

# FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC)

December 2021

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There are times when it is very hard to maintain a spirit of tolerance, let alone acceptance, of those things that seems to plague us. I must believe that those times that try our patience must be for some reason. If they are not for some reason, then they must be moments where we can learn something. I have come to accept that. Yet, I confess I do not like, in fact I despise, those moments when the lesson is “just live with it. It is beyond your control.” It is very challenging to want to do tasks right but then find that some of the moments/events that we cherish will turn into disasters. I have often used the phrase “nothing is a complete failure. It can always be used as a bad example!” However, I have discovered in no way, shape, or form have I really accepted that.

Take the service a couple of weeks ago. For those of you in the congregation, you did not know what was happening as we were streaming live. Well, the stream sent to other worshippers on-line kept going in and out, on and off. The irony of that moment was the sermon title which was “Rejoice and Be Glad.” How could I? Is that possible when I know I have a fairly meaningful sermon, the staff has made an extensive effort and dedication in the streaming preparation, my wife has put a couple of hours into creating slides for the world, and both the sound and video crew are extremely conscientious about ensuring all goes perfectly. Indeed, that is irony at its finest. I am still carefully and theologically evaluating if that was God’s sense of humor or the devil that was in the details of the microchips.

Yet it caused me to reflect and realize that it was a little issue compared to the immense and overwhelming goodness God has given us. Our world is filled with actions and reactions. Some of the narratives of our past are being revised as new facts shedding new light on long past and recent history. We don’t like it! We don’t like things to change, especially our perception of what we know, and once thought was concrete. What are the examples? Our experts are giving us new “facts” about COVID 19 every few weeks. Columbus discovered the Bahamas. North America was discovered by Leif Ericksson 500 years prior, and the Vikings had been in the Northeast coast of the US many years before that. Thanksgiving was a religious holiday in Europe centuries before our rendition of it was celebrated as a civil holiday.

Even though we may be challenged with new facts which we don’t like, God still urges us with the words and ministry of Jesus to “rejoice and be glad.” I know. It seems impossible when there are loved ones lost, medical challenges, divergent views, emerging new facts, financial deficits, contrary political opinions, varying religious beliefs, or whatever we might experience that tilts our world a bit or turns it upside down.

WE change! We ARE changed! New facts come. New information arrives. We rebel or rethink or both. Yet, as both Malachi and the writer of Hebrews states, God is the same and never ever changes. He is always good, always loving, always all-powerful. We, our parents, our fore-parents, and those before them have continued to wonder who will win, good or evil. But in this season, the season of giving thanks and light, God came to assure us that evil will not be the victor! Evil will NOT win the day! Destruction is NOT the norm. Good WILL win. And we will sing “For Christ is here; His spirit near, Brings peace on earth, good will to men.”

December Projected Pastor’s Office Days: 1, 7, 10, 14, 22, 28, 29.



## CHOIR NEWS (December 2021)

Christmas! Such a special time of year. Especially for the music department. We have some very special anthems coming up so plan to bring a friend and come to church! You will not want to miss “A Prayer for Advent,” “In the Silence”, “Come to Us O Promised One” and “The Holly and The Ivy”. See you on Sunday and wear a mask PLEASE!

Keep in Tune,  
Jaquae



### A JOYFUL NOISE

Again, we keep hoping to start up the chimes but still we wait. We need more people so if you're thinking about joining us, please give me a call. I'd love to hear from you!

For Whom the Bell Tolls,  
Jaquae



### DECEMBER CALENDAR

Dec 4	Retreat	Dec 19	Luncheon after church
10	Chili Supper 4:30 – 6:30	24	Christmas Eve Service via zoom
18	Men's Breakfast 8:00 am	31	Square Dance

## Jesus Is the Reason

*In Bethlehem, God gave to us  
The source of Christmas joy;  
A star shown on a miracle:  
The virgin birth of a boy.*

*He was born both God and man,  
A Savior for us all,  
The way to get to our heavenly home,  
If we just heed His call.*

*So, as we shop and spend and wrap  
And enjoy the Christmas season,  
Let's keep in mind the sacred truth:  
Jesus is the reason.*

**– Joanna Fuchs**





## BOOK CLUB

Our next book will be "The Debt" by Angela Hunt. This story reminds us not to follow in the footsteps of man, but to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Emma Rose Howard has had a difficult past, but finally settles into the role of a pastor's wife. She and her husband, Abel, parent a mega-church and influence thousands of lives through their varied ministries.

When Emma gets a call from someone in her past, her entire way of life is threatened including her calling, her marriage, and her relationship with God. This book helps readers embrace the heartache and joy that comes with a soul's redemption, but also challenges us to follow Christ into new and unexpected places.

We are changing the way we do Book Club. From now on we meet once a month, on the first Monday at 3:00 p.m. Please read the entire book before you come and be prepared to ask questions for all of us to answer. We are all leading the book from now on, and all will participate as much as we can. Please order your book from Amazon, or wherever you buy your books.

Our next meeting is Monday, Dec. 6, at 3:00 pm in the church library.

Let's gather together this month to worship the Lord.

Psalm 100

1. Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth
2. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs.
3. Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His.
4. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name.
5. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.

## OUTREACH



Many thanks to many people who made the Shoebox ministry a success. You completed 50 boxes. Thanks to Terry Lahr for delivering them. I think Wanda Gordon would have been proud of us continuing her special project.

We collected the left-over items and donated them to fill other boxes at the collecting spot. So now we need to start gathering for next year. Look for sales and take advantage of them.,

Seven men were on hand for our second DOC men's breakfast on Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> enjoying a hearty breakfast of Corn beef hash, hash brown potatoes, biscuits .and scrambled eggs.

