

First CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Disciples of Christ

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2018 ISSUE

**PASTOR JACK TO SERVE AS MLK, JR. DAY
SPEAKER IN FINDLAY, OH**



Details to come soon. Pastor has been under the weather since the Christmas holiday. He has walking pneumonia and is taking it easy in North Carolina to date.

Church Events

- **January 2, 9, 16, 23, 30- 2 p.m.**
Tea & Talk at We Serve Coffee,
114 E. Sandusky St.
- **January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31—9:30
a.m. Taize Prayer and 6:00 p.m.
Bible Study**
- **January 5, 12, 19, 26— 11 a.m.**
Bible Study
- **Youth meetings on 1st/3rd
Sunday's 3-5 p.m.**
- **January 6, 2018 - 9 a.m. Elder
Meeting, 10 a.m. Board Meeting**
- **January 8—Serving Dinner for
SAFY 6-8 p.m.**

ON TRACK WITH PASTOR JACK!!



Renewed Mind Volunteer opportunity continues.....

First Christian Church is underway with a new volunteer mission of opportunity and we need **YOUR** help!

Volunteers will take *(we can use more volunteers at 10 to haul the cooler, please lend a hand and help)* a cooler of water and approximately 15-20 healthy snacks to the Renewed Mind main office each Wednesday/Friday morning around 10 am.

Snacks may be of your choosing for the day you volunteer. Trying to keep them somewhat healthy. We have used small variety bags of chips, fruit cups, granola bars, cookies, bars, etc.

OR

YOU MAY SIMPLY PROVIDE YOUR DELIVERY SERVICES ONLY.

Please help us share God's Word through giving of our time and gifts to those who are finding their faith. See sign up sheets as you enter!

THANK YOU!!

Christian Church in Ohio Announces THRIVE Grant to Help Pastors and Congregations

God intends for everyone to **THRIVE** in their community. We see evidence of this throughout the New Testament and especially in the story of Jesus sending out his disciples into communities to preach and heal (Matthew 10). However, both Protestant and Catholic denominations are aware of obstacles which limit the ability of pastoral leaders to **THRIVE** as God intended, and the impact those obstacles have on the congregation's health as a result.

In an effort to answer the question, "What obstacles are preventing the church from thriving as God intended?" our pilot research noted 3 major obstacles: the burden of carrying too much debt as a result of education loans or consumer debt, or mid-career pastoral leaders who don't have emergency savings to meet unexpected family health care and other emergency expenses, and/or end of career pastors who could not adequately save for retirement or possibly did not receive adequate benefits from their employer.



These obstacles are affirmed by Catholic and Protestant denominations and judicatory institutions as a unique systemic barrier impeding pastoral leadership and congregational health. This barrier is distinct from similar obstacles faced by many in our church families today largely in part because most pastoral leaders while required to be highly educated, will serve their entire careers in settings that typically pay low salaries. The fact that educational requirements for ordination carry the same debt load as other college Master Degrees, and compensation commensurate with education is not in sync, makes the pastoral leadership position different from the norm.

Churches who compensate pastors with low salaries often can't afford to offer employee benefits or if they do, they are generally modest making it nearly impossible for the pastor to save for emergencies or retirement. This barrier makes for a potentially unhealthy marriage between pastor and church because pastoral leaders are expected to provide leadership for financial management, administration, and fundraising in their churches. This barrier makes it difficult at best to provide financial leadership.

Consider this: if a pastor has a constant and severe stomach ache, one that the pastor finds no remedy for relief, how can that pastor focus on her/his congregation's stomach ache? How does a pastor who is working to honor her/his call to Jesus the Christ walk in healthy ways with her/his congregation when part of the pastor's focus is on her/his own pain? Economic pressures often are cited as motivating factors for pastoral leaders who leave ministry.

We, in the Christian Church in Ohio, believe our pastors are gifted leaders who are called by God, but many of them are facing some challenges which they are trying to meet in a healthy way as they endeavor to live out their call. In an effort to address the financial obstacles which impact the health of our pastors and congregations, the Christian Church in Ohio in partnership with Lilly Endowment Inc., has created the **THRIVE** project to alleviate some of the economic challenges facing pastoral leaders. The **THRIVE** program addresses three major areas:

THRIVE Grants: for Clergy Debt Relief, or Congregational Grants for Pastoral Compensation Support. Clergy may only receive one grant, either a Debt Relief Grant or a Congregational Compensation Support Grant.

The Financial Literacy Academy will provide required educational resources in the Spring and Fall for 2018 and 2019 to strengthen understanding in the areas of: personal and congregational budgeting, fundraising, and clergy finances.

Encouragement Groups, Cohort Groups, Advocacy Support and Personal Financial Planning will assist the implementation of financial plans for both clergy and congregations. The grant's goal is to impact 25% of the active Ohio Disciples Clergy with CCIO standing. The financial literacy program will include educational experiences for both clergy and congregations on personal and congregational financial management and will be open to all Ohio Disciples Clergy in CCIO standing. Over the next 2 years, twenty-two (22) Debt Relief Grants (for individual clergy) and thirty (30) Compensation Support Grants (for congregations) will be awarded. Clergy and congregations, and/or clergy whose spouse/life partner is also clergy, may only receive one grant per clergy family, either a debt relief or congregational compensation support grant.



