



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Disciples of Christ

Welcoming All. Encountering Christ. Celebrating Community.

JULY 2021

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STATEMENT OF MISSION

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is called to witness to all humankind with a spiritual vitality that embraces inclusiveness and Christ-like justice. Therefore, we seek to be a community that **reaches in** to one another, **reaches up** to God, and **reaches out** to the world with the love of Jesus Christ.

SO VERY
grateful
INCREDIBLY
thankful
UNBELIEVABLY
blessed

This month we say farewell to two exemplary models of compassion, faith, and dedication in our First Christian congregational life and mission. It is difficult to put into words all that they brought to their respective ministries, but we all know we are stronger as a community because of their time with us.

Rev. Lukus Ebert's last Sunday will be July 11, and he will be giving the worship message that day. His next step in life is to be a hospital chaplain, especially for children.

Pastor Ben Hitzfeld's final Sunday with us is July 25. He, Bekah and Eliana will be moving to St. Joseph, Missouri where Ben will serve as Senior Pastor of Wyatt Park Christian Church.

For all these two servants of God have done in our midst, for all they have been while present with us, and for all the good they will continue to be and do in this world, we say "Thank you, God".

FROM BEN.....



“Every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end.”
(Closing Time, by Semisonic)

I was a Senior at Manhattan Christian College when I began my first preaching ministry at Westmoreland Christian Church in Westmoreland, KS. I was 23 years old and had it all figured out (as most 23 year olds do). I shudder when I think about it now, but one of my sermon series was about how to know God’s will. I stood up in front of a congregation filled with people who could be my parents and grandparents, and boldly and confidently told them how to discern God’s will.

It is a humbling thing to read some of my sermons from five years ago, let alone sermons from fourteen years ago. One thing that stands out to me is that wisdom that comes with time is not about having all of the answers, but being willing to admit that I still have much to learn. The small “God box” of my youth has been shattered to pieces. I am certain of fewer things after fourteen years of ministry, but the things that I believe to be true, I believe whole heartedly.

I can admit that I don’t have an easy 3-step process to knowing God’s will for your life. The Bible is filled with examples of humans longing for certainty in the midst of waiting and travelling nowhere fast - kind of like the Israelites wandering in the desert for forty years before entering the promised land. God was with the Israelites in the desert in the same way that God was present in the land flowing with milk and honey.

Father Richard Rohr writes, “*God comes to us disguised as our life.*” What this says to me is that God is the God of the journey. We are mistaken if we think that God is only to be found in our best moments - when we have clarity, and everything makes sense. Paul the Apostle writes, “*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known*” (1 Cor. 13:12). God’s love for us is not based on our perfect understanding of complicated theologies. Childlike faith is what pleases God. You are a beloved child of God. Believe that!

It has been a joy and an honor to serve Christ with you over the last two and half years. We crammed a lot into the time that we had together. Some of it was planned - moving into a new building. And some of it was...well...unplanned. I may not go down as the longest serving Pastor at FCC, but I am one of the few, and the proud ones who served FCC during a global pandemic! At the end of July, we will part ways, but we will move on knowing that faith, hope, and love is what remains.

In the words of Forrest Gump, “*I may not be a smart man, but I know what love is.*” Thank you for loving the Hitzfeld family well! Thank you for making room in your hearts for us. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to “*come home.*” Thank you for showing us grace in the midst of unexpected news and unsettling change.

“May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, so that you, being rooted and grounded in love, will be able to grasp fully the breadth, length, height and depth of Christ’s love and, with all God’s holy ones, experience this love that surpasses all understanding, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. To God—whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine— to God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, world without end! Amen.” (Eph. 3:7-21)



