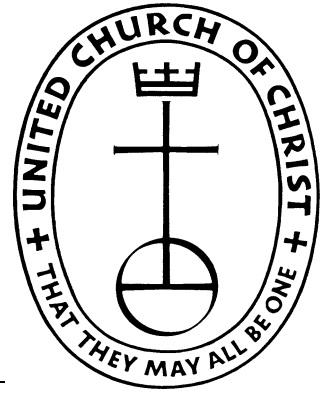


First Christian United Church of Christ Newsletter September 2019



The Annual Ice Cream Social was held on August 7th. Many came out and enjoyed delicious treats contributed by many talented folks!

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PASTOR'S COLUMN

This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it! Psalm 118:24

I saw a cartoon where a little girl is shown talking to her younger brother. They are sitting outdoors on the ground. The little girl says, "Yesterday is the past, tomorrow is the future, but today is a gift. That is why it is called the present."

A child's perspective can be helpful for us to have at times! How easy it is to get so caught up in our thoughts about the past or the future that we forget to live in the only real time we have, which is the present. This present time we should view as a gift to us from God.

I find that it is hard to live in the present. I easily get caught up in memories from the past. I remember special times with family and friends. I find I am bothered by mistakes I made in the past and feel guilty about hurts I have brought on others. I spend time wishing I could undo things I have done. I spend time wondering about decisions I have made as I consider whether I did the right thing at the time. The past takes up much of my time in the present.

I also find that the future takes up much of my time in the present. I find myself looking forward to special events that are to happen. I also find myself worrying about the future, especially in regard to financial matters and health concerns. Will I remain in good health so I am able to enjoy retirement and time with family and friends?

I also worry about the future of this Church Family and our spiritual health as I desire for us to be a positive influence upon each other and on our community. In various ways I have concerns about the future to occupy much of my present time.

Yet it is only the present time that I have as a gift from God to enjoy. I find that when I can push the past and the future from my mind that the present has much to offer. It is exciting to notice the complexity and beauty of nature. It is fun to spend time being with people to enjoy their smiles and laughter. It gives a good sense of accomplishment to do some task which you want to do. It is peaceful to reflect upon God being with you and to find that God's spirit gives special worth and value to your life.

It is in the present that we have the opportunity to enjoy life, to fellowship with God and other people, and to be in service to God. It is in the present that God promises to be with us. God is not working in our past - we cannot ask God to undo or repeat what has happened in the past. Neither is God in the future - God cannot solve our worries about events yet to come and God will not rush the future to occur. God is only actively with us in the present. It is in the present, when we receive it as the gift of time that it is, that we are able to find the value and joy, the peace and the worth, which makes life so special - whether we are alone, with others, or consciously with God.

I believe it is important for each of us to live as much as we can in the present, for the present is a gift to us from God. It is a "present" which we should not take for granted, for it is in the present time when we may know God is with us, which can enable each of us to realize our true value.

Jamie Fonville, Supply Pastor

STEWARDSHIP 2019 – THE WAY

“I (Jesus) am the Way”

The Board of Finance has begun work on a budget for First Christian United Church of Christ for 2020. In this process we are seeking to be good stewards of the money that has been shared with this church to enable it to carry out ministry in Jesus' name. We are striving to continue providing quality spiritual nourishment, emotional under-girding, and physical support to our members and the community around us.

We begin our Stewardship Campaign in September as we seek the commitment of members and friends to support the ministry and work that Jesus is seeking to accomplish through this Church Family in 2020.

The theme for our stewardship reflection is "The Way. I am the Way". During this time you and I will have the opportunity for our own personal reflection upon what this means to each of us. How diligently do we seek to live in the ways Jesus tells us are important for well-being? For me, it means understanding that although we do not have God supplying all of our wants, God does supply us for our needs. God even gives us more than we really need, so that we have the opportunity to share with others for the benefit of those around us. Jesus was One who shared his entire life for the eternal good of each of us.

When the topic is stewardship, we often think it refers just to money and material goods. This is an important part of stewardship, especially when you seek to provide ministry through a building and the people who work to help the church function in its ministry. Stewardship should also be understood as what we do with our various talents and our many opportunities to make a difference for good in life around us, and in how we share our words. How we live all of our life is really our stewardship of what God has entrusted to each of us, and is our true worship of God.

As we each consider what we may provide and do to help God accomplish God's desire of having life become better around us, may we first reflect upon our own lives and how God has been good to us. Then may we look to Jesus' example to better learn what Jesus is seeking to accomplish through each of our lives.

Why do you have life, and why has God sustained your life to this day? God has been generous. How is Jesus calling upon you to use your many and various gifts? How generous are you? Are you seeking to follow The Way?

UGANDA TRIP PRESENTATION

Dotti Davis has returned from her trip to a mission school for refugee children in Uganda, Africa and has interesting information to share with us!

Dotti Davis will give her presentation during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, September 29. Plan to be here to learn from her experience.

