



First Christian Church
 (Disciples of Christ)
 816.628.5583
 2151 S Jefferson ST
 PO Box 576
 Kearney, MO 64060
www.fcckearney.org
fcckearney@aol.com

The Christian

February 2012

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Valentine Banquet

Saturday, February 11 at 6 pm. Registration deadline is Sunday February 5. The evening will include a meal and program. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Join Us on Our Journey Toward Easter

For many centuries, Christians have set aside the forty days before Easter as a time of spiritual preparation, usually through the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting. This year, our congregation will be preparing together in an intentional way. In addition to the Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services, you are invited to Bread & Broth each Wednesday evening during Lent. We'll begin with a soup dinner at 6:15—though you're welcome to come later—and share a time of reflection and devotion together for about half an hour beginning at 7. Kids and youth are invited to share supper before Kings Kidz and Youth Group, as well as join any of the other services and events.

A full schedule of the events is below. Invite your friends and neighbors, too!

February 22	6:15 pm Bread & Broth (Soup Supper) 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service
Wednesdays, February 29 through March 28	6:15 pm Bread & Broth (Soup Supper) 7 pm Devotions
April 1	Palm Sunday 9:30 am Easter Egg Hunt
April 5	7 pm Maundy Thursday service
April 6	7 pm Good Friday service
April 8	Easter, services at 8:15 & 10:45 am brunch at 9 am



Pastor Gilpin's Notes

I hope you are half as excited as I am. We continue to grow in our awareness of God's presence in worship and respond in awe. Folks are discovering their gifts and using them in joyful/fulfilling ministries. Small groups (Sunday morning classes, evening study groups, service groups, fellowship groups, discussion groups, support groups, etc.) continue to mature and multiply. Open/honest communication with God and each other is at an all-time high. Those who have eyes to see and ears to hear know exactly what I am talking about - God's Spirit is fulfilling God's plan. All I can say is "Thank You, God, for removing the scales from our eyes, opening our ears, and breaking down all barriers between You, us, each other, and Your glorious plan. ... Hallelujah!!!"

Within the pages of this newsletter are numerous opportunities for you to be a part of God's work in Christ's Church, our community, our country, and our world. All you have to do is say "Yes!!!" to Christ's call and join the fun.

Your partner in joyful ministry,
Doug

The Christian Roundtable

This group, led by Doug Gilpin and Rod Will, will meet at the church on the first Thursday of every month at 7 pm. The purpose is to be "a safe place to discuss important issues and learn." At *The Christian Roundtable*, we will follow the following Table Manners:

- Be honest and speak your mind, but use self-control in our interactions.
- No one is always right. Be open to the opinion of others.
- Seek to understand before you seek to be understood.
- When differences arise, no labeling and personal attacks.
- No personalizing of issues. Address behaviors, not persons.
- Conflicts are problems to be solved, not contests to won.
- Above "table manners" will be refined and new ones added as needed.

At our first meeting on Thursday, February 2, we will study the Old Testament story of the Tower of Babel and what it teaches us about the separation of people, customs, and countries. Everyone who wants a safe place to learn is welcome!

Living Proof 2012

Are you ready to see God's Word in a new way? There's nothing quite like worshipping the Lord with Bible teacher Beth Moore, worship leader Travis Cottrell, and an arena full of women. If you've never experienced Living Proof Live, join us for a time of life-changing worship and one-of-a-kind teaching on April 13-14 (starts Friday at 7 pm and ends Saturday at noon) at Municipal Auditorium - \$65 per person. Please contact Shawna Rapstine at 816.320.3732 if you are interested.

Ongoing Sunday Morning Study Groups

Mixed Nuts: Adult study group meeting in classroom A
This group continues to study The First Christmas by Marcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossman.

Young at Heart: Senior adult study group meeting in the room off the sanctuary
This group uses The Present Word, a series for adults.

A Chronological Study of the Bible: Adult study group meeting in the pastor's office
This group is using The Chronological Study Bible, reading their way through the Bible. You're welcome to join them.

Youth Group: Kids in grades 6th-12th meet in the Barr Youth Center
This group continues studying Scary, Gross & Weird Stories from the Bible; once they're finished with that, they'll be moving on to even more weird stuff! GiGi Leighr & Abigail Conley will be their teachers for the month.

