



The Christian

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Through Word and Communion, Prayer and Praise,

During Advent we prepare
for the coming of the Messiah.

On Christmas Eve we
celebrate with joy the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24th

7:00 p.m.

*The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.
O come let us adore him!*



God so loved...



that God
Gave.

Your Christmas Offering Supports
The Ministries of Your Regional Church

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING
DECEMBER 19**

From the Bend in the Road.....

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!" ~Amen.



I've been thinking a lot about Mary, the mother of Jesus this week for a variety of reasons. The first being that a song planted deep within the heart of my faith experience seems to have risen up from the past and echoes in my thoughts. I find myself humming the aria at the most unexpected times. The second catalyst of theological pondering came as I was volunteering at Shepherd's Crossing this past week, I found myself staring into the face of modern day Mary's, great with child and children, living on the edge between existence and life. As the song began a soundtrack for my own encounter with God, I remembered the first time I heard the *Magnificat* sang. It was a young woman whose soft and quiet voice echoed a melancholy from deep within her very being and she was singing the words as though they were a prayer she hoped might one day would become real.

*"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord. My spirit and my soul rejoice in Him;
for He has gazed on me in my iniquity and His mercy shall reign forever more.
O the mighty God has done wondrous things for me and holy, holy is His name.
O the mighty God has done wondrous things for me... and holy, holy is His name."*

A few years ago I was traveling on business with a very long layover in Chicago. I was listening to NPR in the airport. I heard a rendition of the *Magnificat* that was so beautiful, strong and bold, I sat up and leaned into the airport speaker. This "Mary" proclaimed with every fiber of voice and being that she embodied God's grace and mercy and was a witness to the transforming power of love and hope. Most of the time, I think as a people, we vacillate between these two visions of Mary and of faith. We doubt if the lives we have led and the choices that we have made are worth redemption and love. And yet we proclaim that grace and love are freely abundant for all, even when we doubt our own worthiness. Both of these "waiting rooms" of the soul are valid and necessary on the journey of faith to grow our roots deeper in the love and mercy of God and to prepare us to offer love, mercy, compassion, joy and hope to all those we encounter. May the love of God, through the song of a mother, find it's way into your hearts and may you share that hope it brings with someone trying to discover their worth.

~Pastor Christy

Something you might enjoy... <http://brianmclaren.net/archives/blog/an-advent-meditation.html>

Community Announcements

Bathroom remodel started!

Disciples Men started renovation of the downstairs bathrooms which were in bad shape and worse when years of layers were uncovered but don't worry! We have a very dedicated, talented crew working hard to make the bathrooms into ones we can be proud of. We found expected issues underneath and some that were not. We had about 12 guys working extremely hard for about 9 hours the last Saturday worked. We are so blessed to be in the same community with these hard working guys. Thanks to Sharon Purvis for bringing cinnamon rolls and chili. It was a nice break and great food! We are looking forward to the construction phase when we get to see some real progress, after we finish the deconstruction phase. The floor has asbestos tile that is very hard to get up. There are no regulations on asbestos floor tile if it stays complete as floor tile. Issues begin when the tile gets broken up and dust forms. We've had a very generous donation of labor given to us by Eric Purvis who works for a asbestos removal company here in town and offered to donate his time and expertise in removing the tile for free. He has training and expertise to remove the tile without causing issues. We thank him for this generous offer. If we had to have this done professionally, it may have taken us way out of our budget in a real hurry. If you haven't seen the progress, pop in and see. It will be slow progress, so be patient and keep thinking about how great it will be! Many thanks to all who have donated toward this project. More donations are still welcome!

Waide Purvis



UPCOMING LEADERSHIP RETREAT

January 21-22

Our Servant Leadership Team

will gather at

Living Water Ranch

for a planning retreat

as we move into 2011.

We urge all

Coordinating Council

members, Deacons,

and Elders to attend.

We're going to do great things

together at First Christian

in 2011!

Living Out Our Mission: Reaching In



GET READY FOR TABLE FELLOWSHIP!

Table Fellowship, a small group dinner meeting, will again be organized for the new year. We will be making sign-up sheets available the first part of January. Table Fellowship will be held in January, February, March, April on the last Friday night of the month. This is a great opportunity to get to know people a little more intimately than "hello, how are you?" Each group is usually only about 7 to 9 people at one house. Each person contributes to the meal with the host providing the meat dish and drinks. Set aside your last Fridays of these months and join in this fellowship!

Sharon Purvis, Chair of Fellowship Ministry Team

Living Out Our Mission: Reaching Up

DisciplesNet Church launches as online alternative for people who can't get to church

Our newest Disciples of Christ congregation is DisciplesNet Church, a church “along the internet highway for people who can't get to church in traditional ways.” The church also works in partnership with brick-and-mortar churches to supplement faith experiences, offer free resources, and direct people who can connect with brick-and-mortar communities to opportunities there for face-to-face connection and service.

