



THE
March 20, 2020
Vol. 77, No. 74

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) VISITOR

Our mission: to know God and follow Jesus Christ

GOOD NEWS to SHARE

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT Worship Happening Online!

While Worship at 10th and Walnut may be suspended for the next two Sundays, we will still be able to set aside time to be with God, read Scripture, pray, take communion (juice and cracker is just fine) and call a fellow church member or visitor to tell them that you're thinking about them from home! Perhaps, you ask how you might pray for them in these days? While this is a strange time, the people of God have long endured many strange, challenging and difficult times – from the Exodus to Roman persecution to these modern day virus woes.

Christ's church is more than a building; it's a people living in faith with God and one another! Let's use this time to find creative ways to be church in the coming weeks and then share them with one another through the church office. Let's stay connected to Christ and one another during this time.

Join us ONLINE this Sunday as we share a short worship experience. Log onto the link below and share worship with us. Light a candle, gather some juice and cracker for communion, be ready to listen, pray, and sing! We will journey this week with the 23rd Psalm: The LORD is my Shepherd!

Check us out on our YouTube Channel: "First Christian Church – Columbia, MO"

The channel is "private" as of printing, but should be public by Friday afternoon. We will send out an e-mail with the link, once you are able to access it.
Thank you for your patience!

Congregational Letter: FCC's Response to COVID-19

Dear FCC Members & Friends,

As we have witnessed over the past few days there have been numerous closings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After consulting with several medical and public health officials and heeding the recommendation from the CDC, the Church Officers and the Senior and Associate Ministers have decided that **First Christian Church will suspend all meetings and gatherings beginning Tuesday, March 17 through Sunday, March 29.** Then on Monday, March 30, we will reevaluate on a week-by-week basis as to when to begin normal activities. This decision is also being done in alignment with many of the other downtown area churches.

We believe this to be a compassionate, proactive step to protect the health and wellbeing of our congregation and our community.

This decision includes but is not limited to: Worship services, Sunday school classes, youth group meetings, Bible studies, Mother's Day Out, all fellowship events, funerals/memorial services, committee meetings, department meetings, and governance bodies.

The Staff will continue reporting to work to:

- Distribute the newsletter which will include devotionals for this time.
- Handle the pastoral needs of congregation members.
- Explore online means of communicating with the congregation.
- Conduct normal business.

If you have any questions, concerns, or affirmations to share, please do so. As the Officers and Ministers of First Christian Church, the physical and spiritual wellbeing of our members is our prime concern.

In this time, let us be reassured that God is with us. With this blessed assurance, we trust that Christ leads us to lovingly respond to those who are sick, weak, and in need. And that the Holy Spirit provides all the strength, hope, and compassion we need to meet this ministry challenge. During this time let us continue to be a witness of Christ's love and mercy to all in our congregation, in our community and in our world.

-- FCC Board Officers & Ministers





News and Notes...

Prayers of the People...

Willie Mae Wheeland is now home after a brief hospital stay. **Roy Overacre** continues to have daily treatments. **Beth Jorgeson, (daughter of Cliff and Mary Tompson)** was recently diagnosed with lung cancer. We pray for each of these friends prayers of love and healing.

We can connect you with address and phone numbers of church folks who are home centered in these weeks. Call the church office for those details. ALSO be mindful that paper mail can carry germs — phone calling doesn't!

Sign-up continues in March. Email Jimmy. The event has not yet been changed—time will tell.

FOR COLUMBIA
2020
SAT. APRIL 25

POSTPONED

Congregational Meeting

Postponed until the next Sunday we gather for worship together in the Sanctuary.

Need/Give HELP

Mindful of those in our church community and beyond that might be in need of assistance *and* with a good group of able folks at the ready, let us know your need/give story.

NEED: Many senior adults are being encouraged to remain at home. If there are supplies, groceries or medication that are needed to be picked up, we can help! This also applies to anyone who is sick or needs transportation. If you need assistance, let us know!

GIVE: If you are someone who is able to be helpful in the ways listed above, let us know!

NEED or GIVE — call or email Laura in the church office. Laura is compiling both lists of folks and will put people in touch to make it happen!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- March 22** - Grace Henry
- March 23** - Mary Rogers, Jared Swope
- March 24** - Jonathan LaHue, Kirsten Leach, Helen Stemmons
- March 25** - Natalie Barnard **March 26** - Libby Weber
- March 27** - Kira Hoenes **March 28** - Monica Palmer
- March 29** - **Ferd Lightner (91!)**, Bradley Snyder

Report for March 15, 2020

Total Attendance: 109 (8:30 service - 25)
Offerings: \$4,081

YOUTH GROUP!

YOUTH GROUP is suspended until after Easter.

Palm Sunday Egg Hunting is in flex for later evaluation. CYF — Chi-Rho — DOC groups will continue to communicate and share distance-togetherness over the GROUP ME messaging system.



Student Mission Fundraising NOT Hindered BY COVID-19!

