

The Courier

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Minneapolis



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UPCOMING Events

Mardi Gras Sunday,
February 26

Sanctuary Switch
Monday, Feb. 27, 10 am

Ash Wednesday Service,
Wednesday, March 1, 7 pm

Family Folk Dancing
Sunday, March 5, noon

What is Lent and why should I observe it?

by Deborah Arca, Chalice Press

Lent is the 40-day season between Ash Wednesday and Easter in the Christian liturgical calendar. Representing the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan, Lent is traditionally a season of repentance, fasting, and preparation for the coming of Easter. Once a season observed primarily by Catholics, Lent has increasingly become popular with Protestants and is now anticipated as an opportunity for an annual "spiritual check-in;" a time to look inward and reflect on our relationship with God.

"Lent is a great opportunity for us to go deep," says Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). "In a world where everybody is busy, busy, busy, Lent encourages us to slow down just a bit and get more attentive to our own spirit, and to the spirit of God working in and through us, and that is a healthy, healthy thing for our spirit and for our life all together."

Traditionally, many people choose to give up something tangible for Lent, such as chocolate or caffeine, but there are many ways to observe Lent. "What's important is going personal with it; finding our own way to observe Lent," Watkins says. Instead of giving something up this year, Watkins plans to take something on. She will be reading through the Psalms - a psalm a day - and letting that guide her own personal discernment and reflection and slowing down. Resources such as a daily devotional can help guide the Lent.

Editor's Note: FCC will be providing "Practicing Lent," a resource from the same group that created the daily Advent practice cards we used in December. According to the publishers, "it will challenge you to see the hope and light all around you as you stay present and awake to the injustices of the world." "Practicing Lent" includes six weekly Lenten practices, each one designed to deepen your journey through these 40 days of lengthening light. You can practice them alone, or with a partner, friends, or family, sharing experiences and insights as you travel.



Mardi Gras Sunday!
Join us this Sunday, February 26, for
Mardi Gras Sunday -
complete with a Dixieland Band,
beads and King Cake!



In Our Prayers

Prayers of Joy

For Paolo Mandjanga on becoming a US citizen

For Ali Hesano who received her diploma from St. Paul College

For Laurie Feille for completing another step on her thesis

Prayers for Concern

For Carolyn Povolny's cousin Matt

For Jim Smith's son Tom

For Valerie Dunham's brother Randy and brother-in-law Doug

For Glenn Crown whose mother died on Feb. 20

For all our homebound members, including Evelyn Lawson and Bev Singewald

Prayers for the World

For all who are ill, lonely, confused, or facing difficult decisions

For those affected by tornados in New Orleans



A message from Pastor Laurie Feille



On Gratitude as a Lenten Practice

As I prepare for Lent and all that it entails I find myself saying things like: “I am so thankful that I am at First Christian,” “I am so thankful for the team with which I get to serve,” “I am so thankful for the faith of the members.” With all of the chaos in the world right now I am struck by how many times I find myself saying prayers of gratitude to God.

Yes, the world is chaotic and that makes me so thankful to God that I am called to serve a loving, intelligent, compassionate, open minded, welcoming, faithful, God-loving, people-loving church that desires to follow the ways of Jesus Christ. Yes, church staffs are under incredible stress right now to proclaim and live out the Gospel knowing that “the pews” are filled with diverse opinions. I am so thankful to serve with a Ministry Team where we can share our fears, our concerns, our hopes, our dreams and be there to support each other when we need that extra word of encouragement. Yes, the members of the church are feeling the stress and effects of a country that is divided in a sundry of ways. I am so thankful for the prayerful, wise, faithful, caring leadership of our elders.

With all of the “yes life is chaotic” and the yet “I am so thankful” moments that I have had lately I discovered that there is something to practicing gratitude as a spiritual discipline. While offering to God our fears, our doubts, our concerns, our anxiety and our frustrations helps us breathe easier, it is in expressing our gratitude for even the smallest of grateful moments that we find our empowerment to act and to keep going. Our Youth showed us this so beautifully last Sunday as they led us in worship.

