

# Church Life

Experiencing and Sharing Christ through Love & Service



October, November, December 2021

Volume 73, Issue 3

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## CWF Noel Market, Saturday November 6

The Christian Women's Fellowship has finalized plans for their Bake Sale and Soup and Cornbread Luncheon to be held Saturday, November 6th. The Bake Sale will be in the fellowship hall from 8 AM until noon. Masks will be required by all attending. There will be two raffles this year. One, an antique quilt, and the other a large basket of seasonal party items (paper plates, napkins, dishtowels and décor for winter, spring, summer, and fall). Raffle tickets can be purchased in advance from CWF members, calling or texting Doris Cella at 270-994-4228 or can be bought at the Bake Sale.

Because of COVID, the Soup and Cornbread Luncheon will be served by take out only, at \$6.00 per serving. This will include a soup of choice (vegetable beef or white bean), homemade cornbread and pie. There will only be 100 tickets sold. Tickets must be purchased by October 28th from CWF members, or Doris Cella. Take out lunches must be picked up at the fellowship hall on November 6th from 10:00 to 12:00.

**Sunday Worship Services:**

9:30 AM— Sunday School

10:30 AM—Worship Service

**Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday, 11AM—1PM

**Phone:**

(270) 753-3824

**Church email:**

Main office:

fccmurray@gmail.com

Pastor Ruth:

ruthragovin@gmail.com



## Pastor's Article

Dear Church Family and Friends,

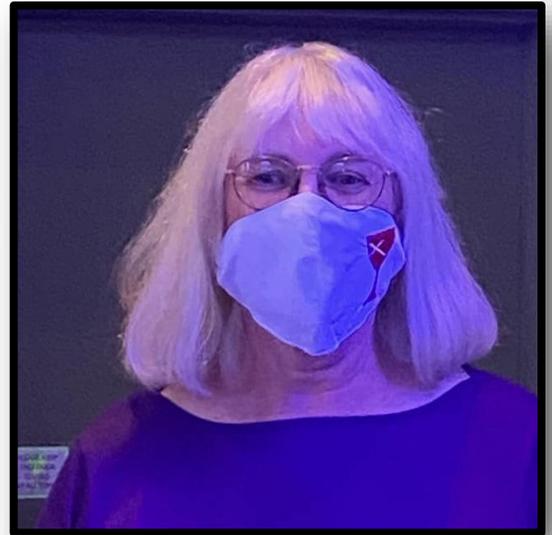
While our weekly "Tuesday Email" has been going out faithfully over the past few months, the last edition of *Church Life* was published at the end of last April (the May/June/July edition) as one of the last things that our Director of Communications, Debbie Batteiger, did before leaving on May 20 to assume a position as a journalist. We remember that she ended up leaving a week earlier than initially planned as she rushed to her mother's bedside to be with her when she took her final breath, dying from Covid-19, even though she had been vaccinated.

Our initial search for a new administrative assistant was not successful as no good match was found. This position requires someone not just with a good skill-set but also someone of outstanding character with excellent communication skills. We were so fortunate that my friend Angela Thomas (wife of our recently deceased congregant Steve Horwood) helped us make contact with an enormously gifted young woman named Katelyn Crane, who began working at the church on July 20th. She will introduce herself to you following my article. I know that you will enjoy working with her. So as not to overload Katelyn as she had to learn to do so many new things with initially limited hours (about to be extended), we decided to hold off on publishing *Church Life* until now, even though this meant a long gap between issues.

During the period of time between Debbie and Katelyn, when Judy Lyle and I were overseeing the office, I reflected on the evolution of *Church Life* under my watch. When I first arrived back in February of 2009, *Church Life* came out biweekly. It was a cumbersome task as everything was typed out, clip art manually added, run off on the photocopier machine (there were usually 3 or 4 pages), folded, mailing labels put on, then the mail was sorted into categories based on mailing addresses, and brought to the post office where it was snail mailed out to over 100 households at the bulk mail rate.

About a year or so later, Steve Parker, who worked at Printing Supplies over on 4<sup>th</sup> Street, mentioned to us that they could do an attractive mailing for us that would look highly professional. We decided to give it a try. For a few years we emailed articles and photos to them, which their graphic artist turned into a beautiful slick glossy publication. This made our lives so much easier. However, it was very expensive since postage costs still needed to be added to that. Margaret Heath, our administrative assistant at that time, next came up with the idea that she wanted to try to produce *Church Life* using the Microsoft Publisher program on her computer. She did an outstanding job of creating an attractive and informative version of *Church Life*, which she then ran off on the copy machine and snail mailed out at a bulk mail rate.

When Amanda Pennington arrived as our administrative assistant, her goal was to help us streamline things and save money. She wondered why, since so many people were on the internet, we weren't emailing *Church Life* out to everyone who had email addresses, leaving out paper copies for those who weren't on email but were at church on Sundays or weekdays, and only snail mailing it out to those who did not have email and were not at church (the homebound and those who did not live in Murray). During her tenure with us she used her knowledge of graphic design to give *Church*



# Pastor's Article

*Life* a facelift with a view to it being primarily an online publication. Needless to say, our postage costs went way down since most people could receive a version via email. Additionally, instead of it being a bi-weekly publication, we began to produce it ten times a year (with November / December being a single volume). To stay connected to the congregation between issues of *Church Life*, we created a weekly email that included the upcoming events, joys, concerns, giving information etc., which we started calling the "Tuesday Email" since it covered from that week's Tuesday until the following week's Monday.

When Debbie Batteiger took over, assuming the title of "Director of Communications," with the goal of increasing the communication not only within the congregation but also outside the church, she correctly believed it was important to prioritize the weekly "Tuesday Email" over *Church Life*. She upgraded what we could do with it by moving from sending it out with the church's Gmail to using a program called Mailchimp. This allowed her to include photos and even videos and also apps that led the readers directly to our website([www.fccmurray.com](http://www.fccmurray.com)) and our church's Facebook and Instagram pages.

While *Church Life* still was important, the decision was made to publish it six rather than ten times a year. Since Debbie loved photos, *Church Life* began to include a more substantial photographic look back at previous events while advertising upcoming events. The last few editions of *Church Life* under Debbie's watch also included a number of Faith Journeys given by members of the congregation during this Covid period of time.

And now, with this issue, Katelyn is taking the helm of this publication, which has such a longstanding history and has played such an important connecting role in our historic congregation. A decision now has been made to begin publishing *Church Life* quarterly in the following four editions:

- January / February / March
- April / May / June
- July / August / September
- October / November / December

This division dovetails well with the flow of the liturgical year and the way our events tend to be organized. *Church Life* will continue to include a look back at the past months (in this case going all the way back to May) and a view forward three months (in this case the Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas seasons). Katelyn, as the editor of this publication, will have final say over what is included and she will leave her own unique mark on it. The weekly email, however, will take precedence since it will always have the most updated information. As we continue on into what may be yet another fall and winter with Covid, we have no real way of knowing whether the activities we advertise in *Church Life* (e.g., the Christmas Eve service) will take place in person or virtually. So please be sure and read your weekly 'Tuesday Emails'! And please be sure to welcome Katelyn Crane as our new administrative assistant! I think you will discover, as I have, that she is simply awesome!

In Christian Love and Service,

Pastor Ruth

## A Letter from our Administrative Assistant



Hello FCC!

The past few months have certainly been a whirlwind, getting to know my responsibilities here at the church, as well as many of the wonderful people who call FCC home. I have never felt more welcomed, appreciated and cared about in a job, as I already do here at FCC! Thank you to each and every one of you who has gone out of your way to make this new journey a pleasant one for me.

I never imagined I would end up working as an administrative assistant at a church. I attended a few different Christian churches growing up, and it was a strong foundation for who I would become— a thoughtful, caring, heart centered person, seeking Truth. Although church has not been a significant part of my adulthood, I have certainly grown closer to God in my years since moving out on my own.

Growing up, I didn't have a lot of guidance on what I could do with my life. By the time I had reached the point in high school where friends were applying to colleges, the thought of going for a career I'd spend every day doing for decades to come felt repulsing to me!

The one thing I did always know is that I wanted to have a family and be a mother. So I partnered up at 17 and at 19 I got pregnant for the first time but at 8 weeks had a miscarriage. The doctors told me the statistics of how normal this was, but I couldn't help look at myself and wonder why my body rejected the pregnancy. At this point I was about 20 lbs. overweight, heavier than I ever had been. I was living the typical young adult lifestyle of eating mostly junk food, drinking all the soda and sweet drinks I wanted and simply paid no attention to my general well being. Looking back, this wasn't just a "young-adult" thing like I thought, but was more about the way in which I was raised. Health was never a priority, or even a thought, until someone was in crisis mode.

