



Christian Courier

First Christian Church of Minneapolis (Disciples of Christ)

January 3, 2009

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Upcoming Dates

Sunday Jan 11
Annual congregation meeting

Sunday Jan. 18
Elder's Retreat

Tuesday, Jan., 20
Board Meeting

Scripture for Jan 6, Epiphany

“Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.”
Isaiah 60: 1

“Magi” opera raises over \$4900 for Feed My Starving Children program

Laura Anderson came up with a “gift that keeps on giving” this holiday season at First Christian. Laura, one of the soprano soloists in the FCC choir, produced and directed the opera “Gift of the Magi,” at FCC on Dec. 19, a gift to the church, the community, and children worldwide.

Approximately 80 people, over half of whom were first time visitors to FCC, attended the opera, which was having its Midwest premier. Seven singers and 14 orchestra members performed in this one-act opera based on the famous short story by O. Henry about a young couple who each sell their most precious treasures to buy a gift for each other. Choir member Jim Baumgartner sang the role of one of the Magi, and pianist James Barnett was the conductor for the opera.

But beyond this gift of music, the proceeds from the opera donations will help feed hungry children around the world. Contributions for the evening of music totaled \$1272; that amount will be matched by FCC’s Outreach Committee, and that total will be matched again by the Gap Corporation, for a total of \$4968 to go to the Feed My Starving Children

(FMSC) organization. Donations from the Christmas Eve service will also go to FSMC.

FMSC is a local organization, founded in 1987 as a Christian non-profit by a Minnesota businessman. Children in more than 50 countries receive FMSC food. Just one cup of FMSC food per day, which costs only 17 cents to produce, provides the nutrients a child needs to survive and thrive.

Last spring, several youth from our church spent an afternoon packing food at a local FMSC packing facility. Dennis Sanders has also participated in volunteer packing, and is hoping to promote more involvement for FCC with FMSC.



Justin Carlson, Amy Morton, and Athena Carlson packed food bags at Feed My Starving Children.
Photo by Serena Carlson.



A Look at the Brite Side

Discerning the Spirit in decisions we make

At our congregational meeting on January 11, we'll be talking about the usual matters of nominations and budget, and perhaps about some unusual matters such as chairs, and transformational prayer, and future congregational directions. Talk is the lubrication and nutrition of relationships, and such conversations are important, to help the body to discern God's will and the collective, communal will.

I have a sense that that sort of decision-making spirit is also here at FCC Minneapolis. As we look forward to the decisions of 2009, may we do so in such a way that the decisions are discerned rather than made. Personally I think it'll be a pretty exciting year around here.

God's grace and peace,
Bob

"The practice of justice involves making sure that, in every decision, all people are heard and respected."

At the same time, I recall a statement someone once made to me: "Every majority decision involves, following it, the presence of an oppressed minority." The practice of justice involves making sure that, in every decision, all people are heard and respected. I always have respected the Society of Friends consensus model of doing business. They just simply talk about an issue until a decision is reached by consensus; I've been told that sometimes decisions take days to make!

Like the new look? Let us know what you think

We continue to work on improving the look, depth, and timeliness of our communications. Thanks to Martha Harris, Dennis Sanders, and Chris Wogaman for heading up the efforts. And please let these people know what you think of the revamped Courier, both on line and in print.

In our prayers

Gracious God, we lift up these persons in our prayers, asking the blessing of your Grace and outpouring of your Love upon them.

Mike Brady's family at the loss of Mike's father Byron; **Shirley Draine**, recovering from a fall and wrist surgery; **Enid Griffin**, recovering at United Hospital from a fall; **Ernie Brennan** who fell and hurt his wrist; **Nancy Curry's aunt and other family members** who are ill; **Bob Brite's niece** serving in Korea, and **daughter Cory** who had surgery in December; **Jay Hillstead's family** rejoicing in good news about nephew Gabriel; **all those serving in armed services** around the world, and their families at home who wait their return; homebound members of FCC including **Emma Armstrong, Helen Smith and Betty Redpath**

Board chair Pat Dunlop reflects on 2008 at FCC

As 2008 comes to a close it is appropriate, and perhaps overdue, that I take the time to reflect on what has transpired in the life of our church this past year, and ponder what might lie ahead in 2009

First let me say that it has been a year that has required great trust and patience by you the congregation. We recognized our need to have transformational leadership if we were to move into the 21st century and we sadly accepted that the buildings we have loved for over 50 years where not enhancing ministry of First Christian Church. Rather, they were consuming so many dollars in maintenance that we were hampered in our outreach and service ministries.

