

Church Life



Experiencing and Sharing Christ through Love & Service

July, August, September 2022

Volume 74, Issue 3

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Article	2-6
FCC Music	7-8
Upcoming Events	9-11
Women's Fellowship	12
Men's Fellowship	13-14
Financial Giving	15-17
Birthdays/Anniversaries	18
Joys & Thanksgivings	19-24
Condolences	25
Prayer List	26
Outreach	27-28
Past Events	29-44



(Historic photograph provided by Michael Hendon, taken by L. Barry Hendon in 1904)

Sunday Worship Services:

9:30 AM— Sunday School

10:30 AM—Worship Service

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday, 11AM—
1PM (and upon request)

Phone:

(270) 753-3824

Church email:

Main office:

fccmurray@gmail.com

Pastor Ruth:

ruthragovin@gmail.com



Pastor's Article



Dear Church Family and Friends,

I personally also am trying to catch up with the news I shared with the congregation in a letter on July 3, 2022, that I will be retiring from ministry on August 31, 2022. This is unexpected for me too. My original plan was to enjoy the Christmas Eve Candlelighting and Communion service in our beautiful sanctuary on December 24, 2023, and then bring my ministry to completion in January of 2024 when I reached full retirement age. But, as the Jewish saying goes,

“humans plan, God laughs!” My husband, Russ, who has a muscle degenerative disease they believe is Inclusion-Body Myositis (IBM), is experiencing symptoms that now are affecting his mobility. Since we may only have a limited period of time during which we can travel to see our daughter Rachel and grandchildren, and hopefully even have some other adventures, we are going to take full advantage of each moment of every day to enjoy each other's company, grateful for all that God has blessed us with and still may have in store for us.

I want to thank each and every one of you for the extraordinary opportunity I have had of being your minister for the past 13 ½ years. Never could I have imagined that I would be able to spend my final years in ministry serving in such a life-giving environment, surrounded by the most interesting, caring, faith-filled people, who have allowed me to be just who I am with some strengths and many weaknesses, to express myself freely, to try new things, to sometimes fail but to get up, dust myself off, and move forward. And what a blessing it has been to worship in our beautiful sanctuary, surrounded by the lingering prayers and good works of all those who have preceded us in this space dating back so many years! All this within the context of living in a university town where there are so many opportunities for continued learning and growth. And I would be remiss if I did not mention that it is because I served in this church that I now have my beautiful grandchildren Eliana and Isaac!

I think back over these many years that have included, among many things (and in no particular order chronologically or in importance): our participation in “Surfing the Edge” (which led to our implementing the first “Longest Night - Service of Light” worship celebration in our community on the Winter Solstice); the Celebration Service; Dream Team Meetings; the “Charter for Compassion” gatherings (which helped to give rise to the Need Line Green Bags), “Wednesday Night Live” Gatherings during which so many themes were covered, good conversations had, laughter shared, and delicious food eaten; Baby Dedications; Baby and Bridal Showers; Watchnight Gatherings; Ash Wednesday; Maundy Thursday; Healing Services; Palm Sunday Processions; Easter Sunday; the Hanging of the Greens; the Christmas Eve Candlelighting and Communion Service; Children's

Pastor's Article

Skits; Youth Sundays; Lock-Ins; our explorations of rural poverty (that led to our trip to Kentucky Cornerstone in Beattyville, KY); our concern about children in urban poverty (leading to our "Connect Forth Worth" Experience in TX); our study of systemic racism (leading to our intergenerational trip to Alabama); Family Camp at KBY; Children's Summer Camp; Thursday Evening "Spirituality Today" studies; over 600 sermons (sorry you had to listen to me drone on!); 26 sermon series on various topics including the controversial "The Bible and the LGBTQ Community"; 12 Spring Spiritual Retreats (10 of which were at Camp KBY); close to 50 funerals (including that of former minister Rev. Dr. David Roos, whose support of my ministry and participation at our church was so incredibly helpful to me, and our beloved organist Donnie Hendrix); Bereavement Meals; Out to Lunch gatherings at local restaurants; Homecoming; Elders Meetings; Board Meetings; Stewardship Finance Committee Meetings; Personnel Committee Meetings; Christian Education Meetings; Church Building Reopening Committee Meetings; CWF Fellowship Gatherings; Mother-Child Banquets; Salad Suppers; Noel Markets; Baptism Receptions; Farewell Receptions; House Blessings; my participation at the occasional DMF meetings; our many Fellowship Meals; Soup and Bread fundraisers; Graduation Sundays; Memorial Day Remembrances; Picnics; the Warming Center; Laundry Love; the Need Line Back Pack Program; Alternative Gifts; Life House Baby Bottles; the collection of School Supplies; snacks for Main Street Youth; Candles for HOPE Calloway; Clutch; Need Line; Angels Attic; Church World Service; Angels Clinic; countless other Outreach Projects and Giving to Ministries Locally, Regionally, and Internationally; Giving to "Week of Compassion"; "Disciples Mission Fund"; "Reconciliation"; Benevolence Fund giving; the sponsorship of an individual and one family for political asylum, celebrating when it was granted; Children's and Youth Ministries; Cooperative VBS; Stewardship Finance campaigns and Fireside Chats; Spring Cleaning; Meal Trains and Prayer Chains; serving on the board of Murray Christian Fellowship; Mission Behind Bars and Beyond; Pride Festivals; Freedom Fest; de-icing the walkways and stairs; decluttering and cleaning; CUBS Meetings; District Meetings; Regional Assembly; the Commission on Ministry; Boundaries Trainings; Anti-Racism - Pro-Reconciliation Training; Hospice Training; Mental Health First Aid Training; "Gather Murray"; over 100 movies viewed during "Faith and Film" followed by discussion over brownies and ice cream; the Moms' Group; our book discussion group at the Round Table at Tom's Grill; Lost Scriptures Series; Mental Health Awareness Studies and speakers; Covid organ concerts; Covid front yard worship followed by Simplicity Sunday parking lot worship, followed by Zoom worship during which many people shared their personal faith journeys; "Midweek Virtual Live" on Zoom to reflect on scripture and poetry; "Sharing Stories about Race in America" Zoom presentations; Celtic Christian Spirituality Studies; Enneagram training; Ethical Will workshop; bulletins; Tuesday emails; Church Life; Facebook; Facebook Live; Zoom; Instagram; the church website; hours and hours of visitation and counseling; at home communion; late night ER visits; Premarital Counseling; Wedding Rehearsals; Weddings; Wedding Vow Renewals; Wedding Receptions; Membership Classes; Sunday School; Sunday worship; my enjoyment of the Chancel Choir on Sundays and their awesome Christmas Cantatas and special Choir Celebration Sunday; my enjoyment of all the Elders' Communion Messages during which I am inspired and learn so much; my enjoyment of the delightful Children's Messages; Baptism Classes; and Baptisms. Whew! The list goes on and on and I'm sure there is much I have left out.

