



Christian Courier

First Christian Church of Minneapolis (Disciples of Christ)

January 31, 2009

Inside the Courier:

- A Look at the Brite Side, p. 2
- Opportunities for Mission, p. 3
- February Calendar, p. 4
- FCC news in brief, p. 5
- 2009 Budget, p. 5

On the Web:

[Bob's Blog](#)

[Text of Sharon Watkins' Inaugural Sermon](#)



“Telling the Story” to be theme of Forum

As part of the Week of Compassion campaign for February, the Outreach Committee is sponsoring a Refugee Information forum and luncheon on Sunday, Feb. 15.

Two guests from the Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services, one a recent immigrant and one a staff member, will share stories of immigration and information about what Refugee Services does to help and support those new to our community from places around the world.



Church members and guests are invited to come, listen and ask

questions such as the following:

- What does it take to help new immigrants?
- How do we help? What is needed?
- What supports are in place for the longer term needs of immigrants and refugees?
- What is the refugee experience like?

The forum will be at noon, following morning worship, in the new Hearthstone Room. A light lunch and refreshments will be served.

Week of Compassion offerings will be taken on Feb. 15 and Feb. 22.

Annual Dinner set for Feb. 22 to celebrate newest and eldest

The 132nd anniversary of First Christian Church will be celebrated on Feb. 22 with a potluck dinner at noon following the worship service. People who have been members of our congregation for 50 years or more as well as the new members will be honored at this dinner.

An entree, rolls and beverage will be provided for \$5 per person or a maximum of \$15 per family. Everyone is asked to bring his or her favorite vegetable, salad, or dessert

to share. For those unable to bring food, a contribution of \$8 per person is suggested.

Reservations can be made by indicating the number for dinner in the attendance book at worship on Sunday morning Feb. 8 or 15 or by calling the Church Office. All reservations need to be made by Sunday, Feb. 16. Child care is also available by reservation.

The event is sponsored by Membership and Catering.



Pastor Bob Brite

Evangelism – “selling” a story to others

Among the many things that I, as pastor, have to do to get ready for “Unbinding the Gospel” is teleconferencing, homework, and prayer. Among the homework pieces for this week was answering the question: What do you REALLY think about evangelism? Why?

It’s a good question, and the way I answered it might seem a bit crass, but I think it’s valid. Evangelism is “sales.” In a time and culture where knowledge and awareness of Jesus Christ is on the decline, I try to look for secular reference points that help to get Christian concepts

A Look at the Brite Side

across and, having come back into ministry from a time spent in a sales career (housing and food), it seems natural to me to make the connection between evangelism and “sales.”

Sales is telling the story and advantages of a “product,” promoting the recognition of a desire or need for the “product” in others, and working to create the environment in which an “investment” in the “product” is seen as a good thing for the person. As I read John 3:16, which says, “whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life,” the word “believes” does not mean, “agree with the opinion/fact stated,” but rather “invest in the cause.” To invest in something is to make the commitment in the worthwhileness (I think I made up another word there) of that investment. On that basis, evangelism is sharing the story of your own investment in and commitment to God.

We’ve come through a time in the life of the church where people were told not to mention their faith-life to others in doing things in the church; that time is past, and considering how much in the Scriptures talks about witnessing to the Good News, that’s a good thing.

So, what have you been doing lately to “sell” Jesus to others? I’d like to hear.

And I’d like to see YOU on Sunday!

Bob

**20’s AND early 30-SOMETHINGS!!
SAVE FEBRUARY 28TH!!**

Pastor Bob is working up a get-together – call it a 20-30-something thingie, if you’d like. See page 5 for details! And save the date—hope to see you there!

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.

We pray for Enid Griffin as she recovers from her fall; for Mike Collignon’s nephew and godson’s marriage; for the Griffin/Hesano family in the loss of their pet; for David Pyles as he undergoes therapy; for full recovery for **Jay Hillestad’s** mother; for Phil Kinney’s sister, who is gravely ill; for Pastor Bob as he travels this week for a conference and family visit; for Mike and Janice Brady as they begin their new interim pastorate in Iowa; for the joy of having new members join our church family, especially Sarah Mason and Cory White; in thanksgiving for the faith stories shared by Tom Curry, Arlene Hillestad and Mike Collignon on Laity Sunday.

