

**First Christian United Church of Christ**

# **JANUARY NEWSLETTER**



**2024**

# January Devotion

*People are called...to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith, and in the knowledge of the son of God, and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

*Ephesians 4:12-13 New International Version*

*The New Year of 2024 is arriving! Or it may be here by the time you read this! It is a time when many people make resolutions for changes in their lives they want to make in the days ahead. So often the resolutions I hear people making are related to our physical bodies, - such as losing weight or exercising more.*

*Positive changes that will benefit our lives in any fashion are good. Seldom though do I hear a person verbalize the desire to change their inner nature to become more like Christ. Yet the calling of Jesus' disciples is to have our ways of thinking, speaking, and acting to become more Christ-like.*

*You and I are called upon to mature in our thinking, in our attitudes, in our reacting, in our actions, so that we become more like Jesus, who gives us the example we are to follow in life.*

# January Devotion

*Each of us is different, so we have different areas of our lives where we are not the person God wants us to be. It may be that you and I have let society so influence our ways of thinking that we fail to realize how our desires and actions may be counter to what Jesus desires for us, and they may also cause harm for others, and for our earth.*

*It may be that we have not rethought the prejudices we have been taught about the value of other people - because of their age, size, sex, skin color, wealth, sexual orientation, physical health, educational level, dress, nationality, religious faith, etc. We may even discriminate among people based upon where they went to school, what political party they favor, and even where they go to church.*

*Since all of us have been created by God in God's spiritual image, then in whatever ways we devalue other people, we are falling short of following Jesus' approach toward people and how Jesus calls us to respond toward people.*

*As you consider new year resolutions, have you given consideration to becoming more Christ-like?*

# January Devotion

*Is there the need to better control your anger? Have you thought about improving your level of patience? Have you reflected upon deepening your level of forgiveness toward those who have wronged you? Have you considered how your ways of responding to people and situations in life may better mirror for others the ways of Jesus?*

*Have you evaluated your spiritual health recently? How often do you find yourself being aware of God's presence? How attentive are you to obeying the urging of God's Holy Spirit to do, or not to do, something? What do you expect God to do for you? What are you willing to do for God?*

*I find I have the tendency to believe that I have arrived and have become the person God intended me to become. Being honest, I have to acknowledge that I have a long way to go in changing my inner being to become what God has given me the capacity to become.*

*God's calling to us is for us to daily be striving to improve and refine the quality of our lives, for our good, and for God's good to be done through us. May 2024 be a year in which you and I both realize improvements that we have made in our inner selves, which we make in thanksgiving for God's goodness to us and hope for us.*

*A healthy, maturing New Year to you!*

*Shalom!*

*Jamie Fonville, a Supply Pastor*

# OUR CHURCH FAMILY

## Birthdays

Glenna Lewis - 1/2

Voncile Fowler - 1/4

Mark Garrison - 1/6

Kathy Russell - 1/9

Dotti Davis - 1/17

Stuart Stone - 1/17

Marybeth Linton - 1/28

## Anniversaries

Stone, Stuart & Sandy - 1/10

Fowler, Lewis & Voncile - 1/17

## Those Remaining in Our Prayers

Amber Massey

Buster Freeman

Lola Pipes

Ross Strange Sr.

Voncile Fowler

Lewis Fowler

Joe Strickland

Vicki & Curtis Foster

Best Friend and Best

Grandmother

to Tena Barnwell

David & Nell Allred

# CHURCH UPDATES

- **Sunday, January 7th**
  - *Worship with Holy Communion at 10:30 am*
- **Monday, January 8th**
  - *Margaret Lightbourne Circle at 11:00 am*
  - *Official Board Meeting at 6:00 pm*
- **Tuesday, January 9th**
  - *Centennial Circle at 5:30 pm*
- **Tuesday, January 16th**
  - *Finance meeting at 11:00 am*
- **Tuesday, January 30th**
  - *Deacons meeting at 6:00 pm*

***On December 10th Deborah Suess asked us to consider “waking up moments” in our lives. Do you have one you would like to share on a Sunday morning (in 2-3 minutes) in the the upcoming weeks? Please let Deborah know: [deborahfcucc@gmail.com](mailto:deborahfcucc@gmail.com).***

***Thank you!***

# THEMES & LITURGISTS

## Communion

Dotti Davis 1/7

## Greeter

To Be Determined

## Ushers

Julie Miller, Eleanor Lovgren, Charlie Vitou

## Liturgists

January 7th - Dotti Davis

January 14th - Julie Miller

January 21st - Kathy Russell

January 28th - Sandra Greene

## Receptions

Please join us in the parlor for fellowship and light refreshments after Worship on Sundays.

# **CHURCH INFORMATION**

## **Mission Statement**

We affirm our faith in Jesus Christ and in the Church that he has called into being which, by his grace and mercy, welcomes all. We encourage all who join us and confess Jesus Christ - regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, social, economic, physical or mental condition - to share fully in all aspects of our church life and leadership. We believe relationships between individuals, groups, and nations must be based on love, justice, commitment, and mutual respect; and we strive toward such relationships in our church, homes, and community.

## **Our Ministry Support Team**

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9 am - 12 pm

## **Church Officers**

President: Jamie Fonville

Vice President: Cindy Sharpe

Treasurer: Judy Kipp

Assistant Treasurer: Julie Miller

Secretary: Mark Garrison

## **Church Staff**

Interim Chaplain: Deborah Suess

Supply Pastor: Rev. Jamie Fonville

Organist / Choir Director: Matt Rice

Custodian: Rodney Paul Sr.

Office Administrator: Debbie Norris



Dear First Christian,

It has been a joy getting reacquainted with you all. Thanks for the warmth of your welcome and as well as your grace as I learn and relearn the traditions here. Also a big thank you for the sweet Christmas gift that came via the Deacons.

-With gratitude and blessings, Deborah Suess