Because of the miscarriage, I began to do my own research on health and was immediately inundated with information on our food system and its brokenness. I slowly incorporated changes to my diet. I cooked more, I ate less processed foods and drinks. And at 20, I became pregnant again. It was a perfect pregnancy. I rarely ever felt nauseas and I had zero complications. Xavier came into the world (10 days late!) on a beautifully dreary morning in November of 2010. Being a mother only deepened my desire to give my family the best that I could.

As Xavier began to grow out of infancy and into toddlerhood, I began to think about my larger role in the community I was a part of. What good was all this knowledge if all I did was keep it to myself? So when Xavier was two, I began seeking a way to study nutrition, so that I could empower others to educate themselves on what they put into their bodies. After talking with a few folks about a traditional dietetics/nutrition program, I knew this wasn't the route for me. I kept digging and found an accredited program at Southwest Institute of Healing Arts (S.W.I.H.A.). Shortly after starting school, some unfortunate events came to a head & I separated from my husband & eventually went through a divorce.

## A Letter from our Administrative Assistant

But this school that I had begun at the perfect time was my saving grace. I was first attracted to S.W.I.H.A for their nutrition classes, but I learned so much about Holistic Health that has shaped the person that I am so happy I have become. It was a great support in that transition time for my family.

The program I entered would bring me a degree in Mind Body Transformational Psychology, as well as certificates in Holistic Nutrition & Life Coaching. That introduction to “holistic health” changed my life.

According to **OxfordLanguages** the word holistic when referring to philosophy is “*characterized by comprehension of the parts of something as intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole.*” and likewise when referred to in medicine is “*characterized by the treatments of the whole person, taking into account mental and social factors, rather than just the symptoms of a disease.*”

It seems obvious to me now, that our health and well being would be determined not just by some disease state that happens **to** us, but by the many intricacies that make up our own unique human story. Our health is effected by everything— the food and drink we consume, the amount of movement our body is allowed, the things we put onto our skin, the products we use in our homes, the families we are born into and the environments that raise us, the amount of stress we deal with on a regular basis, the thoughts we think and the words we speak, the media and entertainment we inundate ourselves with, the air we breathe and the amount of sunlight we receive, etc. Every little thing.

The thought of this sometimes seems a bit daunting, but it is also the most empowering lesson I have ever acquired in this life. Human beings are incredibly powerful. Every choice we make harnesses that power in one way or another. And we live in a country where we have so much freedom of choice.

Although I am still far from a perfect example of health, I am healthier and more whole and balanced than I have ever been. Learning the power that my choices have has inspired me in many ways— to grow & prepare my own food, to spend lots of time outdoors moving my body in different ways, to pay attention to how different activities make me feel, to go to therapy, to be discerning of who I spend my time with, to focus on what nourishes myself and my family. I learned that the most important thing I could do for my community is to stay centered on what it is that brings me health and wellness. Because when I am balanced, I can be of best service to my family and then greater community.

No one’s health and wellness journey will look identical, because that is just the nature of nature! And that is what humans are, nature. But I hope that I can be an example of getting curious and empowered by the impact of our own daily choices.

With Blessings of Empowerment,

Katelyn Crane

# From the Church Buildings Reopening Committee

We will continue to offer Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. and meet in person in our sanctuary at 10:30 a.m., as we follow the guidelines of the CDC. We believe that we can safely do this because the majority of the people attending have been vaccinated. We recognize, however, that many of you prefer to join the worship celebration virtually either through Facebook Live or Zoom. We will try to provide these virtual options, internet permitting, and as long as we have volunteers to oversee the equipment.

As a measure of respect and love for each other, please observe the following guidelines established by the committee last year:

1. Wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, except when observing communion. (Extra masks are available in the narthex.)
2. Practice social distancing.
3. Enter by the southeast door (the left one when facing the church front). Please pick up a pre-packaged communion cup upon entering and a mask if you do not have one with you. The bulletins also are on that table. *(NOTE: if you need gluten-free communion bread, you may find some on the table immediately upon entering the sanctuary.)*
4. Collection plates will be available at the doors leading into the narthexes at the back of the church sanctuary and also the door at the front of the sanctuary leading into the hallway.
5. Exit through either of the doors on the south side.



# Disciples Men's Fellowship



Once a month the Disciples Men's Fellowship meets with other men from Disciples of Christ churches in the Far West Area for a meal, time of fellowship, and program. We travel in the church van to the church where it is being posted. Dan McKeel, DMF chair, will let the men know what time the van is leaving from the church parking lot.

## The far West Christian Men's group will meet:

**October 19, 7PM:** Meet at Maxon Christian Church  
7920 Cairo Rd. West Paducah, KY 42086

**November 16, 7PM:** Meet at Paducah Christian Church  
415 Audubon Dr. Paducah, KY 42001

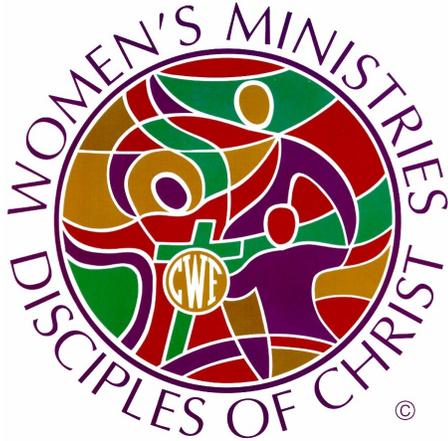
**December:** No meeting this month

## Six Things You Can Do to Help Support Our Church

by Pastor Ruth and Katelyn Crane

1. Pray for our congregation during this anxious time when the pandemic continues to rage.
2. Attend Worship! Either in-person as we continue to wear masks and social distance or virtually on Facebook Live or Zoom. As the virus begins to wane, let's set a goal of filling our pews back up. Think of inviting someone to worship with you.
3. Commit to incorporating the messages and teachings into your everyday life. Remember that Christianity is not just about showing up to church on Sundays, but about living a Christ centered life.
4. Reach Out and Connect with those who are unable to attend worship at this time. Give them a call, bring them a meal or something you know will make them smile and feel cared for. If you would like a copy of the church directory please either call us at 270-753-3824 or email us at fccmurray@gmail.com
5. Volunteer to help with some task or ministry of our church! Share your gifts. What are you good at? What lights you up? Find a way to share these gifts with your church family. Teamwork makes the dream work!
6. Give Financially to the ongoing support of the church. Every little bit matters! To learn why our member Bobbie Raby gives to the church, see her article in the financial giving section in this issue of Church Life. You may put your tithes and offerings into the offering plate in the sanctuary, drop it off in the church office, put it into the mail slot beside the door leading into the fellowship hall, mail it to the church at 111 North Fifth St, Murray, KY 42071, or give online through Givelify.

# Christian Women's Fellowship



## Coming Up:

### Saturday November 6

Christmas Bake Sale:	8:00 am -Noon
Soup & Cornbread	10:30am-12:30 pm
Luncheon:	

Both groups invite all ladies of the church to join them any month for meetings including prayer, motivational lessons and fellowship. You can even do as some do and attend both groups!

### Group I Meetings:

Meets in the church fellowship hall on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm.

#### **October 12, 2021**

Hostess: Norma Jean Williams & Pastor Ruth

Lesson: Ann Thornton

#### **November 9, 2021**

Hostess: Celeste McCallister

Lesson: Charlotte VanDyke

#### **December 14, 2021**

Hostess: Betty McCord

Lesson: June VanderMolen

### Group II Meetings:

Meets in the church fellowship hall on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm.

#### **Monday October 18, 2021 (Meet at 5:30)**

Clean Fellowship Hall & Kitchen

#### **November 15, 2021**

Hostess: Emily Kennedy

Program: undecided

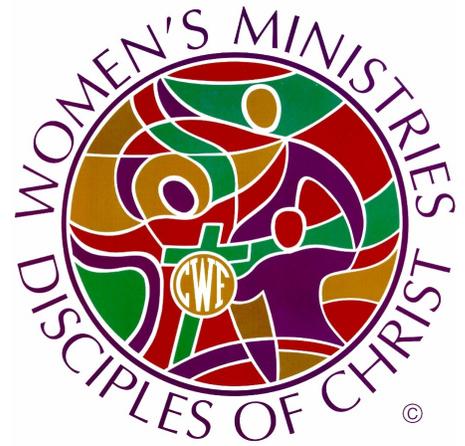
#### **December 20, 2021**

Christmas potluck at Carmen Garland's home

# CWF Fall Report

The Christian Women's Fellowship started the 2021-2022 year September 1, 2021 with the traditional salad potluck supper with fourteen attending. The food was delicious! We wish to thank Betty McCord and Vicki Holton for the lovely table settings and decorations.