Pastor's Article

But, when it gets right down to it, I think that what I will cherish most of all are those sacred moments when I would put on waders and, during a worship celebration devoted solely to that one person, gently would lower a person into the waters of the baptistry with the beautiful mosaic behind it, baptizing a person in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then see the beautiful expressions on their faces as they rose to new life as a follower of Jesus Christ as their church family broke out in applause. What a privilege it has been to experience all of this!

Not only have I been blessed to serve as the minister of what I consider to be the best congregation in the world (since it has the most wonderful people in the world!), but I also have served alongside the best possible staff. Our faithful custodian Aimee Bailey has been a constant since the very beginning, and I always enjoy the times she pops her head into the office to catch up! Nothing could be better than working with our Minister of Music, Mark Dycus, and witnessing the wonderful work he has been doing with the Chancel Choir, working to prepare Special Music, and leading singing with such joy and enthusiasm! All those years with our beloved organist Donnie Hendrix, who dearly loved this congregation, and who loved playing every week alongside Judy Hill! How grateful we presently are for Janet Finch, Dr. Lucia Unrau, and Robert Arneson! Tom Seipel, who sadly left this earth while still so young, did amazing work with our youth and brought new energy! I am grateful for Samuel Underwood, Corey Fletcher, Andrew and Janie Green, and Elena Roberts who also worked with our youth, each of whom left their own unique mark on this ministry! Many thanks for the many years of outstanding ministry by our Children's Director Nancy Dycus! She definitely knows how to throw a party! I appreciate all who have worked with our Children's Worship and Wonder Ministry over the years, strengthened by the leadership of June Vander Molen, who have included Jennifer Donnelly, Elizabeth Dawson Howard, Ashley Dawson, Allison Willis, Amara Anderson, Emily Dawson, and Alyssa Daugherty! It is so wonderful to have Lisa Allen back overseeing the nursery! And then there are the group of administrative assistants who work so hard behind the scenes to keep the church going: Margaret Heath, Amanda Pennington, Debbie Batteiger, and presently the creative and efficient Katelyn Crane who is doing an incredible job! The elders, deacons, and committee chairs have been the best! Thank you to all of you and to each member of the congregation (including all those saints of this church who are now with the Lord) as you have offered your many gifts, continuing to build God's Kingdom in the world through the particular ministry of this church. You are too numerous to name but please know how much I value each and every one of you!

It is hard to be leaving you while we still are struggling with the difficulties wrought by the pandemic. We all thought that it would be over within a month or two. We never thought we would lose Donnie Hendrix, Carolyn Reagan, and Tony Van Dyke to Covid. I never thought we would lose my sister-in-law Eileen either. We never could have imagined that, just since the beginning of July, 2 years and 4 months after our building first shut down because of the pandemic, seven of our congregants have been quarantined because they have contracted Covid. Thankfully this new variant, even though highly contagious, it is not as dangerous, so the outcome is better, especially for those who have chosen to be vaccinated. Yet the pandemic still is not over. We still are wearing masks. We still are using pre-fab communion cups. We still do not pass the offering plate. We still have a portion of the

Pastor's Article

sanctuary cordoned off. There still are people who are afraid to return to in-person worship. A number of people have passed away. Some have drifted away. Several have moved away. The Church Buildings Reopening Committee will still have to meet and make decisions. But that's where faith comes in.

Faith. Hebrews 11:1 says: *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."* This is an anxious time for Russ and me. There are not only the concerns about his health but there also are significant financial concerns for our family since leaving 18 months early will impact my social security and Pension. But that's where faith comes in for us. So Russ and I walk out in faith, assured and with the conviction that God will be with us still.

Faith. Matthew 21:22 records Jesus as having said: *"Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive."* The church also has concerns about the pandemic related lower attendance and financial giving. That's where faith comes in for First Christian Church too. But just as God has seen this congregation through the Civil War, the Spanish Flu, the Great Depression, a fire that led to the sanctuary having to be rebuilt, desegregation, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, various controversies, ministers and congregants coming and going, and this recent pandemic, God will continue to be with you and work through you. God is your anchor, God's love surrounds you with every breath you take, and God will see you through, as you walk out in faith.

While I am so sad to be leaving, I know that God has great things in store for you! I am so excited for you! You will go on to write the next chapter in the history of this church. You especially will be remembered as those who were called to shine the light of Christ from the corner of Fifth and Main during an especially difficult moment in our nation's history as you proudly proclaimed the Christian faith, putting it into action through outreach, walking out into the unknown with faith as you had to reimagine what it means to be church in the midst of a pandemic and learned to do things in brand new ways.

I will be with you for the next month and a half. My outward task over this time leading up to August 31, 2022, will be to try to finish well, undertaking all the tasks that I normally do. This will include emptying out and packing up an office that has accumulated not only my things but also houses papers and books and videos belonging to the church that have been stored there since there is little place to put things otherwise. In retirement, I still plan to complete the pictorial account I have been working on that tells the story of how the church navigated through this pandemic. It is designed to be a historical record for future generations and I will get it to you when it is completed.

My inward task and internal struggle is bit by bit to try and let go, fully understanding that the success of my successor partly depends on how well I do this. This, actually, is an ethical requirement. Our denomination's Ministerial Code of Ethics, which I adhere to, states that I am to help with the future success of the church by:

Pastor's Article

“Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding, and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor nor will I perform any pastoral services unless requested by the congregation’s current pastor and elders.”

[https://cdn.disciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/06162227/Ministerial Code of Ethics-english-1.pdf](https://cdn.disciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/06162227/Ministerial_Code_of_Ethics-english-1.pdf)

Because of this stated and necessary ethical requirement, even though Russ and I plan to make Murray our permanent home (while taking as many trips down to Florida to see our daughter and grandchildren as still will be possible), I will not be able to continue to worship or participate at events at First Christian Church unless, at some future date, an invitation is extended to me to do so by the minister and elders. I know that many of you have asked me to do your funerals. I will only be able to do this if such a request is made formally by your future minister and elders.