Grace & Peace, Beloved

Ben, Bekah, and Eliana

COORDINATING COUNCIL

After we received the news from Ben last month that he would be leaving FCC at the end of July, we moved as quickly as possible to locate an Intentional Interim Minister to be followed by hiring a new pastor. A search committee has been formed with Eric King, chair. Other committee members include Grant Chapman, Linda Uthoff, Larry Sloan, Alicia Chaline, and Rose Carter. The committee has already met to review and begin updating the Congregational Profile. The Congregational Profile needs to be updated and submitted to the regional minister of the Christian Church in Kansas, the first step in getting names of minister candidates to us. The factual items on the profile are easily updated. Still, the section titled "Discerning Areas of Greatest Need for Ministerial Leadership" is a portion that requires conversations with the congregation and the completion of a brief survey. The profile requests that the congregation list the top four skills that we seek in a new pastor. You may remember completing this survey in 2018, but because we have moved to the new building and three years have passed, it is essential to ensure that the priorities are verified and updated. Expect to be asked for your opinion of these priorities.

The Worship and Spiritual Life Ministry Team will be working with the search committee to find individuals to fill the pulpit beginning in August. Hopefully, an Intentional Interim Pastor will start early this fall, but there will be some weeks of having guests who give the message in the meantime.

On June 1, we learned that the From Cradles to Crayons childcare director left the position immediately. Pam Russell volunteered to step in as an interim director until a new director could be located. We are very fortunate that Pam has all the required qualifications to be a director. She has done a fantastic job and deserves a huge "thank you" from all of us at FCC. Thank you, Pam!

A retreat was held in Fellowship Hall on the evening of June 11 and the morning of June 12.. Ben began the Friday evening session by talking about detours. Yes, we have detoured from our planned FCC journey, but detours will lead us back to our destination. We simply wind up seeing and experiencing different things on our journey than we had anticipated. Rev. Steve Martin, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Kansas, talked to us about the process of hiring a new pastor. The Region has many helpful resources for our search committee and congregation. The evening was very informative and comforting as Steve shared the process with us and assured us that FCC Manhattan is a highly regarded opportunity. He believes we shouldn't have any trouble finding qualified candidates who want to come here. On the second day of the retreat, we focused on financial information. The pro forma budget information sheet and an income statement were distributed and explained. The key to meeting the budget is growth. After we moved to Grand Mere, we had consistent growth in our Sunday morning attendance, but the pandemic hit us hard just as other churches and organizations were impacted. As people have become more comfortable coming to church, we again see gradually increasing attendance. After focusing on finances, we split into ministry team groups and brainstormed opportunities. Each ministry team was challenged to come up with a minimum of five opportunities for service and growth. It was exciting to hear creative ideas and enthusiasm generated, and all who attended came away from the retreat with profound optimism. Our future is bright--hang on for an interesting detour!

Alice Trussell
Chair, Coordinating Council



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

TIME, TALENT, TREASURE?

This is how we present this topic every Sunday but I think it should be **Treasure, Time, Talent**.

When I started tithing, really intentionally tithing, really giving the first instead of the left over, it was hard. I didn't really manage my money very well at that time, really just going paycheck to paycheck. Adding a real tithe to my mismanaged finances meant that check bounced like '80s superball. But, if you actually start doing something you can actually get better at doing that thing. Tithing led me to better financial discipline. In short, tithing helped me. This is why I think starting with Treasure makes the most sense. If we can make ourselves better we have more and we can give more.

Turns out that if you are actively involved in something, i.e. giving time, it will become more important to you. For many this may be mostly attendance on Sunday. That's fine and very important because Sunday attendance is the basis of our community as a church. I encourage you to participate in worship service and know that when you do you are giving life and fellowship to others in the congregation and that is truly a gift. Participate in person if possible (we'll pick you up if you need a ride). Participate online when you can't make it physically. Beyond Sunday service there are many ways to participate in church life. We consider ourselves to be a "Community Church". When you participate in community activities, consider doing so not simply as an individual, but as a member of our church. Giving time to the church doesn't have to mean Committee Meetings.

America's Got Talent. We all have talents. If you give Treasure and Time you might be surprised what talents you might discover in yourself. Consider participating in the worship service; greeting parents as they drop off their children at our childcare; chipping in on a workday; being a camp counselor; calling on other members with needs; Praying; or any of a million other ways. You might think these all would take time and they do, but it's what you do with that time that is the Talent.

Treasure, Time, Talent. Together they are synergistic. We can do this. See you Sunday.