A discussion followed on the repairs of the roof, and it was agreed that funds would be taken from the DOC men's account to cover whatever wasn't already budgeted for this project.

A possibility of starting up our dinners was entertained, and it was decided to begin with a chili supper on Friday night December 10.

There will be two servings 4:30 and 6:30...cost \$10.00. Tickets for sale and distribution will be available soon and a sheet for volunteers and donations of cornbread and deserts will is posted on the bulletin board.

We will also be moving ahead with plans for new signage for the church which was place on the backburner due to the pandemic. Riches Neff and Campton will be gathering estimates.

Our next meeting will be December 18th 8:00 AM in the church kitchen. This will be a week later than usual due to the chili supper on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

MANY THANKS! To Teresa Williams for heading up our recent Thanksgiving dinner aided by Linda Lussier. It was indeed a bountiful feast!

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## **YEAR-END TAX PLANNING**

### **Bill Hinline**

We are coming to the end of 2021, which is also the end of the Church's fiscal year. During this year, the Church has experienced some unexpected expenses that were not in approved budget- for example, a new air conditioning unit and workers compensation insurance premium. Many of you have made contribution to assist with these costs.

First, the tax code has increased the standard deduction and reduced the advantages of itemizing deductions on personal federal income tax returns, so many taxpayers are using the standard deduction rather than itemizing deductions for charitable contributions. For those of you who are least 70 ½ years old and are required to take a minimum distribution each year from your IRA, there is good news. If you instruct your IRA custodian to issue a check from your IRA directly to the Church (not to you), It will NOT be subject to federal income tax. The net result is that you save taxes and still can take the standard deduction on your federal income tax return.

Second, there is a special tax deduction for regular charitable contributions that permits a deduction of up to \$600 on your federal income return for 2021, even if you do not itemize deductions and claim the standard deduction.

If you would like to know more about either of these tax saving methods of giving contact your tax advisor. I can also answer question, but you should also verify with your tax advisor that this is appropriate for you.

### **We Need Your Help**

The last year has been challenging in many ways. Our church has been resilient, but has had to deal with several unexpected, and unbudgeted, expenses of replacing an air conditioning unit and roof repair (approximately \$10,000) and unexpected increases in internet, insurance, tax, and other operating cost (approximately \$3,000) that will affect our 2022 budget.

Thanks to those who have already given to help offset these costs in the form of designated funds, but we are still short.

Two requests 1) if you are able, please make a year-end gift and consider increasing next year's giving. 2) attend the all-church meeting with your ideas and suggestions to further our service as Disciples of Christ. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please give your ideas to any elder or deacon.

Bill Hinline,  
Finance committee Chair

## On The Lighter Side



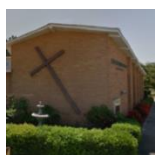
TV Meterologist: "The forecast for the weekend is clear and warmer with a 70% chance that we are wrong."

What do you call a fish with no eye? "FSH"

A young man once asked God how long a million years was to Him. God replied, "A million years to me is just like a single second in your time."

Then the young man asked God what a million dollars was to Him. God replied, "A million dollars to me is like a single penny to you."

Then the young man got his courage up and asked, "God could I have one of your pennies?" God smiled and replied, "Certainly, just a second."



## Worship/Education/Fellowship Committee Report

What a wonderful month we have had leading to the first Sunday of Advent. Our Thanksgiving Dinner with all the fixings and beautiful decorations could not have been more glorious or delicious. Thanks to all who contributed such delicious food; Special kudos to Teresa, Linda Belle and Sandi for all their hard work both before the meal, during and afterwards, although I did see some masculine hands making quick work of the dirty dishes. We had about 30 dining with us, including six guests, who also contributed some extra special goodies for the buffet table.

As we bask in the aftermath of feelings of love and family with our Thanksgiving meal, we face changes. Sometimes changes are met with trepidation; these changes will hopefully be received with joyful anticipation. **Changes are-not-etched in stone.**

We will go back to 9:00 a.m. Sunday School meeting, which will then allow us to return to our coffee fellowship. (Do I hear Amen?) This will also give the choir to return to the choir room, warm up, preview the anthem and put on robes! How is that for six (6) changes in all?

We will continue our 3rd Sunday "pot-luck" dinners, which will be held on December 19<sup>th</sup> yes, our Christmas dinner. The entree will be ham. Having a preselected entree makes sign-ups so much easier to form a beautiful array of side dishes and desserts. What will the New Year bring? If you feel the urge to contribute, please let the office (or me) know in time to publicize the menu offerings.

The greening of the church (the Saturday after Thanksgiving) was again spear-headed by our three "kitchen" angels. When you want something done, just let them go! How fortunate we are to have Teresa, Linda Belle and Sandi. They did a phenomenal job of finding, placing, and directing the nine of us who pitched in. Twelve sat down for a hearty lunch of turkey soup and some welcome leftovers from Thanksgiving. Thanks to everyone; it was a big job, but many hands made light work of it.

A Christmas Eve service is being planned for Friday, December 24th. Plans will include a virtual service with a gathering in the sanctuary. A special email message will be sent; if you haven't received your invitation, check with the office. Blessings to all as we get ready for Christmas and the New Year.

*Ann*

## 5 LEVELS OF LIFE

Listen	Before you Speak
Earn	Before you Spend
Think	Before you Write
Try	Before you Quit
Live	Before you Die

....Facebook