Plans for November 6, 2021 CWF Christmas Bake Sale and Soup and Cornbread Luncheon were discussed. Much consideration is being given to the COVID pandemic and final details are pending. However the general CWF asks for those in the



congregation who are willing to begin baking and canning goods for the Bake Sale. Also we ask for donations of small Christmas trees, ornaments. And trimmings. If you donate any of these, please leave them in the fellowship hall.

Rebecca Landolt once again has been very generous in donating a beautiful antique quilt. Raffle tickets can be brought from CWF members, or by contacting Leah Heart at 270-293-1213. The raffle tickets continue to be \$1.00 per ticket, or six tickets for \$5.00.

June VanderMolen has also donated a very large lovely basket of seasonal party goods. This includes paper plates. Napkins, dishtowels and small décor for winter, spring, summer and fall enjoyment. This too will be raffled at the same ticket prices as the antique quilt.



# Upcoming Events

**EVERYONE (NEAR AND FAR) IS INVITED TO ATTEND OUR  
MIDWEEK 'VIRTUAL' LIVE GATHERING**



**Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 6-7:30 PM on Zoom.**

During our time together we will:

- Fellowship *(as we update each other about our lives)*
- Reflect on a piece of poetry that has spiritual or ethical importance *(to be emailed out earlier that day, but which need not have been read beforehand to participate)*
- Deepen into a passage of scripture *(sometimes a Psalm, or a lectionary passage that the sermon may be based on the following Sunday, or a scripture that is relevant to the time)*
- Listen to some music *(always a piece by Carrie Newcomer and usually something in addition to that)*
- Share our joys and concerns
- Close with the Lord's Prayer

***The Zoom link and writings will be emailed out on the day that we will be meeting.***

# Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 28

6 p.m. on ZOOM

An evening with John Paul Martin:  
Explorer Guide for the “Community of Aidan and Hilda USA”



As a follow up to our 2021 Lenten Spiritual Retreat on “Celtic Christian Spirituality,” we have a special opportunity to spend an evening with Paul John Martin, who is the Explorer Guide for the US branch of the “Community of Aidan and Hilda.” He will tell us a little about the Celtic saints Aidan and Hilda, and what it means to belong to this community in the United States. The Community of Aidan and Hilda USA describes itself as follows:

*“We are a dispersed, ecumenical community who live by what we call a ‘Way of Life’. Before all else, we seek to be wholly available to the Holy Trinity and committed to the way of Jesus as revealed to us in Scripture. In order to earth our commitment, we draw inspiration from Celtic saints such as Aidan and Hilda. These particular saints symbolize two servants of God in different race and gender who became soul friends for the common good. As such, they represent both the flame of zeal to witness for Christ along with the struggle of peace-making in a chaotic world, which reflect the root intention of our community.”* (<https://aidanandhilda.wordpress.com/community/>)

**The Zoom link will be emailed out in the Tuesday Email and again on that day.**

# Upcoming Events

**Sunday, October 31, “All Hallows’ Eve”**

**5:30 p.m.**

**Faith and Film Viewing of  
“Coco” (2017)**

**Directed by Lee Unkrich, Adrian Molina**

***A wonderful animated feature set around the Day of the Dead in Mexico.***



In many countries Christians celebrate a period referred to as the “Days of the Dead,” which runs from October 31 (Halloween or All Hallows’ Eve), to November 1 (All Saint’s Day), through November 2 (All Soul’s Day). This setting for this interesting animated film is the “Day of the Dead (*Dia de los Muertos*)” celebrated in Mexico on November 2. While this might seem countercultural to us, these days are ones where life is celebrated and children, as they dance with caricatures of the dead, learn that death is not to be feared. This Covid pandemic provides a special opportunity for us to think about the afterlife and whether we will meet our loved ones again. This All Hallows’ Eve come and allow this beautiful film to challenge your conceptions of your understanding of death and what in Christianity is known as the “Communion of the Saints.” Hot apple cider will be provided. We will spread out and socially distance in the sanctuary so that we might be safe in enjoying this film together, which is appropriate for people of all ages!

**Sunday, November 7**

**10:30 a.m. during worship**

**“All Saints Sunday”**

**Memorial Remembrances**

During worship we will be remembering all those saints within our congregation and those who were important to them who have transitioned over into eternity since November 1, 2020. While their names are read, a white carnation will be placed in a vase in their memory. If you have a loved one you would like to have remembered, please email this information to the church at [fccmur-ray@gmail.com](mailto:fccmur-ray@gmail.com) or call the church office at 270-753-3824.

# Upcoming Events

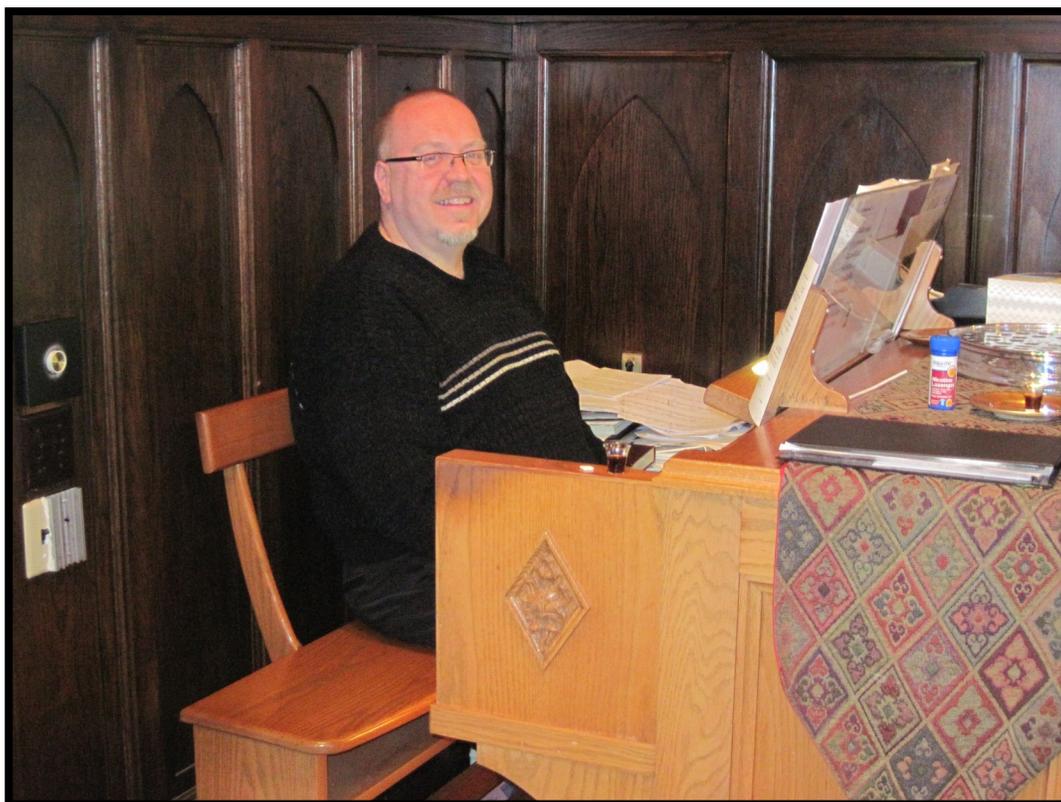
**Sunday, November 21**

**10:30 AM**

**A Special Worship Service Celebrating  
the Life and Legacy of Donnie Hendrix**

**November 19, 1959 to November 15, 2020**

**followed by bringing flowers to his grave in Bardwell, KY**



Our beloved organist Donnie Hendrix died of Covid-19 on November 15, 2020. Because of Covid restrictions at that time, only a small private burial service was possible. Even though we still are in the midst of the Covid pandemic, we would like to honor Donnie's many years of loving service with us by viewing some videos of his music and having people share some memories about him. We hope that all members of his church family will make a special effort to attend this service (we will wear masks and socially distance). Only a few of his friends will be invited so as not to have too many people in the sanctuary, although we will be offering a ZOOM option. Following the memorial service, you are invited to drive to Bardwell so that we might bring flowers not only to Donnie's grave but also to his beloved mother Ruth's grave. Donnie kept vigil by her bedside until her untimely death on March 25, 2020, and was faithful in bringing flowers to her grave.

# Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, December 21 ~ The Winter Solstice**

**7:00 PM**

## **“Longest Night ~ Service of Light”**

This service is designed to honor the fact that the holidays are not always times of happiness for so many people but rather accentuate feelings of darkness and despair. Held on the longest night of the year, we will sit together in a candlelit sanctuary as we listen to quiet contemplative music, and hear scriptures, psalms of lament, and meditations that remind us that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Please invite people you know who might have lost a loved one, have relationship problems, are suffering from depression or loneliness, are having difficulties keeping or finding a job or just making ends meet.

**Friday, December 24**

**8:00 PM**

## **“Christmas Eve Candle Lighting and Communion Service”**

“This service is a beautiful, inspiring service, attended by our church family and many from the community. Adding to the magical atmosphere: the church is filled with poinsettias, a Christmas tree, a star in the baptistry, candles and greenery in the windows. The service starts at 8pm and is over by 9, giving everyone time to get home and complete any unfinished Christmas day preparations and get the kids in bed at a reasonable time. The service involves a number of readers, instrumental music, special music, choir anthem, lots of congregational singing, communion by intinction, and the enchanting ending when the lights are lowered, the congregation all light candles, sing Silent Night and raise their candles on the chorus of each verse. Let us hope that by this Christmas season (optimistically well before then) the viruses will be conquered and we will be able to freely gather in Christian love and joy!”

-Jean Bennett



# Financial Giving

September 22, 2021

Members of Our Church Community,

As many of you know, each fall we conduct our Every Member Campaign (EMC) during which we (1) prepare our proposed budget for the upcoming year and (2) ask members of the congregation to prayerfully consider what they wish to contribute toward the church's many programs.

Beginning on September 26<sup>th</sup> and continuing on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>, selected members of our congregation will speak briefly about why their gifts to the church represent an important part of their Christian ministry. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Ragovin will speak from the pulpit regarding tithing. On the same day, immediately following the service, we will discuss a draft version of the proposed budget. Members of the Stewardship and Finance Committee will be available to answer questions and record your input regarding changes you or others might think are appropriate.

The Stewardship and Finance Committee will take its final version of the budget to the Church Board on November 14<sup>th</sup>. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, as part of the annual congregation meeting immediately following the church service, members will cast their vote on the final version of the budget.

We look forward to your participation in our EMC process and will keep you informed over the next few weeks. Until then, please give prayerful consideration as to how your gifts and talents can be used through this body of Christ we call First Christian Church of Murray.

God Bless You!

Don Chamberlain  
Stewardship and Finance Committee Chairman

## Financial Giving

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JULY		
	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>	\$ 13,740.90	\$ 13,411.23
<b>Expense</b>	\$ 10,411.85	\$ 10,166.58
<b>Balance</b>	\$ 3,329.05	\$ 3,244.65

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR Jan - July.		
	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>	\$ 80,445.16	\$ 94,902.72
<b>Expense</b>	\$ 85,067.46	\$ 93,103.99
<b>Balance</b>	\$ (4,622.30)	\$ 1,798.73

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR AUGUST		
	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>	\$ 13,160.92	\$ 16,417.56
<b>Expense</b>	\$ 14,347.38	\$ 14,225.04
<b>Balance</b>	\$ (1,186.46)	\$ 2,192.52

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR Jan - Aug.		
	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>	\$ 93,606.08	\$ 111,285.28
<b>Expense</b>	\$ 99,414.84	\$ 107,329.03
<b>Balance</b>	\$ (5,808.76)	\$ 3,956.25

## Online Giving

Missing worship service? No problem. Make your tithes and offerings with Givelify from wherever you are, using your computer or your Smart phone app.

To make a computer donation, go to <https://www.givelify.com/givers> to start giving. To make a mobile donation, we recommend you download the Givelify app for Android or iPhone.

It's free to download and use. It's totally safe and secure, and for tax time you have one-tap access to your complete donation records.



# Financial Giving

## Why Do I Give to the Church?"

By: Bobbie Raby



I looked in my Bible Concordance for giving and tithe and found several references for each and the one I chose was **Nehemiah 10:37**

*“And we made ordinances to bring the first fruits of one ground and the first fruits of all trees year by year to the house of the Lord. To bring the first born of our servants, our cattle, as it is written in the Law. And the first born of our herds and our flocks to the house of our God. to the priest who minister in the house of our God (the Levites) — and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God and to the rooms of the store house.”*

Notice this passage always states “first fruits.”

So I give to the church because God commanded it. Giving can take many forms. I choose to speak about tithing.

I learned about giving at a young age but then I didn't realize it would later become a vital part of my life. Daddy always made sure I had Sunday School money every Sunday. In our individual classes we always took up a “collection” as well as in church. I also saw Daddy put in money when the offering plate was passed. Those times stuck with me as I grew to adulthood. It was then I learned the importance of tithing— to me tithing means a little off the top and not what's leftover after everything else is taken care of. God has never failed me. Each person has to decide for themselves what their own tithe is.

So I give to the church to support the ongoing ministry whatever that may be.

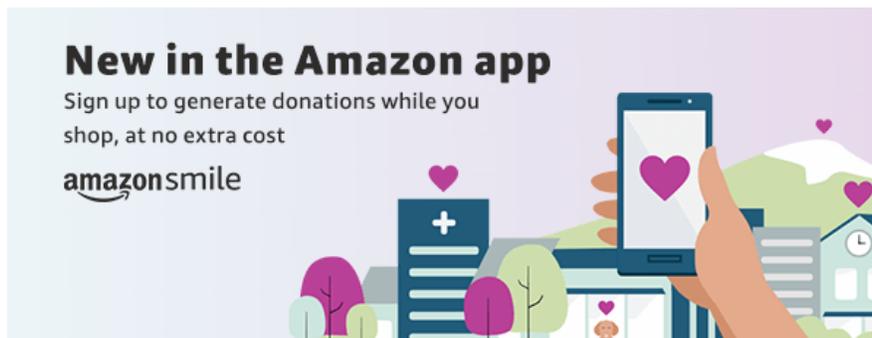
I give because God commands it, because it's my duty as a Christian and above all it's for and to the Glory of God.

# Financial Giving

## Community Rewards Programs



Remember, always start at **smile.amazon.com** and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to our church. To support First Christian Church when shopping on Amazon, simply click on the following link: **<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/61-0482959>** and shop! It's that easy!



*Want to help make a difference while you shop in the Amazon app, at no extra cost to you? Simply follow the instructions below to select "First Christian Church" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile in the app. They'll donate a portion of your eligible mobile app purchases to us.*

*How it works:*

- 1. Open the Amazon app on your phone*
- 2. Select the main menu (=) & tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs & Features*
- 3. Select "First Christian Church" as your charity*
- 4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app*

- 
1. To enroll in Kroger Community Awards and give back to FCC, visit **<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>** and log into your Kroger account.
  2. Once there, you will see "Give More Back to the Community." Hit the "Enroll Now" button.
  3. To enroll in awards to benefit FCC, type in "First Christian Church— Murray" or "ID458"
  4. Click on the organization button (it's round and to the left of the name). Then click on "enroll." This money benefits the Building Fund.



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Happy Birthday!

### October

1	Don Wilson	20	Andrew Holton
	Laura Lee Stephenson	21	Alyssa Daughrity
4	Luke Dibble		Celeste McAllister
5	Jeromey White	22	Brooks Daughaday
	Mitchell Fralick		Judy Eldredge
7	Cliff Dibble		Olivia Marshall
12	Hayden Warner	23	Jackson Roberts
15	Elena Roberts	24	Tim Daughrity
	Shannon Farley		Betty McCord
16	Amberlyn Hall	25	Bradley Dawson
19	Ethan Phelps		Isaac Benton-Ragovin
		26	Dave Eldredge
			Bill Lyle

### November

1	Tamara Abo Al Haija
	Sunny Kwan
	Bianca Youngman
2	Fred Wells
3	Mandy Byrd
5	Mike Holton
	Gideon Miller
6	Joseph Benton
10	Luke Donnelly
12	Debbie Dibble
14	Jack Epperson
19	Diana Darnell
26	Wanda Lawson
	Cindy White



### December

3	Sophie Dunham
6	Taylor Lynn Garland
10	Ashley Criswell (Nichols)
	Steven Reed
11	Brandon Redd
15	Enas Abo Al Haija
16	Richard Reed
17	Don Bennett
19	Wyatt Dunham
	Judy Lyle
	Catherine McKeel
	Allison Willis
	Maya Hughes
23	Greg Gierhart
26	Erica Gray
27	Beth Roark
28	Zaid Abo Al Haija
	Laura Nixon Enzendorfer

## Happy Anniversary!

### November

14	Howard & Crystal Dillard
27	Tony & Charlotte Van Dyke

### December

12	David & Rita Daughaday
21	Don & Martha Chamberlain
	Steven & Richard Reed
23	Ron & Doris Cella
24	Ron & Hester Gray
29	Rachel & John Hughes

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Camp Kum-Ba-Ya Summer Fun!



