

The Visitor

875 Haskins Rd. Bowling Green, OH 43402 • Phone: 419-354-3989 • E-mail: fccadmin@bgfcc.org • Website: www.bgfcc.org

I Need A Vacation

I realized this past week I need a vacation. Maybe we all need a vacation. 2020 has been a year that seems to continually beat on us with one crisis after another. From COVID-19, to the impeachment process, to police brutality against Black people, to wildfires and now double hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, I'm tired of it all. The multiple crises are really outside forces converging on more localized problems – how do we handle worship online, when do we return to the building, how do we keep ourselves connected, how do we build ministry in a time when most of us are afraid to get within six feet of each other. I need a break, a chance to sit back, catch my breath and reenergize.

Thinking about vacation turns me toward thinking about Jesus and how Jesus dealt with the pressures of ministry, of people crowding him – day in, day out, of the pressures from political and religious leaders, and just life in general. Reading through the gospels, there are several places where we hear how Jesus revives himself – by himself, in the wilderness, in prayer. Often these asides in the gospels are short, single sentences, and often come just after Jesus has spent time teaching and healing. We see this in the gospel of Mark 1:35, where just as Jesus starts his ministry, where he takes time first thing in the morning to go out alone and pray. We see something similar in the stories of the feeding of thousands in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, where Jesus goes up to pray following this miracle. Luke 5: 15-

16 simply say, “But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.”

This got me thinking. When I go on vacation, I often find myself busier than when I am at home. No, I don't have the pressures of preparing liturgies, writing a sermon, checking in with people, or the other things around a week of ministry. But I do find myself busily doing whatever it is that we have planned. Jesus' example to us is that we should step away, go off alone and pray.



We renew our hearts, our souls, our spirits when we spend time with God. In prayer we allow God to fill us with God's love and grace, we open ourselves to God's mercy and healing, we embrace God's spirit and allow our hearts to be restored. It is in time alone

with God that we find what we are looking for when we go on vacation – a refreshed spirit, ready to face the world again.

As we face the uncertainty of what is left of 2020 and the beginnings of 2021, as we wonder and worry about what's next, as we feel the pressures from the outside running us down, we should turn to God in prayer. Take time to get away – no one else, no electronics, no books, and sit with God. Maybe it is only for a few minutes, but spend sometime alone in prayer, listen for God, and allow God to renew your spirit. May the peace of God pass over you and keep your hearts and minds on Christ Jesus.

Yours in Christ – Pastor Matt



As we move into the Fall season, we usually think of change..... change in the color of the leaves, the length of the days and even a change in time. They are anticipated changes and part of our cycle of life.

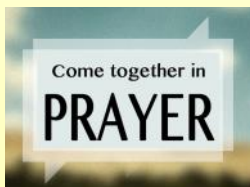
We have had more unexpected changes in our lives during the last six months than we could possibly have ever imagined. Changes that have nothing to do with the cycle of life. We are separated from family members, friends, routines, and yes, even our church.

There's an old CYF song that starts, "*Heh, heh, anybody listening; heh, heh, anybody there? Heh, heh, anybody listening; anybody care*". There may be members of our own congregation who may be feeling lonely and disconnected and wonder if anybody is listening or cares. As church, we need to listen and we need to demonstrate our love for one another.

How can we do that? We are forming an FCC Care Team to assist our Elders in reaching out to our congregation. Care Team volunteers will connect with each person several times a month to see if help is needed or simply to say hello.

Do you have the gift of compassion? Will you help with this care ministry? Please call Pastor Matt or Pat Koehler at 419-494-3231 if you have questions or think you might like to volunteer. A meeting to discuss ideas and organization will be held at the church on Wednesday, September 9 at 2:30. Bring your ideas and your mask and be assured that we will be following safe distance as we meet.

Blessings!



Join us September 8th at 7:30pm for an outdoor prayer service. As we wrestle with the problems of today and in our own lives, it is through prayer that we find rest and comfort in God. As a community faith,

we pray together for and with one another. This service will allow us to gather and pray as one people. We will adhere to social distancing guidelines and require masks. Please bring your own chair. We will gather on the lawn near the outbuilding beginning at 6:45.

ARC Blood Drive:

During this COVID pandemic, we were able to host a much needed blood drive. On August 8, 4 new donors and 32 regular donors came out to donate. Thirty-eight units were collected potentially saving 114 lives. We exceeded our goal.... 109% of goal. Thanks to the Beekers who continue to help facilitate these important events.

Prayer and Praise

Condolences for Claude & Earlene Kilpatrick on the loss of Claude's mother
Victims of Hurricane Laura
Victims of California Wildfires
Becky Meredith
Ann Jones
Sheldon & Peggy Carsey
Health Care Workers
Diane Morlock

Continuing Prayers

Karen Adams, Patty Bienkowski, Paul Bomeli, David Ridgway, Sharon Shaffer, Tim Bomeli, Ruth Ann McCray

Pray for Our Shut-Ins

Carol Steiner

Pray for Our Missionaries & Ministers

Audrey Connor, Erin McCreight & Ernie Unholz

Prayer Requests??

Please let Pastor Matt or the church office know of any prayer requests you have. We want to pray for you!



