

The Courier

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Minneapolis



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UPCOMING Events

*FCC Board meeting,
Tuesday, September 16,
7 pm on Zoom*

*Coffee Hours continue,
9 am on Wed & Sat,
Happy Hours
5 pm Tues & Thurs*

Rev. Benjamin Masters begins post as FCC's Intentional Interim Minister

The board of First Christian Church voted at its meeting on August 19 to offer the post of Intentional Interim Minister to Rev. Benjamin Masters.

As he wrote in his Personal Profile, Rev. Masters or "Ben" says about himself: "I am a pastor ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) based in Minneapolis, MN, called to encourage small congregations with big hearts – especially communities in transition. If God is calling us to work together to nurture disciples, develop leaders and love neighbors, then I say: 'Onward in the Spirit!'"



Ben spent this past summer working in a pastoral role at Holden Village, in Washington's Cascade Mountains. He served as Interim Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church of Northeast Minneapolis from 2022 to 2025. Before that, he was an Interim for two years at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Ben grew up in the Palouse Hills area of Washington State. Is it coincidence or "something else" that he and Pastor Dan Adolphson recently discovered they had mutual acquaintances and experiences from their childhoods in the Northwest! He served as pastor at two rural Presbyterian congregations in the Finger Lakes region of New York from 2018 to 2020, through the pandemic era.

Ben currently is a member of the Committee on Representation and Ethics, a group that invites leaders in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area to reflect on and deepen its commitment to diversity and just relationships in the Body of Christ. He also loves to spend time with Iglesia Luterana St. Paul's San Pablo, an urban multilingual congregation in Minneapolis, where his husband Rev. Hieraal Osorto serves as senior pastor.

In an email replying to our invitation to minister to us at First Christian, Ben said, "I am truly humbled by FCC's generosity and openness of heart. Thank you for inviting me to journey alongside you in ministry!"

Ben will be introduced to the SpringHouse congregations at the Joint Worship on September 7, and preach his first sermon as he leads worship at First Christian on September 14. We hope everyone will extend a warm welcome to Rev. Ben Masters and join him in saying "Onward in the Spirit!"

In Our Prayers



We lift up Prayers of Joy as **Rev. Ben Masters** begins his Interim ministry; that Karen Kandik had successful surgery; that **Margaret Hutchens** is in a place where she can get needed care.

We lift Prayers of Sorrow for the families of **Harper Moyski** and **Fletcher Merkel**, who lost their lives in the shooting at Annunciation Church and School, for the 18 people wounded as well; for the transgender community, targets of hatred another result of this shooting.

Prayers of Concern are offered for **Ann Antus' brother Barney** and **Rita Nakashima Brock's friend Diane Christopherson** as she reckons with her diagnosis of terminal cancer.

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

Another new chapter in FCC's life begins

by Martha Harris, FCC Board Co-Chair

Yet another chapter in the 148-year history of First Christian Church Minneapolis begins this month as Rev. Benjamin Masters starts his work as our Intentional Interim Minister. He will be with us for at least nine months and possibly longer, guiding us through a time of self-reflection and discernment of our needs for the future.

The FCC Transition Team (David Cobb, Lu Griffin, Margaret Hutchens and Martha Harris) began its work in June. We decided on three main goals that we would ask the Interim Minister to work on:

1. Help us reflect on, question, and examine ourselves as a congregation to better understand how to move forward, building on our strengths and acknowledging what might be holding us back.
2. Help us reflect on our worship, spiritual, and community life.
3. Bring "fresh eyes" as we work to envision how FCC Minneapolis can be a vital and thriving congregation as we move into the future.

In an interview with the Transition Team, Ben talked at length about his experiences as an Interim, how he approaches building relationships with a congregation and coming to know and understand its culture and its needs, how he will approach working with Associate Pastor Dan, and how he helps support the various ministry teams in a congregation.

In his Personal Discernment Profile, Ben says this about himself and how he answers God's call: "Gifts like energy, optimism, and curiosity make me an encourager, especially to small congregations with big hearts. I lean on empathy and camaraderie to build relationships in and beyond the church."

It is our hope that Ben will be able to meet and interact with every member of our congregation in some way – in worship, in committee meetings, in fellowship time together and in other ways and venues. He will also get to know us as he combs through the work we have already done through our 2023 congregational survey and small group meetings, and through the Narrative Budget that built on the data from the survey and meetings.

Our last Interim Minister was Rev. Bob Brite. At the end of his Interim work, First Christian was ready to welcome a new Senior Pastor into our new life as a church in the ground-breaking partnership of SpringHouse Ministry Center. Our hope is that FCC will be a strong, healthy and forward-looking congregation ready to begin its next phase of life with a new Senior Pastor. We are confident that Ben Masters can steer us toward that moment.

