

CHRISTIAN CHURCH NEWS



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

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Our Mission

God calls us...

And the Holy Spirit empowers us to:

- *Share the Good News of Jesus Christ with all ages*
- *Explore and express a growing faith*
- *Equip believers for ministries which expand the Kingdom of God.*

Come to Worship.

All Are Invited.

8:00 Coffee House

8:30 Praise Service

9:30 Sunday School

10:40 Trad. Worship

Noon-Coffee

Fellowship

**Next Newsletter is
January 12.**

The Weight of a Snowflake- A Christmas Parable

"Tell me the weight of a snowflake," a sparrow asked a wild dove.

"Nothing more than nothing," was the answer.

"In that case I must tell a marvelous story," the sparrow said. "I sat on a branch of a fir tree, close to its trunk, when it began to snow, not heavily, not a giant blizzard, no, just like in a dream, without any violence. Since I didn't have anything better to do, I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs and needles of my branch. Their number was exactly 3,741,952. When the next snowflake dropped onto the branch - nothing more than nothing, as you say - the branch broke off."

Having said that, the sparrow flew away. The dove thought about the story for a while and finally said to herself:

"Perhaps there is only one voice lacking for peace to come in our world."

Whenever you think your contributions, acts of charity, work for justice, gifts of love, or your talents are nothing, or are small in comparison to those of others, remember that when one is added to another, and then to another, great things can happen---from "nothing more than nothing."

This year's growing project raised \$8,000, and we chose the Kenya program to be our recipient.

Thank you for being part of Foods Resource Bank! We hope that you will continue to support our project to help overseas programs.

Happy New Year!

January 2012: Seeking God's Vision

Written by Emily Goldthwaite Fries

January 1, 2012

When he [Barnabas] came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to God with steadfast purpose. Acts 11:23

I recently explored Bethlehem with a friend who lived there before the construction of the 30 foot concrete wall that snakes through the city. Back then, people generally moved freely to and from Jerusalem, just a few miles to the north. Tourists flooded the city not just at Christmas time, but year round. Farmers tended the orchards and fields that had sustained them for centuries.

Today, the separation wall and its system of permits and identification cards generally exclude Bethlehem residents from crossing to Jerusalem, and discourage visitors from entering. The wall creates a very different landscape. The main road into town is blocked by the wall, so the neighborhood which used to welcome visitors driving in from Jerusalem now resembles a ghost town. As we followed the wall around and between homes and closed-up shops we tried to imagine how it might feel to live in this neighborhood today.

On my way home from my volunteer work at the Palestinian Lutheran schools one day, as I crossed the checkpoint to return to Jerusalem (a privilege of holding a US passport), I feared that I have little hope to offer our students, who have experienced so much trauma and humiliation. Who am I to tell them there is a better future ahead? I felt ashamed that I could not even visualize Bethlehem without the wall. In that moment, I asked God to show me a vision of Bethlehem freed from the wall. I had come to the realization that I couldn't do it myself – I did not have the answer.

Later that same week, I saw the vision I had asked for. Many visions, in fact: paintings, collages, comics, and quotes painted on the wall. The graffiti is the work of both local and international artists. One mural pictures people opening the wall by pulling down a giant zipper; my favorite portrays the giant panels of the wall falling toward the viewer, with a clear view of Jerusalem on the other side, and a ladder to heaven revealing God's love to the people. It is the work of the faithful in this conflicted land who seek God's vision above all the cruelties imposed by human hands and dollars.

We pray together, as in the old Irish hymn, “Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me save that thou art.” Please, God, reveal to us the potential you see in your creation. You are what matters – we want to witness your truth in this messed up world. Your powerful vision of peace has the last word.

Rev. Emily Goldthwaite Fries is an ordained minister of the UCC who has volunteers through Global Ministries to accompany our partners of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

January Board Meeting
January 11, 7:28 p.m.
Refreshments will be served in the
parlor.

Chi Rho and CYF (6th -12th grades)

New video study begins January 8 at 5p.m.
Invite your friends to be part of the "Gospel
Journey."

JUNIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (JYF)

Will meet every Sunday evening, 5-7 p.m.

Thank you notes

*We want to say a big thank you to the church
for the gifts given this Christmas.*

*We also want to say thank you for the treats
that were brought in. We enjoyed those too
much!!*

Cindy & Kevin Howard

*Thank you to all at First Christian for the
Christmas gifts to us. It is our pleasure and
privilege to participate in the music ministry of
the church.*

Anita & Gary Grigsby

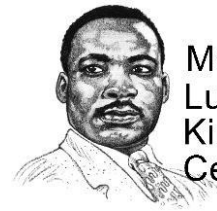
*Noel and I want to thank Mary Howey for the
beautiful carnation she brought for our 55th
Anniversary, 12-22-2011.*

*We had a great visit. It was fun. Thank you
Mary.*

Noel and Shirley Dougherty

*Thank you First Christian Church for allowing
the Christmas Store to use your building for our
annual holiday meal distribution.*

The Christmas Store Committee



Martin
Luther
King Jr.
Celebration

January 15, 2012

6:30 p.m.

@ Community of Christ
700 S. Mitchell St.

Christian Book Club

Do you like to read? We are thinking about
starting a Christian Book Club during the
daytime. If you are interested, call the church
office with your name and time preference.

**GEARING UP FOR THE 2012
'SOUPER BOWL'**

We need to start bringing in our soup
cans! "Souper Bowl" will be here before we
know it!

Share Your Memories With Us

The Photo Exhibit will add new photos of
"Veterans." Jerry will begin changing those out
the first of the year.



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*The Christian Church News is
 Published Twice a Month*

Come to Worship!
Everyone is Welcome!

Coffee House in CLC: 8:00 a.m.
 Praise Service: 8:30 a.m.
 Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.-All Ages
 Worship: 10:40 a.m.
 Coffee Fellowship: 12 noon in Parlor

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 64093

Return Service Requested



Throughout this week, we invite you to pray for these and others announced in worship.

Name

Blake Walsh
 Vivian Turnbow
 Our Law Enforcement
 Our Military who are deployed



JANUARY

January Celebrations

Happy Birthday!

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1-Missy Whisenhunt | 17-Nick Nichol |
| 2-Tori Hunter | 18-Milfred Hall |
| 3-Clint Godfrey | 21-Nora Sullivan |
| 5-Cindy Howard | 22-Pat Turner |
| 5-Kyle Ritchhart | 23-Robert Cochran |
| 8-Duane Sterling | 23-Sterling Granger |
| 12-Karla Seigfreid | 27-Gary Grigsby |
| 14-Sean Sullivan | 29-Jane Russell |
| 15-Shirley Fitterling | |
| 17-Mary Younce | |

Happy Anniversary

- 8-Peggy & Rich Dudley
 14-Linda & Don Hoover