*Claire Gray (left) and Laurel Gray (right) both have enjoyed attending Camp Kum-Ba-Ya this summer. Claire has gone for a few years and this was Laurel's first year. Laurel attended with her mother Erica, who posted the following about their experience there:*

**C•A•M•P 2•0•2•1** (by Erica Gray, who attended camp with daughter Laurel)

Laurel had her first camp experience this weekend at Camp KBY. 🏕️

Discovery Camp is a parent/child experience for 1st and 2nd graders. To say it was a success is an understatement. 10/10 highly recommend!

We/she:

1. slept in a cabin,
2. found huge bugs 🪲 ,
3. made cute crafts 🍪 ,
4. kayaked on the lake 🚣 ,
5. enjoyed a color run ❤️🧡💛💚💙 ,
6. and made new camp friends. The gals from FCC Glasgow were so gracious and welcoming of Laurel (and me!) into their Girl Gang!

Great weekend, precious memories, and ready for a nap!

*Alyssa Daugherty and Emily Dawson attended CYF Camp there this summer and also had a terrific time!*

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## David Robinson has a new bike!!

Thank you to the generous members of our congregation who helped David Robinson acquire a new bicycle. *"As you know, David is a very giving person of his time and his own resources to help the church and others. THANK YOU!"* Ruth Daughaday.



## More Graduates!

Congratulations to Theda Farris' last grandchild to graduate. **Cameron Champine** (Missy's son) graduated from Homelife Academy on May 15, 2021. He will attend Union University in the Fall. He has received the following awards: Scholars of Excellence Award winner, UU Debate Team scholarship, and an academic scholarship.

Congratulations to **Eli McKeel**, who completed his training, graduated, and has received his High School Diploma!

## New Beginnings

"**Jordan Benton** has moved to California to begin a two-year graduate program for a Master of Fine Art in Studio Art at the University of California at Davis. The degree will help him have a professional career as an artist. He's a contemporary documentarian photographer shooting with film and he will be studying with painters, sculptors, performing artists, videographers and visual artists. He has received a full scholarship for the program. Congratulations Jordan!"

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Loved Ones Return to Murray!

### *Amara Anderson*



Early in June Amara Anderson arrived from Canada to help with her grandparents Charlotte and Tony Van Dyke! Amara previously lived in Paris, TN for a period of time and we had the joy of having her participate in our Connect Fort Worth Mission trip the summer of 2018 when we immersed ourselves in both educational and hands-on outreach. Over the past few years Amara has developed into a strong Christian leader. She has offered to help lead our Children Worship and Wonder program during this period of time when Allison Willis, because of Covid, is unable to be in church. Children Worship and Wonder resumed on Sunday, July 11. Amara is doing a beautiful job of leading our children and looks forward to June Vander Molen doing a Worship and Wonder Training with her, Alys-sa Daughrity, and Emily Dawson in the near future.

### *Doug and June Vander Molen*

Doug and June Vander Molen, long time members of the church, have moved back to Murray after a number of years in New Orleans, Louisiana! On Sunday, August 8 they re-joined the church. It means everything to us to have them back!



### *Judy Nichols*

Judy Nichols, who had moved from Murray to California some years ago to help take care of her grandson, returned to Murray on September 28 after driving cross country. We are thrilled to have her back with us!

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Special Music shared during worship



*Pictured above: Tory Daughtry and Mark Dycus share special music "Pass it On" on September 19.*



*Pictured above: Leah Hughes plays "Come, Thou Almighty King" on piano for the special music on August 29.*

*Pictured below: Amberlyn Hall and her grandfather Mark Dycus play together as she sings "Amazing Grace."*



*Pictured below: Jean Bennett and Mark Dycus sang "He Lifted Me."*



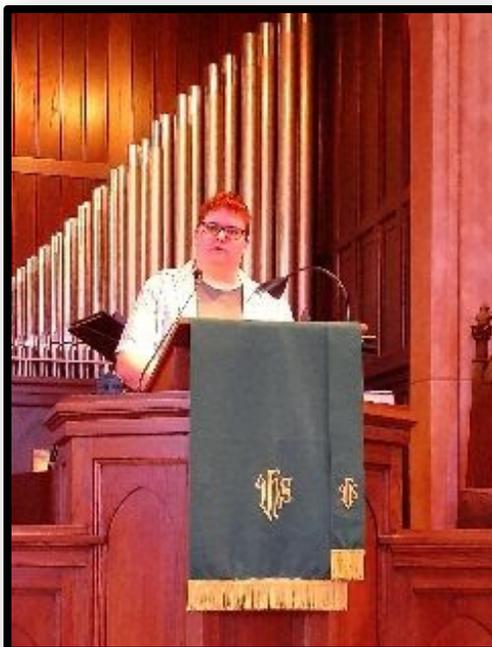
# Joys and Thanksgivings



*Pictured above: Haval Latif visited us in May. He presently works as a professor of English at a university in Kurdistan but was back in the US for about a month seeking medical care.*



*Pictured above: Sunday School teacher Rebecca Landolt presents Bibles to our rising fifth graders Milo Dillard, Leah Hughes, and Sam Dillard during worship on July 11.*



*Pictured left: Joey Parker led special music and shared his faith journey with us on August 22. Joey, thank you for trusting us with your faith journey and for the privilege of being fellow travelers with you through this adventure through life!*



*Pictured above: The acolytes are back! It was wonderful to have Maya and Leah bring the light of Christ into our sanctuary at the beginning of worship again in early May!*

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## HOPE Calloway's "A Night on the Town": Saturday July 24, 2021

A NIGHT ON THE TOWN was a success! Over \$43,000 was raised to help HOPE Calloway assist fellow Calloway Countians who are facing homelessness. We are so grateful for all of the volunteers and Box Dwellers who braved the heat to spread awareness of homelessness in our community. Our congregation was well represented. Crystal Dillard was a "Box Dweller," having a little experience of what it might be like to be homeless. There was a First Christian Church table. On it were electric candles sold to raise funds for HOPE Calloway, purchased by Rebecca Landolt. They are designed to put in your windows to shed light on homelessness. Celeste and Bob McAllister displayed and gave away "Little Acts of Kindness" bags to be gifted to those who are experiencing hardship that might include homelessness. Celeste also donated a number of Bible Bags and sachet bags as fundraising items. Ann Thornton, Judy Lyle, Pastor Ruth, the Hughes family, and the Gray family also were there at different times during the evening. A wonderful time was had by all!



*Pictured above: Crystal Dillard, our FCC box dweller.*



# Joys and Thanksgivings



*Pictured Left: Pastor Ruth, Rebecca Landolt, Ann Thornton and Donna Herndon gather together to "Shine a Light on Homelessness"*



*Pictured Left:  
The Hughes and Gray families showed their support!*



*Pictured Right:  
Celeste McAllister shows off her handmade blessing bags.*

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Graduation Picnic Celebration: Sunday, May 23, 2021

We had a wonderful time celebrating our 2020 and 2021 graduates both during worship and at a graduation picnic at the park. The food was delicious and it was so good to gather for our first time of real fellowship since before the pandemic closed our building on March 16, 2020. Many thanks to Ann Thornton and her team for organizing the picnic!



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Pride Picnic at Chestnut Park: June 26, 2020

Over the summer, a number of people from our congregation participated in Murray's own Pride Parade and Price Picnic. A special thanks to Elena Roberts, Ann Thornton, Janie Eckstein, and Bryan Warner for getting a table set up for us! Crystal Dillard made signs for our table. Rebecca Landolt provided water and juice. We had good representation from our church, including some of our children!