So as we approach Lent, a time where we will be very intentional about exploring who we are as followers of Jesus Christ and as God’s creatures and our relationships as God’s creatures, I invite you to join me in offering gratitude to God. It can be as simple as gratitude for rain to gratitude for a congregation that celebrated your 20th year of ordination (I am so very thankful!). Maybe you are thankful for someone that stands with you as you stand for the rights of all or maybe you are thankful for someone that sits with you as you try to discover what it is you want to stand for. Maybe all that you can say right now is thank you God for being God and that may be the first step we should all take in practicing gratitude as a spiritual discipline.

Wherever you are in expressing to God the deep needs of the world and finding one or more words of gratitude, know that you are not alone on this journey. With that we can say: Thanks be to God for this community of faith! Much love and peace, Pastor Laurie

Forum on Sanctuary Church discernment held



First Christian, Salem Lutheran and Lyndale UCC will be working together this spring to educate the congregations about questions regarding becoming a Sanctuary Church. We will do so with an eye toward congregational votes in all three churches some time in April or May to answer the question: Ought we to become a Sanctuary Church, A Sanctuary-Supporting Congregation or neither? If all three churches vote to become Sanctuary Churches, then the SpringHouse Board will vote as well.

The first of three forums in this discernment process was held Sunday, February 19. Approximately 35 people from the three congregations heard about the theological basis for churches declaring themselves Sanctuary Churches for immigrant people. Pastor Rebecca Vogel of Lyndale moderated the forum, and Pastors Ashley Harness, Laurie Feille and Rhonda Hlavinka provided information and background on how and why churches in all three denominations have been involved in sanctuary movements.

Pastor Harness reviewed the ancient Biblical history of offering sanctuary in temples or cities to people unfairly accused of wrongdoing. She also talked about the United Church of Christ's involvement in the sanctuary movement in more recent times. Pastor Feille discussed the activity of Disciples churches in Texas in providing sanctuary to people fleeing violence. Pastor Hlavinka told about parishioners in her previous church who were detained, and also commented on the process by which Lutheran synods around the country are becoming "Sanctuary Synods." All three pastors referenced multiple Biblical passages about welcoming the stranger and loving our neighbors.

Two more forums will be held as SpringHouse on March 26 and April 9, both at 9:30 am. The March 26 forum will examine legal implications of becoming a Sanctuary Church and the April 9 forum will look at logistic and practical matters.

The SpringHouse Sanctuary Task force members are Rev. Paula Bidle (Lyndale), Kathryn Lee (Lyndale), Wendy Manuel (First), Kathy Hintz (First), Rev. Rhonda Hlavinka, Rev. Ashley Harness, Rev. Rebecca Voelkel, Rev. Laurie Feille.

Temple Israel again invites all to Interfaith Seder

Temple Israel will joyfully sponsor the 35th Liebenberg-Knelman Interfaith Seder on Sunday, March 26 from 1 to 4 pm. The Interfaith Seder prompts valuable learning a social exchange between Jews and people of other faith communities in the Minneapolis area. FCC will make a group reservation so please contact Deb Murphy by February 26 if you are planning to attend

FCC 140th Anniversary Recognitions

FCC marked its 140th year of serving God in Minneapolis on February 14. We'd like to recognize and honor our most senior members and also our newest members.

