

The Church Bell

January 20, 2021

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

Pastoral Ponderings

This is the letter Rev. Beau emailed to the congregation last Tuesday. He is sharing it again in the Bell to ensure everyone has had a chance to read it.

Brothers and Sisters,

I wish this is a conversation we could have individually and in person because I love you all dearly. The theologian Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt claims that love "is a desire that delights in the sheer existence of the beloved and wants that existence to flourish."

That is how I feel towards you all. I want you to flourish.

As I have been reflecting on my own vocation and ministry over the last few months, I have regrettably concluded that I am no longer a catalyst to your thriving. Thus, after this discernment, I am planning to conclude my ministry with FCC on April 30th.

I understand my decision will come as a surprise to many. Despite my tenure with this congregation extending more than six years, our work and witness together still feels fresh. There is also an added weight that comes with announcing a transition during a pandemic. Please allow me to share a bit about arriving at this conclusion.

Let me start by dismissing the immediate concerns that might come to mind. There is no major conflict or controversy within the church driving this. This is not about compensation or related to finances. Other than chronic issues among some extended family members, everyone is healthy. The story is more complicated but less sensational.

Last fall I was encouraged to apply to lead a Mid-Missouri non-profit. When I was not selected for the position disappointment set in. Casey and I had started imagining a different future for our families that was less constrained by the conflicting pressures of our respective jobs. Some of the challenges were only going to intensify in the years ahead as Jesse grew older. To realize the life we wanted to share together, there were difficult changes that would be necessary.

I also recognized two shifts in my ministry that had to be faced. First, the energy I previously devoted to crafting new ideas, investing in relationships with people across the church, and leading worship on Sunday mornings has diminished. I am less creative and more impatient. My preaching has suffered in ways that frustrate me. There's nothing more dispiriting than feeling incapable of offering your best to God and God's people.

The second was the natural divide that exists in church life between pastor and members. I am paid to live, breathe, and sleep church life. My job is to build up this community, encourage its leaders, preach the Gospel in ways that alter lives, and instill within its members a deeper devotion to following Jesus Christ. I find myself laying awake at night worried about the church. I feel dejected and inadequate whenever a church member chooses to leave, even when the causes are beyond my control. (continued)

Every frustration vented at me started to feel like it was about me, even when it wasn't. Belonging to this church is an important part of your life, but pastoring it has started consuming my life in unhealthy ways. My ability to serve you with the love, grace, and understanding required of a minister and deserved by a congregation was diminishing.

Without meaning to sound trite, I have prayed over this decision. I have looked for less extreme solutions but none have presented themselves. My own renewal requires a season away from congregational ministry. As to what comes next, that remains undetermined and I am trusting God's timing. There are lots of possibilities but nothing that is yet concrete.

When we moved to Missouri in early 2015 this was not how I pictured my tenure concluding, but I am grateful beyond words for what we have experienced together over these six years. We have put this congregation on strong financial footing, revised our governance to serve our mission, launched new ministries, welcomed new members, celebrated the lives of incredible saints, and strived to be good news to a hurting world. This congregation has a rich history and a bright future.

As I look back, there is one regret I harbor. For justifiable reasons, I took on too much responsibility for our shared life together. There were too many decisions that depended on me and too many places that depended upon my presence. None of this was intentional but it is a dynamic that is not sustainable. A minister only shepherds a community for a season; its members are here for a lifetime.

In our Congregationalist polity, belonging to the church cannot be a spectator sport. The only way to ensure the church remains vibrant is for everyone to invest their time, resources, and identity in solving its problems, serving its mission, and enhancing its vibrancy. If the work of the church is as significant - now and forever - as we claim it to be, then the church should be far higher on our priority list than it often proves to be. The future of Christ's Church is in God's hands. The future of this particular congregation will be determined by its members.

As we enter this season of transition, I am not just handing the baton to the next fantastic minister that will have the joy of serving as your pastor. I am also handing the baton back to all of you with the confidence that the Spirit will lead you in wonderful directions together.