Pastor Jack continues to present, "Tea and Talk with Pastor Jack."

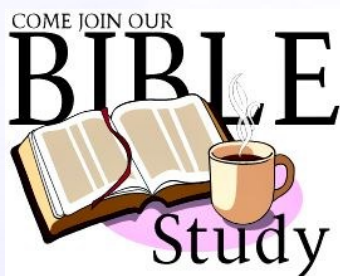
This weekly gathering will be a time for conversation, fellowship, storytelling, and occasional book and movie discussions. We want everyone from the community and congregation to come to First Christian Church and we will begin at 2pm and end around 4pm. Everyone is invited to come. If you've got the time, we'll have tea!

New Weekly Bible Study for FCC and Community Members!

On Wednesday, at 6:00pm, Pastor Jack conducts weekly Bible Study sessions for FCC members and people in our surrounding areas. Gathering in the church's sanctuary, these weekly Bible Study sessions will help people grow closer to God, understand more of God's vision for humanity as expressed through Jesus Christ, and deepen their commitment to live more faithfully and proactively as agents of God's hope in the world. Each session lasts for one hour. Bring a Bible, a sandwich, and an open heart and mind as together we grow in our faith and witness!

HELPING HANDS NEEDED!!

Delivering our donated food items to Chopin Hall from time to time!! If you can spare some time to pick up items from the church office cupboard and deliver it to Chopin Hall on a regular basis, it would be greatly appreciated for you as a volunteer! Sometimes we forget these little tasks that can so benefit others and they take so little time to do. Please see Linda Pitkin today if you have volunteer times available in this new year!!



Pastors

EMPOWERED to
THRIVE and
SUSTAIN Congregations

in the Holy Spirit

Matthew 10



God intends for everyone to **THRIVE** in their community. We see evidence of this throughout the New Testament (Matthew 10). The **THRIVE** Grant builds up the local church by empowering pastors to walk with their church in healthy ways.

The **THRIVE** Grant is a building block that Empowers churches to Sustain the covenant network of congregations in mission. We believe our clergy are gifted leaders who are called by God, however they may face some economic challenges. We believe our clergy are trying to meet those challenges in a healthy way as they endeavor to live out their Call. Therefore, the Christian Church in Ohio is using the **THRIVE** Grant to EMPOWER clergy, by walking with clergy in healthy and effective ways, so they may SUSTAIN their local congregations by the power of the Holy Spirit.

DONATE NOW

Please consider making a tax deductible matching gift to the Restricted Designated **THRIVE** Ministerial Excellence Fund to match the grants we offer pastors. Your matching gift will be held in a restricted account at the Disciples Church Extension Fund. You can find more information about this by visiting the [About Matching Donations](#) page.

JANUARY BIRTHDAY'S



1/3 Jesse Beltz
1/15 Kelly Sullivan
1/17 Linda Pitkin
1/22 Andre Hawks
1/29 LaVera Hover

THE RETURN OF YOUTH MINISTRY AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH!

Sarah Greeno is giving leadership as Director of Youth Ministry! Meeting from 3pm to 5pm on First and Third Sundays, our youth ministry effort is open to youth from First Christian Church and our community at large. Along with Sarah, Robin Kretzinger, Steven Strayer and Beth Reynolds are working to provide Christian education that builds Christian character among youth, in a fun and energetic way!

Sarah has also formed "Youth Church" during Sunday morning worship services. Youth Church will gather in the youth classroom immediately after the "passing of the peace" during Sunday morning worship. Once together, youth will experience age appropriate worship elements and return to the sanctuary in time for The Lord's Supper.

Prayers/Concerns

- ◆ For murder victim families and those injured in the Texas and Las Vegas domestic terror shootings.
- ◆ For those with cancer and undergoing Cancer Treatment: *Ray Neall, *Fred Kretzinger
- ◆ For those struggling with addictions.
- ◆ For those with various health issues and concerns: *Jack (brother-in-law of Charlotte Ballard), *Nancy LaRoche, *Donna Foreman, *Kathleen Schaeffer, *Janet Powell, *Joe Brinkman
- ◆ Prayers for peace and just solutions to conflicts, natural disasters, polarizing, police/citizen relationships, terrorism around the world, refugees fleeing and trying to find new host/home countries, and healing of political fractures in our country
- ◆ For our members of this congregation being called to fill positions within our church.
- ◆ For those seeking 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.
- ◆ For victims of recent Hurricanes.
- ◆ For the end of systemic racism and other systems of hate.
- ◆ For safety for law enforcement personnel.





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DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DELIVER

Sunday Schedule
9:30 AM Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship Service
Followed by Fellowship-Coffee Hour

First Christian Church is joyfully affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) US and Canada. www.disciples.org. We welcome all people whatever their gender identification, race, culture, ethnic background, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, family configuration, or difference in ability into full participation in the life, leadership, and employment of First Christian Church.

A request: If you find yourself being admitted to Blanchard Valley Hospital or any medical center, please do the following:

- a. 1. Call the church office to let the pastor know where you are.
419.422.5615
- b. 2. Report your church membership at the time of your admittance.
 - c. A. Name of church: First Christian Church of Findlay
 - d. B. Denomination: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), or
 - e. "Disciples of Christ".