In closing, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the huge blessing each and every one of you has been in my life and that of my family. It has been an extraordinary journey and I have felt loved and supported by you every step of the way. I will continue to keep you in my daily prayers and will be cheering you and your future minister on from the sidelines. I leave you with this quote, which has sustained me so often during my life, written by the English anchoress Julian of Norwich (1342-1416):

*“All shall be well,
and all shall be well,
and all manner of
things shall be well ...
For there is a Force of Love
moving through the universe
that holds us fast
and will never let us go.”*

In Christian Love and Service,

Pastor Ruth (with heartfelt thanks from my husband Russ too!)

FCC Music

Why I Love My Church Choir (Thank you for being so wonderful!)

By: Mark Dycus, Minister of Music



In March of this year the Chancel Choir of First Christian Church met for the first time in more than two years. And picked up right where they left off. They are a joy to work with. Here are some reasons why.

First, they love what they do. They recognize their service in the choir as an offering to God and His church, and they give of themselves joyfully. Right before the phrase "Come into his presence with singing" in Psalm 100:2 is the phrase, "Serve the Lord with gladness." That is the Chancel Choir of First Christian Church. They serve with gladness. It is not a sense of duty that brings them to practice on Wednesday nights, but a sense of joy.

Second, they are a joy to work with because they work hard. They serve with gladness, but they take their assignment seriously and strive to give their very best. Many come to practice after a full day of work or other activities. But they never complain or excuse themselves from giving their best. Their attitude is an inspiration to me to want to be at my best.

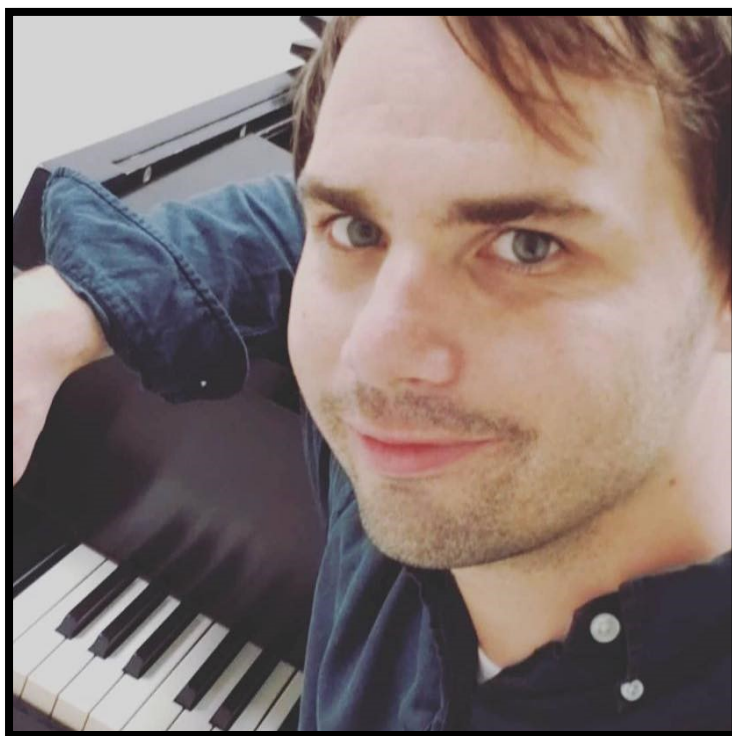
A third reason they are a joy to work with is they love each other. I speak from almost 50 years of directing choirs and tell you that not all choirs love each other. When they do, lots of good things happen. And loving each other reinforces the first two reasons I mentioned. When you love each other, it's easier to love what you are doing together and it's easier to work hard at it. As often as not, there are still choir members at church visiting with each other more than half an hour after practice is over.

All these wonderful things about the choir were still there, even after the long break. It is my privilege to be their director. I love you, Chancel Choir members, more than I can say. Thank you for being so wonderful!

FCC Music

Introducing Rob Arneson

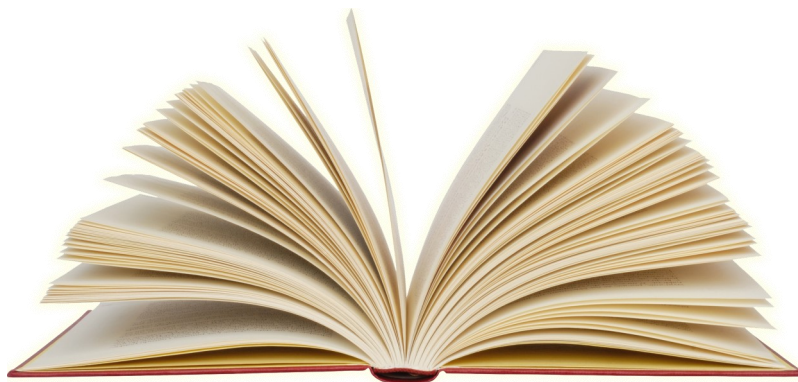
In the aftermath of Donnie Hendrix' unexpected death and the short period during which Angie Thome played alongside Judy Hill, we have now been blessed over the past months by the extraordinary musician Janet Finch. When Janet is not able to be with us, she has arranged for two amazing pianists, Dr. Lucia Unrau and Robert Arneson, to play for us. In this issue of Church Life we would like to introduce you to Rob Arneson, who also has joined us during worship on a number of Sundays. Thank you, Rob, for sharing your gifts of music with us!



Rob Arneson is a graduate of Murray State University with a degree in piano performance. He currently works as a freelance collaborative pianist at MSU. Rob is studying solo piano with teachers in California and Tennessee as he prepares for an audition to a master's degree in piano performance.

Upcoming Events

MIDWEEK 'VIRTUAL' LIVE GATHERING



Wednesdays from 6-7:30 PM on Zoom

(while Choir does not meet and most Tuesdays otherwise)

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 import**
(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**
(Over the months we have deepened into the music of Carrie Newcomer and Elaine Hagenberg)
 - **Share our Joys and Concerns**
 - **Close with the Lord's Prayer**

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

Upcoming Events

Pastor Ruth's Retirement Reception

Sunday, August 28, 2022

1:00– 3:00 PM

Murray FCC Fellowship Hall

We invite the Murray First Christian Church congregation and the greater community of Calloway and surrounding counties to join us as we celebrate **Reverend Dr. Ruth Ragovin** and her many years dedicated to serving our community in and out of the church. We will miss her greatly in the role as minister of FCC, but wish her and her family all the best in retirement!

Rev. Dr. Ruth Ragovin moved to Murray in February of 2009 to serve as senior minister at First Christian Church. She has previously ministered in California and Tennessee. She received her B.A. in religious studies and health studies from the University of Waterloo, in Waterloo, Ontario. Following a year of graduate studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitat in Munich, Germany, she enrolled at Drew University where she received both her Masters and her Ph.D. in theological and religious studies. In addition to pastoral ministry, she also is a trained spiritual director, and has a number of scholarly publications. She is married to Rev. Russell Ragovin, also a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister, and has one daughter, Rachel, and two grandchildren, Eliana and Isaac.



