

The Church Bell

February 17, 2021

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327 East Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101-3003 (573-636-5157)

Pastoral Ponderings

The Earth is a pretty attractive place.

I'm not referencing its natural beauty that stirs within us a sense of awe. Nor am I talking about its practical value for sustaining our lives, though we certainly appreciate the way it supports our well-being.

I mean this more literally. The Earth is a magnetic field with forces that attract and repel. The physics behind all of this are beyond my expertise, but the veracity of the claim is proven by any compass. The reason that instrument proves accurate is that a magnet within the compass interacts with the Earth's magnetic field to guide you in the right direction.

You can be lost, disoriented, completely confused by your surroundings but the compass remains true. It can be trusted because it depends on magnetic forces that remain unchanged by circumstance. North is always north regardless of how lost you are or how scared you might be.

As we observe Ash Wednesday and mark the beginning of Lent, we are reminded of another condition that does not change. Our lives are moving inextricably in one direction. We, who were born of dust, will become dust once again. No matter where our lives might lead or the specific patterns they might take, all of us end up the same. Our biological compass is pointed in one direction. We are headed towards the grave.

Reminding you of this seems rather morbid. There are many ways in which our culture tries to ignore and deny death. One of those is by refusing to talk about our mortality. The implicit message is: "sure, all of us are going to die, but there's no reason to talk about it."

The Christian Church refuses to be complicit in this silence. We intentionally set aside entire days in the church calendar - Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, All Saints, the Feast of the Holy Innocents - that call our attention back to our finitude, to the inevitability of death.

Indeed, on Ash Wednesday we adorn our heads or our hands with ashes to signify our grief. Imitating biblical figures who did the same, these ashes are a visible acknowledgement of the sins we both readily confess and those we refuse to recognize despite the pain and destruction they cause. The ashes are a humble way of saying, "we have been part of the problem, part of the undermining of all that God created as good." *(continued)*



Pastoral Ponderings *(continued)*

These ashes of grief are also meant as signs of solidarity, as we join Jesus in his journey towards the cross. Aware of the way that our sins add to the suffering of the world, we seek to be close to Jesus as he approaches crucifixion, mindful that his death is simultaneously an indication of our depravity and of God's wondrous love.

While none of us can enter the minds of others or truly grasp the psychology of a culture, many have suggested that our collective silence around death is caused by a lack of hope. Lacking confidence in any life beyond the grave, we are reduced to burying our heads in the sand for as long as possible. In the life of Christ's Church, we have our attention focused on our mortal end because of our hope in God's immortal promise.

Yet, even as we trust in our ultimate reunion with God, that path to that reconciliation is not straight. Just as Jesus does takes a winding, exciting, and even provocative journey to the cross, so our lives often meander. They include moments of intentional wandering and wondering. Sometimes we find ourselves lost or taking a detour.

The destination has not changed, but we become diverted along the way. And, in doing so, we often discover new things about ourselves about the God whose heart we seek to be joined with forever.

Wandering is our theme in this Lenten season. We will talk about being called, about paths that diverge and converge, about living in Exile, about the challenge of following a path we did not create, and about finding ourselves in some unexpected places.

We undertake this wandering as mortals, lamenting the grief we both cause and experience. We wander as disciples, walking behind Jesus as he heads to the cross. Above all, we wander as creatures marked by ashes that confess our sins and yet profess our hope that wherever we are, we have already been found.

*Steadfast in hope,
Rev. Beau Underwood*

Webinar with Dr. Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt about "The Love that Is God" on 3/17 at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

Time for Prayer and Reflection Wednesdays During Lent

Each Wednesday during Lent you are invited to join us for an intentional time for Prayer and Reflection at 6:30PM on Zoom. Starting February 24th, we will spend about 30 minutes prayerfully reflecting on a scripture about wandering and sharing in a time of intentional confession and prayer.

Please note we will be using a different Zoom room for these gatherings. You can find us at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88625072978> Meeting ID: 886 2507 2978. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Sarah at sarah@firstchristianjcmo.org.

An Update from David Durbin, Chair of the Search Committee

Dear Brothers & Sisters—

I am pleased to report that our Search Committee consisting of David Avery, Donna Brown, Georgia Griffith, Meghan Hagenhoff, Melanie Highland, Venita Jackson, Rick Naught, Jonathon Prouty, John Ruth, Susan Vaughn, Elaine West, and myself, held our first meeting (via Zoom) Thursday evening, February 4th. We were joined by Rev. Sarah Kingsbery and Rev. Paul Koch, our Regional Minister of the Christian Church of Mid-America (Moberly Office). Rev. Sarah assisted us with the Zoom meeting and shared her experiences with the Search and Call process in the Disciples of Christ Church. Rev. Koch serves as the intermediary between our congregation and the denomination and potential candidates.