Children: Preschool-3rd grade: Classroom C
4th & 5th grades: Classroom B
In February the children will be hearing Bible stories and having fun together. Come see what's going on!
Please note: These locations are where children begin the rotation each week, not where they finish.

Dad's Group Interest Meeting

Dads, how would you like to help each other be *Courageous* dads? For more information, without making a commitment, join us for dinner on Friday, February 3 at 6:30 pm at the church. Please RSVP to church office or the website so we can have plenty of food.

Update from Global Ministries:

Whom Shall I Send? by Tom and Linnea Morse

And I heard the voice of God saying, whom shall I send and who will go for us? Isaiah 6:8a

Churches in China are growing rapidly. This growth isn't the result of massive missionary efforts from the west after China's opening, but fruits of the work being quietly done by Chinese believers who held on to their faith through all of China's turmoil.

I want to tell you about Mr. K as he told me his story. Mr. K is about 40 years old and has a smile that makes you want to hear what he has to say. He was born in Northern Jiangsu province into a family of farmers.

"I was 19 years old when I first learned about Christianity from a classmate's mother-in-law. She had us pray before and after meals, which introduced us to these ideas for the first time. I had little interest in religion, but was willing to pray if it meant I could eat. One day I was walking past a small church and heard the sound of hymns being sung. When I glanced inside the feeling of comfort and peace I felt in that moment led me to believe. I realized God cared for me and it was a moment of great joy. After that I looked forward all week to my Sunday meetings with God. In the congregation no one else had even a middle school education, and 90% of them were illiterate. So they started asking me to preach or help them with reading the Bible. Looking back, it was my happiest year.

Outside of church, my friends had encouraged me to start raising chickens. I had invested in the supplies: feed, eggs, fences. One night I was outside, and sisters from the church came looking for me, but I didn't hear them knocking on my door. When I heard that I had missed them, I became focused on why it was they were searching for me. I stared at the sky unable to sleep, I knew they were going to ask me to study at the seminary, but I wanted to say "no."

Then I remembered the verse that says, "Whom can I send? Who can go for us?" And I realized that for my church I was the only one to do this on their behalf. It was my calling. The next day a sister from the church came and asked me to study at the seminary, and I happily agreed. I had been focused on raising chickens, but God told me to raise my sights."

Together we pray for higher visions for ourselves, our church, and our world.

Tom and Linnea Morse, Global Ministries missionaries, serve with the Nanjing Drum Tower Hospital in China in English communications.

2012 Concert Series

All concerts begin at 7 pm.

Mark Trammell Quartet
Thursday, March 15

The Melody Boys Quartet
Friday, April 13

The Dixie Echoes
Saturday, May 5

Red Roots
Thursday, June 14

The King's Heralds Quartet
Monday, August 6

The Inspirations
Saturday, August 25
at Kearney First Baptist Church

Week of Compassion Special Offering February 19 & 26

**SHARING
BRINGS JOY**
TO US. TO OTHERS. TO GOD.

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This offering allows the larger to church to respond to disasters around the world, such as Joplin, Haiti and Japan. It also goes toward building communities in the poorest parts of the world, from supporting food security in the U.S. to establishing micro-credit programs in Mozambique.

From Your Church Leadership:

The new Church Council and governance model changes are well underway. Here are the highlights from the first meeting:

- Reporting: There's no prescribed method of reporting in the new governance model. At this meeting, the Church Council voted to not prepare a board packet; instead, there will be a detailed agenda before the meeting and minutes following the meeting. As the board packet was, these are public and will be available in the information center.
- The accountants who have handled our payroll are retiring; they transferred their accounts to a new accounting service, Rosie B's.

Weight Watchers Meeting Update:

We are still trying to start a Weight Watchers meeting at the church. The meeting would be on Thursday evenings (weigh in at 6 pm and the meeting at 6:30 pm). We are just a few shy of having the required 20 people. If you are interested, please email the church office.

Relay for Life 2012

Relay for Life is Friday, June 8 through Saturday, June 9 at Kearney High School. Teams are now forming and donations are being accepted for our team name, *Angela's Angels*. Valentine Luminaries are also available for purchase. Please visit the information center or contact Susan Mick (antutu1@aol.com or 816.320.2209) for more information.

Just A Reminder

If you volunteer in either worship service and are not able to serve on your scheduled Sunday, you'll need to find a replacement. Please let the church office know of the change before noon on Wednesdays so the bulletin will reflect the change. If it's after 2 pm on Friday and you cannot find a replacement, email Abigail at rev.abigail.conley@gmail.com.

