plan to come to one or both sessions! And please be praying that we'll be open to seeing God's vision for our church.***

So, how did I do with the bears in Glacier National Park? The fact that I'm writing this column would seem to indicate that the bear bell worked and the only exciting part of my hikes was the gorgeous scenery. I never saw a bear.

I hope our efforts now keep our church safe from encountering any ravenous, snarling grizzlies in the future.

— Jim Warren

## ➤ Stewardship Campaign



This Sunday, October 29, concludes our annual stewardship campaign. Both services will include a time for you to submit your Estimate of Giving card. This card indicates what you intend to give to Christ and His church in 2018. This giving goes toward the church's general fund, which includes the church's ministries, outreach, normal building maintenance (utilities, routine repairs, mowing, snow removal, etc.), and staff.

The theme of this year's stewardship emphasis has been *Extravagant Generosity: The Heart of Giving*. You've learned what it means to be extravagantly generous from sermons, lay speakers, the *Messenger*, from scripture passages, and the book of daily readings titled *Practicing Extravagant Generosity*.

As you prayerfully prepare your Estimate of Giving card, may you be the person described in the last reading in *Practicing Extravagant Generosity*: People who practice Extravagant Generosity give with unexpected liberality, they make giving a first priority, and they plan their giving with great energy and passion. They go the second mile. They do not give from a "what remains" mentality, but from a "what comes first" priority. Giving seriously becomes a personal spiritual discipline, a way of serving God, and a means of helping the church fulfill its God-appointed mission. Focused conviction and intention causes them to give in a more pronounced way, without fear and with greater trust. Giving changes their lives.

## ➤ Youth News — Bonfire this Sunday,



October 29, at the Efts' (Kim Cox's parents) for 3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. We will meet at the church at 5:15 PM and return to the church at 8:00 PM.

➤ *Bible Study* — You are welcome to read through the short Letters of Paul (currently II Thessalonians) on Wednesdays at noon in the Conference Room. Jim Warren leads the study.



➤ *Time Change* — Remember to set your clocks back one hour Saturday night, November 4.

➤ *Drivers Needed* — Please call the church office if you would be willing to bring someone to church (in your own car) who needs a ride.

## NOVEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29</p> <p>9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:15 AM One and All Worship 10:15 AM Youth Sunday School 1:00 PM Visioning Session 5:15 PM Youth Group - Bonfire</p> <p><b>YOUTH GROUP BONFIRE</b></p> <p><i>Fall Back</i></p> <p>All Saint's Sunday Gifts for Another Table SET CLOCKS BACK 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:15 AM One and All Worship 10:15 AM Youth Sunday School 5:00 PM KFC &amp; Youth Group - Prepare for Hanging of the Greens</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10:30 AM Bridge 5:45 PM Bridge 5:45 PM Voice Lesson</p> <p>6</p> <p>10:30 AM Bridge 11:30 AM CCIW 4:30 PM Seeding 5:30 PM Elders' Meeting 5:45 PM Bridge 5:45 PM Voice Lesson</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM NA 5:15 PM Music Connections</p> <p>7</p> <p>9:30 AM Staff Meeting 4:30 PM Seeding 5:00 PM NA 5:15 PM Music Connections</p>	<p>1</p> <p>12:00 PM Bible Bunch 4:30 PM Seeding 5:30 PM Hand Bells 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM One and All Rehearsal</p> <p>8</p> <p>12:00 PM Bible Bunch 4:30 PM Seeding 5:30 PM Hand Bells 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM One and All Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1:00 PM Disciples Women's Ministries 4:30 PM Seeding 5:30 PM Private Voice Lessons</p> <p>9</p> <p>10:30 AM Bridge 4:30 PM Seeding 5:30 PM Private Voice Lessons</p>	<p>3</p> <p>4:30 PM Seeding 7:00 PM Square Dance</p> <p>10</p> <p>4:30 PM Seeding</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10:00 AM CCIW</p> <p>11</p> <p>10:00 AM CCIW 10:30 AM Bridge</p>

## ➤ *Gifts for Another Table*

This is the last Sunday to bring gifts for Salvation Army. Please consider bringing: boxed rice dinners, pasta & sauce, potato dinners & sauce, Hamburger Helper, instant mashed potatoes, or canned vegetables & fruit. In November our gifts will be given to Regional Alternative School. Watch for a list of their needed items.

## ➤ *Disciples Women's Ministries*



Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 2, at 1:00 PM. At this meeting a third presentation ("Recognizing our Gifts") will be given as a possible study for next year. The committee which formed to bring suggestions to the entire group for our financial expenditures and contributions will give a report. This group consists of Mary Helen Haskell, May Jackson, and Marcia Christensen. Jan Dyer would like to thank all those who participated in the "Operation Santa" drive. The stockings you made and the items you contributed will be greatly appreciated by our service personnel. Come join us!

## ➤ *Heritage Sunday*

Last Sunday during worship we honored those who have 50 and more years of membership at this church. This year Carol Cable, Michael Murray, and Shirley Wotherspoon joined this honored group.