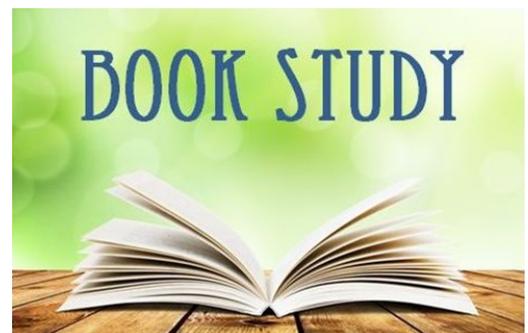
Dave Rogers



BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITY!

The Elders have been conducting monthly book study sessions. We are finishing our second book and have selected our third. If you are interested in participating in our next book study, please send a message to Robert Russell rrussell21@cox.net.

The next book is entitled "Take This Bread: A Radical Conversion" by Sara Miles. Book study sessions are normally conducted via Zoom on the first or second Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM. Sessions last about an hour.



DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY NEWS



December 20, 2015 was a Sunday that was filled with such joy. That was the day I officially joined First Christian Church. I had been coming for some months prior after being invited by Marilyn Masterson. I came in quietly near the start of service as to seat in the back and not take much notice. However, there was much notice that happened. I was greeted by a few folks, one carrying bread and some information about the church and denomination. I left that day feeling optimistic but admittedly struggled with the optimism. I was church shopping for a new place. Nothing to special, somewhere that loved and lived like Christ. Somewhere that took in folks other places said they didn't have room at the table for.

Truthfully, I was worried about coming back again and again for the next month or so. I worried not that I wouldn't fit in but that I would. Because when you fit in somewhere, it is harder to leave. It has been around six years since that first Sunday I came. Six years is the longest I have ever been apart of a faith community because many Christians and all churches I had been to prior did not want a member of the LGBT community there. Truthfully, I can not recall the exact Sunday I disclosed this information. In part because it was not made a big deal but it also was not diminished. Not only was I not diminished but I flourished. I was invited to events, ministry teams, leadership and service opportunities, etc. It was in that flourishing that I was able to receive "the call."

When I embarked on my discernment journey a little more than five years ago I knew that I would be leaving. It was not a concern though because that was a situation for future me...well it's here. When we talk about loving and living like Christ with reckless abandon I think of this church family. I know that I am loved in a such a way and that we love each other in such a way. This love comes from seeing that it does not matter what I wear from earrings to eyeglasses but what I say. I know that I can change my appearance like a rainbow chameleon and what is on the inside; my morals, preaching messages, prayers, motives, etc. that matters.

It is in that loving and living with reckless abandon that makes First Christian Church my home and church family no matter where I go.

Thank you so much for seeing me, caring for me, growing me, and loving me through everything. If it were not for this place and these people I would not be an ordained minister. I am able to be who I am and follow my calling because of you. And for that I will be forever grateful.

Peace and Love,
Rev. Lukus Ebert

Camp Attendees!

Primary - June 30-July 2

- Kylee T.



Discovery - July 1-2

- Reiley V.

CYF Omega - July 6-10

- Dakota O.
- Michael H.
- Nicholas H.

Chi Rho - July 12-16

- Tristan T.

Want to send mail to our campers?

Campers love to receive mail from friends and family back home. Letters need to be addressed in the following format to ensure timely delivery. There is no mail delivery on the last day of camp.



****Do not send food or candy as it is not permitted in the bunk rooms.****

July 26-30, 2021

Register:
fccmanhattan.org
(785) 776-8790

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



PLAN TO BE HERE BY 9:30 P.M. FOR THE VIEW OF A LIFETIME!

JULY 11

The church family will wish Rev. Lukus Ebert farewell by gathering in Fellowship Hall at 9:45 a.m. before worship. We will be treated to coffee cakes and sweet rolls as part of celebrating Lukus' wonderful time with us and to wish him well in Wichita, interning as a Hospital Chaplain with children. Oh what a gift he will be in the lives of those children and parents he will serve.

