

December 21, 2023

The Courier

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Minneapolis



What's **INSIDE**:

*A Message from
Pastor Laurie Pound Feille,
page 2*

*January 2024 calendar,
page 3*

*News and Notes,
Page 3*

UPCOMING Events

*Elders Meeting,
Wed., January 3,
7 pm Zoom*

*Last 2023 Coffee Hour
@9 am on Wed 20th;
Last 2023 Happy Hour
@5 pm Thurs 21st*

*Note on links: If the links in
the PDF version of The
Courier don't work, copy
and paste the URL address
in your browser.*

Christmas Eve Services

December 24th is the 4th Sunday in Advent, and we will be able to gather twice on this special Christmas Eve, once at the regular 10:30 am worship service, and then at 7 pm for the traditional candlelight service, where we join in a circle of light and sing "Silent Night" as we end the service.



For those who cannot attend either service in person, both will be live-streamed.

Special Christmas offerings

Personal care items can still be placed under the sanctuary Christmas tree by Christmas Eve. This year, Mission and Outreach will be donating items such as soap, shampoo, feminine hygiene products, toothbrushes and toothpaste to those who visit the Groveland Foodshelf.

Kafika House (formerly Plaster House) is an organization in Tanzania that FCC supports with Christmas Eve Candlelight Service offerings. Kafika House provides free medical care to children (and their families) who have congenital or accident-related injuries or conditions.

The Upper Midwest Christmas Special Offering for ministries in our region goes to such things as supporting individuals called to ministry, hosting camps and retreats at the Newton conference center, supporting new and longtime ministers through Institute cluster groups, and many other projects that the Upper Midwest staff is engaged in to reach out to Disciples in the region.

Delightful Advent Presents/Presence

Our Advent worship services have featured some surprising appearances representing the Advent themes: Hope, Peace, and Joy. Be with us this Sunday to find out who/what the 4th Sunday in Advent will bring!



In Our Prayers



We pray with joy that **Pastor Dan** is healing and will soon be on a knee scooter; that funds were raised to help **Margaret Hutchen's 4-year-old friend OG** as he readies for surgery; and that **Gomer Pound** is now settled in his new home.

We pray in sympathy for friends and family of former member **Jane Anderson**, whose memorial service is this week; for Lyndale friends **Rebecca and Steven Miller, Alan Henden and Pastor Joan Conroy**, who lost family members recently.

We pray in concern for **Angela**, a new live-stream worship attendee, whose family is having several stressful situations; for **Val Dunham's sister Bettie**; for **Pastor Dan's cousin Sheila**, and for **Josh and Emma Jorstad of Salem**, whose little boy **Kjell** was hospitalized with RSV.

We pray that the continuing violence against queer and trans people, against the Ukrainian people and against people in Gaza and Israel will end.

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

A message from Pastor Laurie Feille



The Gift of being present

We have been called to be “present” with God, with ourselves, with each other and with the world during our Advent series this year. That sounds like a lot of work until we stop and realize that being present means being present just as we are. Our Wednesday night Advent Study has shown us ways to be present by using mindfulness practices. We have practiced ways to be present with however we are feeling or whatever is going on in our lives and instead of trying to fix everything we pause and take time to just be.

Those times together have been a gift to me this Advent season. As I work my way to getting my daddy settled in Enhanced Care (he is doing well there!) and getting everything out of his old apartment (he moved from a one bedroom to a studio), I feel as if chaos is surrounding me every minute of every day. Stopping each Wednesday night to reconnect and be present with God, with each other, with myself has allowed me to be present with the world. I wish everyone had been able to join in our study, as part of being a faith community is being present with one another as we are present with God.

It sounds a little like worship, doesn't it? When we gather online or onsite, we are invited to come and be.... just be. Your pastors, musicians, tech crew, Elders, Deacons and volunteers have already planned their parts of the service with the hopes that our faith community, friends and visitors will come and be present. We want everyone to come and be present with whatever is going on in your lives or in the world. Just come and be present with God and with each other. We offer a multitude of ways for everyone to participate and connect. In other words, we do everything we can to make sure that there are opportunities for all to be present and experience the presence of God in some way.

Being present can make a huge difference in how you feel, act and live. Right now, it is six days before Christmas and I am sitting in my living room looking at an undecorated Christmas Tree. With everything I have been doing for church and my daddy I have not had time to decorate our tree. It is up and it has lights, but I think for the first time in my life Christmas morning will arrive without one decoration on our tree. I also still have my Thanksgiving tablecloth on my table and a Fall wreath on my door. Other years this would have made me sad and stressed. This year thanks to the call to “be present” I know that God is present and whether the tree gets decorated, or the Thanksgiving decorations get put away will not stop God from being present.

I am so grateful for the special opportunities we have had this Advent. From Advent worship services, to Coffee, Cookies and Crafts, Wednesday night Advent Study, Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve morning and Christmas Eve night worship and our opportunity to be present with our gifts for Groveland Food Shelf, we have had opportunities to be present with each other, God, ourselves and the world. Being present this Advent has made it a holy one for your pastor. I am also grateful that our ability to be present doesn't end with Christmas Eve or Christmas Morning. We have all of 2024 to live out what it means to be a community of faith that follows the call of God through Jesus Christ.