Women's Annual Retreat Sept. 26-28

The annual Upper Midwest Women's Fall Retreat will be September 26 -28 at Koronis Retreat Center in Paynesville, MN. This is a gathering that many women from First Christian Church have attended and loved for any years! Anna Bliss and Elaine Tucker are Retreat Coordinators this year. Kirby Gould will be the Worship Leader.



The theme this year is "Returning to Sacred Ground: Home, Land and Our Living Stories." The keynote speaker will be Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy, a Native American theologian, activist and storyteller. Through storytelling, interactive exercises and spiritual practice, retreat participants will explore questions such as *What makes a place home? What makes a space sacred? What stories live in the land? Can we feel at home in places that hold both beauty and harm?*

Registration must be made by September 15. For more information about the retreat and registration for it go to

<https://www.uppermidwestcc.org/women-s-retreat>

Elena Huegel of Global Ministries to speak at SpringHouse Joint Worship, September 7



Elena Huegel is a mission co-worker with Global Ministries in Chiapas Mexico. (The UCC and Disciples denominations are partners in supporting Global Ministries.) She will be in the pulpit for the annual fall Joint Worship service of the SpringHouse congregations.

Elena's ministry in Chiapas include learning from the wisdom of the Mayan and Mexican cultures and traditions. The overall goal of the Chiapas ministry is to contribute to the construction of peace in Chiapas through the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue."

Elena knew our beloved **John "Juanito" Carter** well, having spent two and one-half years at the Jack Norment Camp in Caacupé, Paraguay under the mentorship of John and Renee Carter. She wrote a beautiful memorial tribute to John for Global Ministries; you can read it at <https://www.globalministries.org/hope-chest-remembering-juanito-carter/>

First Christian Board Notes

Eighteen FCC board members and staff attended the August 19 meeting of the General Board. Highlights of the meeting include the following:

- Pastor Dan Adolphson brought a question from the SpringHouse ministers about having communion by intinction during the joint worship services. After discussion, board left it to the SH pastors to make a decision.
- Pastor Dan shared some slides that will be used in this year's Stewardship theme of "The Possible Promise of Enough." Katy McFall volunteered to serve on the committee; at least two more volunteers are needed.
- Martha Harris brought a Wholeness Fund grant request from an organization called "God and Girls." After some discussion, the board voted to approve the request.
- Finance chair Mike Cackoski reported that member income and expenditures through July were comparable to last year.
- Pastor Dan shared updates from the SH Board meeting, including approval for hanging the artwork by Ta-Coumba Aiken.
- After extensive discussion, the board approved a motion from the Transition Team to extend a job offer as Intentional Interim Minister to Rev. Ben Masters.

FCC Calendar for September 2025

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

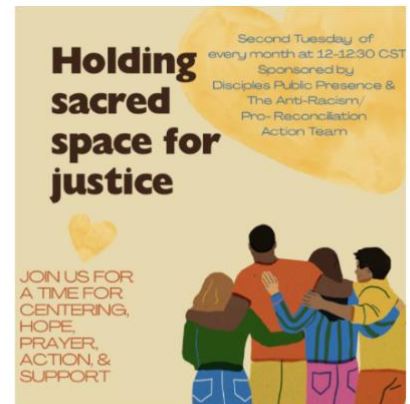
- Sundays 10:30 am Worship, Children's Activity Table
9am -12:30 SH Youth Room & Activities
- Tuesdays 8 am – SH Lectionary Group
5 pm - Happy Hour with Community
- Wednesdays 9 am - Coffee Hour with Community
- Thursdays 5 pm - Happy Hour with Community
- Saturdays 9 am - Coffee Hour with Community

Note: Check eblasts for changes in Coffee/Happy Hour dates

MONTHLY MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

- Wed., Sept. 3 7 pm Elders Meeting
- Thurs., Sept., 4 Noon Mission and Outreach
1:30 SH Clergy Meeting
- Sun., Sept. 7 10:30 **Joint Worship, South Sanctuary**
- Mon., Sept. 8 5 pm SH Building Committee
7 pm Women's Fellowship
7 pm SH Finance Committee
- Wed., Sept. 10 12:30 pm Finance Committee
- Thurs., Sept. 11 7 pm Pastor Dan PRC
- Sat., Sept. 13 10:30 am Trustees Meeting
- Sun., Sept. 14 10:30 Rev. Ben Master's first FCC sermon
- Tues., Sept. 16 7 pm FCC Board
- Mon., Sept. 22 7 pm Worship Committee
- Fri – Sun, Sept. 26-28 **Women's Retreat**

Note: Worship services are hybrid (In person and Streamed); most meetings are on Zoom unless otherwise noted. Links are sent in emails and eblasts.