JULY 18

Immediately after worship we'll have a birthday cake in Fellowship Hall for a very special woman in our church family on the occasion of her 99th birthday. 
Happy Birthday Eula Mae Hedman!!



JULY 25

We will honor the Hitzfelds with a potluck dinner after worship. FCC potlucks are unbelievably good and it has been a long COVID time since we've enjoyed one. It is hard to say goodbye to a family we love, but at least this will be an enjoyable way to do it!

COMING UP IN AUGUST—



Our regular 5th Sunday Congregational meeting and potluck will resume on August 29th. The potluck will begin immediately after the brief congregational meeting and will be dedicated to the memory of Sharon Purvis. Sharon loved working in the kitchen and preparing food for heartwarming meals together. The Charades will sing during the potluck dinner.

DISCIPLES WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

YEAR END REPORT

The fiscal year for Disciples Women's Fellowship ended May 31, 2021. This has been a challenging year due to the pandemic. We were not able to have in-person monthly group meetings and the large fundraiser, Pumpkin Patch, was cancelled. However, we stayed in touch through Zoom meetings, letters, cards, and telephone calls and were still able to meet our budgeted expenses. The following is a list of the missions contributions made this year:

Global:

Church World Service Blanket Fund	\$ 250.00
Women's Empowerment Fund	\$ 100.00
Matthew 25 Ministries	\$ 51.84
Blessing Box Offering	\$ 265.70

Regional:

Kansas Plan Disciples Mission Fund	\$2,000.00
Kansas Disciples Women Regional Staff	\$ 250.00
Woodhaven Learning Center	\$ 100.00
Tennyson Center for Children and Families	\$ 100.00
Kansas Christian Home	\$ 100.00

Local:

Manhattan Emergency Shelter	\$ 364.00
From Cradles to Crayons	\$ 185.00
Big Lakes Developmental Center	\$ 100.00
Kitchen Facility (new chest freezer & electric knife)	\$ 663.15

We are so thankful for these women of faith who rose to the challenge and we look forward to starting a new year filled with limitless possibilities!

Disciples Women combats Human Trafficking through advocacy, service, education, and collaboration. Christian Church Foundation partners in the work through decisions on ethical investments.



**Disciples Women:
Love in Action**

CHURCH NEWS



If you would like a ride to church, call the church office, 785-776-8790. It will be our pleasure to pick you up!



Disciple Men's Fellowship will resume their 2nd Tuesday of the month breakfast meetings on July 13, 7:00 a.m. at Vista Restaurant. Come one and all!

WE ARE INVITED TO A HOUSE WARMING PARTY! FOR DREW (TRIMMER) GLAVES

July 16, 2021, 3:00—9:00 p.m.
1500 McCain, Unit 3,
RSVP@ 785-770-6521 or
dtrian2019@gmail.com



Our Cub Scouts improvising fun!



Bluebird eggs in one of the Cub Scout Bluebird Boxes around the FCC parking lot



The babies are born!

All of Creation is seen by God, and all of it is declared "good."

Ultimately, humans image God in our care of creation.

God bless our Cub Scouts and their wonderful leaders for the care of creation they accomplished with the installation of all the Bluebird boxes at FCC.

LOCAL & GLOBAL OUTREACH MINISTRY

Do you remember how much you loved getting new school supplies?

We have an opportunity to help support USD 383 students through the 14th Annual “**Stuff the Bus School Supply Drive**” on Saturday, July 17 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm in the Wal-Mart parking lot OR on Sundays, July 11 & 18 at FCC. You’ll find a special box in the narthex for dropping off school supplies.

It is anticipated that 900+ USD 383 students will qualify to receive free school supplies this school year (any USD 383 student who qualifies for free/reduced fees also qualifies for free school supplies).