To move forward, the board, together with the congregation, voted for the sale of the property and that transaction was accomplished at the end of August. The work of the Core Committee is essentially finished. We are still developing all the necessary under-

standing to be effective tenants.

We also called an intentional interim minister, Bob Brite, whose primary ministry with us is to help us discern what "Transformation" for First Christian Church will look like. Steps toward transformation have begun. The Worship committee has worked to enrich our worship experiences with different orders of service, different music, and different sanctuary arrangements.

We have enlisted the help of Dennis Sanders to serve in a ministry of cultural and technological diversity. A new Church webpage and blog is another first step. The Elders have undertaken the study and action of "Unbinding the Gospel" as part of their first steps in transformation and this will spread to the entire congregation.

A new "Leadership Team" is being formed whose responsibility will be visionary as well as practical for the implementa-

tion/coordination of "transformational activities".

So here we are at the beginning of an unknown journey with many questions: where will our church be in a few years; what will our ministry focus be; what will our worship service be like; will we even exist? These are difficult and unsettling questions, yet they are questions that Christians have been asking for centuries. The good news is that God is on this journey with us and if we pray for vision and patience I believe we will find our answers. One thing is very clear to me. We are a loving faith community dedicated to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to one another. Thus we will continue to support and care for one another and we will open our hearts and minds to all who come upon us.

Happy New Year!
Pat Dunlop

2008 milestones at First Christian, Minneapolis

February

Rev. Bob Brite called as Intentional Interim Minister

April

Small group listening sessions with Bob Brite

May

Congregation votes to sell property to Minnesota Institute of Arts

August - Nov

South Wing closed off; moving and renovations on North end of property

October


Rev. Dennis Sanders joins ministry team

December

"Gift of Magi" opera raises funds for Feed My Starving Children

*"You trace my journeys and my resting-places and are acquainted with all my ways."
Psalm 139: 2*

January 2009 Calendar for First Christian Church, Minneapolis

<p><u>Regular Sunday Schedule:</u> 9:15 Church School Classes 10:30 Worship 11:45 Fellowship Time in Lounge</p>				<p><u>Thursday</u> <u>1</u></p> <p>Happy New Year!!</p>	<p><u>Friday</u> <u>2</u></p>	<p><u>Saturday</u> <u>3</u> -9am- Men's Group</p>
<u>4</u> Baby Dedication for Tristan Whitaker	<u>5</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA (FH)	<u>6</u> <u>EPIPHANY</u> 7pm: Worship Committee	<u>7</u> -9am Nikkei Group (FH) -5:30pm Finance Committee -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>8</u> -9am Handcrafters	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> -9am- Men's Group (131) -11:30 Women's lunch @ Tucci Benucch (Mall of America)
<u>11</u> Annual Meeting Youth Group Fundraiser	<u>12</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -6:30pm—Pastoral Relations Cmte. -7pm AA (FH)	<u>13</u> -7pm- Property Committee Meeting	<u>14</u> -9:30am Whittier Neighborhood Faith Leaders -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>15</u> -9am Handcrafters	<u>16</u> -6:30pm—Christian League	<u>17</u> -9am- Men's Group -9am—Lauralynn/Naomi Circle (Lounge)
<u>18</u> Food Pantry Sunday 12n—Elders Meeting	<u>19</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA	<u>20</u> Inauguration Day Board Meeting 7 pm	<u>21</u> -9am—Nikkei (FH) -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>22</u> -9am Handcrafters	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> -9am- Men's Group
<u>25-</u> LAITY SUNDAY 12noon—Mtg. with St. Stephen's	<u>26</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>29</u> -9am Handcrafters	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u> -9am- Men's Group

Bus Drivers in January

Jan. 4 Garry Hesser 612-721-4905
 Jan. 11 Mike Morgan 612-926-9834
 Jan. 18 Garry Hesser
 Jan. 25 Mike Hesano 651-645-6758