I disclosed my thinking with the appropriate leaders in our congregation - board chair(s), elder chair(s), personnel chair - several weeks ago. They have been wonderful in giving me the space to discern and serving as a sounding board to me along the way. They are prepared to lead the congregation through this process and have already been in touch with the Christian Church in Mid-America, whose role includes supporting congregations in transition.

I know my email is going to spark conversations and provoke questions. While I am happy to discuss my journey to this decision with each of you, specific questions about the search process should be directed to Steve Waters (board chair) or David Durbin (personnel) chair. Their contact information is available in the church directory, if you need it.

The Church isn't about any one of us. It is about what God is doing with all of us. I have been blessed beyond measure to watch the Spirit at work over these last six years. I am confident in what is yet to come for this community of Jesus followers. Thank you for the love and trust, the prayers and wisdom, you have shown be. It has been - and remains until April 30th - a privilege to be your pastor.

*Steadfast in hope,
Rev. Beau*

A Word from Our Administrative Board Chair

Brother and Sisters

This past week you were informed of Rev. Underwood's decision to pursue different professional goals and that he will be leaving us on or about April 30, 2021.

As the Administrative Board Chair, Article VIII of the First Christian Church Constitution spells out my duty to appoint an "Ad Hoc Search Committee". The Search Committee shall be selected to be representative of the Congregation and shall be approved by the Leadership Development Team and the Administrative Board.

After discussing the process with our Personnel Chairman, David Durbin, we believe the Personnel Committee would make a good "core group" for the Ad Hoc Search Committee. Also, included in this Committee is the Chair of the Ministry Team and Chair of the Worship Team, along with the Vice Chair of the Board and Board Chair.

Therefore, the following individuals will be submitted to the Leadership Team and Administrative Board to fulfill the duties of the Ad Hoc Search Committee.

Chair of Search Committee:	David Durbin
Board Chair:	Stephen Waters
Board Vice Chair:	Jonathon Prouty
Ministry Team:	Elaine West
Worship Team:	Georgia Griffith
Personnel Committee:	David Avery
Personnel Committee:	Donna Brown
Personnel Committee:	Rick Naught
Personnel Committee:	John Ruth
Personnel Committee:	Susan Vaughn

I know there are a lot of questions and thoughts about what will be the time frame and what's going to happen until a new Minister is found. I assure you we are working to make this transition as smooth as possible. We have been in touch with the Region, and together we are working on our next steps. I strongly encourage you to contact any member of the Ad Hoc Committee with your thoughts and suggestions. We will keep you posted as we work through the process. Above all, please continue to keep Reverend Beau and his family in your prayers.

Respectfully,

Stephen R. Waters

Chair of Administrative Board

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We pray for these

Beverly Anderson, Reba Brandenburg, Steve Brown, Jane Burd, Richard Carroll, Wilma Collins, Gibson Archer Dudenhoeffer, Ken Dykes, 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

Terry Fockler

HEISINGER

ST. JOSEPH'S BLUFFS

OUT-OF-TOWN MEMBERS

Richard Carroll

Doris Yelton

Betty Schramm

Shirley Ferguson

SUMMIT VILLA

Betty Schulte

Barbara Nikodyn

Shirley Jarrett

Norma Woodson

THE TIMBERS

JC MANOR

Mae Oehring

Jackie Possinger

Our Condolences to

Gary & June Spencer on the loss of Gary's sister, Sue Vernon, who passed away recently.

The family of Steve Seifert, son of Fran Smith, who passed away December 29, 2020.

January/February Birthdays and Anniversaries

JANUARY	23	29	4	11
15	Katy Ramirez	Marsha Graham	Tucker Lane	Jan Alexander
Donna Cook	David Reeves	John Kuebler	Nancy Samp	Michael Jones
16	24	Abbigale Ramirez	5	<i>Gary & June Spencer</i>
Cindy VanCamp	Dan McClard	30	Brent Connell	12
17	Sandy Zimmerman	Lisa Ramirez	Trevor McClain	Kory King
18	25	Olivia Wood	6	13
Cecile Landrum	Lauri Woodruff	31	Tim Alexander	Rosie Woodruff
Hayden Markway	26	Ethan Snyder	7	14
19	27	Sue Tussey	Ashley Weaver	Ben Gonder
20	28	FEBRUARY	8	Tina Wood
Nancy Hequembourg	Chris Graham	1	9	<i>Tom & Mary Ann Weaver</i>
Leslie Murphy	Jana Millard	2	Kathy Brown	
21	Jacqueline Natsch	David Lichty	Terri Lloyd	
Andrew Schramm		Matt Tollerton	10	
22		3	Ashley Crisp	
		<i>Jon & Lois Alexander</i>		

