

First Christian Church
620 N. Main St.
Findlay, OH 45840
419-422-5615



The Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

The Lamplighter



You are the light of the world...no one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket...let your light shine before others..."
Matthew 5:14-16 NRSV

January 2016

WEB PAGE:

www.fccfindlay.org

WEB ADDRESSES:

info@fccfindlay.org - For people who are looking for information about our church

pastorrick@fccfindlay.org - For people who want to contact Pastor Rick

tinamiller_fcc@yahoo.com - For people who want to contact Sue Davies, Board moderator about church business or the Board agenda items.

FCC Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/fccfindlay

Church Office Hours: 9:00 am - 2:30 pm, Tuesday–Friday

To you wonderful folks of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Findlay. I wonder, as did the 20th century devotional writer, military chaplain, and theologian Oswald Chambers, whether many of us really have an understanding of the reason why Jesus Christ died. Chambers, and other theologians, reminds us that if sympathy is all that we humans need, then the Cross of Christ is an absurdity and there is absolutely no need of it. What the world needs is not “a little bit of love,” but major surgery.

Jesus said in John 12:32, “**And I, when I am lifted up....will draw all people to Myself.**”

When we find ourselves face to face with a person who is spiritually lost, let us resolve in this new year that we will remind ourselves of Jesus Christ on the cross. If that person could get to God in any other way, then the Cross of Christ is unnecessary. If we think that we are helping lost people with simply our sympathy and understanding, we are, in effect, a traitor to Jesus Christ. We need to have a right-standing relationship with Jesus Himself, and pour our lives out in helping others in His way – not in a human way that ignores God. The theme of so many religious people today is to serve in a pleasant, non-confrontational, even entertaining, manner.

But sometimes we as Christians need to speak truth to power and speak love to those who despise us or who persecute us. This was made evident this past month by two ecumenical actions taken in two neighboring states to Ohio – Indiana and Kentucky.

In Indiana, executives from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Episcopal Church said, in part, in a joint statement: *For the sake of clarity in our state law within our public interactions, we believe that it is right and appropriate to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the state civil rights code that already contains protections based on race, age, gender, disability, military status, and religion. Doing so*

will mean that all Hoosiers, including members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community will be assured the freedom to work, have a home, use public accommodations and business services with access to the same opportunities and same fair treatment all citizens enjoy. We believe that doing this is consistent with the value we share to be and continually create a hospitable and welcoming community for all. This is also consistent with our common Christian call and commitment to care for and serve our neighbor following the example of Christ. We believe that strengthening the anti-discrimination provisions of our state statutes does not weaken or diminish the opportunity for the free exercise of our religious faith grounded in our (state and federal) constitutions.

In Kentucky, executives from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Baptist Fellowship, Roman Catholic Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church USA, African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church said, in part, in a joint statement: *Not unlike the days after September 11, 2001 and in World War II, we find ourselves (today) faced with acts of violence. It is a very natural reaction to be afraid in the midst and aftermath of these types of acts, but we find that we are called, as followers of Jesus Christ, to remember that refuge for all people is found in God, and not in fear.... We continue to pray for all who died and were affected by the tragic acts that have rocked France, Lebanon, (San Bernadino, California) and other sites throughout the world in these last weeks. We know, though, that those who have fled war-torn Syria are truly in need of refuge. And in recent days we have heard some voices from state and federal leaders who no longer wish to allow these refugees forced from their homes the alternative of a safe haven in the United States, and even in our own Commonwealth. (Cont'd pg.2)*

(Cont'd) The children, women, and men of Syria are victims of terror, as well, and we strongly urge that Kentucky can continued to be a safe haven for refugees to begin their lives again, as Kentucky has been welcoming refugees from war-torn nations for many years... It is always helpful to note that it usually takes a refugee 18-24 months to complete the extremely thorough screening process before a refugee from any country can enter the United States. We urge our government agencies to be as thorough as possible in these screening efforts, but we wish always to be a community that welcomes the refugee... Jesus, a refugee who fled to Egypt Himself, calls us to welcome the stranger. We call on the leaders of Kentucky to continue to welcome the Syrian refugees who desperately need our help. God is the refuge and strength of all, and God empowers us to open our hearts and our doors to the ravaged refugees of Syria.