You can make a cash donation or shop online at the Amazon Wish List (and have it delivered right to Manhattan High School West Campus) at www.fitcloset.org You can volunteer to help during school supply week July 19-23 (unpacking and organizing supplies, creating individualized school supply bags for students, or distributing them at Open Registration Day on July 30th) by signing up for a shift at www.fitcloset.org



You ask what is needed:

Elementary-Sized Backpacks, Middle/High School-Sized Backpacks, Pencil/Supply Box (5x8), Pencil Bags (sturdy), Large Pink Erasers, Dry Erase Markers, Fine Point Black Permanent Markers, Crayons (24 count), Markers (8 or 10 count; bold tip), Glue Sticks, Watercolor Paint (8-pan), 5" or 7" Scissors, Ziploc Bags (qt or gal boxes), Pocket Folders (no prong; varied, plain colors), Spiral Notebooks (wide-rule & college rule), 1" & 1.5" 3-Ring Binder, Pkgs 5-Tab Dividers, Colored Pencils. (12 count; NOT ERASABLE), Highlighters, Composition Books (wide-rule & college rule), Filler Paper (wide-rule & college rule), 70 - Scientific Calculators (TI 30X IIS), Compasses, Protractors, Red Pens, Rolls of Masking Tape or Duct Tape, Copy Paper Reams, Stylus w/ pen tip.

Jesus loved learning. Remember where his parents found him.

Cindy Garwick, Local and Global Outreach Ministry Team

SECOND HELPING SACK LUNCH MISSION

65 dinner meals are being made on Sunday evenings at First Congregation Church. Our sack lunch mission provides breakfast and lunch items for Monday for those in need. Thank you to Linda and John Uthoff for taking care of the sack lunches in June. The Debi and Dave Rogers family will prepare the lunch bags for July 4th. The Kara and Grant Chapman family will pack the sack lunches for August 1st.

Your donations of granola bars, individual packets of peanut butter/cheese on crackers, and cookies for this mission are greatly appreciated. You’ll find a collection box in the church office on the back counter.

Thank you for providing 50 lunches for the Second Helping meals on June 13th. Your contribution helps us stretch limited dollars to provide meals for those with food insecurity.

Shari Tedford, Second Helping Coordinator



FROM CRADLES TO CRAYONS CHILDCARE

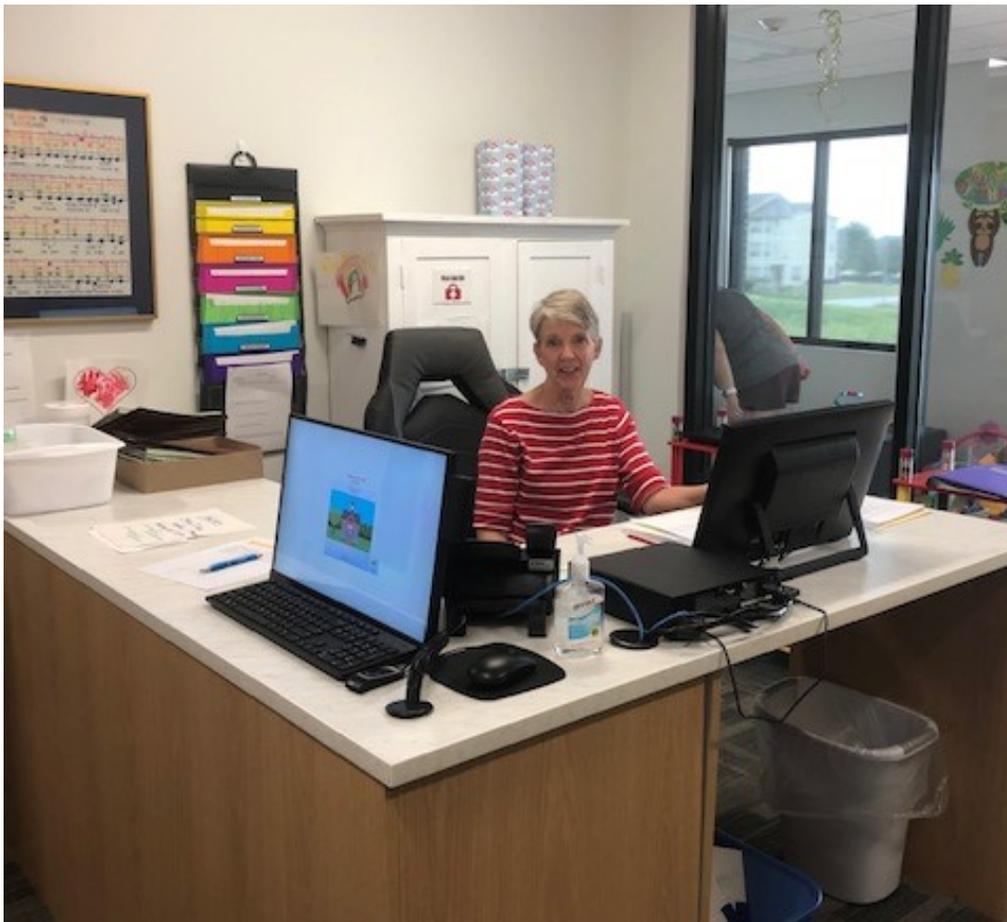
June was a month of changes for From Cradles to Crayons!

