

The COURIER

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Minneapolis



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UPCOMING Events:

Women's Ministries
Lunch Out at Tucci Benuch,
Mall of America, Saturday,
January 14, 11:30 am

**Special Day
Christmas Offering
This Sunday,
December 18**

Celebrate Christmas at First Christian



Saturday, December 17

11:30 am Cookie Baking for the Aliveness
Project and Cookie Swap
2:30 pm Blue Christmas Service



Sunday, December 18

10:30 am Fourth Sunday in Advent service
Christmas Offering



Wednesday, December 21

5 pm Soup Supper
6 pm Holden Prayer Service

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve

3:45 pm Hot Chocolate, Hot Cider, Treats
Christmas Carol singing
4 pm Family Friendly Christmas Eve
Service with special Christmas
Story guests
10 pm Christmas Eve Service of
Candlelight and Communion



Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day

10:30 am Worship Service with Hymn Sing
Come in your jammies!



All services will be in the North Sanctuary. Join us – and bring a friend! And don't forget the opportunity for Advent giving to Refugee Services and Plaster House!

In Our Prayers. . .**Prayers of Joy**

*For Leah Sitberg and Eric
Froelich on the birth of
their third child, Harvey
Edward*

Prayers of Sympathy

*For Shannon Grady, whose
grandmother Jewel Von
Ruden, passed away
For Bud Shandorf, whose
daughter Wendy Hunt
passed away
For the Salem congregation
mourning the death of long-
time member Myrtle
Johnson*

Prayers of Concern

*For Val Dunham's brother
Randy
For Melinda Nickerson
For those healing, including
Justin Carlson and Elaine
Tucker
For all our homebound
members including Dorothy
Becker and Phyllis Dunlap*

Prayers for the World

*For those who lost friends
and family members in the
Oakland fire
For families in Azle, Texas
who lost loved ones in a
recent accident*

**Voices and Views**

Justin Carlson

***Listen: Silent***

One basic definition of music is sound organized in time. As a musician, I enjoy many beautiful and complex sounds. It may therefore be surprising that the sound I love most is silence. Silence is never neutral. White noise may be ignorable, but silence demands attention. There's a reason why many classical music traditions began expecting silence from the audience; why pieces begin from and end in silence; why silence between movements of a work is important. Silences can be beautiful, graceful, ugly, even awkward; but each unique silence plays an integral role: it interrupts the flow of sound. A silence surprises us, altering our perspective.

I've never much enjoyed the lyrics of Silent Night - I find singing about silence vulgar. Even more, it's a lullaby about quaking shepherds and the whole heavenly host singing alleluias! The original German lyrics and verse ordering are less offensive: "stille" can translate as "quiet," while the heavenly host refrains from singing until the very end of the final verse.

Many of the most memorable, perhaps the most holy, experiences in my life have occurred during silent nights. One unseasonably warm mid-December evening in high school, I needed space to feel angry. I walked to a park near our house, occasionally picking up dead branches and throwing them as far as I could into the snow. After releasing much of my anger, I wandered onto the ice rink. The trees were lit, the ice rink was frozen, and it was raining. Silence forced me to confront the beautiful absurdity of standing on an ice rink in the rain, and I felt the incomprehensible presence of God amid the absurdity. A few years later, a good friend and I walked through my college's arboretum amidst the clamor of mid-term. As we passed a tall dead tree on the edge of a prairie, our conversation fell silent. Fog thickened until we could no longer see more than ten feet around ourselves. We paused, listening, and I began to understand the beauty of just being.

Silence is neither inherently negative nor inherently positive. Its effects may not be felt until after it ceases. Some silences, like that following a loss of life, are unceasing. However, when we recognize them, when we see silences as processes rather than absences, we open ourselves to their transformative power. Listen to the silent.

SpringHouse children tell the old, old story



A snowy morning did not stop the children of SpringHouse from presenting their annual Christmas pageant during the Joint Worship on December 11. Deb Murphy wrote the script for the program, Pastor Rhonda Hlavinka directed the music, and shepherds, angels and kings gathered once again around Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus at the manger.

SpringHouse folks going to DC Women's March

January 19-22, 2017

There are only 40 total seats available!



Only a few seats are left on the chartered bus that will take people from SpringHouse plus other friends and families to Washington D.C. for the Women's March on Washington. The march will be on Saturday, January 21, one day after the Inauguration of Donald Trump as President. The women will join other marchers staying at the Disciples National City Church in Washington. The march is not limited to women! Full details about the vision and mission of the march, its organizing committee, ways to support the march and other details can be found at womensmarch.com

Health at First

Julie Andrix, Faith
Community Nurse



Keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy for the holidays! We seem to have had a crash landing into winter and a time of more indoor activities. Make sure to wash your hands often (using soap and running water for at least 20 seconds) to prevent the spread of germs. Handwashing is the best method of infection control.

Managing stress is also important for health maintenance as there have been research studies showing a relationship between our response to stress and our physical/mental health. It is not so much the stressors in our lives but how we see and react to them that determines how we have a healthy versus unhealthy response. If we change the way we see, we can change the way we respond. Come and be a part of church to find help with stress.

Fire safety is important this time of year because most residential fires occur during the winter months. Don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on the stove, or lit candles unattended. If you have young children around, keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items out of their reach. Watch them closely around items listed with fire safety.

Eat healthy and stay active. Fruits and vegetables pack nutrients and help to lower risk of disease. Limit foods with added sugar, high in fat and salt. Being active for half an hour at least 5 days a week helps with strength and endurance. Come to church this and all seasons for healthy doses of spiritual lessons and fellowship! See you in church.
Julie Andrix

**Sundays at First Christian Church
Worship at 10:30**

Before Worship

Hearthstone Class, 9 am
Children's Classes, 9:20 am
Joint Adult class 9:30 am

After Worship

Fellowship Time 11:45

**Narrative Lectionary
Jesus' Birth Announced
Luke 1: 26-49**



Annunciation by Henry Ossawa Tanner

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

Reflections on the Word

*Luke 1:35 The angel said to her,
"The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will
overshadow you; therefore the child
to be born will be holy. . ."*

God's "overshadowing" power appears more than once in Luke's gospel. Luke again uses "overshadowing" language during the transfiguration scene. At that event, a cloud "overshadowed" Peter, James, and John, a cloud out of which God -- not an angel -- spoke words of affirmation about Jesus' identity: "This is my Son" God is active and present throughout Jesus' life, and, if we can be open to God, in our lives too.

*Emerson Powery, Messiah College,
Grantham, PA (adapted)*

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

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