An Update from Alexis, Our Youth Director

In his book *The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of The LORD's Prayer*, John Dominic Crossan writes: "The LORD's Prayer is, for me, both a revolutionary manifesto and a hymn of hope. It is revolutionary because it presumes and proclaims the radical vision of justice that is the core of Israel's biblical tradition. It is a hymn, because it presumes and produces poetic techniques that are the core of Israel's biblical poetry." Such qualities in a prayer are certainly needed today.

Those participating in the upcoming intergenerational Prayer series will delve into the world behind the text of the LORD's Prayer, reflect upon the language within the prayer, and explore what it means for disciples today. We begin meeting this Sunday (one session in the afternoon and one in the evening) via Zoom. If you would like to participate, please email me. While the space remaining is limited, there are ways you can receive access to the material we are using and be part of our reflections.

On another note, I am happy to share I have completed my Master of Divinity program at Phillips Theological Seminary. I am continuing to fulfill ordination requirements as I pursue my goal of being a senior or solo minister. This coming semester, I am taking a class on United Church of Christ History and Polity as a special student, while serving as a Teaching Assistant. I appreciate the support and experiences First Christian provides during this part of my journey.

Parents of 6th-12th graders: If you have not yet done so, please complete this survey: <https://forms.gle/ep4d24EB6gGsBFY47>. Your responses will help me learn more about how I can serve you and your families.

With you on the journey,

Alexis

alexis@firstchristianchurchjcmo.org

Thank You Notes for Hospital Staff

Help us thank the employees of Capital Region Hospital!

We will be delivering thank you cards to Chaplain Tammy at Capital Region Hospital the week of February 14th for her to pass out to individuals and departments. There are lots of employees at Capital Region, and they all could use some extra encouragement right now!

The easiest way to help is to pick up a set of 10 premade cards and write encouraging notes letting them know we are thankful for them and are thinking of them during this time. Cards are available for pick up from the church office or on Sunday morning in the FLC. Please return completed cards to the church by February 14th.

You are also invited to join us for a time of fellowship and maybe even make some cards of your own, Wednesday January 27th at 6:30PM or Saturday January 30th at 3PM in the church Zoom room. If you would like to make cards, we have kits available courtesy of Sue Snell, just let Rev. Sarah know how many you need.

We have plenty of supplies of both card making kits and premade cards available that can be picked up or mailed. Please contact Rev. Sarah or the church office if you are interested in helping with this project or have any questions.

Rev. Sarah Kingsbery

Join our Zoom Fellowship Room on Sunday Mornings!

If you are worshipping 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.

Dr. J. Todd Billings, author of *The End of the Christian Life*, will speak with us about his book and life via Zoom on Tuesday, February 2nd at 5:30PM. Join us for this exciting opportunity to think deeply about a faithful life, the truth of our mortality, and the resurrection hope we profess. Please [RSVP](#) if you are interested, so we know we have a critical mass for meaningful conversation.

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 573-636-5157, she will secure a Sunday for you.



Hello everyone,

I hope you all had wonderful holidays!

In Nov 2020 we were able to provide 114 families with turkey dinners for Thanksgiving thanks to generous donations from Cargill and our amazing local churches. These families consisted of 367 youth and 194 adults.

Our families were so appreciative of the Thanksgiving dinner that we would like to put together an Easter dinner! I will be reaching out to other churches regarding donations, as it hasn't been very long since our Thanksgiving drive, however I wanted to let you all know how many families and individuals we were able to serve because of your congregations!

We could not have done it without your support!

Thank you,

Libby Beetem

Resource Coordinator

(573) 645-3072, libby@mofosteradopt.com

Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association



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.

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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 February 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.

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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