The above two examples are admittedly controversial. You may not agree totally with the statements. But they are two ways that those groups of Christians have discerned that they (and we) can pour out our lives in helping other in Jesus' way. Indeed, as Oswald Chambers and others accurately say, our only priority must be to present Jesus Christ crucified – to lift Him up all the time (see 1 Corinthians 2:2). Every belief that is not firmly rooted in the Cross of Christ will lead people astray. If we ourselves really believe in Jesus Christ and are trusting in the reality of redemption, His words will be compelling to others. What is extremely important is for our simple relationship with Jesus Christ to be strong and growing. Our usefulness to God depends on that, and on that alone.

When we think about it, our calling as Christians is to expose sin and to reveal Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Consequently, we cannot always be charming and friendly and funny (although there are times to be all of those). But rather, when needed, we must be willing to be stern to accomplish major surgery. We are sent by God to lift up Jesus Christ, not to give wonderfully beautiful speeches. We must be willing to examine ourselves as deeply as God has examined us. Some Christians are in the habit of sharing mostly spiritual experiences that make them feel good and excited. But faith based only on experience is not faith; faith based on God's revealed truth is the only true faith there is. Faith is willingly committing and placing ourselves completely and absolutely on God. God's purpose in getting us into His kingdom is that we may realize all that that identification with Jesus Christ means. As such, we need to be sharply intent on sensing those Scriptural passages that will drive the truth home, and then not be afraid to apply them. Will you join me in doing that in the new year!

See you around this month of January. Take care and God bless, Pastor Rick

AS THE NEW YEAR BEGINS....

Our church Board, our Elders, and our Relationships Team have all discussed with me recently how I should segue into a more "intentional interim ministry mode" as together we begin my last year of ministry here at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Findlay. My current plan is to retire at the end of 2016 and end my ministry (which both Becky and I have found wonderful) here. My ministry here may end earlier if the church finds a new settled pastor to begin ministry here before the end of 2016.

Two things that the church has asked me to emphasize as we begin the new year: (1) To begin honest conversations about what we can and need to do about our building and property. (2) To continue to build good Christ-centered worship and a strong sense of fellowship. Discussions have already begun with the above boards and committees. Our future with our current building and property is uncertain. We may be able to stay in it. However, maintenance of our building and property has become really expensive for our small group. If we stay here, it might deplete our investment savings pretty quickly. An alternative is to see if we could sell or donate our building and property and perhaps then find a place to rent (that would ensure a longer life span for us). Whatever we do, we want to continue to enhance our vibrant worship, Bible study, prayer, and fellowship community of faith. As one person has put it, "Being the body of Christ here in Findlay is important; it does not matter where we are (think of the Israelites in the Bible wandering in the wilderness for 40 years and later in their history when the Israelite leaders were in exile in Babylon). The important thing about our church is the people – not the building."

With all of that in mind, we have contacted two commercial realtors here in Findlay so far (we will also be contacting Re-Max): Jim Geyer of ERA Geyer Noakes Realty Group and Kelly Haase of Century 21 Koehler and Associates. Jim Geyer will be meeting with our church Board on Saturday, January 9, to begin conversation about what our realistic options are and how feasible they all are. The Board plans on meeting with Kelly Haase and someone from Re-Max Realtors at later dates.

If you have any thoughts or questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact our new church and board moderator, Sue Davies, at 419-619-8002. We continue to plan on offering meaningful and relevant worship and fellowship opportunities (including reaching out to our community, especially to those who feel that they do not belong or have a place in the body of Christ). This includes a new Men's Breakfast group, headed up by Ed Davies, to start in January. Please watch our "Calendar of Upcoming Events" for that and other happenings. Thanks. God bless, *Pastor Rick*

Prayer Needs:

- ◆ For those with cancer and undergoing Cancer Treatment:
 - ◆ *Kathy Brinkman * Emelia (4 years old) *Fred Kretzinger*
John Turner (Janet Powell's nephew)
- ◆ For those with various health issues and concerns:
 - ◆ *Jayleen Miller *Erma Weiss *Ryan and Nicole Howard (Davies; daughter and son-in-law) *Deborah and granddaughter *Doris Moore (currently in Heritage Rehab)
- ◆ Peaceful and just solutions to conflicts, natural disasters, polarizing, police/citizen relationships, mass shootings, terrorism around the world, and the humanitarian crisis of refugees streaming from and into several parts of the world.
- ◆ For those seeking employment or full-time employment
- ◆ For those who are having trouble making ends meet
- ◆ For those who are in physical or emotional pain
- ◆ For our First Christian Church homebound members
- ◆ Military personnel around the world who regularly risk their lives for freedom.