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## THE ORDINATION OF AMANDA SIMS GROVES

Sunday, October 10, 2021, 3 PM

Camp Kum-Ba-Ya

About fifteen members of our church traveled to Camp Kum-Ba-Ya to witness and participate in the ordination of Amanda Sims Groves to the order of Christian ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We were privileged to be her sponsoring congregation. Kentucky's recently installed regional minister and president, Rev. Dr. Donald K. Gillett II, led the ordination covenant. Mark Dycus helped with the music. Elena Roberts oversaw the zoom component. Rev. Dr. Bruce Dobyns represented our congregation as someone who spoke to her qualifications for ministry. Pastor Ruth helped to oversee the service. The elders of our church who were present participated in the laying on of hands. Ann Thornton helped bake cookies for the reception. Charlotte Van Dyke made two beautiful stoles for Amanda. Patricia Hughes made some anointing oil that consisted of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Ann Thornton, Rebecca Landolt, and Rev. Dr. Beth Dobyns participated in the presentation of the signs of the office. Rev. Amanda Sims Groves will be beginning a new ministry at First Christian Church in DuQuoin, Illinois in the near future. We are very excited for her!



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## BABY SHOWERS AND BABIES!

### **Baby Shower for Elizabeth and Zach Howard, June 26, 2021**

A baby shower was held and hosted in honor of Elizabeth Howard, on Saturday, June 26, 2021, at the home of her parents, Roger and Melanie Dawson. Elizabeth looked radiant in her final weeks of pregnancy and she and her husband Zach enjoyed the many gifts that they received.

### **Welcome Baby Clay!**

**Clay Edward Howard** was born on August 8, 2021 to proud parents, Zach and Elizabeth (Dawson) Howard, and proud grandparents, Roger and Melanie (Roos) Dawson. Clay was born at 7:00 AM weighing 7 lbs. 7 oz. and 21 inches long.



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## Baby Shower for McKenna Phelps and Alex Embrey: Sunday, July 11, 2021

A Baby Shower for was held for McKenna Phelps and Alex Embrey on Sunday, July 11, to help her get ready for the birth of her son Greyson Wayne Embrey.



Even though soon-to-be-mother McKenna Phelps was not able to attend her baby shower as it was thought her baby might be on the way, the congregation still had a wonderful time of fellowship enjoying delicious food. Soon-to-be Grandma Judy Phelps opened the many presents that were brought. Many thanks to Nancy Dycus, Sharon Rue, and Ann Thornton who organized the shower and to all who contributed and attended!

## Welcome Baby Greyson!

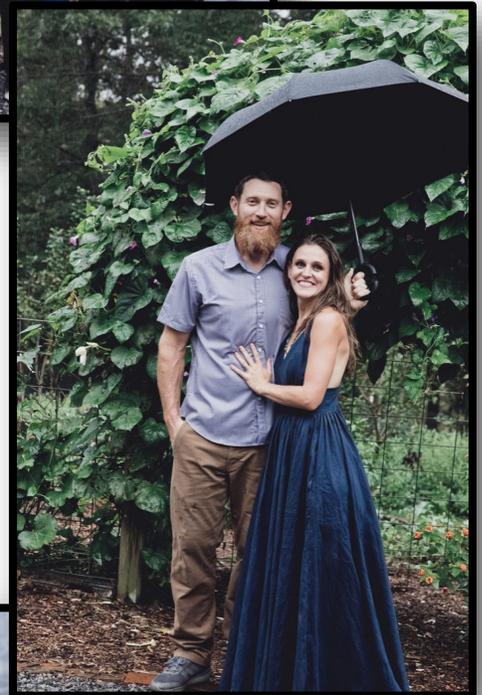


Congratulations to McKenna Phelps and Alex Embrey on the birth of their son Greyson Wayne Embrey on Saturday, July 17, 2021, at 12:16 AM weighing 7 lbs. He was born by c-section at the Murray Calloway County Hospital. You can see from the photo what a handsome, healthy little baby he is and what a proud mother McKenna is! Congratulations too to the proud grandparents and great grandparents!

# Joys and Thanksgivings

## WEDDINGS

Congratulations to our administrative assistant, Katelyn Crane, on her marriage on September 25, 2021 to Justin Bryant at Rocky Fork State Park, TN, followed by a reception at their homestead on October 2, 2021 where they were joined by their closest friends and family.



# Joys and Thanksgivings

## THANK YOU NOTES

*“Dear FCC,*

*Thank you for all of the support over the years as I enter into this new chapter of life. Thank you for everything you have done for me and the many prayers. Thank you for the bookmark you have given me.*

*With love,*

*Angela Gierhart”*

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*“To First Christian Church,*

*Thank you for my graduation gift! It has been truly wonderful to both work for you and attend service.*

*With love,*

*Ellen Blalock”*

---

*“Dear Church family,*

*Thank you for our bookmarks, cards, prayers, and graduation recognition this year. It has been so wonderful to grow up in this church and have such a supportive extended family. Thank you for always being there for us through the good and the bad.*

*With Love,*

*Elizabeth, Bradley, and Emily Dawson”*

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*“Dear Members of First Christian Church,*

*I want to first thank you for your kindness these past four years. I have enjoyed working for you and Pastor Ruth. Second, thank you for your condolences and generosity at my mother's death. Your prayers meant the world to me and my family. No words can ever express my gratitude for your support during this last month or the friendship you shared with me these past 4 years.*

*Much love,*

*Debbie Batteiger”*

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*“First Christian Church,*

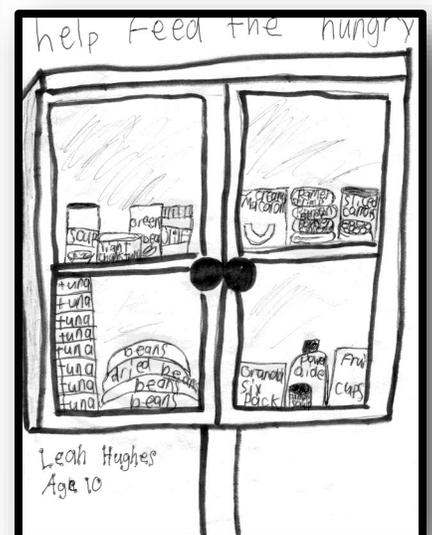
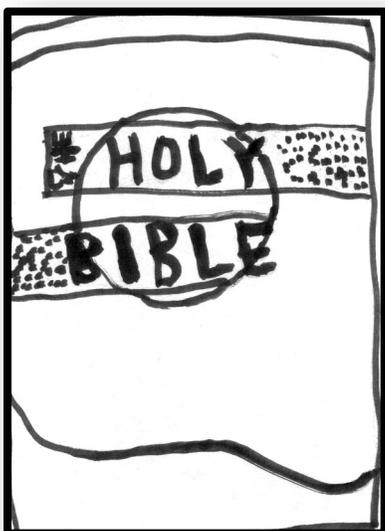
*Thank you for your well wishes and generosity! Your gift helped cover the gas during our wedding trip to the Appalachians. It was a beautiful and perfect trip!*

*Many Blessings,*

*Katelyn & Justin”*

# A Peek Inside Rebecca Landolt's Sunday School Class

My Sunday School class is presently completing a study of the Parables. Plans are to begin a new series with lessons selected from "Ministries Across Generations," "Disciples Family Faith/families and children" that has been recommended by Pastor Ruth. I have subscribed to this program which is from our Disciples of Christ Home Missions office in Indianapolis. In addition our children has become faithful each Sunday morning after class to fill the FCC Blessing Box with foods, etc. that have been provided by David Robinson as his faithful church commitment and in addition by other members who so generously add greatly to the needs for those less fortunate. We focus on "the fruits of the spirit." (Gal 5:22-23). The students design the FCC bulletin covers with their favorite Bible stories, characters, messages—this is exciting and meaningful for them and for our church family. Each Sunday class is very busy and productive as we learn about Jesus and how to show love to others, our neighbors (they reminded me that our neighbors cover the world).