This process will be a “marathon rather than a sprint” as the expression goes. We want to keep momentum toward calling a new senior pastor, but we also want to be deliberative about it. Indeed, we want to be discerning about this important decision. Toward that end, the Search Committee unanimously agreed to seek an interim pastor with the assistance of Rev. Koch for the period between Rev. Underwood’s departure and the ultimate call of a new senior pastor. As you can imagine, the COVID-19 situation will impact the speed of this process even as vaccinations are helping to reduce the effects of the pandemic.

There are a number of ways that you, the congregation, can contribute to the process of Search and Call:

- (1) Prayer: Pray with us for wisdom, discernment and good judgment in this process. “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” James 5:16 “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” Ephesians 6:18

- (2) It is fortuitous that we are also embarking on a Strategic Planning process over the next few months. We would ask you to participate as you are able to help determine what our mission should be in the coming years—and what type of pastor would best be able to lead our congregation in pursuit of our mission.

- (3) Please feel free to share your ideas with members of the Search Committee (see members above). If those ideas involve a recommendation for a specific minister you know, or know of, you can share that information with the understanding that the name will be passed along to Rev. Koch for him to assemble the resume and background information for the committee.

Finally (at this point in time), please understand the confidentiality that is involved in the Search and Call process. We will share information on the processes that we are following, but we will not be sharing names until it comes time to suggest a specific candidate to the Administrative Board and the Congregation. This is for the protection of the individual ministers and for their congregations.

For those of you who wish to do so, you may want to visit the “Congregational Resources” on the Disciples of Christ website: <https://disciples.org/gcom/resources/> When you reach the page scroll down about halfway for the Congregational Resources.

At the time of this writing, the Search Committee has had its second meeting on Sunday evening, February 14th. We began work on a “congregational profile” which will help introduce us to ministers who may have an interest in serving different congregations. Again, this is still very early in the process, and I want you to know that we will be seeking your input, and we will have ways of your sharing your thoughts through questionnaires, focus groups, and contact with members of the Search Committee.

We covet your prayers and your input.

David

David Durbin, Chair
Search Committee
captdsd@gmail.com

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We pray for these

Beverly Anderson, Reba Brandenburg, Steve Brown, Jane Burd, Richard Carroll, Wilma Collins, Gibson Archer Dudenhoeffer, Ken Dykes, Marilyn Gross, John & Barbara Gulick, Norma Hasselman, Philip Hawkins, Jeanette Hickman, Shirley Jarrett, Angie Kellard, Harold Libbert, Virginia Masters, Toni McNeal, Karen Meade, Dan & Sandy Meade, Vivian Murphy, Milo Mutz, Jackie Possinger, Joe Robey, Jessie Schell, Betty Schramm, Sue Steppelman, Barbara Walker, Sharon Williams, Janice Wood, Doris Yelton, Eileen, Dennis, Debbie, Desmond, Our Country

Individuals will be kept on our prayer list for **four weeks** at a time. At the end of four weeks, please give Kathy a call at 573.636.5157 or email her Kathy@firstchristianjcmo.org, if you would like continued prayers for an individual. Thank you!

Members in Care Centers

THE ARBORS AT WESTBROOK TERRACE PRIMROSE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Rita Connell

Norma Hasselman

Reba Brandenburg

BLUEGRASS TERRACE

Wendell & Myra Hubbs

Mariam Craddock,

Glenda Crow

Jessie Schell

OUT-OF-TOWN MEMBERS

HEISINGER

ST. JOSEPH'S BLUFFS

Betty Schramm

Richard Carroll

Doris Yelton

Betty Schulte

Shirley Ferguson

SUMMIT VILLA

Barbara Nikodyn

Shirley Jarrett

Norma Woodson

THE TIMBERS

JC MANOR

Mae Oehring

Jackie Possinger

VILLA MARIE

Terry Fockler

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

FEBRUARY	8	14	19	27
1	9	Ben Gonder	Doris Park	Kayla Vegiard
2	Kathy Brown	Tina Wood	Connie Wade	28
David Lichty	Terri Lloyd	<i>Tom & Mary Ann</i>	Peggy Williamson	29
Matt Tollerton	10	<i>Weaver</i>	20	30
3	Ashley Crisp	15	21	31
<i>Jon & Lois Alexander</i>	11	16	22	
4	Jan Alexander	Stephanie Durbin	Rich Green	
Tucker Lane	Michael Jones	Barbara Gulick	Harrison Imler	
Nancy Samp	<i>Gary & June Spencer</i>	17	Eric Obmann	
5	12	18	Skyler Simms	
Brent Connell	Kory King	John D. Bennett	23	
Trevor McClain	13	19	24	
6	Rosie Woodruff	Terry Fockler	25	
Tim Alexander		Joyous Frye	Cyndi Roberts	
7		Shannon Imler	26	
Ashley Weaver		Ian Murphy		

