

Become The Change



**First Christian United Church of Christ
OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2022**

PASTOR'S PONDERING

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS AUTUMN LEAVES

I love fall!! I have a beautiful drive into the church in the autumn season. This is truly my favorite season. The color change, the weather change, the smell change...it's about change. I always get a little more pensive in fall. Maybe, it is because change means that something must go.



Tulip Poplar in the Fall

As I sit here looking out the window with massive trees all around my back yard, I see it happening right now. When I sold my previous home, I thought, I am going to miss this one tree called a Tulip Poplar. I always said, "God put that tree there for me—a gift" because it was beautiful both in the fall and in the spring. I hated losing that tree more than the whole house and I did love that house. Little did I know, the next house I bought, *miraculously*, had the same tree and I had not even seen/noticed the tree prior to making the offer. So here I sit, today, and as I look out, I see a leaf falling. I drive to church and along the route, I realize that what was once a rich green tree drive is now a drive vibrant in shades of red and orange. Yet, sadly, it will soon be that these trees are empty of their leaves. Nothing will be left but the branches.

I guess our human side finds that sad and we wish the color stayed. We think the only thing that makes the tree beautiful is the colorful leaves ...Hmm. Why does it have to be so bare in winter? That's a sign of what is to come.

Every new beginning comes from an ending. What I find amazing is that those trees, barren as they seem, still stand. Those branches still reach out and upward. Upward because even the trees praise God. There is beauty in the strength of those branches.

Such is the beauty of the God who lives in us. That same God carries us as individuals and as a church through all kinds of seasons. Some are seasons of hard times; such as, loneliness, physical illness, seasons of loss or other things such as financial hardships. And those seasons change us. Through all those seasons, God is telling us, "Let go and let Me. Let go and let Me show you what I can do. Let go and let Me show you what I can teach you.... There is strength in your branches with Me." We have to let go to grow a new perspective. What are we as a church to let go of this fall? What expectations did you have for life or this age or your marriage or your kids? Is it time to let go of them?

Isaiah 43: 18-19 "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing: now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? It will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the dessert."

- *Pastor Joy*



The same Tulip Poplar in the spring

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Those remaining in our Prayers...

*Ray Hockaday
Elsie Bolick
Troy Johnson
Amber Massey
Rachel
Buster Freeman
Bobbye Mebane
Randy Sellars
Lewis Fowler*

*Voncile Fowler
(ICU at ARMC)
Marci Nanny
Joe Strickland
Suzette Pawson
Ken & Lola Pipes
Penelope Strange
Kathy Russell & Joy Ballard
(And son, Spencer)*

Change of Address

Change of address? Please let us know by contacting the church office via email, office@firstchristianucc.org or phone, 336-226-7428.

Birthdays

Benjie Terrell 10/4
Ann Strange 10/13
Mike Smith 10/20
Joy Ballard 10/31

Anniversaries

None this month

TENTATIVE THEMES & LITURGISTS

Date	Liturgist	Scripture	Theme	Extra Info
10/2/22	Brooke Manning	2 Timothy 1:1-14	Fan the Flame Also World Communion	Rev. Joy Allridge
10/9/22	Jamie Fonville	Luke 17:11-19	Thankfulness	Rev. Joy Allridge
10/16/22	Mack Painter	Genesis 32:22-31	Wrestling	Rev. Joy Allridge
10/23/22	Debra Seuss	Luke 18:1-8	Joint Service with FRUCC	Rev. Joy Allridge
10/30/22	Judy Kipp	Luke 19:1-10	Up a Tree	Rev. Joy Allridge

PASTOR'S JOKE CORNER

In honor of Stewardship Month

A little boy in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed around the offering plates. When they came near his pew, the boy said loudly, "Don't pay for me, Daddy, I'm under five."

After service, a stranger approached the pastor and said, "I'd like you to pray for my hearing." The pastor placed his hands on the man's ears and said a passionate, earnest prayer. "How's your hearing now?" the pastor asked. Looking surprised, the man said, "Well, it's not until tomorrow."

One Liners

1. What kind of cell phone did Delilah use?.....Samson
2. How do we know Peter was a rich fisherman?.....By his net income
3. Why didn't Noah ever go fishing?.....He only had two worms
4. How long did Cain hate his brother?.....As long as he was Abel to
5. Who was the smartest man in the Bible?.....Abraham. He knew a Lot!

If you like this joke corner, send me your jokes next month. I will change it to the Congregational Joke Corner and attribute it to you.

CHURCH UPDATES

- The church is no longer on the market and the real estate agent has been notified verbally by the pastor.
- Reminders
 - Please turn in your pledge cards and review the proposed budget.
 - Also, remember to present any suggestions or questions to someone on the finance committee prior to the December congregational meeting (first Sunday in December). Any suggestions or changes must go to them first and then in December the congregational meeting will simply be to approve or not approve the budget presented by Finance. The December meeting will also approve a ballot of nominees for the coming year. If you have been nominated for a position a nomination committee representative will contact you.
- Visioning
 - The visioning committee is tossing around ideas for a vision statement. Some words they feel must be in the vision statement or at least encompass their meaning in it include the following: “Teaching, Accepting, Love, Welcoming, Strong, Mission, Evangelical, and Future.” The most common word appearing is Accepting.
 - If you read a newspaper headline 5-10 years from now, the groups imagined the headlines would read something like one of the following:
 - First Christian Church Downtown Burlington Standing Room Only!
 - FCUCC has broken ground on a K-12 school.
 - First Christian United Church of Christ, we made it to the next Millennium!
 - These are but dreams, but the headlines indicate the direction of the visioning committee members’ hearts.

CHURCH EVENTS

Women's Circle Meetings

Margaret Lightborne Circle and Centennial Circle meetings are back on regular schedule.

Centennial Circle meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm at the cutting board.

Adult Faith Formation Class

John Graves Adult Sunday School meets weekly on Sundays at 9:30 am in the John Graves Classroom.

NEW Sunday School: Discussions for Modern Christians meets weekly on Sundays at 9am in Bray Hall. Pastor Joy will share Nooma discussions with us.

All are welcome to join in!

Visioning Meetings

Tuesday October 6th at 6pm

CHURCH INFORMATION

First Christian UCC Mission Statement

We affirm our faith in Jesus Christ and in the Church that he has calling 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.

~Approved by FCUCC congregation 2011

OUR MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9 am - 12 pm
Office is closed on Fridays

CHURCH OFFICERS

President: Mr. Troy Johnson
Vice President: Mr. Jamie Fonville
Treasurer: Mr. Ken Little
Church Secretary: Ms. Nancey Simmons
Acting Church Secretary: Peggy Johnson

FIRST CHRISTIAN UCC STAFF

Interim Pastor: Rev. Joy Allridge
Minister of Music: Mr. Matt Rice
Office Administrator: Debbie Norris