



Sunday Services and Fellowship

The First Sunday after Christmas will be a beautiful day in worship as we continue to enjoy our greens and hear the gospel story according to Luke 2. Between worship services remember to enjoy the Advent Brunch from 9:15 – 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall! Sweet breads, fruit and beverages will welcome us in on our way to Sunday School or as we linger around the tables to talk about our holidays.

Jerry Daugherty will be the featured soloist at both worship services. He will sing "O Love So Small".



Fellowship Brunch - Sunday, December 27th

Come to the Fellowship Hall for a few minutes or for an hour to visit with friends over fruit, sweet breads and beverages. From 9:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m. you are invited to come and go as you wish and simply enjoy the season of Christmas together.

The "End of the Month" Movie Matinee Wednesday, December 30

2:00 p.m.
3rd Floor Cinema
Hot Popcorn and Beverages Served



"Harvey"

The classic stage hit gets the Hollywood treatment in the story of Elwood P. Dowd who makes friends with a spirit taking the form of a human-sized rabbit named Harvey that only he sees (and a few privileged others on occasion also). After his sister tries to commit him to a mental institution, a comedy of errors ensues. Elwood and Harvey become the catalysts for a family mending its wounds and for romance blossoming in unexpected places. Jimmy Stewart plays Elwood P. Dowd in this fun, light-hearted classic. Bring a friend or your family to the cinema for a mid-Christmas break matinee!



Welcome New Friends!

With gladness we recently welcomed in worship two young men who rededicated their lives -- renewed in the Spirit and glad for a place of worship to call home. Welcome Steven Hayes and Jeremiah Coleman, pictured here with Rev. Jimmy Spear

Weekly Report

Dec. 20, 2009

Received this week \$6,905

Received to Date \$229,848

Needed to Date \$217,901

Attendance - 338

(includes early worship - 66)



Heerrree's Johnny!

As we were talking on Tuesday morning someone observed it has been a great Advent season. There was so much good music in worship services, so much good food and fellowship at CAFÉ and such a great Christmas pageant. And now as we approach Christmas Eve services my hope and prayer is that same spirit in the coming days. I am reminded of Henry Van Dyke's poem which says "There is a better thing than the observance of Christmas day, and that is, keeping Christmas." Among other things he reminds us that we can keep Christmas...

if we forget what we have done for other people, and remember what other people have done for us;

if we try to put our rights in the background, and our duties in the middle distance, and our chances to do a little more than our duty in the foreground;

if we see that men and women are just as real as we are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy;

if we close our book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around for a place where we can sow a few seeds of happiness.

We can keep Christmas...

if we are willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world — stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death—

if we believe that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love;

and if we try never to keep it alone, but to share it together.

If we can do that, then we can keep Christmas. And if we can keep it for a day, why not keep it always?

Here's a wish and a prayer that you observe Christmas not just for a day, but keep it always!
Merry Christmas!

Are you willing...

... to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world—

stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death—

... and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love?

Then you can keep Christmas. And if you can keep it for a day, why not always?

But you can never keep it alone.

The Bread of Christmas Eve Communion

Christmas Eve worship services are special in so many ways. One of the beautiful pieces of the evening will be in our communion bread. We are thankful that Anne Campbell will provide an offering of "Christopsomo" bread which means "Christ's Bread". It is traditionally a Greek bread decorated with an early form of the Christian cross with ends that split and curl into circles. It is a rich, round loaf scented with anise that can be plain or sometimes can contain fruits. For centuries the baking of Christopsomo has been a sacred tradition in Greek Orthodox homes with the baker using great care and the finest ingredients to ensure the wellbeing of the home in the coming year. The head of the household blesses the bread before the family members partake. It is traditionally baked on Christmas Eve, and families eat slices of bread with honey. After the meal, family members leave pieces of bread on the table, believing that Christ will come and eat them during the night. Christopsomo is one culture's unique way of celebrating and honoring the arrival of Christ into the world and remembering that He will always be with us. May it indeed be so for us this year!