Youth Meeting

Anyone interested in the life of the youth group is invited to a meeting on Sunday, February 5 immediately following 10:45 service. Email Abigail at rev.abigail.conley@gmail.com for more information.

Church News Email

If you would like to receive emails about church life, please email Abigail at rev.abigail.conley@gmail.com. Unless there is urgent news, you will not receive more than two emails per week.

February Birthdays

2/1	Janice Doss
2/2	Kari Harris Rebecca Singleton
2/4	Ethan Caraway
2/5	Ann Boettcher Creason Kane
2/7	Breya Haggart Lora Haggart
2/8	Paula Cobb Jacob Milligan
2/9	Sheryl Burnett Cathy Judy
2/12	Craig Handy
2/14	Kevin Davis
2/15	Jessica Barnes Jean Rapstine
2/18	Pat Holmstrom
2/19	Steven Collins Chris Wood
2/22	Martha Armstrong David Leigh Grant Roberts
2/23	Peggy Burr Gavin White
2/25	Kirby Roach
2/28	Cecil Lovett Bud Quinn Roy Templeton
2/29	Doug Sargent

Please let the church office know if your birthday is missing.

Praying with...

...those who grieve. Please hold the families of these people in your prayers:

- Raymond Bagley
(uncle of Martha Billups)
- Vic Liddle
(brother of Aggie Davis)
- Mark Sexton

February 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunday Service Times 8:15 am Worship 9:30 am Sunday Morning Study Groups 10:45 am Worship			1	2	3	4
			7 am Men's Prayer Group (McDonald's) 6:45 pm Kings Kidz 7 pm Youth Group	Pam's scheduled day off 7 pm Christian Roundtable	Doug's scheduled day off 6:30 pm Girl Scouts (Breece) 6:30 pm Dad's Group	8 am Men's Breakfast
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11:45 am Youth parent meeting 2 pm Roller skating	Abigail's scheduled day off	9:30 am Quilting 7 pm Handys' Small Group	7 am Men's Prayer Group (McDonald's) 6:45 pm Kings Kidz 7 pm Youth Group	Pam's scheduled day off	Doug's scheduled day off	6 pm Valentine Dinner
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
6:30 pm Executive Council meeting	Abigail's scheduled day off	9:30 am Quilting 7 pm Handys' Small Group	7 am Men's Prayer Group (McDonald's) 6:45 pm Kings Kidz 7 pm Youth Group	Pam's scheduled day off	Doug's scheduled day off	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Week of Compassion offering	President's Day Office is closed	9:30 am Quilting 7 pm Handys' Small Group Newsletter deadline	7 am Men's Prayer Group 6:15 pm Bread & Broth 7 pm Youth Group 7 pm Ash Wed. Service	Pam's scheduled day off	Doug's scheduled day off	
26	27	28	29			
Week of Compassion offering	Abigail's scheduled day off	9:30 am Quilting 7 pm Handys' Small Group	7 am Men's Prayer Group 6:15 pm Bread & Broth 6:45 pm Kings Kidz 7 pm Youth Group 7 pm Devotions			

Youth

Wednesday evening Youth Group on Wednesdays at 7 pm.

Kids

Kings Kidz

Join us for Kings Kidz on Wednesday evenings in February from 6:45 - 7:45 pm. This is a Vacation Bible School type program for kids 1st through 5th grades. Join us for Bible stories, songs, crafts, games and snacks. If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Rapstine at 816.320.3732.

Roller Skating

We are going roller skating on Sunday, February 5 from 2 – 4 pm at Northland Rolladium Skate Center, 1020 Kent ST, Liberty. Cost is \$3 per skater and includes skate rental and a small drink. We need 10 skaters to qualify for the group discount. Contact Shawna Rapstine at 816.320.3732 if you plan on attending.

Conference

Children Welcome! From Stumbling Blocks to Building Blocks of Faith is happening in Kansas City, February 23-25, 2012. The conference is jointly sponsored by The Presbyterian Church (USA) and The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and will be an opportunity for personal and congregational renewal as together we explore how best to respond to the needs and gifts of children. The time will be filled with music, worship, the learning of new skills, theological discussions, Biblical reflections, networking and much, much more. Register at www.childrenwelcome.org or complete the registration form on the next page. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

What About the 491st Time?