Upcoming Events

Christian Women's Fellowship Salad Supper

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

5:30 PM

Fellowship Hall

All women are invited to attend the annual Salad Supper!

This event launches the CWF 2022-23 season.

Please bring a salad to share if you are able.



Christian Women's Fellowship



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.

September 13, 2022

Hostess: TBA

Program: TBA

Chair: Judy Lyle

Vice Chair: Bobbie Raby

Treasurer: Ruth Daughaday

Service Chair: Betty McCord

Group II Meetings:

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

September 19, 2022

Hostess: Carmen Garland

Program: Carmen Garland

Chair: Teresa Nixon

Vice Chair: Billie Burton

Treasurer: Vicky Holton

Service Chair: Vicky Holton

**Wednesday, September 7, 2022 — 5:30 PM
CWF Salad Supper in the Fellowship Hall**

*No meetings June - August

Disciples Men's Fellowship

Once a month, usually the third Tuesday, the Disciples Men's Fellowship meets with other men from the Disciples of Christ churches in the Far West Area for a meal, time of fellowship, and program. Our men (women also are invited!) travel in the church van to the church where the meeting is being hosted. Dan McKeel, DMF chair, will let the men know what time the van will be leaving the church parking lot.

DMF UPDATES FROM DAN McKEEL

April 20, 2022

Good morning everyone,

Last evening the Far West Men met at Bethel Christian Church. We had a great turn out with 37 in attendance representing 7 churches. We also had an excellent collection with \$191 given for KBY and \$165 given for the Christian Care Communities. Our total in the bank for KBY now stands at \$5,039.57. I have attached a copy of our check to Christian Care Communities. Thank you all.

During our meeting Dan McKeel told our group about a request from Rev. Dee Moore Wells, KBY Director, to purchase a log splitter for the camp, estimated cost @ \$1,000. During the discussion Keri Frazier spoke and told us that he had offered to loan the Camp a log splitter that he owns. Rev. Dee Moore Wells was not present to contribute to this discussion. Dan McKeel will reach out to Dee to find out her preference as to how to proceed. A motion was made and seconded to Purchase a log splitter if Rev. Wells decided to do so. Everyone voted in favor.

A very delicious meal was served and the program was presented talking about the importance of security at our churches. We learned about the steps that have been taken at Bethel Christian Church. It was stated that the most important part is that your church have a Plan of Action. If you don't have one you can reach out to Bethel for ideas and you can reach out to your current Church Insurance Agent for recommendations.

Several were asking how to get in touch with Rev. Dee Wells. Here is her contact information: deemwells@gmail.com, (931) 260-7788

Finally, this Saturday is the Spring Camp Work Day (4-23-22). Please consider attending, work is scheduled to start at 8am. Lunch will be served and you can work as long as you want. There is plenty of work to do to get ready for Summer Camps. Also, you can get a look at the new Cabins! This would be a great time to bring someone from your church that has never seen or been to KBY. Come for a little while or stay all day. Hope to see you there.

Disciples Men's Fellowship

June 22, 2022

Good morning to everyone,

Last evening the Far West KY Men met at Benton Christian Church. Seven churches were present and we had 42 in attendance including two guests from KBY (Dee and her husband).

We were entertained with music before our meal. The meal was excellent, fried chicken and all the fixings.

Rev. Dee Moore Wells gave a report from the camp. The attendance has been excellent which has already surpassed last year. The new cabins are in place and electricity has been turned on to two of them. They have already received shipment of 35 beds, still needing 35 more. (If you have any ideas or leads on beds please contact Dee). The new cabins all have concrete front porches with roofs. The fronts are being detailed in wood and look a little like Cracker Barrel. PS, again if you or your church has any time to help at camp just contact Dee at (931) 260-7788 and she will tell you what is needed.

A collection was taken up totaling \$285. (\$175 for KBY & \$110 for Christian Care Communities. A check has been mailed to CCC)

Next month's meeting will be hosted by Mayfield First Christian and will take place at Benton Christian. Date 7/19/2022 at 7:00pm.

The Far West Christian Men's group will meet:

July 19, 7PM: First Christian Church of Benton

2515 Main St. Benton, KY 42025

August 16, 7PM: First Christian Church of Murray

111 North 5th St Murray, KY 42071

September 20, 2022: Bardwell Christian Church

US-51, Bardwell, KY 42023

Financial Giving

Financial Update

As we enter the second half of the church year, we want to remind everyone to please continue giving to the church. The Stewardship and Finance Committee (SFC) has been monitoring our financial status over the past several months and met most recently this past Tuesday, July 12.

Currently we are \$12,448 in the red (revenue vs expenses), through June 30. While we remain on solid ground financially for the long term, the committee decided we should advise the entire congregation of our current standing and encourage everyone to bring their giving up to date. Attendance has been down over the few months, for a number reasons including Covid 19, work commitments, vacations, etc., and giving has fallen well below budget. We understand completely but want to remind everyone that the church's expenses continue to be incurred.

So, please do what you can to continue your support of our church. You will continue to hear from the SFC and the board over the next several weeks regarding our status and other ways you can help.

See you Sunday!

Stewardship and Finance Committee

Don Chamberlain, Chair of the SFC

Amy Roos, Chairman of the Board

Ruth Ragovin, Pastor and Ex-Officio Member

Don Bennett

Ruth Daughaday

Dan McKeel



Financial Giving

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR April		
	2022	2021
Income	\$10,516.58	\$ \$ 10,893.50
Expense	\$12,822.95	\$ \$ 10,178.33
Balance	\$(2,306.37)	\$ \$ 715.17

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR June		
	2022	2021
Income	\$10,326.82	\$8,759.97
Expense	\$14,010.19	\$14,302.83
Balance	\$(3,683.37)	\$(5,542.86)

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR May		
	2022	2021
Income	\$11,767.59	\$13,891.34
Expense	\$13,522.08	\$10,549.67
Balance	\$(1,754.49)	\$3,341.67

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR Jan-June		
	2022	2021
Income	\$69,191.60	\$66,704.26
Expense	\$81,640.46	\$74,655.61
Balance	\$(12,448.86)	\$(7,951.35)