River of Life: Dec. 27, Jan 3.

Children's Sunday School will be on break **this week (27th)** and the children will join their families for the fellowship brunch in Fellowship Hall at 9:30.

January 3 will be a special movie in the cinema at 9:30 am. The animated "The Fourth King" will tell another part of the visit of the Wise Men.

Thank you!

Many thanks to all our wonderful contributors of goodies for the Tasting Party. Special thanks to Carol and Tom Hughey for the table decorations and to Nelson Trickey and Ed Hinderberger for helping.

Gratefully~Cherry Hinderberger
And a BIG thank you from all of us at FCC to Cherry H. for making the Tasty Party a big success!

What a wonderful surprise! Thank you CL Class for honoring me as teacher, with a gift made to Heifer International. This is one of the best ways we can help others.

~Marsha Rawlings

News of the congregation

Congratulations to **Curt and Carolyn Snow** on the birth of their son, **Caden Joseph**, born Thursday evening, December 17 at Boone Hospital Center. He came into the world at 6 lbs. 7 ozs., 19 3/4 inches long. Proud big sister **Carleigh** and big brother **Cullen** helped to welcome him home last weekend.

Congratulations to **Jim Rogers** who received his bachelor's degree from Columbia College in commencement exercises held on the campus Saturday, December 19.

Thanks to all the musicians who filled the sanctuary with great music on Christmas Sunday morning, December 20: to **Harlan Hackett** for his solo at 8:30, and the members of the Handbell Choir for their prelude, and the Chancel Choir for their anthem. They were accompanied by the Handbell Choir, and members of the brass quartet, **Alan Nellis, John Wetzel, Carl Reno** and **Todd Yatsook**. We also rejoiced in the special music presented by the Second - Fifth Grade Children's Choir.

Among the members of our congregation in our concern at this time are: **J.W. "Stan" Stafford** who was re-admitted to Boone Hospital Center on Sunday after spending several days at Lenoir. **Ruth Brandenburg** returned to Lenoir Woods Health Care Center after spending the past three weeks in the hospital. **Muriel Leach** was admitted to University Hospital last week and is recuperating from a surgical procedure on Saturday, December 19. **Linda Chandler** is recuperating from an outpatient surgical procedure at Boone Hospital on Tuesday, December 22. Our prayers are also with **Elaine Kent**, daughter of **Fred List**, a patient at Boone Hospital; she is doing well recuperating from a surgical procedure last week. **Moray Kiehl's** brother, **Clayton Martin**, was admitted to University Hospital on Monday. We are glad to report that **Cheryl Nichols**, our Chancel and Handbell Choir Director, is doing well recuperating from surgery Wednesday afternoon, December 16, at Boone Hospital Center. She hopes to be back to work at the church soon. In the meantime we are delighted to welcome **Melissa Straw**, former Choir Director, back to the chancel to direct the music of the choirs in Cheryl's absence.

Thanks to each of you who provided a poinsettia for the sanctuary and to **Mary Daugherty** for arranging and caring for them. Remaining plants after the Christmas Eve services will be taken to the homebound.



Sing We All - Noell!

Thirty-eight musical members bundled up to brave the chilly air and bring caroling joy to house bound friends. With so many singers - two groups under the leadership of Jimmy and Amy Kay - were able to double the number of people who were visited. In addition to the great music, each friend received a Christmas Card handmade by the children in the River of Life Sunday School program. The evening concluded with a hearty supper prepared by Sarah Storm and Joyce Stanley.

Children's Christian Education Meeting

(Children's Sunday School

--River of Life)

Monday, January 4, 7:00 p.m.

Bethany Hall

The Children's Education Committee and any interested parents/church members are invited to a meeting to review and renew for the winter and spring season. We will make some changes to the Sunday morning plan and get excited about some new possibilities.