DisciplesNet has been in development for about a year, building its leadership team, online following, and brick-and-mortar supporters. This summer they began building a growing fan and membership base on Facebook, then in late summer began meeting for face-to-face and Skyped worship. More milestones came quickly the past two weeks. On November 8, 2010, DisciplesNet launched their beginning web platform, which they are quick to point out, “is still under construction.” On Sunday November 14, DisciplesNet offered their first weekly videotaped worship, which for the time being will be in a taped video format, but will grow to include live worship. Then on November 15, the church was recognized as a ‘church in formation’ by the Indiana region. DisciplesNet’s membership base only begins in its Indiana hub. Already DisciplesNet’s growing membership and support network extends across the United States and Canada into India, Pakistan, China, Congo, Kenya, Burundi, Malawi, Italy, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Read more about DisciplesNet in the article: <http://ccindiananews.wordpress.com/2010/11/19/disciplesnet-emerging-as-a-church-without-walls/>



*The Christmas Story
In Negro Spirituals
Presented by Dr. LaVerne
Baker, Vocalist-Guitarist
and Mary Caudle-Kidd,
Vocalist-Pianist
Sunday, December 19,
6 to 7 p.m.*

Living Out Our Mission—Stewardship

Faithful Servants of God's Infinite Grace



A big thank you for a job well done to our Nominating Committee under the leadership of Debi Rogers, who served as Chair. This committee worked through the fall months to put together our newly elected Servant Leadership. The dedication and time of Debi, Waide Purvis, John Trussell, Miranda Bennett, Pam Russell, Toni Cross, Linda Uthoff, Gene Wiley, and Shelby Berggren in completing this task was a great service to our congregation. Our newly elected Servant Leadership will join those continuing in their terms of service and be installed January 9. What a blessing and joy to have people who so readily say "yes" to service at FCC.

*

Tim Berggren donated a drainage culvert, did all of the prep work and installed the culvert under the road leading into our property on Seth Child Rd. Bayer Construction donated and delivered a 15-ton dump truck load of road gravel to the site. Then Tim and **Rick Allen** spread all of the gravel! Can you imagine the labor involved in doing that?? They believe they solved the washing out problem on that entry road. This is just a huge gift to the church and we think that Tim, Rick and Bayers are awesome!!

*

Many thanks also to **Steve & Toni Cross** and **Robert & Pam Russell** for gifting the church with new Advent banners in the sanctuary. The banners are a beautiful reminder to us of this important season we observe in our church life.

*

An additional thank you to the **Russells**: Can you imagine the frustration of having a refrigerator that freezes items not in the freezer section, such as worship flowers, plus cycles off for long periods of time damaging all contents while leaking water out on to the floor? Such was the case with the old custodial room refrigerator—for years. But no more! Robert Russell located a like-new used refrigerator, bought it, donated and delivered it to church, he and Pastor Paul hooked it up, and then Robert hauled away the old one.

Thank you one and all for all these special gifts!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

In order for you to receive credit on your contributions in 2010, I will need to have your check by noon 12-31-2010. Please mark you payment for the year 2010.

Thank You, Sonny Redding



Living Out Our Mission: Reaching Up



December 19—*"How Do We Find Joy?"* Pastor Christy

Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10

Children's Message: Joy! Joy! Joy!

December 24, Christmas Eve *"Promises, Promises"* Pastor Paul

Luke 2:1-20

Children's Message Christmas Eve

December 26—*"Witnesses to New Life"* Pastor Paul

Isaiah 52:7-10; Luke 2:21-40

Children's Message The Season of Christmas

*It was always said of him, that he knew how to keep
Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge.
May that be truly said of us, and all of us!
And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!
From "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens*

MEADOWLARK VESPERS

*First Christian leads December Vespers at
Meadowlark, Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m.*

*Rev. Ben Duerfeldt leads December 19
and Pastor Paul will lead December 26 .*

*We hope you'll join us to share worship with
members of our own church family, some of
whom are not able to attend worship at
First Christian on Sunday mornings.*

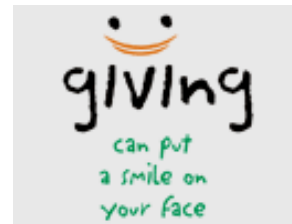
Living Out Our Mission: Reaching Out

Christmas Eve Offering

This year we will be donating our Christmas Eve offering to Shepherd's Crossing. Pastor Christy is involved in this local outreach ministry and Pat McReynolds serves on their Board. As you can imagine, they have received many more requests for assistance than ever before, and unfortunately, giving has been lower than usual. We are grateful that our church family can help in this way. See you Christmas eve!

Food Collection Sunday

In the midst of all the holiday activities, please don't forget that our Food Collection Sunday, in support of local food pantries, is the first Sunday in January. Bring non-perishable food items to share with families who are in financial distress. Bring all you can!



Jamaica Sunday!

Put on your calendar now that our annual Jamaican Sunday dinner will be after church on Sunday, January 16. The mission team will be leaving for Falmouth, Jamaica on January 20. More details to follow!