Andersons lending a helping hand during RV mission trip

Ron and Judy Anderson have been on the road since Oct. 11, traveling from Minnesota to Iowa to Texas in their RV, helping out on mission projects all along the way. They parked their trailer in church lots or, in one case, on the slab where a church used to be, rolled up their sleeves and got to work on projects such as the following:

- framing in new windows, siding and cleaning two houses damaged in the devastating Cedar Rapids floods
- participating in a Habitat for Humanity “blitz build” in Beaumont Texas – two houses in two weeks.
- Helping out with the opening of a mission station in Texas City, Texas, which will be used to house volunteers working on Hurricane Ike cleanup.
- Volunteering at Bible Study Fellowship collating bible study materials.

Ron pointed out that Week of Compassion money was being put to good use for many of these projects. “Week of Compassion paid for half of the \$50,000 that went into the Habitat homes in Texas,” he said in a recent letter. Week of Compassion is also funding the Texas City project.

Ron and Judy also worked in a little family and recreation time during their travels, visiting son Matt at McConnell Air Force Base in Kan-



This photo of Ron and Judy Anderson appeared in “The Beacon.” newsletter of FCC. Texas City, TX

sas, and sight seeing in Corpus Christi and San Antonio.

The Andersons have plans to become long-term volunteers with Disciples Home Mission, and are hoping to be accepted for training next fall.

“I know we are facing major problems at First Minneapolis,” Ron wrote. “However, we have resources that many of these churches would love to have and our problems pale compared to theirs.”

The full text of Ron’s letter on the FCC website, www.fccminneapolis.org

News and Notes about FCC and neighborhood

Rev. Chris Morton reports that the **Core Planning Group** has completed its work on the church’s property. The two task groups, ReDesign and Real Estate, may find themselves called upon in the next phase of

planning for the future, but transformation is the next focus for energy at FCC.

Athena Carlson, one of FCC youth group, won a \$500 grant from the Ann Bancroft “Dare to Dream” Foundation.

The **Whittier neighborhood** will have its **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration** on Monday, Jan. 19 from 1-3 p.m at Whittier Park, 26th St. and Grand Av. This annual celebration features music, speeches and more

Sundays at First Christian Church

Worship at 10:30 am
Church School Classes, 9:15 am
Fellowship Hour, 11:30 am

Scripture for Jan. 6, Epiphany

Selected Lectionary Verse
“Arise, shine; for your light
has come, and the glory of the
Lord has risen upon you.”
Isaiah 60: 1

Reflection:
What does it mean to look for
God’s glory in this messy,
troubled, and troubling world?

Prayer:
God of love and light, help me
remember that your light is in
me and in others. We are all
called to be God’s light in the
world, so that all might see
and give God glory. Amen.

from Disciplines 2008, p. 378

This Week at FCC

Sunday, Jan. 4
Baby Dedication Worship Hour

Monday, Jan. 5
Book Club @ Westphal’s 7 pm

Tuesday, Jan 6
Worship Committee 7 pm

Wednesday, Jan. 7
Finance Committee 7 pm
Bell Choir 6:30pm
Chancel Choir 7:45pm

Thursday, Jan. 8
Handcrafters 10 am

Saturday, Jan. 10
Men’s Group 9 am
Women’s Lunch at
Tucci Benucch 11:30 am

Next Week at FCC

Sunday, Jan. 11
Annual Congregational
Meeting 12 noon

Monday, Jan. 12
Pastoral Relations
Committee 6:30 pm

Tuesday, Jan 13
Property Committee 7 pm

Wednesday, Jan 14
Whittier Neighborhood
Faith Leaders 9:30 am
Bell Choir 6:30pm
Chancel Choir 7:45pm

Thursday, Jan. 15
Handcrafters 10 am

Saturday, Jan. 17
Men’s Group 9 am

Celebrating God’s Presence,
Serving God’s People

Ministry Team

All Members of the Congregation

Robert Brite, Minister

Dennis Sanders, Minister of Di-
versity and Mission

Chris Wogaman, Office Manager

Bill Stump, Director of Music

Rick Bowman, Maintenance

Serena Carlson, Nursery Atten-
dant

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Christian Courier is published bi-
weekly. Send items and ideas to
Martha Harris by Mon. Jan. 12 for
next issue.

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Address Correction Requested