January Birthdays

- 1/3 Jesse Beltz
- 1/15 Sue Davies
- 1/15 Kelly Sullivan
- 1/17 Linda Pitkin
- 1/19 John Snyder
- 1/22 Andre Hawks
- 1/24 A.J. Koehler
- 1/29 LaVera Hover



Tina Miller is featured on the bulletin board this month. She was born in Tiffin and is the oldest with 3 brothers. Tina is our church administrative assistant and married to Ken with whom she owns Miller Lawn Care & Services. They are members of St. Marks United Methodist Church where they are very active. Tina is their webmaster, involved in outreach, serves communion, is Missions co-chair while Ken serves on the Leadership Board and acts as a trustee. Tina is stepmom to Cody (Alyssa) and Sophie and doggie mom to Jasmine and Sophie the dog. When not working or at church, Tina has recently trained as a Hospice volunteer, likes to read, and decorate her home (watching HGTV) and cook.

YOU ARE INVITED...

On behalf of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Findlay, it is my pleasure to invite you to a Men's Fellowship Breakfast at Scrambler Marie's Restaurant on 516 South Main Street in Findlay on Saturday, January 9, 2016, at 8:00 AM (men who are involved with the Church Board meeting at morning will be out in time for the meeting). There will be no cost to you for the breakfast! We believe this will be a wonderful opportunity for the men of our church to enjoy a time of fellowship, encouragement, and sharing. Come and join us and experience God's blessings in a unique way!

"Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him..." (Luke 24:30-31a, NKJV).

Hope you can join us! God bless, Ed Davies

First Christian News

Average number of service attendees for December: 41
 Amount given in December: \$ 12783.76
 Remember to like us on Facebook- "First Christian Church Findlay Ohio"

Directions to Read "The Lamplighter" Online!

To access "The Lamplighter" online; go to our website: <http://www.fccfindlay.org>. On the homepage of the website, please click on the page Current Lamplighter Newsletters. There you may choose from form the list of the current newsletters. Earlier editions will be available on the home page in the archives list.

INTENTIONAL IN OUR SERVICE....


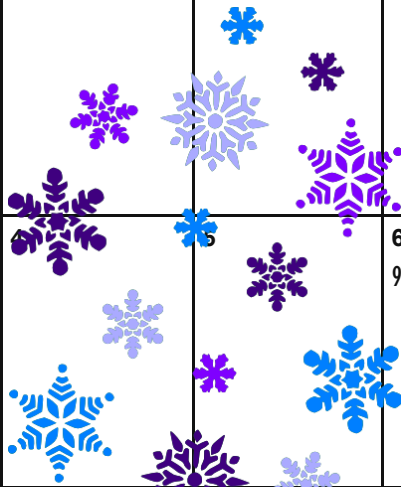





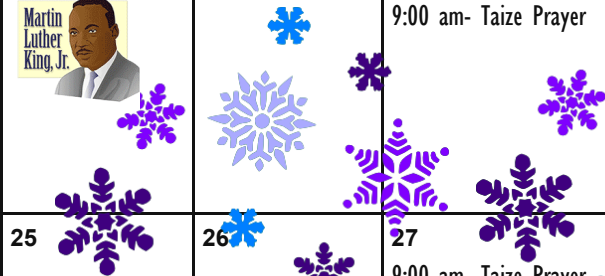
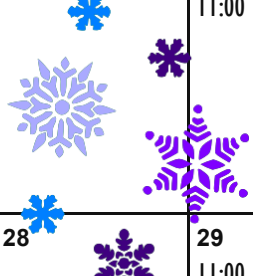
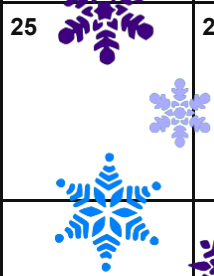