Thank You From The Christian Church in Kansas

What a thrill it was to share in the Gala on November 13 and realize total gifts of \$28,700! The support of congregations made this a tremendous success, and it demonstrates the commitment of Kansas folk to the youth of our Church. What a blessing! Thank you so much for making possible the joys of camp ministry with your recent gift to \$66.54 to support Disciples Center at Tawakoni. Thanks so much for this demonstration of the partnership you share with your Regional Church as together we strive to provide excellent ministry to youth and others. Your ongoing support as indicated by your donation is such a blessing and we are very grateful. Thanks for remaining a leader in support of Camp.

Steve Martin, Association Regional Minister/Direction of Camp Ministries

Living Out Our Mission: Reaching Out

SPRING CASA TRAINING

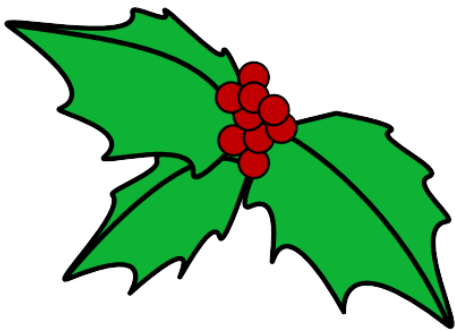
Volunteer to be the difference between abuse and hope - become a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). Court-Appointed Special Advocates are volunteers who give their time to advocate for abused and neglected children in the court system.



Spring training will begin with an orientation session on Monday, February 7th at 6 pm at First Lutheran Church located at 930 Poyntz Ave. Training will continue on Monday evenings for 7 weeks (2/15, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7, 3/14, 3/28, 4/4) from 6-9 pm. Training will be moved to 2/15 for Valentine's Day and there will be no training on 3/21 due to K-State's spring break.

Please contact us at bridget@sunflowercasa.org, 785-537-6367, or visit <http://casa.manhattanks.org> for more information or to learn about our independent study training option.

There is a child waiting for your voice!



THANK YOU!

A special thank you to those who participated in the "Adopt A Teen" Christmas program. Thank you to John Boyer, Steve and Toni Cross, Tanya Purvis, Sonny Redding, John and Alice Trussell, the Spirit Sisters and the Disciples Women's Fellowship as well as all those anonymous donors for their generous donations. A special thank you to Leanne Finnell and to Sharon and Leonard Purvis for their extra help with purchasing and distributing the gifts.

Thank you for making a child's Christmas hope-filled.



Rev. Paxton Jones, Regional Minister
Rev. Steve Martin, Associate Regional Minister, SE District, Outdoor & Youth
Rev. Renee Bridwell, Associate Regional Minister South Central District
Rev. Ken Marston, Associate Regional Minister for Central and High Plains

Doug Gray, Moderator

Looking to see YOU at the...

**Young Adult Retreat
January 7-9, 2011**

**Theme: "Life on the edge:
Christianity in the Margins"**
Geoff Brewster, Speaker
**PTS Church Relations Director/
Cool Guy**



Join us for Fellowship, Renewal of Friend-
ship and Faith — Meet other "college-age"
friends from the Kansas Region — Enjoy a
relaxing weekend at Disciples Center at Tawakoni!

\$25 Fee: begins 6:00 p.m. Friday; ends 11:00 a.m. Sunday

Registrations Due by Jan. 2, 2011

NAME: _____

(Print) Last First _____

ADDRESS: _____

Street/Box Number _____

City State Zip _____

CELL PHONE : (____) _____ SEX: M F

E-Mail _____

HOME CHURCH: _____ CITY: _____

Send check to: CCK—2914 SW MacVicar, Topeka 66611 or
Fax 785-266-0174 OR—Register at www.kansasdisciples.org—scroll down
and enter in "other event" box

DISCOVER THE DISCIPLES





Community



Dear Rev. Paul & First Christian,
 I wanted to thank you on behalf of the Schwerdt family for your warmth, prayers, and for the fellowship following my father's funeral. Your message was wonderful. Words cannot express the gratitude for your love and care in our time of need, and in particular for Grandma June.



Very Sincerely, Stephanie Heersink
 & the Schwedt family

Again we wish to thank you for allowing the HUG Al-Anon Family Group to meet in your church each week. It is a wonderful facility and we are so grateful to be allowed to use it. Enclosed with this note is a small contribution as a token of our thanks. Sincerely, HUG Al-Anon

OUR SYMPATHY

We extend heartfelt sympathy to Bev, Jason, and Jeremy Orr and to the entire Mayo family at the death of Joyce Mayo on November 27th.

Sympathy also goes to Betty Slemen at the death of her cousin Margaret Adams, in England.

We reach out in Christian sympathy to the family and friends of Cecil and Alberta Gregory, who died on December 12. Pastor Paul will lead their service on December 18th.

**Father, grant peace to those we love
 but see no longer. Amen**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM
 YOUR CHURCH STAFF**

Paul Christy
 Don
 Sonny Treasa
 Fred Marian
 Diana Lisa
 Alicia Shania
 Tiffany