Sanders lifts up “full plate” of mission activities at FCC



Pastor Dennis Sanders

It's hard to believe that it's already been two months since I started here at First Christian as the Associate Minister for Diversity and Mission.

In that short time, I've been working on getting the new website up and running and also taking the time over coffee to chat with various people to get a feel for the congregation. Now that the main bulk of the website is done (and if you haven't seen the site yet, go to

www.fccminneapolis.org), I'm starting to work on the two other parts of my job: working on uplifting mission activities taking place in the church, and also working with you to help First Christian become a more diverse faith community. Below are some events taking place that I'd encourage you to be a part of.

Food Shelf Sundays

Remember that the Third Sunday of the Month is now Food Shelf Sunday. On that Sunday, please bring your nonperishable food items to donate to the Groveland Food Shelf. While giving food is much appreciated,

remember that you can also give money to the food shelf as well. Simply write a check to First Christian and put “Groveland Food Shelf” on the memo line. In this time of economic hardship, foodshelves in Minnesota are very busy trying to make sure no Minnesotan goes hungry. Please consider giving on each Third Sunday.

Feed My Starving Children

Our sisters and brothers at Plymouth Creek Christian Church have invited us to join them on March 30 from 6-7:30pm to pack meals at the Feed My Starving Children facility in Brooklyn Park. Feed My Starving Children, which sends meals to hungry children around the world, has been a big ministry for Disciples here in the Twin Cities. Plymouth Creek has 20 spaces available, so if you would like to take part, please contact me at associatepastor@fccminneapolis.org

Gay-Lesbian Fellowship

As part our efforts to truly live out that fact that the Table where we share the Lord's Supper is a table for everyone, we will be starting a gay/lesbian fellowship group at First.

It will be a time where our gay and lesbian members of our community can come together for fellowship, study and service.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact me at associatepastor@fccminneapolis.org. We will have an informational meeting in the next few weeks.


Week of Compassion

Also, as February approaches, remember that we are receiving the Week of Compassion offering February 15 and 22. As you know, Week of Compassion is the main disaster relief and development agency of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Many of you remember when Johnny Wray, the former Director of Week of Compassion, met with local Disciples in November of 2008. He told us of how the people of Bosnia saw the monies received from Week of Compassion as halal, something that was very special. That part of the world received money from various agencies, but they saw this small money as something that came from people's hearts. The offerings we give to Week of Compassion will change the lives of many both here in America as people deal with the aftermath of disasters like tornadoes, floods and hurricanes, and around the world, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked.

That's all from my corner of the world for now. Godspeed, my friends.

February 2009 Calendar

<p><u>Regular Sunday Schedule:</u> 9:15 Church School Classes 10:30 Worship 11:45 Fellowship Time in Lounge</p>						
<u>1</u> -Souper Bowl youth offering -12n --Outreach Committee	<u>2</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA (FH)	<u>3</u> 7pm: Worship Committee	<u>4</u> -9am Nikkei Group (FH) -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> -9am- Men's Group (131)
<u>8</u> 12 n - Diaconate Meeting	<u>9</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA (FH) -7pm-Carter Circle @ Sandy Morgan's	<u>10</u> -7pm- Property Committee Meeting	<u>11</u> -5:30pm Finance Committee -6:30pm Bell Choir -District 18A (FH) -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u> -9am- Men's Group
<u>15</u> - Week of Compassion Offering and Food Pantry -12n—Refugee Services Panel	<u>16</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA	<u>17</u> -7pm Board Meeting	<u>18</u> -9am—Nikkei (FH) -6:30pm Bell Choir -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u> -6:30pm—Christian League	<u>21</u> -9am- Men's Group -9am—Lauralynn/Naomi Circle (Lounge)
<u>22</u> - Week of Compassion Offering - Dixieland Service for worship - 12n FCC Anniversary Potluck dinner	<u>23</u> -Mikaharu Kai (FH) -7pm AA -Book Group @ Westphals'	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u> 6:30pm- ASH Wednesday Service -7:45pm Chancel Choir	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> -9am- Men's Group -5:00-20s/30s group

Elders' Schedule for Serving:

Feb. 1 – Warren Westphal, Russ Griffin
 Feb. 8 – Barb Creighton, Dean Creighton
 Feb. 15 – Dean Creighton, Barb Creighton
 Feb. 22 – Earl Dunham, Valerie Dunham

Bus Drivers for February

Feb. 1 – Garry Hesser—612-721-4905
 Feb. 8 – Mike Hesano—651-645-6758
 Feb. 15 – Mike Morgan—612-926-9834
 Feb. 22 – Mike Morgan

Elder and Diaconate leaders named for 2009

Jay Hillestad and Tom Curry were named as co-chairs of the Elders for the coming year. Karen Kandik will also act as chair of visitation for the Elder Board.

