



## FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC)

December 2021

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We would expect December to be a very busy month for the congregation because the same tends to be true for families. We started with the greening of the sanctuary prior to the first Sunday of Advent. For the first time in many years, we had a congregational retreat or workshop seeking God's will for our path in 2022. We did some repairs to the building. Periodically we opened the rummage room and folks purchased items from there. Not only did we have a men's chili supper but also a congregational fellowship dinner. The advent wreath ceremonies, coordinated by the worship committee and Ann Holly, were meaningful as we went through the four Sundays of Advent. The choir excelled in providing inspirational and meaningful music. And perhaps the most encouraging was that attendance, in person, came very close to pre-level COVID nearly two years ago.

Now we must build on the strengths that were identified at our congregational workshop. Our worship service has great meaning with our liturgy, music, praises and concerns. As a congregation we also have a strong faithful core and a strong fellowship that is welcoming and accepting of all that enter. Meaningful events such as the Men's breakfast and the monthly congregational luncheons along with community suppers show we are a very viable congregation. We also have a great facility, a marvelous location, excellent leadership, teaching, and meaningful outreach to the community, the region, and the world!

But that is history! God has led us now to this time and this place and we must capture that vision and the dreams he gives to us as his people. I believe that part of our vision includes for all of us to connect with those that were once present but now missing from our congregation. You can help by calling those that you know are missing from our fellowship; and those that once attended regularly but have not been to worship recently. Likewise, you can invite others that might be struggling or those you run across in your neighborhood. You can even invite those you greet in a store or on a street corner. Today, young and old often accept an invitation when they would never come by themselves. We give an invitation during worship, but we must give a personal invitation outside of worship where we work and where we live.

Further, we must hope and dream! We must capture a vision of ourselves as the only instrument God has to work his gospel and take the initiative to act. We have more resources than what we realize, both as individuals and as a congregation. Once we can catch and see the vision, we open up doors to greater possibilities of mission and ministry, going places where others do not go to spread the gospel and fulfill the great commandment.

So here we have it...2022, which many of us including myself thought we would never see. Let us be grateful. Let us celebrate the vision and the future God has given to us. Let us take the risk and reap the reward because the birth of Jesus Christ means that evil will be overcome by good, and that God came to be with us and to choose us as his people. Let us be that people for our creator.

Pastor's January days in office: 4, 5, 18, 19, 25, 26 — Vacation January 8 – 15.



## CHOIR NEWS

### January 2022

Doesn't the choir look and sound nice with so many up there now? They work so hard on Wednesday night and I'm very blessed to be their director. We're going to have some good oldies coming up for January so bring a friend and come to church! 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! They say all good things are worth waiting for!

For Whom The Bell Tolls,  
Jaquae



### JANUARY 2022

01/03/2022	Book Club	3:00 p.m.	Library
01/04/2022	Bible Study	11:00 a.m.	Library
01/05/2022	Choir	6:00 p.m.	
01/08/2022	Men's Breakfast	8:00 a.m.	
01/08/2022	De-greening of church	10:00 a.m.	
01/11/2022	Board Meeting	2:00 p.m.	Board Room/Zoom

January 9, 2022 – Sunday Worship message by Gordon Walkington.  
(Pastor Alan will be on vacation January 8<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>.)



## BOOK CLUB

Our next book will be “Seek Me With All Your Heart” by Beth Wiseman. This novel is about the Amish that moved to Canaan, Colorado. Some were looking for cheaper land, while others were fleeing strict bishops. Some had more personal reasons for moving there.

Emily Detweiler's family moved because of a horrible tragedy that struck Emily. They are hoping the distance and a new life will erase painful memories. David Stoltzfus doesn't quite understand why his family made the move but he came with them. Because of his health, he wants to move back to Paradise, Pennsylvania but then he meets Emily who touches his heart.

Emily begins to have feelings for David, but she's worried he will reject her once he finds out about her past. What is the truth? Are they meant for each other? Is God's plan to give them the desires of their hearts if only they will seek Him first? This book is about trusting God in all things. Letting Him decide our futures. Come to Book Club (after buying and reading the book!) and discuss this wonderful book with us!

For February we will be reading “The Storekeepers Daughter” by Wanda E. Brunstetter. Stay tuned for more on that book.

We are changing the way we do Book Club. From now on we meet once a month, on the first Monday at 3:00 pm. 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, Jan. 3, at 3:00 pm in the church library.

Submitted by Jaquae L. Sands, 382-3428



### JANUARY 2022

4 <sup>th</sup>	Bob Rhodes	20 <sup>th</sup>	Dan winters
5 <sup>th</sup>	Annandra Ramkisson	21 <sup>st</sup>	Marly Colon
9 <sup>th</sup>	Mark McClary	26 <sup>th</sup>	Ron Davis
16 <sup>th</sup>	Heidi McClary	30 <sup>th</sup>	Liz Malady



31<sup>st</sup> Robert and Margaret  
Smeltzler



## NEED WASHING?

A little girl had been shopping with her Mom in WalMart. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful red haired, freckle faced image of innocence.