More envelopes have been taken, more are ready to be claimed. You can look to the picture at left, choose a number and mail in the donation or email Jimmy with a pledge of that amount. We are just past the halfway mark.

Two Weeks of Worship in the Season of Lent

In the Sundays we are not together, we will offer an online worship experience. If that is not an option for you, here are two weeks worth of guided at-home-worship. (This is not the same as the online worship being offered).

Find a place—space to sit. Pick a view, be comfortable.

Light a candle nearby. Gather a bible, maybe a hymnal. Get your tablet/internet device/tape player/CD and prime a hymn -worship song for listening. Get communion—any beverage and cracker will do! Be in the spirit of the Holy!

Word and Praise for March 22

Welcome God.

I/We come, all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and Christ will give rest.

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles.

The Lord is always before us. Because God is at our right hand, we shall not be moved.

God shows us the path of life. In God's presence there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

Therefore our hearts are glad, our souls rejoice; our bodies rest secure.

Read Scripture. Psalm 23, John 9:1-41

Meditation. The man born blind. It is a story about sight, healing and proclamation of belief. It is also about the ones who observed a man's life, disability and healing. How often do we define ourselves in terms of limiting factors or difficult things we've experienced? How often do we define others by their circumstance, ability, or what they once were? Jesus invites us to be like the man who sees. BE one who rejoices in recovery and looks ahead to an open and delightful future. Jesus also wants to invite us to a faith that sees others as he does. In all this seeing, we also see who He is – believing in Him brings change of mind, heart, and future.

Prayer and Great Thanksgiving

Be in prayer. Offer prayer to God in thanks, in confession. Express your needs, share the needs of others. Just say what is in your heart. Amen!

Give an offering. What is it that you can give today? To God, to another, to yourself. Either pause worship and go do it or make the commitment of giving that will happen today!

Communion. The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." Speak and partake of the elements. Then pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Benediction. Be, in these days, in the love and grace of God. Keep in the knowledge and promise of Reconciliation. Know peace and stay well.

Word and Praise for March 29

Welcome God.

I/We come, all who are ready to glorify God, ready to praise the work and love of God found in Jesus Christ.

We will bless the Lord at all times; God's praise can be always on our lips.

When we wander afar, God welcomes us back.

When we cry out in despair, God hears and delivers us from all our troubles.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Happy am I/are we when we take refuge in God's care.

Read Scripture. Psalm 130, John 11:1-45

Meditation. The John text has several elements. First, *heart-ache* -- of Lazarus' death and of Jesus' delay. We know heart-ache. Second, *miracle*. We observe the resurrection of Jesus' friend. Grief is over. Jesus contends that the life he offers is not merely an end-times promise but something that makes a difference here and now. One further element is *invitation*. Jesus invites those around him to participate in receiving resurrection: "Unbind him and let him go." He didn't unwrap Lazarus but rather invites those around to get involved, to play a part in seeing this miracle move forward. Could he be inviting us to do the same? When invited into the miraculous, we are tasked to be those who recognize God's movement and believe, letting that go with us into the unknown future.





The Visitor
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 Dr. Rochelle Parker, Organist

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Columbia Area Older Adult Ministry:

Rev. Sally Robinson, Chaplain
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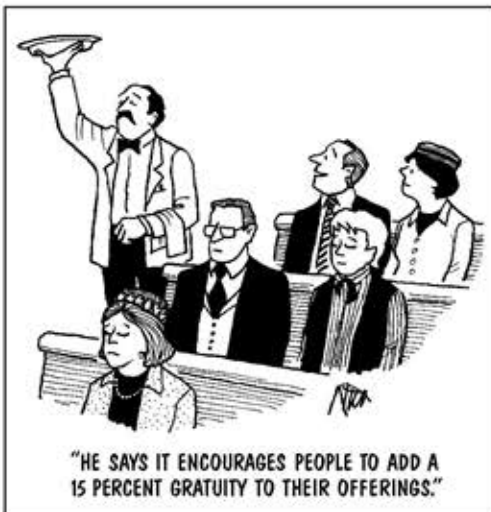
Support Staff:

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 fred@firstchristian.org
 Keith Picker, Custodian

Return Service Requested

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE OF THE VISITOR IS PENDING.

Please keep this one close should we not publish next week. If that is the case, another installment of worship will be on the YouTube Channel (noted on Page 1) for Sunday, March 29.



Vacation Bible School
save the date → June 14-18

Navigating the Future Church Calendar

As of printing future calendar items in April, May, June and throughout the summer will be subject to cancelation, postponement or rescheduling as the need arises. We will follow the community, government officials and general church moves as we proceed with this spring.

STARS, CWF, Youth, Baptism Class, ForColumbia, community events, even summer camps and trips are still being planned...but await adjustment as needed in the weeks to come. Thanks for your watchful eye to this Visitor newsletter, the church website, all-church emails and general phoning to find out the latest. We will always try to let you know well in advance as to any changes.

Feel free to mail in your offering during these weeks away from the church building. If you would like to establish giving through automatic bank withdrawal, call Fred in the church office. Thanks!