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SUPPER CLUB GATHERING SEPTEMBER 3RD

The next Supper Club gathering will take place on Tuesday, September 3rd at 6:00 pm. We will gather at Harbor Inn Seafood on Church Street for a time of fun and fellowship. Please plan to come out and join us... it's always a great time! Call Phil Bray or Eleanor Lovgren today if you can make it to this joyous event.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

The Margaret Lightbourne Circle meeting for September has been cancelled. The Centennial Club will meet on September 10th at The Cutting Board at 5:30 pm. All WOMEN are WELCOME to join!

HOMECOMING 2019 – SEPTEMBER 15

We are looking forward to Homecoming on September 15th 2019. You are invited to be at worship at 10:30 am when we will worship God and also have a special Service of Remembrance for those members of First Christian United Church of Christ who have passed from us since our last Homecoming Service and those who have passed from us 5, 10 and 15 years ago.

Immediately thereafter, we will have a covered dish lunch in the Bray Fellowship Hall. Please plan to bring one or two dishes, either VEGETABLE or SALAD. When you arrive that morning, come through the fellowship hall and put your serving dish directly on the buffet table (not in the kitchen). The Deacons of the church will be in charge of furnishing the meats, desserts, and bread for the lunch.

What a great day this will be, seeing old friends and spending time together as a church family! Please take the time to fill out the form in the church bulletin to tell us that you will be attending and exactly how many will be in your party. If by chance you will not be at church between now and September 8th, please call our church office at 336-226-7428 to give the same information by the 8th. We look forward to your attendance!

We (I) plan on attending Homecoming Service and dinner on September 15th.

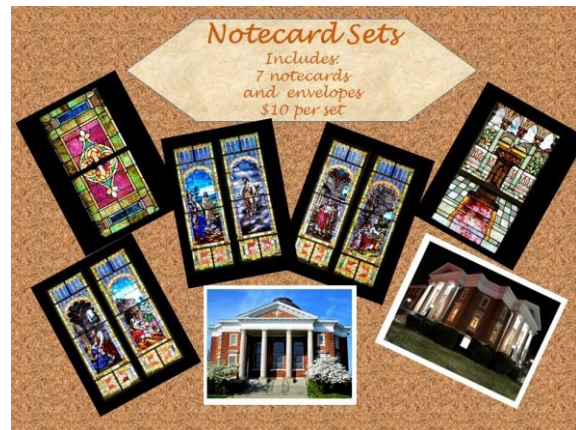
Name _____

Number in party _____

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CHURCH NOTECARDS AVAILABLE

Beautiful Notecards of First Christian's Building and Stained-glass windows are available for purchase. This set of 7 notecards sells for \$10 a box and may be found in the Parlor. We thank Ken Little and Mark Pickett for taking these special pictures!



A WORD OF THANKS

From the Salvation Army: Thank you so much for your support of our mission and our community. Without you and your support we couldn't do what we do! Thank you for your generous donation! (food collected each month goes to the Salvation Army)

INDOOR YARD-SALE PLANNED

Connie Collins has planned an indoor yard-sale for Saturday, September 28th. This event will take place in the Bray Fellowship Hall – rain or shine. If you are interested selling a few of your slightly used things or want more details please contact Connie Collins at the church.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Louise Walters, Betty Loy, Family of Elizabeth Woodlief—Mother of Peggy Johnson, Bobbye Mebane, Nancy Thomas, Anna Gerow, Family of Jeanne Williams, Family of Mary Jane Pettigrew, Frances Morgan, Harvey Sharpe, Donna Freeman, Doris Massey.

Friends: Connie Long – friend of Connie Collins, Ann Tew, Marsha Langford, Jim Sinor, Claire Spence, Lester Griffis—father of Tina Paul, Randy Davenport, Larry & Becky Miles and son Bobby, Families of victims of mass shooting in Gilroy, CA, El Paso, Tx., and Dayton, OH., Barbara Garrison—Mark Garrison's mother, Children and Adults at our Southern Border.

Please remember the families as well as the person listed.

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FOOD DONATIONS – FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

In many places in the Scripture we find the instructions to share with others... to care for our fellow man. Isaiah 58:1-10 speaks of the ways of fasting and giving to others. Matthew 25:34-40 tells us that as we are feeding others, we are feeding Christ. Luke 3:11 instructs us to share with others, and Proverbs 19:17 and 22:9a speak to the idea of 'blessed to be a blessing'.

We are collecting non-perishable food donations on the first Sunday of each month. Items may be placed in the barrels located in the Bray Fellowship Hall at any time. The food items collected will be donated to the Salvation Army Food Ministry when the barrels reach capacity... and thank you for your donation!

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Year to Date through 07-31-19

	Actual	Budget
Income:	\$116,292.09	\$120,690.50
<u>Expense</u>	<u>\$97,274.55</u>	<u>\$120,709.58</u>
Net Balance:	\$19,017.54	<\$19.08>
Balance in Checking 07-31-19		\$5,891.50

Everyone's continued support is greatly appreciated to carry on the ministry of the church. Please send in your giving today.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ken Little and Connie Collins
Treasurer and Accounting Manager