Happy Birthday!

Dec. 27-Mike Taylor, Linda Chandler, Emma Hawkins

Dec. 29-Becky Baumgartner, Bob Chiles, Kevin Crane, Paula Kurtz, Shirley Park

Dec. 30-Fred Mottaz

Dec. 31-Jeryl Vaught, Hannah Shifley

Jan. 01-Steve Gieseke, Jeri Sheppard

CAFÉ

Christian Action Fellowship Education

****CAFÉ will be on break Dec. 30. It will resume Wed. Jan. 6.****

January Bible Study with Marcus Borg!

Beginning Wednesday, January 6, John Yonker and Ken Watson will lead a Wednesday evening study of Marcus Borg's book, The Heart of Christianity. This study will replace the regular Wednesday CAFÉ bible study and is open to everyone in the congregation.

An internationally recognized New Testament scholar, Dr. Borg has written several books on the study of the historical Jesus. Many of our members recall his visit to Columbia when he came to lecture at First Christian Church in 2001.

This 12-week series will give us the opportunity to discuss the issues which lie at the heart of Christianity, including faith, the Bible, being born again, sin and salvation, and other topics many of us find difficult. There will even be times during the 12 weeks to see and hear from Marcus Borg (via DVD) on these topics.

Sessions will be held in the Keystone Classroom on Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 8 p.m. on the following dates: January 6, 20, 27, February 3, 24, March 3, 10, 24, 31, April 7, 14 and 21.

Call the church office to register for the class. For more information contact John Yonker at the church office: 449-7265.

(youth) @ first christian

JYF (3-5th grade)
CHI-RHO (6-8th grade)
CYF (9-12th grade)

JYF, CHI-RHO, CYF - is on break while school is on break!

CYF will be on break for the two weeks of Christmas break. (both Tues. Bible Study and Wed. night CYF)

CYF will serve dinner at Loaves and Fishes on Monday night, Dec. 28.
Meet in church kitchen at 2 p.m. to cook.
Serving after 4 p.m.
We will **EAT OUT** after the serving at Loaves and Fishes.

JYF and CHI-RHO in 2010
January 10 & 24
February 7 & 21

The Visitor

First Christian Church

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Mother's Day Out: Tracy Westhoff, Director

Support Staff:

Kay Beissenherz, Administrative Secretary
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Fred Mottaz, Business Manager
fred@firstchristian.org

Keith Picker, Custodian

Return Service Requested

Serving Schedule - Sunday, Dec. 27

Van Driver: Carol Slusher
Office Receptionist: Cindy Rose
Church School Greeter: Doris Neidhardt
Bethany Hall Greeter: Pat Rainey
Flower Ministry:
Arranged by - Ben and Jen Micek
Delivered by - Marilyn Schappert, Kim Williams

Servers for 8:30 Worship Service

Worship Assistants: Tom and Carol Hughey, Jeri Sheppard
Elder: Will Houston

Servers for 10:30 Worship Service

Communion Preparation: Marion and Sarah Storm
Liturgist: Joyce Stanley
Elders: Jerry and Mary Daugherty, Jacki Davidson
Deacons: The Stanley Team
Greeter North Door: Jessica Humble
Greeter South Door: Elizabeth Updegraff
Ushers: The Scott Team
Banner Bearers: Abe Creasy and Zac Ruffolo
Candlelighters: Alexandra Estes and Jadie Arnett

This Week (Dec. 27-Jan. 2)

- Sun. - Fellowship Brunch, 9:15-10:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall
- Lenoir Worship, 3:30 p.m.
- Mon. - CYF serving Loaves & Fishes (see youth box)
- Wed. - Men's Lunch, 11:30 a.m., Senior Center
- Movie, 2:00 p.m., Cinema (3rd Floor, Education Bldg.)
"Harvey" with Jimmy Stewart
- Fri. - New Year's Day
- Office closed