For better or worse, most anything is readily available these days, via internet, of course. For me, the internet is a ready supplier of my greatest vice: books. I generally practice a great deal of self-control, but when I've already spent enough to get the free shipping, tossing a cheap something for fun in my virtual cart isn't a big deal.

My most recent lapse of judgment arrived in the mail not too long ago. It's called *491*. To tell the truth, I have no clue what the book is about. My Christian Ethics professor just made a passive mention of it one day in class. Yes, the title stuck and yes, I finally got around to ordering it.

It's the title that got me. You might remember in Matthew's gospel, Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who sins against him. Peter's guess is seven. The traditional translation of Jesus' answer is: forgive seven times seventy times. Do the math. The answer is 490.

So, what do you do the 491st time?

I've been pondering that question for days now, as I did when I first heard of the book. The question pops into my head when I wake in the middle of the night. As I walk on the treadmill or drive down the road, I think about that 491st time. How fun that could be! Just to finally let loose on that person who has wronged me 490, knowing that I was justified because it was the 491st sin.

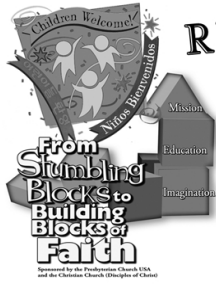
Now, I know that's not what Jesus meant. Despite the Corinthians edict that love keeps no record of wrongs, I'm really good at holding a grudge. Even I, however, would have to develop a spreadsheet or something to keep track up to the 491st time. That's a lot closer to the point. Just keep forgiving. As Paul would say, "Love keeps no record of wrongs."

If you love the way Jesus commanded, then you'll never know it is the 491st time.

Wow.

But I'm still reading the book.

~Abigail



REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) _____

- Adult Laity Ordained Licensed
 Youth (age) _____
 Child (age) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Day _____ Evening _____

E-mail _____

Church Name and Location _____

Special Needs

- Diet (please explain) _____
 Signing
 Other _____

Adult Registration

- Early Bird Registration, Saturday only \$ 95 _____
(If received on or before January 20, 2012)
 After January 20, 2012, One Day Registration \$ 110 _____

 Early Bird Registration Conference \$ 130 _____
(If received on or before January 20, 2012)
 After January 20, 2012, Conference Registration \$ 150 _____

Child Registration

*Infant Care

- Saturday Only \$ 20 _____
 Full Conference \$ 35 _____

*Preschool and Elementary Age Children

- Saturday Only \$ 20 _____
 Full Conference \$ 35 _____

*Middle and High School Youth

- Saturday Only \$ 20 _____
 Full Conference \$ 35 _____

Exhibitors

- \$ 130 registration+\$10 exhibit fee \$ 140 _____

Total

Please return the completed registration form along with your payment to:

Children Welcome! Conference
 P.O. Box 1986
 Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1986

**Children, up through middle school age must be accompanied by an adult.*

**We have scholarship funds available. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

Your Church Staff

Doug Gilpin, Pastor
pastorgiplin@aol.com
816.903.5583

Abigail Conley, Administrative Pastor
Rev.Abigail.Conley@gmail.com
816.628.5583

Pam Novak, Secretary
fcckearney@aol.com
816.628.5583

The church office is open Monday
through Friday, from 9 am to 2 pm.

Prayer Concerns

Jennifer Anton, Ellen Banks, Jean Bonwell, Larry & Marie Booth, Louise Eastep, Darren Epperson, Merrill & Pat Fairley, Diane Gallinger, Bill Goeke, Helen Griffey, Alice Hall, Gerri Hall, Lois Haney, Jim Hutchens, Lisa Irwin, Gary & Cheri Jonson, Mary Lou Jurado, Nick King, Vic Liddle family, Ava Martinez & family, Kate Pence, Allen Pendleton, David Roach, Ellen Smith, Lillian Thompson, Opal Wisely, unspoken requests, our troops (Josh Bettis, Chris Brown, Max Brown, Shawn Lind, Stacy Mycanka, Ben Neth & Brady Willis), Global Mission Partners, our country, our church programs, our world.

Prayer Chain

If you would like to be on the email prayer chain, please send your request to Susan Mick at anttutu1@aol.com. If you would like to be on the phone prayer chain, please call Susan at 816.320.2209.

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