Becki Whitaker was named as chair for the Diaconate. Team leaders this year for the Diaconate are Grace Madsen and Kathy Hintz.



Sarah Mason joins FCC

Sarah Mason has been active in worship and activities at FCC for several months, and on Jan. 18 she officially became a member here as well as at her home First Christian Church in Lincoln, Neb., where she will keep a dual membership. Sarah works with charter schools through AmericCorps.

Get together for 20s/30s

Pastor Brite is planning a get-together for people of college-age up to early-30's, on Saturday, Feb. 28. Plans are to cook Chinese food together led by Chef/Pastor Bob, talk theology, do some networking, and see if there's interest in future groupings and ministries.

Call or e-mail Pastor Bob or the church office if you're interested and can come!

2009 Church Budget presented, approved at Annual Meeting

Figures for the 2009 budget were presented to the congregation at the annual meeting on Jan. 11. The congregation approved the budget, along with a request for some clarifications about salary increases, which Board Chair Pat Dunlop provided at the Board Meeting on Jan. 20.

The projected pledge income of \$240,000 is based on actual income from 2008.

The recent Stewardship Campaign resulted in pledges for 2009 from 51 individuals or families for a total of approximately \$175,000, as of Jan. 25. Anticipated giving from 15 to 20 contributors who did not pledge is expected to make up the difference.

The Outreach budget includes a title of \$15,000 on the annual interest income from the sale of the building to MIA.

The projected salaries represent an overall increase of 6% to 10%.

Board Chair Pat Dunlop explained at the Jan. 20 Board Meeting that these increases for full and part time staff were made for a variety of reasons including delayed compensation from previous years, fulfillment of agreements made at time of employment, and increased job responsibilities.

Projected 2009 Income	
2009 projected pledge income	\$240,000
Visitor Gifts	2,500
Loose Offering	1,500
Christian Education	400
Interest Income (Endowment)	16,000
Rental Income (80% 2007)	10,000
Interest Income (Building Sale)	100,000
Total Projected 2009 Income	\$ 370,400

Projected 2009 Expenses	
Salaries	\$198,338.96
Workmen's Compensation	2,000
Administrative	13,000
Outreach	27,000
Christian Education	2,500
Evangelism	2,000
Membership	500
Worship	28,275
Property	90,000

Total Projected 2009 Expenses: \$ 363,613.96

Bi-Weekly Calendar

Sundays at First Christian Church

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

This Week at FCC

Sunday, Feb. 1
Souper Bowl Youth Offering taken
Outreach Committee 12:00 n

Monday, Feb. 2
AA 8:00pm

Tuesday, Feb. 3
Worship Committee 7:00 pm

Wednesday, Feb. 4
Bell Choir 6:30pm
Chancel Choir 7:45pm

Friday, Feb. 6
-Article deadline for next Courier

Saturday, Feb. 7
Men's Group 9:00 am

Next Week at FCC

Sunday, Feb. 8
Diaconate Meeting 12:00 n

Monday, Feb. 9
Carter Circle @ Morgans 7:00pm
AA 8:00pm

Tuesday, Feb. 10
Property Committee 7:00pm

Wednesday, Feb. 11
Finance Committee 5:30 pm
Bell Choir 6:30pm
Chancel Choir 7:45pm

Saturday, Feb.. 14
Men's Group 9:00 am

Reflections on the Word

*From lectionary texts for Feb. 8,
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*

Mark 1: 35: In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.

Reflection: Jesus shows the anxious disciples with their pressing tasks the importance of prayerful solitude to equip themselves before they embark on the ministry ahead.

Prayer: Loving God, Help us find a time and place each day to be still and listen for you.

from Disciplines 2009, p. 51

*"A Thoughtful Church in the
Heart of the City"*

Ministry Team

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