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

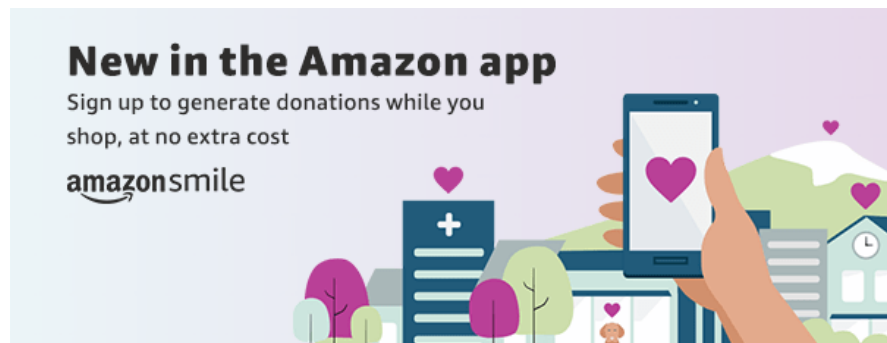


Financial Giving

Community Rewards Programs



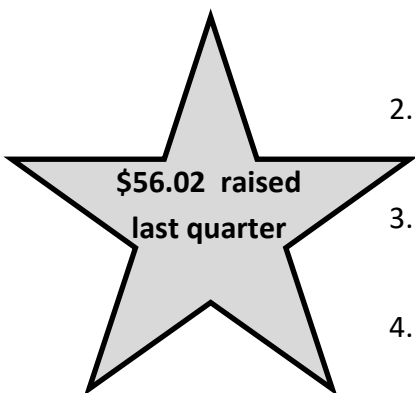
Remember, always start at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to our church. To support First Christian Church when shopping on Amazon, simply click on the following link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/61-0482959> and shop! It's that easy!



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*



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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!

July

1	Mitch Ryan	20	Ann McKeel
3	Ruth Ragovin	21	Brenton Hall
4	Melanie Dawson		Drew Holton
6	Jessica AsBridge	22	Charlotte Van Dyke
	Teresa Nixon	23	Ellen Blalock
7	Teri Gould	24	Dee Roberts
	Beth Dobyms	25	Gary Frank Crass
8	Brian Daughaday		Emily Dawson
10	Raghda Abo Al Haija		Dan McKeel
11	Claire Jones	27	Doug Vander Molen
12	Keisha Kinsley	28	Alison Marshall
14	Scott McKeel		John Roso
15	John Hughes		Joseph Roso
16	Kelly Dibble Stalls		
	Dianne Miller		
17	Eric Roberts		
18	Judy Nichols		
19	Eddie Phelps		

August

1	Teresa Dycus Dowdy	20	Mike Ryan
3	Alan Bearman	21	Yaman Abo Al Haija
5	Paula Marvin	22	Laurel Gray
6	Gary Crass	23	Joey McKeel
7	Don Chamberlain	24	Kevin Hume
	Catherine Crass Gonzalez	25	Marge Roy
11	Hunter Harness		Norma Jean Williams
12	Julie McKeel	26	Rachel Hughes
13	Nancy Manning	27	Janie Eckstein
14	Scott Marvin	29	Andy McKeel
16	Tony Ryan	30	Hester Gray
17	Bryan Nixon		



September

1	Howard Dillard
	Sam Willis
2	Steve French
	David Robinson
6	Ruth Daughaday
8	Isabelle Lane AsBridge
10	Roman Roberts
11	Todd Nichols
12	Mira Kinsley
13	Deane Renshaw
17	Jase Tyler Garland
19	Robert McAllister
21	Phyllis Huggins
22	Greg Ryan
24	Victor Marshall
25	Kellee Hooks-Morris
26	McKenna Grace Phelps
29	Stella Cavitt

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

July

5	Dave & Judy Eldredge
6	Roger & Melanie Dawson
11	Doug & June Vander Molen
16	Chip & Erica Gray
18	John and Beth Roark
25	Blake & Shawna Munger

August

6	Gary & Diana Darnell
7	Dan & Ann McKeel
11	Bill & Judy Lyle
12	Terry & Leah Hart
15	Russ & Ruth Ragovin
16	Mark & Nancy Dycus
18	Bruce & Beth Dobyms
21	Scott & Paula Marvin
22	Don & Jean Bennett
24	Andy & April McKeel

September

1	Mike & Laura Lee Stephenson
8	Mike & Donna Cathey
	Martin & Patsy Tracy
24	Bob & Celeste McAllister

Joys and Thanksgivings

Below contains just a partial list of the accomplishments that were mentioned in worship on Sunday mornings. We know that there are many more that are not listed here that we do not know about and we would be so proud of the person who had done well! Please do reach out and share your joys and thanksgivings with the church office or on Sunday mornings during worship so we can share your joy with others!

The Nursery Reopened on Easter Sunday!

After two long years while we have struggled with the pandemic and have not been able to offer nursery service, our wonderful nursery attendant Lisa Allen returned on Easter Sunday! At present we will only be offering nursery service during the worship celebration at 10:30 AM. If, however, we find that there also is a need during the Sunday School hour we will expand nursery service for that period as well. So come and bring your babies or grandbabies, knowing that they will be in the very best of hands with Lisa!



Congratulations to Bradley Dawson, who is doing a summer internship at Modern Technology Solutions Incorporated (MTSI) at Huntsville, Alabama. MTSI works with Defense and Aerospace.



Congratulations to Mallory and Bret Looney on the birth of their fourth son, Bryson, on Saturday, April 30, 2022!

Congratulations to Leah Hughes who won the Grandparent of the Year essay contest sponsored by the Kentucky Retired Teachers Association for her school and county. She was recognized and read it at the Murray Women's Club during the local KRTA meeting.

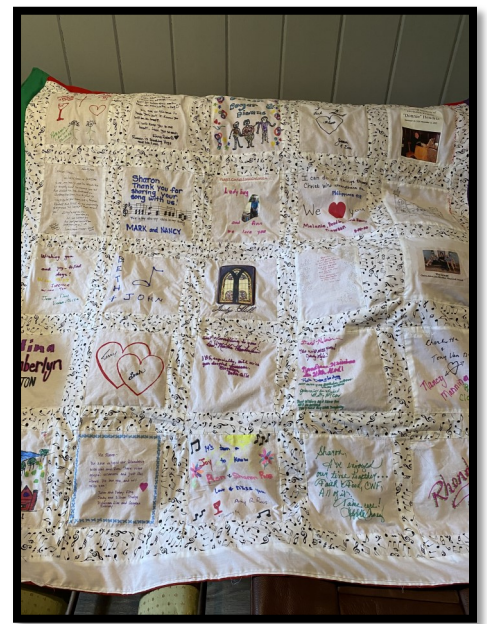
Joys and Thanksgivings

FCC received some special mail; a historic photo of the original church building (which can be seen on this issue's front cover), with a letter that reads:

Hello:

I was going through some family photos this week left to me by my grandfather, Carnie Hendon of Murray. I believe this photo of the back of your church was taken about the time of its opening in 1904, probably by my great grandfather, L. Barry Hendon. I doubt he was a church member, but I could be wrong.