It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the earth it has no time to flow down the spout.... We all stood there, under the awning, just inside the door of the WalMart. We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day.

I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I got lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world. Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child came pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day.

Her little voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in, 'Mom let's run through the rain,' She said. 'What?' Mom asked. 'Let's run through the rain!' She repeated. 'No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit,' Mom replied.

This young child waited a minute and repeated: 'Mom, let's run through the rain.' 'We'll get soaked if we do,' Mom said. 'No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning,' the young girl said as she tugged at her Mom's arm.

'This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?' 'Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, He can get us through anything! '

The entire crowd stopped dead silent....I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain.... We all stood silently. No one left. Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say.

Now some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life. A time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

'Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If GOD lets us get wet, well maybe we just need washing,' Mom said.

Then off they ran. We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They got soaked.

They were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars. And yes, I did. I ran. I got **wet**. I needed washing.

Circumstances or people can take away your material possessions, they can take away your money, and they can take away your health. But no one can ever take away your precious memories...So, don't forget to make time and take the opportunities to make memories everyday.

**Continued on page 5.....**

**.....Continued from page 4—NEED WASHING?**

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. **I HOPE YOU STILL TAKE THE TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE RAIN.**

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate him or her, a day to love him or her, but then an entire life to forget such a person.

Send this to the people you'll never forget and remember to also send it to the person who sent it to you. It's a short message to let them know that you'll never forget them.

If you don't send it to anyone, it means you're in a hurry.

**Take the time ..... to live!!!**

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## Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve service was beautiful and we thank Rev. Peggy Davis for her service. It is our tradition to take up a collection for the Elder and Deacon Fund on Christmas eve, and unfortunately that was missed this year, if you would like to give to the fund, that option is still available to you, please designate for Elder and Deacon Fund when contributing. Thank you.

### OUTREACH



The New Testament Church, one of the outreach recipients, reported they had been vandalized. It seems to have been malicious work as they turned on water hoses and flooded a parking lot, cut the cord to the community fridge, broke the washing machine, tore down Christmas decorations, and slit screens. The old security system needs to be updated. Any donations toward a new system would be appreciated.

This past month they served 3,952 meals, housed 76, provided 171 food baskets.

Their requests for January are body wash, shampoos, Conditioner, wash cloths, baked beans, chili beans, drink mixes, and ziplocks. (They have requested this the last few months, they must use a lot.)

Remember the last Sunday of the month is the time to dedicate your donations to this worthy cause. You can put your donation in the Mission box in the central hall. Let's make 2022 a year of out reaching out to others.

### Rich's Corner

Many Thanks to everyone who had a part in making our recent Chili Supper a great success: Richard Neff, our resident chef, those who helped him prepare , and serve , supplied desserts and corn bread, and those who supported the event with their presence. We cleared \$850.00 which will be directed toward the repair of the leak in the sanctuary roof. An additional \$25.00 was collected during the bake sale following service on the 12th, plus \$23.00 in the 50-50 sale.

Eight men met for our Christmas breakfast on the 18th. The menu consisted of Belgium waffles, topped with berries and whipped cream, scrambled eggs and bacon. This being the last meeting of the year, we revealed who our secret prayer pals were for the past year. Plans are on going to replace church signage . Our next meeting will be on Saturday, January 8th at 8:00 AM. At that time we will be drawing names for 2022 prayer partners.. All men of the church are invited to join us for food and fellowship.

A BIG THANK YOU: to our pastor for his handy man abilities to replaster the damage caused by the roof leak in the sanctuary and vestibule. AND ALSO to the Hinelines who provided the ham for our Christmas dinner after services on the 19th, and Teresa William and Linda Lussier who went all out to makes sure that it was a memorable event.



## Worship/Education/Fellowship Committee Report

We are nearing the end of 2021; what an uplifting time we have had here at First Christian Church, DOC. As I reflect on our recent activities, the Larry Wolfe lyrics keep rolling through my head. "Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place . . ."

Our Christmas dinner, held on the third Sunday, was enjoyed by almost 40 diners. Like Jesus feeding the five thousands, most people took food home for at least a couple more meals. In the congregation that morning, 47 people attended worship. "Surely the presence of the Lord . . ."

Thank you, Bill and Carolyn, for the ham entree and thanks to all who brought in many more tasty treats. The room was beautifully decorated; the kitchen angels were fast at their work and we have a group picture to share.

The Christmas Eve service was absolutely awesome. If you haven't seen/heard it, go to the church Facebook page. Yes, the tech gremlins were causing problems, but the message came through, "Surely, the presence of the Lord is in this place."

Rev. Peggy Davis brought forth an inspiring message, Teresa handled the technology with great aplomb and the candles were lit with only a small wrinkle. Thank you to both Ron and Peggy for bringing us together for this very special night as we exited with candles, the words of "Silent Night" and the chords from Peggy's guitar still echoing in our ears.