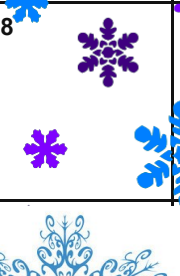
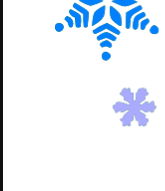
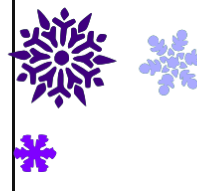
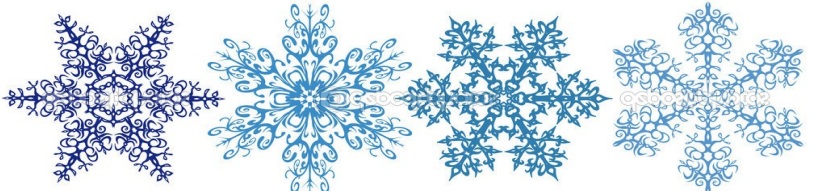
During the Advent/Christmas season, we took our annual special offerings with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Board also determined that we would donate \$342.42 from our "Pennies Sunday" Fund for Findlay's City Missions Children's Christmas Party.



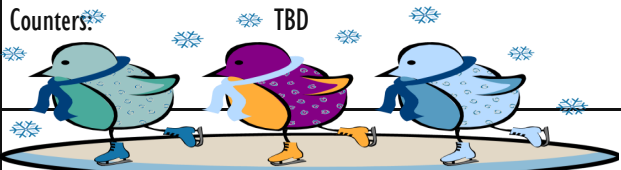
Thank you!

Pastor Rick and Becky want to thank the congregation for the Christmas cards, notes, gifts, and especially for the generous donation to Hancock County Clearing House in our name.

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 11:00 am - No Bible Study 	2 9:30 a.m.-Truth Seekers Bible Study
3 8:45 am-Chimes 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 12:00 Coffee Hour		5 	6 9:00 am- Taize Prayer 	7	8 11:00 am - Bible Study 	9 9:00 a.m. Elders meeting 9:30 a.m.-Truth Seekers Bible Study 10:00 am - Board Meeting
10 8:45 am-Chimes 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 12:00 Coffee Hour	11 	13 9:00 am- Taize Prayer 	14	15 11:00 am - Bible Study	16 9:30 a.m.-Truth Seekers Bible Study	
17 8:45 am-Chimes 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship- 12:00 pm -Coffee Hour 2:30 pm-Fox Run Wor- ship	18 	19 	20 9:00 am- Taize Prayer	21 	22 11:00 am - Bible Study	23 9:30 a.m.-Truth Seekers Bible Study
24 8:45 am-Chimes 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 12:00 pm -Coffee Hour	25 	26 	27 9:00 am- Taize Prayer	28 	29 11:00 am - Bible Study	30
31 8:45 am-Chimes 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 12:00 pm -Coffee Hour						