Join members of Disciples Public Presence and the Action Team of the Upper Midwest AR/PR Team for a time of holding space as we work for justice. We will meet for 30 minutes, via Zoom, the **second Tuesday of the month at 12pm CST** to pray together, learn about an issue and to hear how we can find hope and take action.

This is a peaceful gathering. The moderators reserve the right to remove anyone who is deemed disruptive to the peaceful gathering.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87558728717...>



SpringHouse folks work together for EveryMeal

Members of all three SpringHouse congregations joined to pack food bags for the EveryMeal program on August 13 at the EveryMeal packing site. FCC members again be volunteering this fall at Whittier School to put these food bags in the lockers of elementary school students. More volunteers are always welcome to pack food bags or put bags in lockers this fall!

Kaden Hesser in play “Big Fish” at Lyric Arts Theater, Sept. 5-28.



Kaden Hesser will be one of two young actors playing “Young Will” in the play “Big Fish” at Lyric Theater. This musical play comes from a beloved novel by Daniel Wallace and a film by John August.

Kaden will be in the following performances:

Sat. Sept 6, 7:30 Sat, Sept. 20 7:30
 Fri., Sept 12, 7:30 Thurs, Sept, 25, 7:30
 Sun., Sept 14, 2:00 Sat. Sept. 27, 7:30
 Thurs., Sept 18, 7:30 Sun, Sept 28, 2:00

Lyric Arts is in Anoka, at 420 East Main Street, about 30 minutes north and west of downtown Minneapolis. More about the play and cast can be found at <https://www.lyricarts.org/big-fish>.

FCC choir rehearsals starting, musicians welcomed!

Choir rehearsals begin Sunday, Sept. 14 at 9 am in the North Sanctuary. All voices are welcome - come join us! If you have any questions, please contact choir director Caroline Povolny.



Erin Roe began her new role as FCC’s pianist at the end of July. She is a busy musician: she teaches piano and theory to Twin City students, works with the White Bear Lake choirs and Apollo Men’s Chorus, and has numerous other positions with choirs in churches, synagogues, and communities. Be sure to welcome her to our Sunday morning services! We are also so thrilled to welcome **Deanna Davis** back as our soprano section leader.

Note on fall book club:

Organizer Kathy Hintz writes:

Hello all, just a reminder we start our new study on Monday, September 8 at 7 pm on Zoom. We are reading the book **How We Learn To Be Brave** by Mariann Edgar Budde. In September, we hope to cover the Introduction and Chapter 1, although that is 29 pages of rich grounding material, so we’ll see!

HEADS UP!! Just for us, I’m sure, Rev Budde is coming to Minneapolis Thursday December 4 for the Westminster Town Hall Forum! The program is free, in person or live streaming.

Kafika House leader to join upcoming coffee hour

Sarah Rejman, a leader of Kafika House, is in the US to promote the work of healing done at Kafika House in Tanzania. She has spoken at FCC several times, but this round, her schedule is limited. However, she will join the 9 am Coffee Hour Zoom on Wednesday, September 17. Be on the lookout for a link to this special coffee hour! Sarah will be updating us on some of the changes happening at Kafika House.

Sarah is being hosted in Minneapolis by Amy Dunlop; Amy and Steve Dunlop have volunteered many times at Kafika House, helping heal children. FCC has supported Kafika House through a Christmas Eve offering for many years. Follow this link to learn more about the inspiring work Kafika House does to heal children.

<https://www.kafikahouse.org>

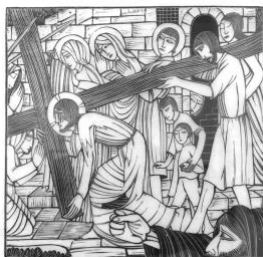


Sundays at First Christian Church

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
September 7, 2025
The Cost of Discipleship
Luke 14:25-33



Carrying the Cross, Eric
Gill, 1926

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

Reflections on the Word

Luke 14:26 – “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.”

The word “hate” is sometimes used in the Hebrew Scriptures to mean “love less.” For example, in the book of Genesis, the phrase “Leah was hated” is often interpreted to mean that Jacob “loved Rachel more than Leah” This seems to be the case here. Jesus is saying that those who want to follow him must love all others less—to such an extent that it might look like hate. Or as biblical scholar Diane Chen puts it, “To become Jesus’ follower, one’s preference—loyalty, love, and priority—must reside with Jesus over all people and things one holds dear.”

Holy Spirit, give me courage to receive Christ’s words that are hard to hear but are ultimately for my good. Amen.

E. Trey Clark, Working Preacher
Website

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

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Next issue deadline is Sunday, September 28

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