Michael Hendon



Nancy Dycus presented Sharon Rue with a memory quilt sewn by Nancy, with quilt squares made by many in the church. Also included was a pillow with a picture of Sharon and Ron. It's easy to see how touched Sharon was by the thoughtful gesture as can be seen by the card she sent the church:

Dear FCC Congregation,

There are not enough words in the English language to tell you how much the quilt means to me. I will always treasure it. Special thanks to Nancy Dycus who (I think) came up with the idea, then brought it to fruition. And even personally delivered it! I have settled in and renewed many old friendships. My house will be ready in December or January-- until then I have a lovely home to live in. I truly miss everyone and value the friendships that were made in Murray. Again, thank you for the quilt and pillow. I have laid it out on the king size bed in the master bedroom, so its easy to show off to everyone. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

In Christian Love and Service,

Sharon Rue

Joys and Thanksgivings



We had a beautiful worship celebration on Pentecost Sunday, June 5! The paraments were changed to red to signify that it was the day of Pentecost, when God poured down God's Holy Spirit on the church. Many thanks to Rev. Russ Ragovin for bringing an excellent message and to Rob Arneson for playing Bach's "Sheep May Safely Graze." It was also wonderful to have Sharon Rue in worship with us, who had come to Murray to attend Nina Natividad's and Brenton Hall's graduation celebration at the Dycus house.

Many thanks to Charlotte Van Dyke for sharing an inspirational tribute about her father, a Pentecostal missionary to remote regions of Canada and China, during the Father's Day worship on Sunday, June 19! A copy of her message will be posted on the church website (www.fccmurray.com) so all can read about the amazing life Charlotte's father lived and Charlotte was privileged to share in!

Joys and Thanksgivings

A big shout out to Erica Gray and her academic team who have gone to compete internationally! This is what was posted about the event:

Lakers take 7th place at Future Problem Solving

International Conference

The Calloway County High School State Champion FPS team competed in the Future Problem Solving International Competition on Thursday, June 9th, using their research on Antibiotic Resistance to examine challenges and solutions related to ABR. The team of Brooklyn Swatzell, Sidney Lasley, Drake Calhoun, and Laken McDaniel scored 7th place in the worldwide competition against teams from across the United States and more than 10 countries, who competed in a hybrid virtual/ in-person event hosted at University of Massachusetts Amherst. The team would like to thank Murray State's Dr. Chris Trzepacz for his assistance in discussing antibiotic resistance in preparation for the tournament. The Lakers are coached by Erica Gray.

Thanks to the Gray girls for filling the blessing box on Sunday, June 26! This continues to be a team effort to keep it stocked. Both Rebecca Landolt and David Robinson regularly stop by during the week to add items, and our administrative assistant, Katelyn, has recently refilled a few times after calls from community members saying it's close to empty.

Alyssa Daughrity is participating for five weeks in the Governor's Scholars Program at Bellarmine University! This is such a huge honor and we wish her a wonderful time of learning and making new friends!

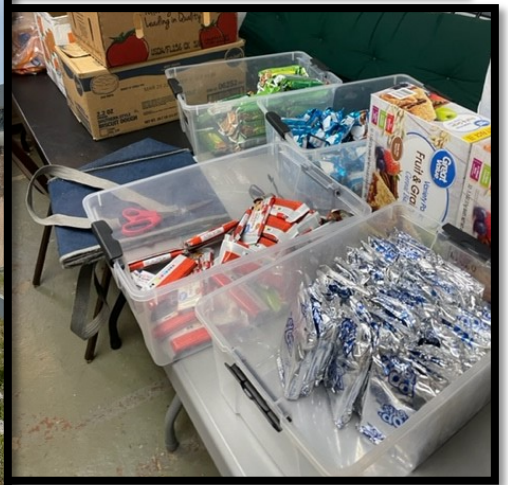


Congratulations to Rev. Beth Dobyms, who completed an interim ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Murray on Sunday, June 26 and now, after three attempts, is officially retired!

Congratulations to Rev. Brittany Hesson, who has been called as the new minister at First Presbyterian Church and began July 3, 2022! Many of us know Brittany from working together with her on cooperative Vacation Bible Schools during the time that she worked at MOTA. She is wonderful and we look forward to a collaborative relationship!

Joys and Thanksgivings

Our Deepest Gratitude for David Robinson



David Robinson has the true heart of a servant leader. He not only takes care of the sound system on the Sundays he is at church, purchases communion supplies and helped get communion ready pre-pandemic when we passed the trays, and comes in weekly to empty the recycling bins, but he also faithfully tithes a portion of every paycheck to fill the blessing box, get supplies for the Need Line Back Pack Program, and for Thanksgiving baskets. You may not be aware that he has an entire room in the "dungeon" dedicated to these efforts where he organizes and stocks these items. Here are a few photos so you don't need to make the trip downstairs to see his amazing work (although feel free to do so if you would like). Thank you David!

Many Thanks to Those Who Have Filled the Pulpit

We wish to thank those who stepped in over the past few months to bring the message in Pastor Ruth's absence.



Elena Roberts brought the message "For God So Loved the World" on June 26.

Charlotte Van Dyke gave "A Tribute to My Father" on June 19.



Rev. Russell Ragovin brought two messages: one on June 5 entitled "You are Super Charged"; the other on April 24 entitled "Peaceful on Purpose".



Condolences

Our love and prayers are with Marge Roy in the sudden death of her husband **Pat Roy** on Wednesday, May 4, 2022, in Clinton, KY, at the age of 82 after suffering from multiple health issues. They had been married for 56 years. Pat was cremated. A Memorial Service will take place this summer in Michigan, where their four children live.

Our love and prayers are with Judy Nichols and family in the death of her brother **William (Bill) J. Smaistria**, age 66, in Texas on May 18, 2022.

Our love and prayers are with Sharon Rue and family in the death of her nephew **Randy Rue**, who passed away on Monday, May 23, 2022.

Our love and prayers are with Don Chamberlain and family in the death of his oldest sister **Linda Blair** on Monday evening, May 30, 2022, in Martinsburg, WV. The funeral service was held on June 2 in Beckley, WV.