January Serving Schedule

January 3		January 10	
Minister:	Rev. Rick Pulling	Minister:	Music Sunday
Music Coordinator:	Patty Koehler	Music Coordinator:	Patty Koehler
Pianist/Organist	Becky Pulling	Pianist/Organist	Jane Snyder
Children's Sermon:	Robin Kretzinger	Children's Sermon:	Patty Koehler
Greeters:	TBD	Greeters:	TBD
Scripture Reader:	Karol Smuith	Scripture Reader:	
Elders:	Linda Pitkin	Elders:	Nancy Peters & Kathy Brinkman
Deacons:	Bill Peters, David England, Sue Davies	Deacons:	Lisa Wolf, Deb Kirk, Karol Smith
Coffee Hour:	Team #1 Cindi Beltz, Beth Reynolds, Kathy Brinkman	Coffee Hour:	Team #2 Pat Sharninghouse, Linda Pitkin, Sue & Ed Davies
Counters:	TBD	Counters:	TBD
January 17		January 24	
Minister:	Pastor Rick	Guest Minister:	Pastor Rick
Music Coordinator:	Patty Koehler	Music Coordinator:	Patty Koehler
Pianist/Organist	Becky Pulling	Pianist/Organist	Jane Snyder
Children's Sermon:	Robin Kretzinger	Children's Sermon:	Patty Koehler
Greeters:	TBD	Greeters:	TBD
Scripture Reader:	Mercedes Williamson	Scripture Reader:	Steven Strayer
Elders:	Robin Kretzinger	Elders:	Nancy Peters & Robin Kretzinger
Deacons:	Charlotte Ballard, Tara Miller, John Snyder	Deacons:	Barb Brown, Tim Wolfe, Cindi Beltz
Coffee Hour:	Team #3 Bill & Nancy Peters, Karol Smith, Dale Yoder	Coffee Hour:	Team #4 Barb Brown, Patty Koehler
Counters:	TBD	Counters:	TBD
January 31			
Minister:	Rev. Rick Pulling	CALENDAR OF EVENTS: Saturday, January 9 – 9:00 AM – Elders' Meeting 10:00 AM – Board Meeting Sunday, January 10 – Special Music Sunday (Patty Koehler and Ed Davies are planning it) Sunday, January 17 – Previously announced ONU Northern Chimes presentation has been cancelled 2:30 PM – Fox Run Worship Service Sunday, January 24 – Dedication of our Labyrinth Coming Up in February and March 2016 – Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10. Easter Sunday is on March 27.	
Music Coordinator:	Patty Koehler		
Pianist/Organist	Becky Pulling		
Children's Sermon:	Robin Kretzinger		
Greeters:	TBD		
Scripture Reader:	Tara Miller		
Elders:	Beth Reynolds		
Deacons:	Bill Peters, David England, Sue Davies		
Coffee Hour:	Team #5 Deb Kirk, Barb England, Lisa Wolfe		
Counters:	TBD		

Sharing brings Joy

To Us. To Others. To God

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Sunday Schedule
9:30am Sunday School
10:30am Worship Service
Followed by Fellowship-Coffee Hour

January

January 3- Second Sunday After Christmas – Epiphany Sunday

Scripture Reader: Karol Smith

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:7-14

Message: “God is in the Relocation Business”

Theme: When companies ask an employee to relocate, they often make the relo package very attractive. So, when God leads us to new challenges and opportunities and new locations, what bennies does God throw into the offer? Anything? Nothing? A lot?

January 10-1st Sunday after Epiphany-The Baptism of Jesus Christ

Scripture Reader: TBD

Scripture: TBD

Message: “The stories behind songs that Ed Davies will teach us”

Theme: This will be a musical Sunday (Pastor Rick will be off this Sunday for medical reasons)

Patty and Ed will plan this Sunday’s worship and music.

January 17- 2nd Sunday After Epiphany – Second Sunday In Ordinary Time— Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Scripture Reader: Mercedes Williamson

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Message: “From Shadow to Spirit”

Theme: It used to be that if we wanted to make an airline reservations, we’d go visit the local travel agent. Not anymore. It used to be that a gas jockey would pump our gas. Not anymore. It used to be that we’d buy a bedroom dresser and have it delivered, perhaps even custom made. Not anymore. Today, many of us do all of these things ourselves. And it takes up a lot of our time. It’s called “shadow work”. But in contrast to “shadow work”, “Spirit work” points us to the gifts of the Holy Spirit which help us to focus on what is truly important.

January 24-Third Sunday After Epiphany – Third Sunday In Ordinary Time – Ecumenical Sunday

Scripture Reader: Steven Strayer

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Message: “Different Part, Same DNA”

Theme: Scientists now are able to regenerate body parts from a patient’s stem cells, shaped especially for their role within the body. Like different parts of a body all sharing the same DNA, we have been assembled by God to be the body of Christ for the world. And we can grow into the ministry to which God has called us.

January 31- 4th Sunday After Epiphany – 4th Sunday In Ordinary Time

Scripture Reader: Tara Miller

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Message: “The Agape Update”

Theme: It is not a stretch to say that there are millions of apps available today for use on our smartphones and tablets. Many of these, however, will not work properly unless we “update” them. Usually, we are notified when an update is needed. Is our love, kindness, and compassion running a bit thin these days? We may need the agape app update. Consider 1 Corinthians 13 that agape app update. Without it, well, the Apostle Paul says, “We ain’t got nothin”.