



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Disciples of Christ

Welcoming All. Encountering Christ. Celebrating Community.

NOVEMBER 2019

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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.



A CHORUS OF

gratitude

For First Christian!

**Stewardship is using the gifts God has given us,
to do the work God is calling us to do.**

**By pledging your financial support, you allow First
Christian to carry out its mission of building an
active faith community through ministry, outreach,
and educational programs.**

FROM BEN.....



As we are coming up on All Saints Day, it is a joy to reminisce about the Saints of God that have impacted my life in some way. I am a better person and I have a clearer picture of God's love because of their life. Most of these people had no idea of the impact that they had on those around them. When we hear the word "Saint" we think upon painted images of people with a heavenly glow around their head and stories of improbable faith. We marvel at their capacity to trust God and to accomplish so much with seemingly so little. But not all saints have a portrait with a heavenly glow or halo hanging in a sacred cathedral. Most of the Saints who have lived, will not be remembered by history books. The impact of their lives will go on in present day in the hearts of those of who knew them.

I think about Alan Cox, a sweet and kind gentleman from our congregation in Darlington, IN. In the span of 5 years he spoke no more than 100 words to me or anyone else other than his wife. If you knew the Cox's you would say that Alan just gave the words he would have said to his sweetheart, Mary Edie, who used them well as a master storyteller. Alan exuded a kind and gentle heart and his smile was infectious. When Alan did speak up, whether in board meetings, Bible study, or during a fellowship meal, everyone listened. Every word from Alan was meaningful. Every facial expression, hug, handshake, smile and laugh was a seed of God's love that was sown into the lives of others. Alan planted more seeds of God's love than most people who use twice as many words in their lifetime. It makes me think of the quote (falsely attributed to St. Francis of Assisi) *"Preach the gospel at all times. When it is necessary, use words."*

As you are mindful of the Saints that have gone on to eternity, who are you thankful for? What memories come flooding in? How is your life different because of them? How do you honor their memory in every day life? As the Thanksgiving season approaches, let us be intentional about honoring the lives of those who walked the path before us and those who cheer us on as we continue our journey of faith.

Grace & Peace,
Ben <>



COORDINATING COUNCIL

Given that we are currently fulfilling pledges to our most recent Capital Campaign, we will not be holding a formal Stewardship Campaign this fall. However, we must be mindful of the ongoing expenses of our congregation that allow us to fulfill our mission in this community. Within the past week, you should have received a letter from Steve Jankord, chair of the Stewardship Ministry Team, with an "Estimate of Giving Card." Please prayerfully consider your gifts to our congregation in the coming year and share your "giving card" on Stewardship Celebration Sunday, November 10th. Following worship that morning, we will enjoy a special luncheon. Dave Rogers will be smoking the meat and the Fellowship Ministry team providing the side dishes and desserts. All you have to do is come and enjoy a meal of celebration and thanksgiving for the many ways God has blessed our congregation.

A Nominating Committee has been formed to identify individuals to fill our servant leadership positions for the coming year. As prescribed in the FCC Governance Document the membership includes the Elder and Deacon Chairs, a Life Elder, an Elder, three Deacons, a Junior Deacon, and a member at large (not currently serving on the Coordinating Council). Vacancies include Coordinating Council Chair-Elect, Trustee, Elder, Deacon, and Junior Deacons. The nine member committee appointed by Ruby K Brower, Coordinating Council Chair, and approved by the Coordinating Council include: Ken Garwick, Chair, Leonard Purvis, Linda Uthoff, John Trussell, Grant Chapman, Cindy Sink, Deb Marfield, Nicholas Hwang, and Alicia Chaline. Please give careful consideration to a request to serve when you are asked.

Election of the 2020 Servant Leadership will be at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 1, 2019. At this time, the congregation will also be ask to approve the 2020 Operating Budget for FCC.

Following additional discussion, plans to utilize name tags for those in attendance at Sunday morning worship have been put on hold. Please keep in mind, when you see a new face at one of our services, take a moment to not only welcome them and shake their hand, but introduce yourself so that everyone can become familiar with each other's names.

Ruby K Brower
Coordinating Council Chair



THANK YOU to those who participated in our Church Work Day a few weeks ago. Much was accomplished in a few hours including replacement of the ceiling air filters, organizing the basement storage shelves, and a thorough cleaning of the building. This will be a project that must be completed periodically to ensure that our building stays clean and that all systems are working efficiently. A special "thank you" to those who provided the "sweet treats" to get everyone off to a good start.