Our condolences to Barbara Keith and family on the loss of her husband, and former FCC Interim Minister, Curtis Keith, who passed away February 1, 2021 due to COVID. If you would like Barbara's address to mail a card or note, let Kathy know and she will be happy to share it with you.

A Note of gratitude

The COVID pandemic has been difficult for everyone. The frontline workers have been heroic, but everyone has had to adjust their lives in some way. We have all missed our normal activities at church and some have had to deal with the ultimate tragedy of losing a loved one. On behalf of my family. I am so grateful for the support from my church family. Susie would be so pleased, but not surprised, with how our friends at church responded and continue to do so. Many thanks to all who have been so kind, whether by personal comments, phone calls, cards and/or donations to her memorial fund. I couldn't be more blessed.

J. T. Yarnell

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, JOHN.....AND YOU

Suppose the disciples decided to let somebody else do it.

Suppose they said, "Jesus is just fine. He's all we need."

But they didn't. In the end, Jesus was NOT all they needed.

Our congregation exists, the Church exists, because they spent the rest of their lives communicating with others— followers as well as strangers and even a few enemies— about the message of Jesus. They were the first version of a church internet. Paul's letters were the emails of their day. Their personal appearances throughout much of the then-known world were the Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and ZOOM meetings of their times.

They were the first communicators of our faith after Jesus. And if they had not spread the Word beyond the geographical limits of Jesus's ministry and the time of Jesus's life, we wouldn't be here.

They filled an important— dare we say, sacred— need for communication.

First Christian Church's Communications Committee needs members who can help our congregation in these difficult times communicate within our body and our larger communities.

Please help us make sure the face we present to others through our webpage, our Facebook posts, our *Church Bell* newsletter, our worship services, our outreach efforts, and other possibilities is strong, effective, and inviting.

If you have skills in web-based content, video and video editing, graphic design, social media— even non-internet skills such as coordinating information that others can post or develop— we need you.

Communication is vital to our "One Church, Many Places" efforts. Although the time will come when the pandemic lifts, a new senior minister arrives, and life becomes more normal, we will remain "One Church, Many Places" and the ability to communicate in so many ways will be central to our mission.

Please contact us at: communications@firstchristianjcmo.org

*Bob Priddy, Communications Chair,
On behalf of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*

An Update from Alexis, Our Youth Director

How do participants describe First Christian's Intergenerational Experiences?

"I enjoyed the interaction with the young people, their creativity and dedication to learning more and growing in faith. I appreciated Alexis' leadership, organization skills, content and inclusiveness. This series helped me grow and learn and appreciate others." - Vivian Murphy

"I enjoyed the Lord's prayer lab experience. It was well organized and I felt like I learned something. I also enjoy the group interaction." - Ann Littlefield

"I enjoyed the group fellowship. I appreciated how much time and energy Alexis put into our meetings; I learned a lot." - guest Elizabeth K.

"I enjoyed the responses. I appreciated everyone's time and would meet again." - Christine Mott

"I like being with adults." - 6th grade participant

"I like the fact that we meet new people." - 9th grade participant

"I like how we can be with our friends." - 6th grade participant

A new Lenten experience begins this Sunday, February 21. There are two sessions (one at 3 PM and the other at 6:45 PM) that meet via Zoom through March 28. Participants will journey with the story of Jesus' temptations as described in Matthew 4: 1-11.

Families and interested members are welcome to contact me to receive the material with or without committing to Zoom sessions. We have some space remaining in the 6:45-7:45 PM time frame.

Special thanks goes to Ann Littlefield for her help in acquiring, organizing, and distributing material that will help make this season a special one. As always, thanks to Jessica Bivin for her care and work as the youth sponsor. I do not do my work in a vacuum and appreciate those who enhance what is possible by their support and contributions.