Our love and prayers are with John Roark and family in the death of his stepmother, **Mary Lou Roark**, on May 31, 2022. The funeral service was held on June 4 in Cadiz, KY.

Our love and prayers are with the family and friends of **Sharon Ruth Lueck**, who passed away at the age of 77 on Saturday evening at 11:30 PM, June 25, 2022, at Mills Health and Rehab in Mayfield after a courageous battle with cancer. A funeral service was held on June 29 at Blalock-Coleman in Murray, KY, with internment at Murray Memorial Gardens. Sharon loved our church and was baptized shortly before the pandemic. She greatly appreciated the prayer notes that the congregation sent her, which she read over and over again.



Our love and prayers are with Rachel Hughes and family whose stepfather, **Ricky Lynn Anderson**, age 60, passed away Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at his home in Medon, TN. A graveside service was held on Sunday, June 26, at Bolivar Memorial Cemetery in Bolivar, TN.

Be in prayer for...



- Aimee Bailee
- Patricia Binford
- Debbie Branam
- Bart Broz
- Billie Burton
- Deborah Campbell
- Marcus Cavitt
- Noah Cavitt
- Ron Cella
- Teresa Dycus Dowdy
- Phyllis Duckworth
- Judy and Dave Eldredge
- Brenton Hall
- Mike Holton
- Phyllis Huggins
- Glenn Hughes
- Loretta Jobs
- Mike Kerrick
- Lisa Kindall
- John King
- Patsy King
- Ruth King
- Gene Lee
- Nancy Manning
- Paula Marvin
- Bob and Celeste McAllister
- Anna McCurdy
- Eli McKeel
- Dianne and Roger Miller
- Landon Morgan
- Kathy Pasco
- Rob Pennington
- Aaron Perkins
- Judy Phelps
- McKenna Phelps
- Russell Ragovin
- Deane Renshaw
- Bill Roberts
- Elena Roberts
- Liz Rose
- Marge Roy
- Sharon Russell
- Diane Samsil
- Andrew Schultz
- Carol Smith
- David Tamaren
- Michele Tamaren
- Scott Tamaren
- Peter Tan
- Ann Thornton
- Jackie Underwood
- Doug Vander Molen
- Charlotte Van Dyke
- Danny Warren
- Cindy Rue Wimbley
- Gary White
- Sonja Whitener
- Allison and Dwight Willis
- Linda Wilson
- Bianca Youngman

Outreach

A report by: Melanie Dawson

During the months of April through June 2022, our church participated in the following outreach efforts:

- Contributed money (\$250) to **Laundry Love** in April for our month of May. Due to COVID, we no longer work at the laundry mat but lwash 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.
- Collected change/money for **Life House** through the Baby Bottle Campaign. We picked them up on Mother's Day and returned them on Father's Day. In a few weeks, Life House will notify us of the total amount given.

Ongoing Outreach activities as seen in our weekly emails:

- 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. David Robinson and many others from our congregation place items in the Blessing Box both here and other places.
- Collect snacks for the **Main Street Youth Center**.
- 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

Upcoming activities:

- Collect **school supplies**.
- Contribute money (\$250) to **Laundry Love** for the month of August.

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



Many thanks to Rebecca Landolt for organizing this important effort!

Previous Events

Decorating of the Cross Saturday, April 16, 2022



Previous Events

Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022



Previous Events

Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022



An Easter account from Celeste McCallister:

It started out when Bob and I felt we were doing better and wanted to attend First Christian Church for Easter. We were so pleased; lots of interaction with readings and scripture, just beautiful, one of the best Easters in a while. Pastor Ruth, we thank you for preparing an excellent program and the music was much enjoyed. What a blessing it was to hear them all sing again. What a blessing it is to have Janet Finch play the piano, a beautiful job all the time. After the service was over, we went and spoke with Monte Finch, and he asked us if we would like our picture taken as we looked so cute together and we agreed (picture above). It was just an amazing day with all the wonderful events that happened. Thank you again to all that made this service so wonderful. God bless everyone.

Previous Events

Camp Kum-Ba-Ya Workday & Cabin Dedication Saturday, April 23

There was a well attended and productive clean up day at Camp Kum-Ba-Ya on Saturday April 23, followed by a cabin dedication at Camp KBY. Dan McKeel brought equipment up to work. Terry Hart got there well before 8 AM in the morning and helped to add locks to a dozen doors. Melanie Dawson got the cobwebs out of and cleaned up all the cabins with the perspective that she wanted it to be as clean as she would like it for her children or grandchildren. The Jacksons were there. Ann Thornton and Pastor Ruth attended the cabin dedication. There was an inspirational message given by the retired West Area minister Rev. Tom Steiner as he reminded the group there that FCC Murray and Mayfield provided the seed money for the purchase of this beautiful camp 66 years ago and walked us through the many transformations along the way. The family of Issac Sterett were there, who created the Issac Sterett Adventure Foundation in the aftermath of the death of their ten-year-old son Issac who had so enjoyed his time at camp. Be sure and spread the word about the upcoming summer camp program! Brochures are available in the narthexes and on the West Area website at <https://www.westareadisciples.org/>



Many thanks to Dan McKeel for bringing equipment to the camp. Here he is driving the tractor.

The Issac Sterett Adventure Foundation

On Saturday, April 23, 2022, 8 cabins were dedicated during a special ceremony that will greatly enhance our camp and conference program. They previously were FEMA cabins and will allow for year round programming since they are heated and air conditioned. They were the gift of the “Issac Sterett Adventure Foundation,” which was established on July 15, 2020.

Issac Sterett was a very adventurous, nature-appreciative 10-year old boy. He had an ability to connect and learn from opportunities inspired from the outdoors. He was a Boy Scout, a camper, a sports enthusiast, and he loved being in water. Nature had a powerful impact on his life, and we want to honor his love of the outdoors by establishing a safe, green space for families to enjoy. Educational programming will also keep people of all ages stimulated to try new outdoor activities and continue to love the ones they already treasure.

Issac enjoyed hiking, biking, target shooting, archery, fishing, boating, and playing sports outside. These activities were some of his favorites on the farm, at the lake, and at camps. We hope to offer an opportunity where these and more will be experienced right here in our community, easily accessible off the Greenbelt. We feel that an ever-growing epidemic of technology and hours spent behind a screen are consuming too much of our valuable time. Many people are in search of a better balance away from technology to improve their mood and behaviors, sleep, and overall physical and mental health.

Issac’s time spent with his family outdoors was incredibly fulfilling. We treasure many trips to places that have now inspired us to look to the great outdoors for special moments in daily family life, and build upon the Foundation that will forever honor his memory. We will continue to celebrate his laughter and love as we share these spaces with you, and hope that you will bring your whole family to share time outside and unplugged!