- 50 years: Mary Lou Cain, Kay McMullen, Dee Ward
 - 51 years: Ardie Armstrong, Val Dunham, Earl Dunham, Evelyn Lawson
 - 52 years: Julie Andrix
 - 53 years: June Andrix
 - 55 years: Karen Westphal
 - 56 years: Rick Rusinak
 - 57 years: Fern Risinger, Barb Rusinak
 - 58 years: Bobbie Hall, Elaine Moe
 - 59 years: Ellie Bowman
 - 60 years: John Takekawa
 - 62 years: Irene Hackett
 - 65 years: Jim Bowman
 - 67 years: Gwen Elmshouser, Warren Westphal
 - 71 years: Pat Carter, Nick Rusinak, Phyllis Takekawa
 - 88 years: Dorothy Becker
-
- 5 years: Dan Adolphson, Jimmy Burnett, Jen and John Kregel, Chris MacDonald-Dennis
 - 4 years: Anna Bliss, Bud Shandorf
 - 3 years: Jim Petermeier
 - 2 years: Shannon Grady, Tom, Lisa and Gracie West
 - 1 year: Ann Antus, Theresa Borchardt, David Cobb, Rodney Higgins, Ron and Alice Keith, Elizabeth Larson, Dan and Sarah Lauer, Wendy Manuel, Henrietta Smith



March 2017 First Christian Church					Sunday Morning Schedule 9:00 Spiritual Formation Classes 10:30 Worship 11:45 Fellowship Time in Gathering Space	
			1 Ash Wednesday 8 am Narrative Lectionary Study 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:45 pm Choir	2 9 am Ecumenical women's ministry 5 pm Sanctuary Task Force	3 4 pm First Fridays	4 9 am Men's Bible Study
5 Garden Sanctuary Noon: Child Ministry Team Mtg Noon: Family Folk Dancing for SpringHouse	6 3 pm Carter Circle @ SpringHouse	7	8 8 am Narrative Lectionary Study 2 pm Mission and Outreach Mtg 5 pm Soup Supper 6 pm Lenten Service 6 30 Handbells 7:45 Choir	9 9 am Ecumenical women's ministry 7 pm Pastor Laurie PRC	10	11 9 am Men's Bible Study
12 Garden Sanctuary Noon: SH Youth Advisory Team Noon: SH Green Team	13	14 7 pm SHMC Covenant Review	15 8 am Narrative Lectionary Study 3 pm DCEH Personnel Cmte 5 pm Soup Supper 5:30 Finance Comm 6 pm Lenten Service 6 30 Handbells 7:45 Choir	16 9 am Ecumenical women's ministry	17	18 9 am Men's Bible Study
19 Garden Sanctuary 11:45 Blood Pressure Check 11:45 SH Activistas Noon Nicaragua Fund Raising Lunch 5:00 FCC Elders	20	21 6 pm Worship Comm 7 FCC Board	22 8 am Narrative Lectionary Study 5 pm Soup Supper 6 pm Lenten Service 6 30 Handbells 7:45 Choir	23 9 am Ecumenical women's ministry 7 pm SHMC Board	24	25 9 am Men's Bible Study 10 am Lenten Brunch
26 Garden Sanctuary 9:30 am Sanctuary Forum 10:20 am - Baptism 11:45 Nicaragua Trip Planning	27	28	29 8 am Narrative Lectionary Study 5 pm Soup Supper 6 pm Lenten Service 6 30 Handbells 7:45 Choir	30 9 am Ecumenical women's ministry	31	

	Elders	Worship Leader	Children's Moment	Diaconate	Bus Drivers
March 5	Mike Hesano Lu Griffin	Jay Hillestad	Deb Murphy	A. Hesano M. Hurlocker	Mike Hesano 651-645-6758
March 12	Kirsten Cackoski Tom Curry	Henrietta Smith	Deb Murphy	M. Hurlocker P. Kinney	Mike Morgan 612.926-9834
March 19	Jay Hillestad Sandy Morgan	Barb Creighton	Deb Murphy	E. Tucker B. Whitaker	Garry Hesser 612.721.4905
March 26	Lu Griffin Val Dunham		Deb Murphy	G. Madsen	Mike Hesano 651-645-6758

Note: Please call drivers by Saturday for Sunday bus ride

Focus on YOUR photography during Lent

The Lenten art focus this year is photography. The Worship Team is inviting everyone to share photos that express where you see God, God's love being made manifest, Jesus' message being taught, or faith in action. Email the photo to Deb – and be sure to ask permission if there are people in the photo. Include a few words about how and why the subject of your photo spoke to you. If you're not sure why, that's fine too! The photos will be shared during Lent, Holy Week and Easter.