Please let me know if you have questions, would like to connect, or have news to share that I can celebrate with your

With you on the journey,

Alexis

alexis@firstchristianchurchjcmo.org

NEW ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

Starting this Sunday we will be sharing a new online Connection Card for you to fill out and let us know you are worshiping with us. Like our in-person attendance pads, this form will help us connect with members and visitors alike. Please take a moment to click on the link that will be in the weekly Sunday morning email and posted on Facebook and make note of how you are joining us for worship! There is also a place for you to note any prayer requests and if you would like Rev. Beau or Rev. Sarah to contact you.

Thank you for helping us stay connected in this small way!

Scholarships Are Due March 30th

All graduating high school seniors are encouraged to apply. Application forms may be obtained from the church office, or from Alexis Engelbrecht, our Youth Director.

Join our Zoom Fellowship Room on Sunday Mornings!

If you are worshiping with us virtually on Sunday mornings via Facebook Live, we would love to have you join us in the [FCCJCMO Zoom Room](#). Because we share the Facebook Livestream directly, this is a great option if you have trouble with the Facebook site or app. The room opens at 9:45AM and is available for fellowship before service and until 11AM after worship. It is our virtual gathering area - hear our Sunday School teachers talking about next week's lesson before worship and say hi to the Friendship class as they gather for Sunday School at 11AM!

Let Rev. Sarah know if you have any questions or would like to schedule a time to learn how to get connected on Zoom.

Come as you are! We would love to have you join us, even if you just rolled out of bed.

If you would like a copy of Sunday's Bulletin or Sermon emailed to you, please let Kathy know so she can add you to the email or mailing list. If you have trouble downloading the Virtual Bulletin, please contact Rev. Sarah.

Have you moved, changed phone numbers, or emails? Want to put an updated picture of you and your family in our church directory? If so, please take a moment now and send those updates to Kathy@firstchristianjcmo.org, so we can update your church and pictorial directory records.

The 2021 Flower Chart

is available on the bulletin board across from the office for you to choose a Sunday for flowers on the chancel. For our new members not familiar with this process, you may choose a Sunday "In Honor of" or "In Loving Memory of" a family member or loved one. We ask that each Sunday have only one basket of flowers, so all Sundays are chosen. The cost for a basket of flowers is \$29.95. If you would like to give Kathy a call in the office at 573-636-5157, she will secure a Sunday for you.



SENIOR MINISTER
 Rev. Beau Underwood
 Beau@firstchristianjcmo.org

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 Login with Facebook

facebook.com/fccjcmo

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCIES:
 Please contact Rev. Underwood at 815-303-1990 **Non-emergency** church-related items after working hours, Monday thru Friday 8AM to 5PM, we have voice mail. Please feel free to call the church (573-636-5157) at any time and leave a message. **NOTE: IF YOU LEAVE A MESSAGE ON THE ANSWERING MACHINE ON FRIDAY (AFTER 5PM), SATURDAY, OR SUNDAY, IT WILL NOT BE CHECKED UNTIL MONDAY MORNING. THANK YOU.**

The next  **Church Bell** will be sent March 3, 2021.
 (Articles are due by noon the Monday before)

MOBILE GIVING
 -TEXT 4842368 TO 715-803-4772
 AND FOLLOW THE PROMPTS ON YOUR PHONE

-DOWNLOAD THE "GIVERS APP"
 (FROM CONTINUE TO GIVE)




Zoom Meeting Room meeting ID is **2202286773**. If you need the password, please contact the church office at 573-636-5157, Rev. Beau at 815-303-1990, or one of our leaders. To join in on our free conference calls, dial (712) 775-7270 and enter access code 444928.

Please email or call Tina Mollenkamp tinamollenkamp@cgcb.org/573-522-4314), if you would like to be on Common Grounds email newsletter list, regular mailing list, or both. As an alternative, you can also sign up for the email newsletters on our website at www.cgcb.org.



You may also give online at firstchristianjcmo.org/donate

Financial Records and Questions

Questions related to giving and church finances should be sent to Carol Kaylor at finance@firstchristianjcmo.org. We have contracted with CALD services, a local accounting firm specializing in religious non-profits, to provide these critical functions.

Who Are We? We call ourselves Disciples, a community of believers who follow Jesus by *worshiping God, growing in faith, and serving all in need*. Bound to each other in Christ's love, we discover our life together through *sharing* life with the world.

WEBSITES YOU NEED TO STAY CONNECTED

Mid-America Updates: <http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/newsletter-signup/>
 Disciples News Service Updates: <http://disciples.org/dns/subscribe-to-dns/>

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