



THE
December 8, 2017
Vol. 76, No. 18

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) VISITOR

Our mission: to know God and follow Jesus Christ

Emmanuel - God with Us, Revealed in Us The 2nd Sunday of Advent Worship, December 10

The first of a series of sermons connecting to our Advent worship theme will be "Emmanuel: The Comfort of the Shepherd" based upon Isaiah 40:1-11.

Unique for Advent, the three hymns will be *Awake and Greet the New Morn; Blessed Be the God of Israel; and Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence.*



The 85th Christmas Pageant & Tasting Party December 10 4:00 pm



Join us this Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. for the 85th Christmas Pageant. We will hear again the ancient story and see the portrayal

of the holy family, shepherds, angels and wise men by children and adult friends from the congregation. With carols sung and instruments played, we will all have a chance to partake in the joyful replay of Christ's birth.

A "white gifts" offering will be collected in support of the Central Missouri Food Pantry. All are encouraged to bring nonperishable canned/boxed food wrapped in white paper. Monetary donations will also be accepted. This tradition reminds us of the importance of the giving, and not the type of gift.

Following the pageant a huge **tasting party** will be shared in Yonker Fellowship Hall. All are encouraged to bring a finger food-cookie-dessert-appetizer type of holiday deliciousness to share.

All participants should be on the 3rd floor of the Education building at 3:30 p.m. Preschool angels meet in the nursery at 3:30 p.m. Older youth meet in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please call the office or Rev. Spear.

Don't Forget Jimmy's Party!

It's the MUST-ATTEND party of the season. FCC is celebrating the ten-year anniversary of our Associate Minister, Rev. Jimmy Spear! Share in the good times on **Sunday, December 10!** Join us for a reception in fellowship hall between services in the **9:30 hour**. There will be refreshments, a video (you might even see yourself ten years ago) and much more. See you then! Remember, there will not be Sunday school on this day.



Buy Heifer Gifts Sunday

The World Outreach Department makes the opportunity available each Advent for unique gifts to be purchased through Heifer International. Give a gift that changes poverty and hunger in a faraway place. Give a pig or cow, a rabbit or chicken. Want to know more? Go to www.heifer.org then buy with us as a church in the narthex on Sunday, Dec. 10. Gift cards are available.



Welcome Jean Juba

The friendly, familiar face of Jean Juba has been seen around FCC for quite some time. We are honored that by transfer of membership Jean has become an official member! Welcome to our membership rolls, Jean. We are proud that you made this decision.



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Bit from Brad

The Advent/Christmas season is filled with a myriad of emotions; joy, excitement and anticipation; nostalgic memories, longing, yearning for years' past; sadness, anger, and depression; and many others. The world paints a glittery, shining world

where all is well; everyone has more than enough and all relationships are harmonious. But often the loss of a loved one, employment, a marriage or significant relationship, places our inner world at odds with the world presented before us. At times we feel ashamed fearing we may be the party-pooper who just needs to get with the program and put on a happy face – but we grow tired of “faking it till we make it,” which just adds more guilt. Mr. Scrooge’s “Bah! Humbug!” doesn’t come close to the silent tears of our soul.

Sunday’s Blue Christmas Service gave voice to those heavy feelings that seem so contradictory to the season. Speaking this truth helps alleviate the pressure and creates a community bound to help one another through this blue time.

I find the Advent hymn, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* very helpful during this season. The first stanza says, “O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear. Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!” Captive Israel refers to those suffering through the Babylonian exiles who mourn the loss of their children slaughtered by Babylonian soldiers, the loss of their freedom and country. They mourn bitterly. There in a faraway county the exiled feel all alone, abandoned by God. The prophets remind them that Emmanuel shall come to them, even though they dwell in deep darkness. God will come to them, so rejoice! The musical notes accompanying the words, “Rejoice, rejoice!” are not happy notes, they are mournful yet sustaining notes, and this is the true Advent season.

If we live long enough, we will know the blue side of life; it’s inevitable. The prophets remind us- Emmanuel shall come to us, so keep your hope in the midst of your tears; hang in there, for God is coming! In many ways those who experience the deep darkness of Advent are very often the ones who experience the great joy of Christmas, for in waiting for “the Son of God [to] appear” they discover the joy of hope in Jesus Christ, the one who comes to wipe away every tear and make all things new.