Childcare staffing has been in transition, Pam Russell assumed the role of Interim Director upon the departure of Cassie Anderson and several other staff members. Brooke Murphy has been named the new director, with July 6 her first day.

In the meantime, Pam has been busy organizing files, and moving things around to maximize space utilization. Staff have been reassigned to different classrooms to provide a more equitable work distribution., The lunch preparation team continues to provide delicious, nutritious meals. We will be welcoming our new director and new children to fill the vacancies in the coming weeks. Exciting times are ahead!

Dave Rogers, John Trussell, and Drew (Trimmer) Glaves have been making improvements to the playground, and they are greatly appreciated. Many thanks also to Fred Landis for his maintenance support.

As we look to the future, the numerous changes which have been made will enhance From Cradles to Crayons Childcare Center as we welcome new staff and children this fall.



ALL ABOUT US

LOVE AND SYMPATHY

Christian sympathy to Lorene Stuteville and her family at the death of Don on June 9th.

Deepest sympathy to Leonard Purvis and his family at the unexpected death of his nephew, Eldon Gene Sylvester, on May 28th, at the age of 59. Eldon was also the brother of Noel Sylvester, who served as the FCC Choir Director for a number of years.

Sympathy to Linda Gallagher and all her family at the death of her brother-in-law, David Ahlrichs, on June 4, in Iowa.



Thank you for your kindness in sending flowers to the funeral home for Don Stuteville's funeral. Thank you as well for the luncheon in Don's honor. Not only was it delicious, it was greatly appreciated by all.

With Sincere Thanks, The Stuteville family

My thanks to First Christian Church friends for sending cards, flowers, and treats on my 94th birthday. *Betty Siemen*

Thank you for the many birthday cards, the Smiley Face balloon, the Happy Birthday balloon and to the church for the beautiful flowers. I had a Happy 97th birthday. *Love, Jane Wassom*

Thank you for remembering me on my 93rd birthday with cookies, balloons, cards and flowers. I appreciate the love from my church family. *Dale Webster*

Thanks so much to Rich and Linda Gallagher, Debi Rogers, Linda Uthoff, and Kay Stith for the help they provided during our move from Grand Mere to Meadowlark by picking up and redirecting items we wanted to share with organizations in Manhattan/Ogden which are doing good work for the betterment of all.

*Blessings, Dee Ann & Ed Herde
and our daughters*



- July 1 Marilyn Wright
- July 2 Barbara Sylvester
- July 4 Steve Dyer
Mark Maxwell
- July 8 Eula Mae Hedman
- July 12 Paula Hardin
- July 16 Pam Nabors
John Uthoff
- July 18 Thelma Vess
- July 25 Judy Marshall
Brenda Schurle
- July 28 Virginia Morris
- July 29 Debbie Soper



JULY 11TH FLINT HILLS BREADBASKET FOOD COLLECTION

The FCC Flint Hills Breadbasket Food Collection is the second Sunday of each month. The donation box is in the church narthex. Current needs include canned meat, Velveeta, Pop-Tarts, crackers, jelly, cake & muffin mixes, cereal, fruit juice—and any other non-perishable food you can give. In June we collected 107 pounds. Your generous gifts impact lives.