Invitation to a special choral concert March 11

Lovers of choral music are invited to a special free concert at Plymouth Congregational Church to hear the Stuttgart Kammerchor, one of Europe's finest choirs. This celebrated choir will be in Minneapolis to sing for the 6000 delegates at the American Choral Directors national convention. This event is only open to the delegates.

However, Mark Sedio from Central Lutheran and Philip Brunelle felt that this amazing choir should be heard by choral lovers of our community – so they have arranged for a free concert on Saturday, March 11 at 2 pm at Plymouth Congregational Church. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Annual SpringHouse Folk Dance set for March 5



SpringHouse members, family and friends are invited to enjoy an afternoon of folk dancing in the South Sanctuary on March 5. Easy-to-learn, easy-to-follow folk dances will be taught and led by our favorite caller, Robin Nelson. We'll include some folk dances from Central America – Nicaragua, perhaps! Lunch will be provided following

worship to help fuel up the dancers. Dancing starts at noon. Contact Michael Vanderford (612-296-9647) or Rae Buzzel (612-991-8351) if you have questions.

Green Team gearing up for Earth Day

With heightened concerns about climate disruption, the SpringHouse Green Team is gearing up for significant action around Earth Day in April. The group can always use new ideas and helping hands, so you are welcome to join. The next meeting is March 12 at 11:45 in Lydia. If you can't make the meeting but want to get involved, though, contact Elly Wagner (952-922-7703 or ellyrw@aol.com) or Melia Derrick (952-220-3081 or runningbird68@aol.com). Help the Green Team care for our precious creation!

FCC Board Notes

The February meeting of the First Christian Church Board was February 21, with 17 people attending. Highlights from the minutes include the following:

- Mary Hurlocker brought a request to be commissioned in her ministries as coordinator and facilitator of the Downtown Coalition for Grief Support and as co-teacher of the Bible study at Oak Meadows. The board voted unanimously to approve commissioning Mary in these ministries.

- Pastor Laurie and Kathy Hintz presented information about becoming a Sanctuary Church, something all three SpringHouse churches are exploring. (See article on page 3). In addition to the upcoming forums on the topic, Pastor Laurie and Kathy both urged anyone who has questions to contact them.

- The Mission and Outreach committee announced that the dates for Mission at Our Doorstep will be July 17 – July 21. Groups will go to both Feed My Starving Children and Second Harvest during the MAOD week, in addition to other activities.

- The Women's Ministry Lenten Brunch will be Saturday, March 25 at 10 am.

- Skip Wolverton presented the Treasurer's Report. Pledged income for January was \$11,803; the monthly budget expectation is \$16,375.

Sundays at First Christian Church

Worship at 10:30

Before Worship:

Spiritual Formation Classes:

- 9:00 Hearthstone Class,
- 9:20 Children's Classes;
- 9:30 SH Joint Adult Class

After Worship

11:45 Fellowship Time

**Scripture Reading for
Sunday, February 26
Transfiguration
Luke 9: 28-36**



Transfiguracion del Divino
Salvador del Mundo

*First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Minneapolis,
is a partner church at SpringHouse Ministry Center*

Reflections on the Word

Luke 9:33a: "Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah..." Peter wants to stay on the mountaintop. He wants to memorialize the experience, perhaps fearing he might never meet God like this again. Jesus though is unfazed. His strong faith trusts that God will continue to be present. *Gracious God, give us faith to let go of our experiences of you in the past so that we might fully know you in the present. Amen.*

By Tom Arthur in Disciplines, 2013

*A Welcoming Community of Faith
in the Heart of the City*

Ministry Team

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Christian Courier is published bi-monthly. Send items and ideas to church office or to Martha Harris by **Sunday, March 5.**

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