MINISTRY INTERN



Hello, siblings in Our Redeemer and Savior, Christ! I requested some space in the newsletter to provide a spiritual challenge for those who are up for one. If you are not, ask yourself why?

The challenge is something that was first assigned to me in August 2017 when I entered Phillips Seminary. That my faith family is using expansive language when talking about God. What does that even mean? Expansive language is not exclusively using male pronouns when referring to God. Expansive language is practiced by not utilizing only He, Him, His, Father. We are tasked at the seminary to either balance it with She, Her, Hers, Mother, or to only say They, Them, Their. I opt for the latter of They, Them, Their when referring to God. Additionally, instead of the Kingdom of God, Reign of God. Some might have heard this in my prayers and sermons.

A part of the policy at Phillips that hits home for me is “we know that language is not merely a collection of inert tools that enable us to ‘say what we want to say’ but is a powerful and subtle force that orders the forms and values through which we perceive and interpret our world.” When we use exclusive pronouns for God, we put God in a box. Which we all know is not possible.

The two main arguments that I have heard made against the use of expansive language:

“We have always done it this way; there is no need to change it. It would be too hard to change.”

“It is something I don’t even think about; I don’t mean anything bad by it.”

Just because something has “always been done” does not mean you cannot or should not change it. There was a multitude of practices in Scripture and in Church that have changed, and it has been for the better. If it is something a person does not think about or mean anything wrong by it, then it shouldn’t be a big deal to change it.

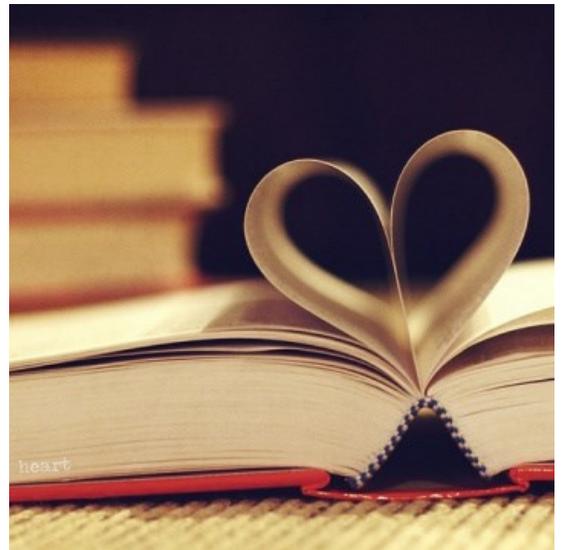
Expansive language is not some “politically correct nonsense.” This language isn’t about politics; this is about a social issue to end the oppression created to advance male leadership. I know someone who fought and died for trying to end oppression and challenging what was “normal,” Christ.

Expansive language is knowing and loving God in profound ways other than the gender binary we have created. Changing my language has been a challenge and continues to be something I am always working on. When I recognize I am not using expansive language, I do not beat myself up but rather acknowledge the mistake and fix it.

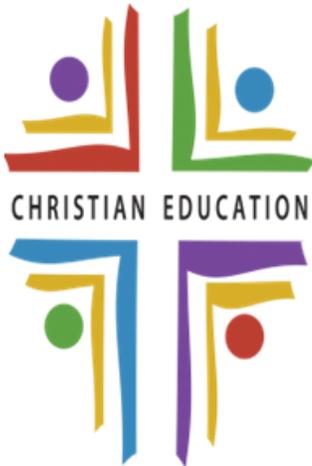
In reading, I have gotten to the point where I can easily switch out words. In worship, if you have been next to me, I am sure you have heard it. It has become easier to do when talking and seamless in writing. The challenge has proven to be an opportunity to grow my relationship with God in a new and life-changing way.

I ask that you walk alongside me in this challenge. We say we welcome all, so lets sincerely welcome all with expansive language that makes God accessible to all who hope to live faithfully in the Reign of God on Their Creation.

Peace and Love, *Lukus Ebert*



DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY



The Discipleship Ministry Team met on October 22 and chose a 5 member board to aid in coordination with our childcare ministry. Team members will determine on responsibilities for this board to facilitate communication with the childcare staff. They are the following: Pam Russell, Alicia Chaline, Renate Woodmansee, Cassie Anderson along with Ashley VanGilder and Pastor Ben Hitzfeld. It is anticipated that this board will help the Childcare Director with major decisions, offer support and evaluation as appropriate.