# History of First Christian Church Murray, KY

Contributed By: Rebecca Landolt

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), located on the corner of Main and North Fifth, found its origins in the Stone Campbell Restoration Movement of the early 1800s. The radical thinking of the Presbyterian ministers Thomas and Alexander Campbell in Pennsylvania and Barton Stone in Kentucky spoke to the needs of American settlers, who yearned for simplicity, unity, and freedom of thought. The original building (1844), on the corner of Maple and Sixth, was the second public building in Murray. The membership record book shows that Nathan B. Stubblefield (who invented the radio) made his confession of faith and was baptized on August 18, 1881. The first building on the present site was erected in 1868 and for 36 years (with approximately 800 members) was served by 19 ministers. The present building, dedicated in October 1905, was damaged by a fire on November 17, 1956. The Educational building served as the worship center until the fire-damaged building was restored and dedicated on March 16, 1958. In 1986, the church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In reference to the destructive fire in 1956, to quote Reverend J. Howard Nichols, *“what seemed at the first moments tragedy, conspired to bring us to a unique celebration.”* The late Lyle Underwood, Elder and Board Chair, wrote that *“Sunday afternoon, March 30, 1958, the new sanctuary that ‘arose’ from the ashes of the building was dedicated and we came together to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the permanent establishment of this congregation.”*

The late Rev. Dr. David C. Roos, who helped found Need Line and established a branch of Habitat for Humanity, served the longest, continuous pastorate in the history of this congregation from 1971 to 1995. Following is his introduction to the 1958-1978 publication of the church history: *“Dear Friends: The First Christian Church of Murray has a long and glorious history ... It has experienced the pain of heartache and hardship but also knows the joy of courageous effort and the nobility of sacrificial leadership. This congregation has given to this county and city many of its finest leaders throughout the years and undoubtedly will continue to do so in the future. Their commitment to the community was directly related to their deep and unswerving dedication to Christ and His Church. ... We look with pride to our past so that we might move toward the future with clearer vision and surer steps believing that the future is open-ended and hopeful.”*

Rev. Dr. Ruth Ragovin was welcomed on February 23, 2009. Her gifts of spirituality and leadership have continued to enhance the growth and development of the church even through these many months of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The available technology and commitment of members with these skills enabled worship, studies, and ministries to thrive during the time the building was closed. We pray God’s forever blessings and guidance upon His church for years to come.

# Outreach

## A report by: Melanie Dawson

In the summer months our church participated in the following:

We returned our baby bottles for the **Life House** campaign on Father's Day. "Every year, as a fundraiser for Life House Care Center, on Mother's Day we give out Baby Bottles to be filled with coins, bills, or checks, which we then ask to have returned on Father's Day. Last year the pandemic prevented us (and other churches) from doing so, leaving Life House without important funds to help women expecting babies in our community. This year we were able to continue this important ministry as people took baby bottles home with them, raising a total of **\$589.47**, considerably more money for this important organization than we anticipated. We received the following note from them:

*"Thank you for your continuing to support us through all the challenges. Thank you for faithfully supporting the women & men who walk through our door with your consistent investment in this ministry. ... We appreciate your support, as do those you may never meet who need us each day."*

Many in our congregation helped at "**A Night on the Town**" (July 24, 2021) to raise money for HOPE Calloway to assist the homeless in Calloway County. A \$250 check was given in honor of Crystal Dillard who was a box dweller. The McAllisters gave away "Little Acts of Kindness" bags. Electric candles were sold to raise funds for HOPE Calloway, purchased by Rebecca Landolt. Helping at the table were Ann Thornton, Judy Lyle, the Hughes family, and the Gray family at different times during the evening. **(See pages 25 and 26 for photos and more information on this event)**

We contributed money (\$250) to **Laundry Love** for the month of July. Due to COVID, we no longer work at the laundry mat but Iwash cards are given to families through the school's resource centers. Twenty cards are loaded with \$12.50 each and distributed (10 each) to the Murray and Calloway schools. We still partner with St. John's Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian Church for Laundry Love.

We collected and delivered **school supplies**. (Pictured below: Our Admin Assistant Katelyn and her son Xavier, getting ready to load & deliver the school supplies gathered by our congregation)



# Outreach

## Ongoing Outreach activities

Green Need Line Bags

Blessing Boxes

Rebecca's Sunday School class goes out every Sunday morning and checks/ restocks the blessing box behind our church.



## Upcoming Activities

Contribute money (\$250) to **Laundry Love** for the month of October.

Continue to collect "**Week of Compassion**" offering to help with all of the natural disasters. Your funds go to help close to home, nationally, and internationally.

**Alternative Gift Catalog:** People may give alternative gifts any time of the year, which help support the following organizations: Murray's Kids Care for Hunger in Calloway County, MCCH Homeless Coalition, Church World Service, Test Fees for Calloway County Adult and Family Education, Main Street Youth Center, Anna Mae Owen Residential Hospice House, Starfish International, Soup for the Soul, CASA by the Lakes, Week of Compassion, West Kentucky Mentoring Program, and Habitat for Humanity, Murray/Calloway County.

### **Need Line Christmas Baskets**

We haven't been contacted yet this year but last year we gave 300 cake mixes. Further information coming in next few months.

### **Christmas Gifts for students/families**

Last year contributed money to COVID Christmas 2020 (Lakers and Tigers). We will have to wait to see guidelines for this year.

2021 **Christmas Eve offering will go to HOPE Calloway** to help with the homeless.

The **Backpack Program** is not until February 2022.

# Outreach

## Thanksgiving Food Drive

By: Rebecca Landolt

It is time to prepare for the annual Thanksgiving Baskets to be given to food insecure families in our community. I have requested that our church provide a Thanksgiving Meal with all the trimmings for 15 families (additionally, there may be some church members who would appreciate some extra food for the holidays). This year due to COVID, the Need Line director has given us permission to decide the best plan for our church to participate. Unlike in previous years where we have had people bring food to the church, assembled, and delivered it, this year we are asking people to provide monetary donations in lieu of food/turkeys for the Thanksgiving baskets. Arrangements have been made with Food Giant to assemble the boxes of canned goods, perishable items, and turkeys that will be delivered to Need Line. Need Line will get the Thanksgiving baskets to the families. To support this important outreach ministry, we ask that you make your checks payable to "First Christian Church" and note in the memo line "Thanksgiving baskets." If you are giving cash, please put it in an envelope with "Thanksgiving Baskets" on the envelope front. Please make a note on your calendar to have your financial contributions to the church no later than Sunday, November 21, 2021. If you have questions about this project, you are welcome to call Rebecca Landolt at (270) 293- 3155 or email [21rl@murray-ky.net](mailto:21rl@murray-ky.net)



# Outreach

## Shining A LIGHT On Homelessness

Support HOPE Calloway and make a difference for our homeless friends and neighbors. When you make a donation of \$10 you will receive a candle to place in your window to help “shine a light on homelessness”

Candles are available for purchase at First Christian Church or at the Hope Calloway office. All checks for the sales should be made to HOPE CALLOWAY.

Call First Christian Church (270) 753-3824 or HOPE CALLOWAY (270) 761-6802

111 North 5th Street

629 Broad Street



## Faith Journey - Tony Van Dyke

I am going to skip some of the more sordid details and begin where all things begin, at the beginning.

I was raised and attended a Methodist church until the age of 18. I drove by it the other day and it came back to me that it was rebuilt in 1951. I remember singing lead in a quartet made up of Kay and Rosanne Gallimore, Thomas Page Alexander, and the pianist, Ann Snow. Rosanne has made music with Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, and Glen Campbell, both as a singer and as a writer. She now has a ranch down in Texas and has done well for herself.

After I graduated in 1955 from Puryear, my dad, whom I had seen only once in my life, paid for my first – and last – year at Lambuth College. I felt the call to preach and received my license in 1956. I believe I preached two sermons before going to Chicago to work. When I returned, not knowing that my father had already paid for my second year at college, a couple buddies and I enlisted in the Army. Then I began to be introduced to different systems of worship.

I have become familiar with Buddhist, the Tao, Catholic, and just about every major Protestant religion there is. I was in military intelligence and it helped to know the habits and beliefs of the people you were working with at the time.

I dated a Catholic girl in China and then met a young lady whose parents were Pentecostal missionaries and she is here today. There was a 45 year span of time before the proposal made on her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday could come to be but, as she says and I agree, we both had a lot to learn.

After we were married in Mexico, we came back to Paris, TN and began attending a Baptist church there. I always felt that I was not fit to step inside, even though I sang in the choir. There was just something missing.



Charlotte began attending a study course here in Murray. Pastor Ruth also attended and they got their heads together and set up what I refer to as a “con job.” Ruth asked if I would come and sing some Sunday. I came down and sang “Where Could I Go but To the Lord?,” the Elvis version.

When we left, I told Charlotte that was the first time in years I had left church feeling uplifted.

We have been here since where I found my true faith.

God bless you.