## *Witness of the Faithful*

**Attendance:** 10/15: 149, 32      10/22: 157, 22  
**Offering:** \$15,476.22

## *Prayer Concerns*

**Advocate BroMenn:** Niola Daily

**OSF St. Joseph:** Betty Steinlicht

**Awaiting Tests/Surgery:** Jackie Hux

**Treatment:** Sharon Warren

**Aftercare:** Lori Craig, Dave Eyman, Scott Fisher, Kaleigh Menken, Peggy O'Neal, Mary Smart, Joe Violano

**Hospice:** Linda Harweger, Virginia Warren

**Assisted Living:** Alma Samuels (Taylors' home)

**Nursing Homes:** Marilyn Thompson (Blm. Rehab); Paul Cope, Merle Murray, Virginia Warren (Heritage, Blm.); Sonna West (Heritage, El Paso); Harold Goyen (Heritage, Nrm); Corena Meyer (Liberty, Clinton); Dave Dungan, Marlyn Mahannah, Gene & Lois Murray, Barbara Thatcher (Martin Hlth); Roberta Blomgren (Sugar Creek)

**Military:** Chris Kavanaugh (Marines, CA);

Harley Scott (Phillis niece/Navy, VA)

**Sympathy to:** Tom (Michele) Pugh and family on the October 19 death of his mother, Virginia Pugh, of Williamsburg, IA

**Dedicated October 22:** Charleigh Lynn & Andie Quinn (daughters of Drew & Jennifer Henneberg)



# FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bloomington's Oldest Continuing Congregation - Founded 1837

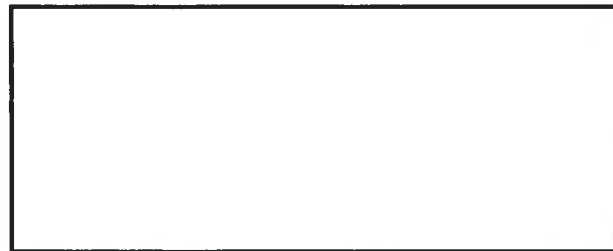


401 West Jefferson Street  
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit #41

Bloomington, IL 61701



## Serving Sunday, October 29

**Acolytes:** Bekah Warren, Gabriel Warren  
**Child Care:** Trish Logan, Kathie Chapman  
**Deacons:** 9:00 Dan & Amy Naughton 10:15 Matt Davis, Valerie Fisher  
**Jr. Deacons:** Sam Warren, Sadie Newton  
**Driver:** Ryan Newton  
**Elders:** Patti & Chip Jamerson  
**Homebound Elders:** Marla McElroy, May Jackson  
**Fellowship Host:** Cindy Rousey  
**Fill Candles:** Connie Rapp  
**Greeters:** Matt & Naomi Kosier, Darrell & Teri Arvik  
**Information Center Host:** Nancy Pool  
**Recycle:** Hank & Linda Sur  
**Sound Tech:** Brian Metz  
**Time for Children:** Patty Thompson  
**Worship & Wonder Greeter:** Patti Jamerson  
**Pulpit:** Jim Warren – John 3:16, II Corinthians 8:24  
"Extravagant Generosity: The Expression of Your Heart"

**Scripture:** Nate Damery  
**Video Tech:** Chip Jamerson

Mailed: October 25, 2017

## Serving Sunday, November 5

**Acolyte:** Charlie Campos  
**Child Care:** Trish Logan, Kim Cox  
**Deacons:** 9:00 Martin & Sue Ross 10:15 Peg Larson, Amy Nichols  
**Jr. Deacons:** Aleea Cleaver, Bekah Warren  
**Driver:** --  
**Elders:** Brenda Phillis, David Bradbury  
**Homebound Elders:** Patti & Chip Jamerson  
**Fellowship Host:** Teri Arvik  
**Fill Candles:** Connie Rapp  
**Greeters:** Jim & Carolyn Hepperly, Ron & Nancy Gramley  
**Information Center Host:** Cindy Rousey  
**Recycle:** Hank & Linda Sur  
**Sound Techs:** Brian Metz, Austin Metz  
**Time for Children:** Matt Chapman  
**Worship & Wonder Greeter:** Ryan Newton  
**Pulpit:** Jim Warren – Ruth 1:13b-18 "Where You Die, I Will Die"  
As we remember those from our church who have died in the past year, I'll talk about their ongoing legacy and how part of us dies with them.

**Scripture:** James Nussbaum  
**Video Tech:** Nate Damery

**Sunday Traditional Worship** ..... 9:00 AM  
**One and All Worship** ..... 10:15 AM  
**Sunday School** ..... 10:15 AM  
**Sunday Youth Group** ..... 5:00 PM

### Senior Pastor

James Warren.....212-6873  
[jwarren@blmfcc.org](mailto:jwarren@blmfcc.org)

### Minister Emeritus

John Trefzger

### Music

Holly Irvin, Director of Music & Youth Ministries  
[hirvin@blmfcc.org](mailto:hirvin@blmfcc.org).....1-864-921-4874  
Lou Ann Fillingham, organ/piano  
[lafillingham@comcast.net](mailto:lafillingham@comcast.net)  
Bill West, One and All Music Coordinator  
[billwest211@gmail.com](mailto:billwest211@gmail.com)

### Communications Coordinator

Jenifer Petri.....808-1181  
[info@blmfcc.org](mailto:info@blmfcc.org)

### Office Administrator

Dawn Craig  
[office@blmfcc.org](mailto:office@blmfcc.org)

### Financial Secretary & Editor

Deborah Stumm  
[dstumm@blmfcc.org](mailto:dstumm@blmfcc.org)

### Custodian

Wally Calvert  
[calvert62@comcast.net](mailto:calvert62@comcast.net)

### Child Care Coordinator

Trish Logan  
[tlogan4@hotmail.com](mailto:tlogan4@hotmail.com)

**Office** ..... 829-9327

401 W. Jefferson, Bloomington, IL 61701  
M-F 8:00-4:30; Closed Noon-1:00

**FAX**.....829-2865

**Website & Calendar**.....[www.blmfcc.com](http://www.blmfcc.com)