Members are asked to schedule all events and activities through the church office calendar in order to coordinate the spaces in our facility with other groups. There is a small space in the basement area that could hold a small group meeting now. (Handicapped accessibility needs would have to be considered.)

The DMT budget was discussed and will be presented to Coordinating Council.

Elves Workshop (Parents' day out) has been scheduled for Saturday, December 14. Craft activities, lunch and a movie will be provided. We will be looking for volunteers to facilitate this event so our parents of young children can take advantage of this. There will be a small fee requested for lunch and craft materials.

Our team is exploring ways that we can involve our children in more advent activities. We have placed several 2020 events on the calendar and the DMT will be meeting on January 13, 2020 to plan and to continue nurturing the education ministry of FCC. If you are interested in joining this team, new members and ideas are always welcome.

Linda Gallagher, Chair Discipleship Ministry Team

Miss Kylee playing in the narthex area with our first toddler to join From Cradles to Crayons!



DISCIPLES WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP



Tresa Landis and Alex Brazill enjoyed the weekend retreat, October 4-6.



Cindy Garwick and Debi Rogers attended the midweek retreat, October 2-4.

KANSAS DISCIPLES WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP RETREAT AT TAWAKONI

It was good to be reminded of "Faith That Overflows" (this year's theme). Kirby Gould's keynotes were thoughtful, emotional, and inspiring. Of course the fellowship with women from all over the state was wonderful, and workshops provided ideas for Faith Sisters. The thought that has stuck in my head, though, is that we are filled again each and every day with God's constant love so that we may pour it out on others. This was my first, but not last, DWF retreat, and I hope more women can go next year. *Debi Rogers*

I was blessed, as a first timer, to find the midweek Kansas Disciples Women's Fall Retreat at Tawakoni to be a place to gather for study, prayer, and fellowship with sisters from across the region. Grace, faith, and love overflowing were woven through four song filled worship gatherings. Each service called us to "Be the Ripple"—tell the story. I was reminded how connected we are as DWF no matter where we live as Christians (DOC): the keynote speaker knows my home church minister in Minnesota, someone knows my new faith friends from St. Louis, women from other congregations know those who have served FCC Manhattan in a variety of capacities over the years, and we shared stories of an interim minister over a meal with women from his home church family. *Cindy Garwick*



Disciples Women's Fellowship gives thanks to everyone who contributed to their food booth at Pumpkin Patch this year. This fundraiser was a big success collecting a total of \$1,909.10. All the proceeds will help support the ministries of DWF. We truly appreciate the collective effort of everyone involved!

FROM CRADLES TO CRAYONS CHILDCARE

We have 5 infants currently enrolled and several more starting over the next couple of months. We opened our mixed age toddler and preschool classroom, Monday October 28th and will slowly split out and open the remaining classrooms as more children start. I would like to introduce our lead teachers for our 2 year old and 3 year old classrooms. They will be co-teaching in the mixed age classroom as it starts out. Thank you to all of the support from the FCC congregation as we get up and running.

We are still looking for all sizes and seasons of infant and toddler clothes to have as extras to keep on hand in case a child runs out. In addition, we are needing a microwave for our kitchenette. If anyone has an extra, please contact me at cassie@fccmanhattan.org or bring donations by the church office. Thank you, *Cassie Anderson, Director*



Hello! My name is Tracie Higgins, the Lead Teacher of the Two Year Old Room. I am an experienced educator who has spent over 10 years in the classroom. I hold a Bachelor's of Science in Early Childhood Education from Kansas State university. Originally I'm from California but moved to Manhattan with my husband in 2015. I am very passionate about working with young children, especially 2 year-olds. They are my favorite age! I'm very excited to be building a new classroom community at FCC. For fun I play the ukulele, sew, and craft. If you have any questions about me feel free to ask!

Hello - my name is Kylee Weisenberger! I'm the Lead Teacher of the Three Year Old Room at From Cradles to Crayons. Originally from Southern California, I moved to Kansas two years ago to be closer to my family. Over the years Kansas has slowly won my heart and I've learned to appreciate all the beautiful things this state has to offer. From an early age, I knew that my heart, passion, purpose and path was to work with children. I began my teaching career in California at age 17 and have been blessed to continue my career after relocating to Kansas. I am truly dedicated to the social and emotional development of each child and have made it my goal to make sure they receive the support and love they deserve! When I'm not teaching, I'm helping raise my beautiful 2-year-old nephew. I enjoy traveling, when I have the chance, and all things music! If there is one thing to know about me, it's that I am the BIGGEST Disney fanatic you will ever meet! So, if you happen to see me sporting a pair of my silly Disney socks, know that yes, I meant to wear them out! I look forward to continuing to shape young minds at FCC and can't wait to meet you and your little ones!



BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

General building construction and the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony are behind us. We are moving into a phase of understanding how we can optimize the usage of the church campus to the benefit of our church family and the surrounding community. The church workday on October 12th resulted in a thorough cleaning of the facility, replacement of air filters in the ceiling ducts of the Administration/Education wing, and rearrangement of the lower level storage area to better accommodate the space for scouts, youth, and the storage of seasonal/special items. Many thanks to the folks who helped on workday....we are effectively making every square inch of space presentable and usable.

The fall season will allow us to schedule replacement of various trees and shrubs that have not survived. Depending upon the weather and the advice of Blueville we will be cleaning up the areas east of the church that have been seeded with the Grand Mere mix and buffalo grass and preparing these areas for over seeding in the spring. Winter weather will soon arrive and the issue of snow removal in the parking lot and on sidewalks on Sundays and week days has been addressed.

The demolition, expansion, and repair of the sidewalk on the northeast corner and north side of the Education wing are completed. This area has been newly landscaped with three Spartan Juniper trees and a Dwarf Burning Bush shrub to help camouflage the child care storage unit. After the official opening of the "From Cradles to Crayons" child care in September we now have several infants and children enrolled.

We continue to work closely with our construction firm and subcontractors in addressing numerous "punch list" items. Painting and repair of several narthex walls have been done. Fine tuning of the A/V systems throughout the facility is an on-going effort. Malfunctioning exterior electrical receptacles and water stained ceiling tiles have been replaced. While doing the water testing of the sanctuary roof all of the roof caps were sealed. Several concrete cuts in the patio and the base of the east door and windows of the narthex have been caulked. As mentioned in a previous report, the Building Committee is committed to working with our construction firm and roofing subcontractor to fix these areas that cause the leaks prior to winter weather. In retrospect, on a positive note, all of the wind and rain this past summer have allowed us to keep on top of water leakage and drips in several areas.

All doors throughout the building (manual and electronic) are being monitored and adjusted if there are opening and closure issues. The interior edges of the double doors at the north end of the narthex hallway have been shaved, sanded, and varnished to allow smooth closure.



Mowing the Grand Mere Mix grass on the hill around our church property.

The Building Committee encourages and welcomes comments and suggestions that would improve the facility and provide a more acceptable physical and worship/fellowship environment. If these suggestions cannot be addressed by the Building Committee they will be forwarded to the appropriate Ministry Team(s).

Respectfully submitted,

Richard R. Gallagher, Chair of FCC Building Committee

GOOD NEWS!

USD 383 FIT CLOSET CONEX STORAGE FUNDRAISER

IT IS AMAZING HOW SMALL CHANGE ADDS UP TO A HUGE GOOD DEED!

Just a reminder that The TRUTH Youth Group is currently raising money through the "Change for Change" fundraiser for the purchase of a Conex storage container for the USD 383 FIT Closet. The goal is to raise approximately \$2,500 to purchase a storage unit. The unit will be placed on USD 383 property and will be used to store furniture donated to the FIT Closet.

David Woodmansee, Youth Leader



CROP WALK



On Sunday, October 6th, the TRUTH Youth Group participated in the CROP Hunger Awareness Walk. The youth group donated \$100 from existing youth funds, plus an additional \$20 donated from other church members. It was a great day for a walk! (Pictured left to right: Mac and Zoey, Drew, Mackenzie, Mr. Dave, Elizabeth, Rose, Dakota, Nicholas, Gabe, Michael, and Frank.)

CUB SCOUTS

Trick or Treat!

Our Cub Scouts had a really fun Halloween party with super treats, games and decorations, all in our Fellowship Hall. It was a delightful night!



TRUTH YOUTH GROUP



KANSAS DISCIPLES YOUTH CONVENTION IN HUTCHINSON NOVEMBER 8-9-10

The TRUTH Youth Group will be joining other 6th through 12th graders from around northeast Kansas in Hutchinson for a weekend full of teaching, learning, fellowship, service, and fun! Our keynote speaker this year is Rev. Virzola Law. Law is well-known among Disciples for her years of service including most recently, supporting the XPLORE program of the National Benevolent Association. She currently serves as the

newly called pastor at Northway Christian Church in Dallas. Please keep our youth and the many adult leaders who make this event possible in your thoughts and prayers this month.

BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER NOVEMBER 17TH

On Sunday, November 17th, the TRUTH Youth Group will be making breakfast to order in Fellowship Hall between 8:30 and 10:30 in the morning. Funds raised help the group cover the costs for KDYC lodging and travel and for our ski trip in December.



WOOD PILE PROJECT



On October 14th, we went to McReynolds home and built a wood pile in exchange for a donation to our youth fund. Pastor Ben volunteered to cook us lunch. We enjoyed grilled hamburgers, brats, chicken & hotdogs. Pictured from left to right: Frank, Nicholas, Elizabeth, Michael's friend, Dakota, Micheal, Tristan, Becca, Annie, Mackenzie, Mac, Mr. Dave, Drew (holding Zoey), and Jenna. (Rose is not pictured but was there!)



ALL ABOUT US



What a blessing we were given when we were able to use your church. Thank you to all who made us feel so welcome and made everything easy from being able to use the kitchen to the beautiful room and view. Thanks to Pastor Ben for accepting my brother's wishes. Christopher's life was filled with so many challenges yet he continued to be optimistic through it all. I'm a great believer in little miracles everywhere and meeting Marian Fuller in the church office who knew my mother did my heart so good! Being able to use your church—miracle. And Deb Marfield, my sister's best friend—a miracle. Always willing to be there for Christopher and Dani and I'm sure for so many more. I believe in the power of prayer, so as life continues on, please pray especially for Christopher and me and our family.

Heather McLoughlin

Thank you for the use of your beautiful church for the Celebration of my brother, Chris Green's life. We felt so welcomed. It was a pleasure to meet Pastor Ben. We certainly appreciated Dave Rogers coming to get the sound system up and running. I'm blessed to have Deb Marfield as a life long friend and know she loves being a member of your church.

Sincerely, Danielle Spain

Huge thanks to you, the beloved congregation, for remembering us on ministers' recognition day with a gift card for our favorite eatery--Texas Roadhouse. We continue to be blessed just by being members of First Christian Church. God bless you all a bunch!!! *Ben & Carol Duerfeldt*

If you still have keys to 115 Courthouse Plaza but won't be needing to get into that building anymore, please turn in those keys to the church



BLESSED BIRTHDAY!

November 2	Cindy Garwick
November 3	Patty Duffy
November 5	Cindy Sink Pat McReynolds
November 7	Gregg Masterson
November 11	Ann Foster
November 16	Janet Webster
November 18	Fred Landis
November 27	Rick Allen
November 28	Tresa Landis
November 29	Tom Carvalho

Do you shop at HyVee? If so, do you have grocery cards? If not, find Debi Rogers before or after church and she will be glad to sell you some.

They come in \$25 increments, work like a debit card, and we get a percentage back. This, plus what we receive when you sign up for Dillons Community Rewards, goes to support our youth activities – in particular to fund scholarships for every child/youth to attend camp.



**FOOD COLLECTION SUNDAY IS
NOVEMBER 3**

DO Something



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
3001 Grand Mere Parkway
Manhattan, KS 66503

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First Christian Church,
Senior Pastor: Ben Hitzfeld
Ministry Intern: Lukus Ebert
Christian Education Director: Ashley VanGilder
Campus Minister: Rev. Christian Watkins, 904 Sunset
Treasurer: Patty Duffy
Financial Secretary: Lukus Ebert
Church Secretary: Marian Fuller
Custodian: Lori Teel

church@fccmanhattan.org
ben@fccmanhattan.org
lukus.ebert@ptstulsa.edu
ashley@fccmanhattan.org
revwatkins@ksu.edu.
treasurer@fccmanhattan.org
treasurer@fccmanhattan.org
marian@fccmanhattan.org
kstedybear@yahoo.com

785.776.8790
785.776.8790
785.776.8790
620.218.2594
785.539.4281
785.665.8790
785.776.8790
785.776.8790
785.776.8790



On November 24, Disciples churches across the US and Canada will collect the Thanksgiving offering. Your gift to the Thanksgiving offering helps to support the work of our institutions of higher learning in many ways: financially supporting Disciples related schools, providing undergraduate scholarships and support for spiritual life offices, and providing scholarships and support for those pursuing theological education.