Have you ever wondered why some people have their birthdays published in our monthly church newsletter and others don't? It's a simple answer. WE DON'T KNOW WHEN IT IS!!!

If you would kindly share your birthday and significant anniversary dates with the church office we would love to get that information into our database. You may email them to our church administrator, Laura Slembar-ski at fccadmin@bgfcc.org. Also, please keep the church office updated with proper addresses, phone numbers, or e-mails. When you make changes PLEASE let us know, we want to keep in touch! Thanks for your help!

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study has been "meeting" via Zoom at 11:00am on Wednesdays. We've also been keeping in touch via a group email.

We'll be **starting our** *Just Women* study, "Hope, Healing and Wholeness on September 2, 2020. This study has eight sessions using Old and New Testament Bible passages that "remind us of stories of vulnerabilities of God's people as well as the assurance that God equips and provides leaders to work toward healing and wholeness. These studies invite us to notice how the intersections of our paths can bring healing to others. The writers remind us that healing is a journey and not an event. Their reflections are a witness to the hopefulness in God while recognizing that everything has a season." Three of the women pastors who wrote the studies are Disciples of Christ Pastors, and one is a Chaplain actively engaged in interfaith activities in Ifrane, Morocco. Some of the Bible passages are familiar ones, but as is often true, these pastors have some interesting new interpretations for us to wrestle with.

We hope you will consider joining us for this most interesting Bible Study dealing with hope, healing and wholeness at a time when we are still dealing with the difficult world of Covid-19. It seems like a very fitting topic.

Zoom is a free app to acquire and if anyone wants to join us, we'd love to have you. Contact Char if you want help with getting Zoom.



August Statistics

Date	Offering	YTD Income	YTD Expenses
7/26	\$1,180.00	\$66,814.51	\$67,281.19
8/2	\$1,055.00	\$67,869.51	\$69,072.11
8/9	\$3,027.00	\$70,896.51	\$69,163.09
8/16	\$1,580.00	\$72,476.51	\$72,184.14

A special Congregational Meeting of First Christian Church to approve the slate of officers for 2020-2021 was called to order at 11:30 following worship by Moderator, Don Scherer. This meeting was delayed from earlier this year due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Moderator Scherer stated that the 2020-2021 slate of officers was sent to members and available in print at the church and is as listed:

COMMITTEES: THREE YEAR TERMS

ELDERS – Steve Riewaldt, Mike Solley, Marie Rogers

PROPERTY – Scott Beeker, Virgil Frost,

FINANCIAL TRUSTEES – Earlene Kilpatrick

SERVING DEACONS – DeAnna Beeker, Todd Jimison, Amy Kirkbride, Mike Kreuger, Sid Sink, Betsy Solley, Gary Spencer.

PREPARING DEACONS – DeAnna Beeker, Patty Bienkowski, Sharon Daniels, Ann Jones, Ruth Maltby, Sharon Shaffer, Julie Sink, Pat Sweeney, and Rae Thomson, Karen Krueger

CHURCH BOARD OFFICERS – ONE YEAR TERMS

MODERATOR – Don Scherer

VICE-MODERATOR – Claude Kilpatrick

SECRETARY – Diane Morlock

CHURCH HISTORIAN – Sharon Daniels

AT-LARGE – Marge Leathem, Charlotte Scherer

Moderator Scherer presented the board's recommendation that the amended Constitution and By-Laws of First Christian Church be adopted. He asked for questions to those in the sanctuary and on-line. Hearing none, he called for the vote which was collected in the sanctuary, from those attending via Zoom and through the on-line Survey Monkey. The motion passed.



INFORMATION ON VOTER REGISTRATION and ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS

VOTER REGISTRATION:

The 2020 General Election on November 3rd is fast approaching. Even sooner is the **DEADLINE** FOR VOTER REGISTRATION ON MONDAY, **OCTOBER 5TH!**

Please go to the OH Sec'y of State, www.ohiosos.gov, or Wood County Board of Elections (BOE) at www.co.wood.oh.us. The BOE home page has direct links to allow you to:

Verify your voter registration, or

Register to vote on line if you have an Ohio driver's license.

If no Ohio driver's license, download the voter registration form, complete including last 4 digits of your Social Security number, and mail to or deliver in BOE drop box at Courthouse atrium entrance:

Wood County Board of Elections
1 Courthouse Square
Bowling Green, OH 43402

The BOE will mail an acknowledgement of a new registration.

ABSENTEE BALLOT:

At this same home page, there is a link to download and print an **Absentee Ballot Application** to submit, **NOW**, by mail to the above address or in the BOE drop box at the Wood County Courthouse. These requests are currently being accepted by the Board of Elections and the ballots will be mailed out to voters early in October.

NOTE:

Carefully follow instructions on completing the actual Absentee Ballot.

Return the ballot by mail, postmarked by November 2, OR

Place in BOE drop box by 7:30 PM on Election Day, November 3. The voter or a close family member can deliver the ballot to the BOE.

Track your ballot online at VoteOhio.gov/track.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT IF you have received an absentee ballot and decide to vote in person at your polling location on Election Day, your ballot will be treated as **'PROVISIONAL'** and not counted until 11 days after the election.

League of Women Voter's site: VOTE411.org has non-partisan information on voting as well as on all candidates.