Issac’s family includes 3 brothers, Will, Max, and Reid, and a chocolate lab named Spidey. His proud parents are Tres and Katie Sterett.

<https://>

www.issacsterettadv.org/



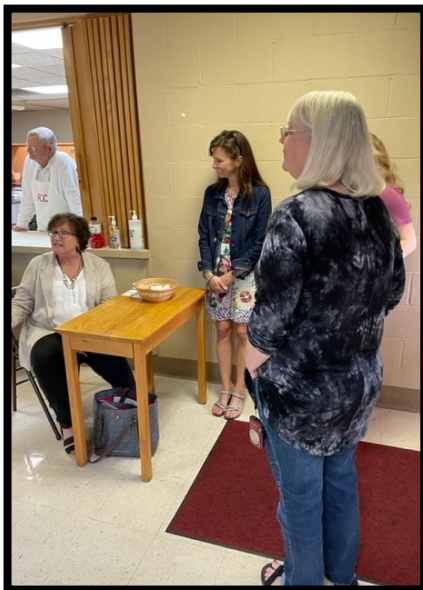
Previous Events

Christian Women's Fellowship Mother Child Banquet May 4, 2022



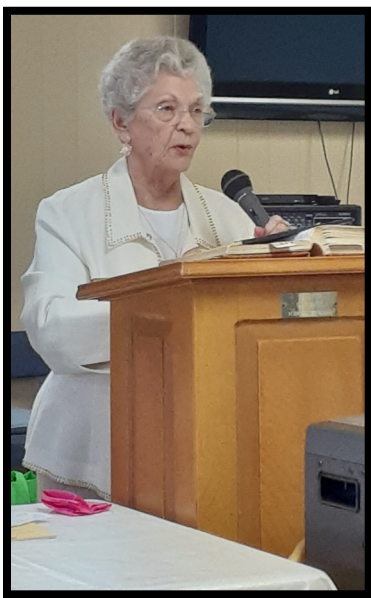
Previous Events

Christian Women's Fellowship Mother Child Banquet May 4, 2022



Previous Events

Christian Women's Fellowship Mother Child Banquet May 4, 2022



Previous Events

Graduation Celebration Music Sunday May 22, 2022

May 22 was such a wonderful Sunday in our congregation as we celebrated a number of graduates and had the pleasure of having Tamara Abo Al Haija, Brenton Hall, and Nina Natividad with us in worship and during the Graduation Luncheon following! They were celebrated with a special music Sunday during which we were blessed by the most amazing prelude played by Janet Finch, hearing the Chancel Choir sing, and enjoying a number of the choir's favorite hymns.



Previous Events

Graduation Celebration Music Sunday May 22, 2022



Congratulations to the Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 Graduates!



Tamara Abo Al Haija - Murray State University - Fall 2021 Graduate

Tamara obtained her undergraduate degree with a double major in Psychology and Advertising with a 3.8 GPA. She is currently at MSU completing her graduate degree in Business Health Administration. Tamara is the daughter of Rasha Khalil and sister of Zaid Abo Al Haija.



Zaid Abo Al Haija - Murray State University - Spring 2022 Graduate

Zaid obtained his undergraduate degree in Chemistry Pre Med with a 3.78 GPA and is in the process of applying to dentistry school. Zaid is the son of Rasha Khalil and the brother of Tamara Abo Al Haija.

Congratulations to the Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 Graduates!



Jared G. Chaney - The Woodlands High School (TX) - Class of 2022

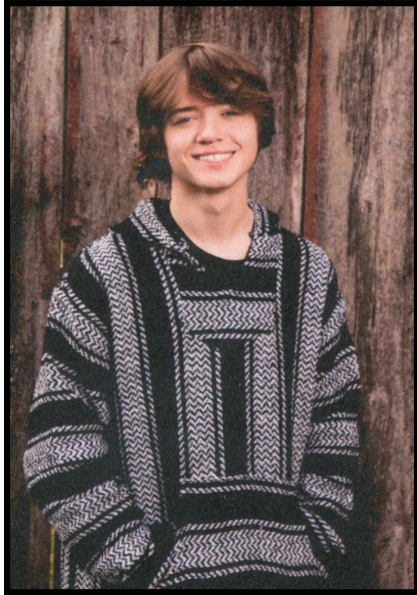
Jared will be attending Texas A & M College of Engineering, majoring in computer science. Joe and Lynda Chaney are the proud grandparents of Jared.



Lexi C. Chaney-Robinson - Lyman High School (CT) - Class of 2022

Lexi will be attending Arizona State University, majoring in kinesiology. Joe and Lynda Chaney are the proud grandparents of Lexi.

Congratulations to the Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 Graduates!



Brenton Hall - Calloway County High School - Class of 2022

Brenton participated in CCHS band, soccer, tennis, and FCC youth and children's programs. Brenton will be taking a gap year. Brenton is the son of Teresa Dycus Dowdy, the grandson of Nancy & Mark Dycus and the brother of Amberlyn Hall.



Katherine Hill - University of Tennessee at Knoxville - Spring 2022 Graduate

Katherine obtained a Master's of Architecture and has accepted a job in Boston, MA. She received the 2022 Award for Distinguished service for Alpha Phi Omega. Katherine is the granddaughter of Judy Hill. Her other relatives at FCC include Olivia, Victor & Alison Marshall and Lily Sanchez.

Congratulations to the Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 Graduates!



Hastings Hume - Green Hill High School (TN) - Class of 2022

Hastings graduated with honors and distinction. She will be attending University of Mississippi, majoring in Chemistry. Hastings is the niece of Leah and Terry Hart and the daughter of Stacy and Kevin Hume.



Nina Natividad - Calloway County High School - Class of 2022

Nina has been involved in FBLA, choir, jazz choir, playhouse in the Park and FCC youth and children's programs. She has received academic awards and plans to attend Murray State University in Social Work with an emphasis in Psychology and counseling. Nina is the daughter of DeeAnna Dycus Vaughn and the granddaughter of Nancy and Mark Dycus.

Previous Events

Pride Festival—June 11, 2022



Previous Events

Pride Worship Celebration

June 12, 2022

The first ecumenical Pride Worship celebration was held on Sunday June 12, at the pavilion at Murray State's Arboretum. First Christian, St. John's Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian Church were present for the worship celebration. Many thanks to Mark Dycus for bringing music and to Nancy Dycus and Elena Roberts for sharing prayers. It is good that our church is known in our community as being welcoming to all!