Thank you for being present in all of the ways that you are able. You make a difference in so many lives. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing where being present leads us in 2024! Much love and peace, Pastor Laurie

FCC Calendar for January, 2024

Monthly or One-time Events (on Zoom unless otherwise noted)

Wednesday, January 3	7 pm - Elders Meeting
Thursday, January 4	7 pm - Mission & Outreach Committee
Monday, January 8	5 pm - SpringHouse Building Committee 7 pm - SpringHouse Finance Committee
Wednesday, January 10	12:30 pm - FCC Finance Committee
Thursday, January 11	7 pm - Pastor Laurie PRC
Sunday, January 14	noon Annual Congregational Meeting
Monday, January 15	7 pm - FCC Book Group
Tuesday, January 16	7 pm - FCC General Board
Saturday, January 20	10 am - Trustees Meeting
Saturday, January 27	10:30 am - Women's Fellowship Luncheon @ Hilltop in Edina
Sunday, January 28	noon - SpringHouse Annual Meeting

Regular Weekly Events:

Sundays	10:30 am Worship, Children's Activity Table 10:00 am SH Youth Group
Tuesdays	8:15 am - SpringHouse Lectionary Group 5 pm - Happy Hour
Wednesdays	9 am - Coffee with Pastors
Thursdays	5 pm - Happy Hour
Saturdays	9 am - Coffee with Pastors

Kafika House News

Kafika House in Tanzania (formerly known as Plaster House), an organization that provides free medical care to children, has had some exciting changes recently. They are also offering summer Immersion Trips for parents and teens to volunteer for two weeks at Kafika House and experience life in the nearby city of Arusha.

You can learn more from their recent newsletter at

<https://tinyurl.com/2a8area2>



More News and Notes

Save the Date for Building Beloved Community Day Camp: August 19 - 23, 9am - 4pm

Please save the date for a great week of fun and faith formation! This year, our ecumenical day camp will be both later in the summer and at a new location - Diamond Lake Lutheran Church (5760 Portland Ave). Our program arc will be Monday - Thursday (August 19 - 22), with a family celebration on Thursday night. Friday is a bonus fun day. We are excited to welcome children between the ages of entering Kindergarten through middle school, and we hope to have a wonderful crew of high school leaders to support the elementary kiddos. More information to come in the new year.

FCC and Friends Book Group will meet January 15 to discuss *Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese: "A stunning and magisterial epic of love, faith, and medicine, set in Kerala, South India." The group meets at 7 pm on Zoom. Contact Kathy Hintz or Kirsten Cackoski if you need a link.

The **Women's Fellowship annual luncheon** will be Saturday, January 27, 10:30 am, at Hilltop in Edina (5101 Arcadia Ave, Edina). Reservations are necessary so contact Kathy Hintz if you plan to attend.

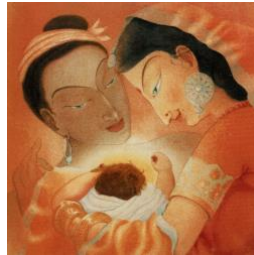
The recipe for Belinda Flanagan's **Potato Cheese Soup** was in demand at the Advent soup lunch recently! Contact Martha Harris (harrismartha@mac.com) if you would like this recipe to make at home yourself!

The **Congregational Survey and discussion** summaries from the small group discussions are all being tabulated for a presentation to the congregation and to the church board early in 2024. Stay tuned for details! (Sneak preview: there is A LOT that people love and value at First Christian!)

Sundays at First Christian Church

Worship at 10:30, in person or livestreamed at fccmpls.org
Children's Table Activities in person during worship: **Join us!**
 Children's Activities are also available online at www.fccmpls.org

Revised Common Lectionary
Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 24, 2023
Luke 2: 1-14



Holy Family in Saffron,
Frank Wesley

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

Luke 2: 7 – And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

If Mary had appeared in Bethlehem clothed, as St. John says, with the sun, a crown of twelve stars on her head, and the moon under her feet, then people would have fought to make room for her. But that was not God's way for her, nor is it Christ's way for himself, now when he is disguised under every type of humanity that treads the earth. Ever faithful God, Open our hearts to receive your Son, that we may open our doors to welcome all people as brothers and sisters and establish your household in our time Amen.

-Dorothy Day, in Watch for the Light

A Welcoming Community of Faith in the Heart of the City

Ministry Team

Dan Adolphson, Associate Pastor

dan.adolphson@fccmpls.org

Rick Bowman, SHMC Building Manager

Chelsea Boyden, SHMC Youth Minister

springhouseyouth@fccmpls.org

Wendy Eidukas, Office Administrator,

wendye@fccmpls.org

Laurie Pound Feille, Senior Minister

pastor@fccmpls.org

Martha Harris, Courier Editor,

harrismartha@mac.com

Deb Murphy, Director of Spiritual Formation of

Children, deb.murphy@fccmpls.org

Tim O'Grady, Keyboardist,

timothy.ryan.ograde@gmail.com

Dr. Caroline Povolny, Director of Music

Office Telephone: 612.870.1868

www.fccminneapolis.org

E-Mail: office@fccminneapolis.org

Next issue deadline is Sunday, January 7

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 OF MINNEAPOLIS
 (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
 610 W. 28th Street
 Minneapolis, MN 55408**