May the love and hope of the Christ child appear to you this Advent and Christmas Season!
Blessings, Brad

Don’t miss the STARS Holiday Luncheon Tuesday, December 19 at 11:45 in the fellowship hall. The Mother’s Day Out kids will perform and there will be soups, breads and potluck snacks. Sign up today!



On Sundays December 17 & 24 our sanctuary will be even more beautiful with poinsettias placed there in honor or in memory of loved ones. Make sure to get your order in today! Forms can be found on the counter in the church office.



Report for Sunday Dec. 3, 2017

Total Offerings \$14,488.45

Attendance 195 (incl. early service-52) (visitors- 10)

FCC Warming Station Opens December 10



December 10 will mark the third season for FCC to serve as a sponsor/partner with RATI (Room at the Inn) by hosting the Warming Station on Sunday mornings from approximately 7–9am. We provide shelter and a warm beverage to RATI guests for two hours and then our Church bus transports the guests to Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church for shelter and breakfast. Each Sunday morning two hosts (must be at least 18 years old) and one bus driver are needed to make this ministry happen! Hosts arrive at 6am to start the coffee and set up Higbee Center. Thorough instructions are provided and everything is organized and ‘ready to go’ on the “RATI cart” so setup is quick and easy.

Guests start arriving approximately 6:50 – 7:00am. In addition to serving warm beverages, there will be magazines and newspapers for guests to read. Guests nap, read, and/or talk among themselves; hosts can join in conversation if included. Bus drivers arrive at 8:30am to warm up the bus, etc. and be ready to board guests at 8:50am.

If you have **any** questions regarding requirements for driving the Church bus, please contact the Church office at 573-449-7265. If you have **any** questions about the ‘hosting’ process, please call or text Sarah Storm; 573-289-0072 or email at marions@centurytel.net.

Staff Christmas Fund

The Administrative Department provides an opportunity for church members and friends to contribute to a Staff Christmas Fund honoring our excellent church staff during this Christmas season for their combined efforts in helping make our church one in which we can all take great pride.

Checks should be made to First Christian Church with “Staff Christmas Fund” noted on them. Deadline for contributions is Friday, December 22. Please note the gift will be divided evenly among the staff members: ministers, office staff, music staff and custodian.

Debbie Taylor, Administrative Dept. Chairperson

December 10

Marjorie Carter, Curtis Snow, Cheryl Unterschultz and Willie Wheeland

December 12

William Bower and Cliff Tompson

December 14

Susan Woodbury

December 15

Buddy Boger, Jerry Daugherty and Darby Henry



Big Turnout for Living Nativity

The weather was great. The crowds were huge. The dancing angels were awesome. Wait. What? Dancing angels? We had them at the 2017 Living Nativity! It was so much fun and the youth did such a nice job. Big, appreciative groups received the message of the coming of Christ in a wonderful presentation by the youth of FCC. Thanks to everyone who helped set-up, participate, costume, make cookies and serve in Bethany Hall... everyone! Well done!



Blue Christmas Service Heals

We have received quite a bit of feedback from people who attended last Sunday's Blue Christmas Service. Hayley Batterson gives us an idea of how much this service meant to attendees,



"Thank you to Brad, Jimmy and Sally and their helpers Adriene and Robert for the very touching Blue Christmas service Sunday afternoon. As someone who often has a lot to say, I am left speechless when I try to describe the many ways the service touched my heart and brought me to a place of healing I didn't even know was left so unsettled. The simple acknowledgement of "the blues" during such a joyous time was very meaningful in itself. Being able to have—and give—the quiet support of my family and friends within FCC was more of a blessing than I can put into words. I genuinely hope this is a service we continue. Merry Christmas, dear friends!"

Youth Group "regular meetings" are now on break until January. Youth are encouraged to participate in the variety of weekly Advent season activities offered.



Room at the Inn (RATI)

RATI (whose mission is to provide to those in need a warm and safe place to sleep) is now officially open. The hours of operation for the guests are 7 p.m. – 7 a.m. The need is always great and will be even greater this year with RATI being open this season through March 17, 2018. There are many ways in which you can help with this ministry:

1. Go to roomattheinncomo.org and learn of the available volunteer opportunities and then sign up!
2. Donate supplies (needed supplies are listed at roomattheinncomo.org and will also be listed in upcoming Visitors as well as posted on the Bulletin Board located outside the Church office and on the Church-in-Society Bulletin Board located in Yonker Fellowship Hall). Donations can be left in the plastic bin outside the Church office door.
3. Monetary donations can be placed in Sunday offering trays or dropped off at the Church office. Please note RATI on the cash envelope or in the memo portion of the check; checks can be made to "FCC".