## Faith Journey – John Roark

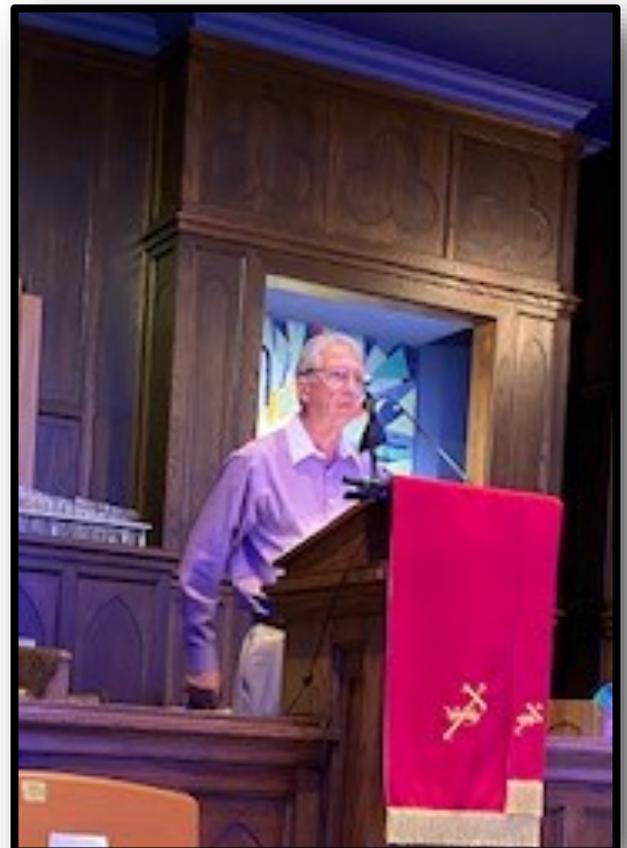
One of my first recollections of being in church was sitting in this sanctuary right over there, listening to my mother play the organ for a service. She was a substitute for the organist from time to time. My father did a brief stint as the custodian for the church. At the time, my father was a student at Murray State, but we moved back and forth between Murray and Hopkinsville. We attended here when in Murray and at First Christian Church in Hopkinsville when there. Finally, we moved permanently to Hopkinsville where we continued to go to church at First Christian.

It was in Hopkinsville that I was baptized and began singing in the Church Choir. I must confess that during my college years, I did not go to church very often. However, it wasn't long after graduation that I put my music degree to use in church and began directing a choir. I directed choirs for 6 churches in 3 different denominations. One of them even hired me twice!

While I confess that the original reason that I started directing church choirs was to supplement my income, I also began to pay more attention to the chosen scriptures so that the music message did not conflict with the sermon message. In order to choose the best music for a given Sunday, I needed to understand the texts for each service as well as the view of the minister and how they might treat each text. I learned from each pastor that I worked with. Somewhere along the line, I began to understand that my job as a church choir director was to enrich the service and to bring the same message as the pastor was bringing.

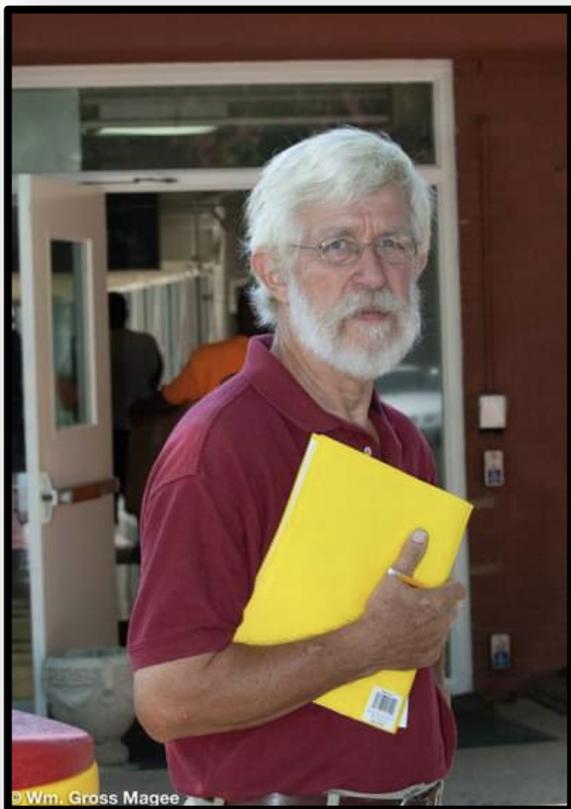
When Beth and I came to Murray, we decided to come here to worship. I did not want to find a church choir to direct. It wasn't that I was burned out, but it was always difficult to really worship when I was waiting for the cue for the next thing for me to direct. Since coming here again, I have had the privilege of bringing the message a couple of times as well as preaching at a Roark family reunion. Fortunately for me, many of the thought processes that I used in picking out music as a choir director also worked in creating a sermon message.

I guess that brings my Faith Journey up to date. It will be interesting to see where it goes from here.



# CONDOLENCES

Our love and prayers are with the family and friends of our beloved congregant, **Dr. Stephen Horwood**, who passed away peacefully in his sleep in the middle of the night, August 23, 2021, at Hickory Woods. His death was completely unexpected. Steve was in worship on Sunday morning and he also attended the Far West Men's Fellowship gathering the week prior. Steve was a retired Murray State University professor. A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday, September 4, (his birthday!) in the fellowship hall. It included a British tea complete with shortbread and scones before a number of people shared heartfelt memories of Steve. We appreciate Joey Parker helping with the virtual component so Steve's family from England could join us, Katelyn Crane who created beautiful flower arrangements for the tables, and everyone who helped with set up and clean up.



# CONDOLENCES

Our love and prayers are with our former Director of Communications, Debbie Batteiger, in the death of her beloved mother, **Mary Ann Hipple**, on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, from Covid-19 in a hospital in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, at the age of 73. A funeral service was held on Sunday, May 30, in Pennsylvania.

Our love and prayers are with John King and family in the recent death of his **sister Bettie**.

Our love and prayers are with Rachel Hughes, in the death of her grandfather (her father's father), **Bill Taylor**, on Wednesday, June 23, 2021.

Our love and prayers are with Sharon Rue and family in the death of her brother-in-law, **Ben Rue**, from cancer, on Thursday, June 24, 2021.

Our love and prayers are with Vicky Holton and family in the death of her father, **Cecil Roberts**, on July 6, 2021, at the age of 92, at Stonecreek Health and Rehabilitation in Paducah. His funeral service was held on Sunday, July 11, at Hughes Funeral Home in Paducah.

Our love and prayers are with the family and friends of **Dr. Stephen E. Horwood**, who died peacefully in his sleep on Monday morning, August 23, 2021, at Hickory Woods at the age of 80. A Celebration of Life / English Tea Party was held in fellowship hall on Saturday, September 4, 2021.

Our love and prayers are with Rebecca Landolt and family in the death of her cousin **Don Faughn**. He passed away at Skyline Medical Center in Nashville, Wednesday, September 15, 2021 following a brain bleed. A graveside service was held on Saturday, September 18, 2021, at the Murray City Cemetery.

# Be in prayer for...



- Aimee Bailee
- Patricia Binford
- Scotty Blane
- Billie Burton
- Noah Cavitt
- Teresa Dowdy
- Phyllis Duckworth
- Bob Dunn
- Nancy Dycus
- Mark Dycus
- Judy and Dave Eldredge
- Fiona Fennell
- Wyatt Heady
- Jordan Hill
- Echo Wu Hensley
- Glenn Hughes
- Loretta Jobs
- Mike Kerrick
- Lisa Kindall
- John King
- Patsy King
- Ruth King
- Haval Latif
- Judy and Bill Lyle
- Paula Marvin
- Bob and Celeste McAllister
- Anna McCurdy
- Eli McKeel
- Jimmy Merrell
- Dianne & Roger Miller
- Landon Morgan
- Nina Natividad
- Ray Neamon
- Jan Outland
- John Pasco
- Aaron Perkins
- Judy Phelps
- McKenna Phelps
- Bobbie Raby
- Red & his son
- Ron Ratliff
- Jean Carol Ridley
- Mike Ridley
- Deane Renshaw
- Bill Roberts
- Marge and Pat Roy
- Sharon Russell
- Andrew Schultz
- Bob Shankle
- Michele Tamaren
- Scott Tamaren
- Betty Shea
- Ann Thorton
- Patsy Tracy
- Will Treadway
- Jackie Underwood
- Charlotte & Tony Van Dyke
- Cindy Rue Wimbley
- Gary White
- Allison & Dwight Willis
- Linda Wilson
- Donhau Wu (Echo Wu Hensley's brother)
- Bianca Youngman