If you have any questions or need assistance with signing up for volunteer shifts, please contact Sarah Storm at 573-289-0072.

PRIORITY ITEMS NEEDED NOW FOR RATI: COFFEE CUPS, MICROWAVABLE PAPER BOWLS, PLASTIC SPOONS, PAPER PLATES and HEAVY WINTER GLOVES

Thank you for your help!

The Visitor
First Christian Church
101 N. 10th Street
Columbia, MO 65201
573-449-7265

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Columbia, MO
Permit No. 75

Ministerial Staff:

Rev. Brad Stagg, Senior Minister
brad@firstchristian.org
Rev. Jimmy Spear, Associate Minister
jimmy@firstchristian.org

Music Staff:

Mary Bancroft, Coordinator of Music & Organist
maryebancroft@yahoo.com
Adriene Floyd, Director of Chancel & Bell Choirs
adriene@firstchristian.org

Mother's Day Out Pre-School:

Tracy Westhoff, Director
tracy@firstchristian.org

Columbia Area Older Adult Ministry:

Rev. Sally Robinson, Chaplain
sallyarobinson16@gmail.com

Support Staff:

Robert Floyd, Office Manager
fcc@firstchristian.org
Fred Mottaz, Business Manager
fred@firstchristian.org
Keith Picker, Custodian

Minister Emeritus:

Dr. John J. Yonker

Return Service Requested

CHURCH CALENDAR DECEMBER 10—DECEMBER 17

Sunday, December 10

- Chancel Bells rehearsal, 8:30am, Bell Room
- Rev. Jimmy Spear 10th Anniv. Party, 9:30am, Yonker Hall
- Chancel Choir warm up, 10:00am, Morris Parlor
- 85th Pageant and Tasting Party, 4:00pm

Monday, December 11

- Church Office Staff Meeting, 2:00-3:00pm, Keystone

Tuesday, December 12

- Tuesday Bible Study, 10:30-11:30am, Morris Parlor
- NO CABINET MEETING

Wednesday, December 13

- Ladies' Book Club, 12:00pm, Bethany Hall
- Wednesday Bible Study, 12:05-12:55pm, Keystone
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 5:30pm, Sanctuary

Thursday, December 14

- NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

NEXT SUNDAY, December 17

- Chancel Bells rehearsal, 8:30am, Bell Room
- Brass Quartet plays in 10:30am worship service
- Coffee Hour, 9:20-10:20am, Yonker Hall
- Chancel Choir warm up, 10:00am, Morris Parlor
- Christmas Caroling, 4:00pm

CHRISTMAS EVE, December 24

- ONLY ONE MORNING SERVICE— 10:30am
- Sanctuary Open for Meditation & Communion, 5-6pm
- 7:00pm Lessons, Carols, Candlelight, & Communion Service

SERVING SCHEDULE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

Bus Driver: Russ Palmer

Office Receptionist: Pat Rybolt

Welcome Station: Chris Creasy and Valerie Freed

Flower Ministry

Arranged and Delivered by: Bob & Linda Hutton

Servers for 8:30 Worship Service

Worship Assts:

Will & Donna Houston and Tommy Gay Evans

Elder: Cherry Hinderberger

Offering Counters: Kim Reardon and Mary Moeller

Servers for 10:30 Worship Service

Communion Prep:

Richard & Allie Schomaker and Jadie Arnett (JR)

Liturgist: Diana Provenzano

Elders: Pat Rybolt and Tommy Tomlin

Deacons: The Beary Team **Ushers:** The Burnam Team

Greeters:

Doug Smith (*N. Door*) Cindy Smith (*S. Door*)

Steve Humble (*Atrium*) Jessica Humble (*Portico*)

Banner Bearers: Ava Martin and Kaedon Wheatley

Candle Lighters: Cullen Snow and Kenzie Von Talge

Children's Worship:

Jessica Humble (ldr.) Allie Schomaker (hlpr.)

Offering Counters: Deb Batterson and Diana Provenzano