

## SOMEBODY! - Part Three

We have been looking at a powerful question Jesus asked in Luke 8 along with the responses received. Jesus said, "Who touched me?"

The CROWD answered saying, "NOBODY." Then the faithful DISCIPLES, based on the pushing crowd of people replied, "EVERYBODY." Those two answers were not the replies Jesus was searching for.

Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, knew SOMEBODY touched Him on purpose. This confirms to us today in the bigger church world this truth. According to Jesus, in His love and grace, there are no such words as NOBODIES or EVERYBODIES, but each one living is a SOMEBODY created for Jesus' redeeming story of salvation.

We notice that immediately the "somebody's" name was changed to daughter as she was given some marvelous presents, health and peace. Jesus said, "Daughter, be of good comfort; your faith has made you whole; go in peace."

Friends, during this Christmas/Advent season, you matter to Jesus. He sees you, He cares for you, and makes His saving power available to you. You are not just one of the crowd, unknown, unloved, unwept. You are a person for whom Jesus died, a person to whom Jesus calls, saying, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest. (Matt.11:28) **Yes you, my friend, matter to Jesus.**

Pastor Jim sharing another story from his old library book shelf  
"TAKE A BIBLE BREAK" by W.E.McCumber



## Congregational Christmas Card

Be sure to stop by the Congregational Christmas Card located by the sign-up desk in the hallway. This card is for you to read the Christmas greetings to the church family and to sign your own. Spread the love and holiday cheer!

## Plan of Giving for 2024

We appreciate your support of FCC through your involvement and giving. We invite you to integrate that giving into your relationship with God. If you are aware, you know there's a lot of darkness in our world. As Christians, we are to counteract that darkness with God's light. And we can, if we allow God's vision to guide our giving. His light shines through what we do, what we send out, what we provide, what we post, what we say. But it's mostly seen in how we live, and giving provides us with sight into our relationship with God. One way to live it is to give it. So we challenge you, encourage you, invite you to see as God's sees by giving. It makes a difference! That's why we are asking you to do two things:

1) Question – Discuss – Pray – Choose and Decide on your intended giving for 2024, including any designations.

2) Fill out – Bring/Send/Turn in your "Plan of Giving" form.

Enclosed in this newsletter you should find the insert of the Plan of Giving form for 2024. Cut it apart and send in the "Turn In" copy; the other copy is for you to "Keep" for your records.



**Paris Healthcare:** Martha Stephen,  
Ron Odle  
**Pleasant Meadows:** Brandon Bell,  
Linda Driver  
**Twin Lakes:** Irma Julian

Carol Marlowe at Twin Lakes Rehab

Continue prayers for: Janice Nicholson,  
Louise Bridwell, Randy Creech

Our sympathies to Cathy Melendez on the  
loss of her husband, Richard; and to the family  
and friends of member, Bea Mae Camp, on her  
recent passing.



-- Mary K. Bradford & Tammy Terry  
for the Children's Sermon;

-- Edna Creech & Jenny McMahan  
for leading Children's Church;

-- those who rang bells for the Salvation Army;

-- those who sang or played at the Community  
Advent Service;

-- the Worship Committee for the seasonal  
decorations;

-- Peg Dixon for covering the office last week;

-- the Nick Sanders family for the Advent  
Candlelighting.

### BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the  
LIGHT of the world; he who follows me will not  
walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

- John 8:12

### DECEMBER PRAYER

Dear Father, during this season we thank You  
for teaching us the meaning of LOVE. You  
prepared before time to redeem us with the  
most precious gift you have - Your Son. Help us  
to love one another and spread the gift of hope  
through Jesus. Amen.



### 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please pick up your 2024 Offering Envelope  
box on the hall table. If you do not receive  
offering envelopes and would like to, sign the  
paper on the table or see Patty Waters.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

- ♦ 2023-24 Elders, Thursday, Dec. 7, 5:00 PM
- ♦ Trustees, Thursday, Dec. 7, 6:00 PM
- ♦ Community Outreach Committee, Sunday,  
Dec. 10, 2:00 PM

### LOVE OFFERING

It is apparent how blessed FCC is to have such a  
talented and dedicated staff! We appreciate all  
the work and effort from each one of them. Note  
the bulletin board next to the office with our  
current personnel. We, the congregation, have  
an opportunity during this season of love and joy  
to show our appreciation to the staff through our  
Love Offering. We are taking gifts now through  
Sunday, Dec. 17th. The gifts will be distributed  
on Wednesday, Dec. 20th. Any gifts that come in  
after Dec. 17th will be held over until December  
2024. It is a process that does take some time.  
Your Love Offering can be made in general, or  
you may designate your offering gift to staff  
individuals by writing the individual's name on  
your offering or on the Offering Envelope. All  
undesignated money will be divided evenly  
among all the staff. We thank you for your  
support and Merry Christmas.

- Staff Relations Committee

### THANKSGIVING OFFERING

Thank you to all those who participated in the  
Thanksgiving special offering. A total of \$856  
was received.

### OPEN DOOR CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Open Door Sunday School class will be  
having a carry-in Christmas party on Sunday,  
December 10, at 5:30 PM.

### COMMUNITY INVITE

Lake Ridge Christian Church will be having "A  
Merry Melodic Madrigal & A Medieval Miracle"  
free Christmas show on Sat., Dec. 9, at 5:00 PM  
and Sun., Dec. 10 at 12:30 PM. See more  
information on their flyer posted on the bulletin  
board. Everyone is invited.

### WINTER SECRET PLACE

We are sorry that the winter edition of "The  
Secret Place" devotional has not arrived. We  
have been in contact with the company and they  
say they are sending a rush order. When it  
arrives, we'll let you know. This has caused the  
delay to our shut-in mailing as well. The large-  
print came in, but we don't receive enough for all.  
Thank you for your patience.

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING REPORT

The Congregational meeting was held on  
Sunday, November 26, where the proposed  
nominees and 2024 budget were presented and  
voted on by the members. The nominees and  
budget were passed.



### DECEMBER CIRCLES

KOINONIA CIRCLE: will be going to Mattoon on the church bus to the Fujiyama Japanese restaurant on Thursday, Dec. 14, leaving FCC at 10:30 AM.

CIRCLE OF PRAYER: meets at 6:00 PM on Thursday, Dec. 14.

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE: is going to Rocky's on Tuesday, Dec. 19, at 11:30 AM.

### CWF COLLECTIONS - STAMPS

Although the CWF "workshops" have been discontinued, they do continue to collect the same items with each Circle being in charge of collecting certain items. Therefore, the Fellowship Circle is requesting that you continue to bring in used stamps. They will send them to the American Philatelic Society in Pennsylvania for them to use in their youth stamp program. It teaches students about stamp collecting and their value. They accept seasonal stamps, cancelled as well as non-cancelled stamps - no flag stamps please. With Christmas card season now, be watching for stamps for CWF! A large shoebox is provided for collection in the parlor closet by the fireplace. Please trim to at least a 1/4" on edges of stamps. Thank you!

### SALVATION ARMY BELL-RINGING REPORT

Thank you to all who volunteered to ring the bells for Salvation Army last Saturday. You helped raise \$2,079.44!!!

### IN HIS SERVICE VOLUNTEER FORM

Volunteer forms for 2024 are available in the hallway for you to fill in what ministries you feel called to serve in. These help committee chairs know if you want to be on their committee next year and where you would like to serve. We need these in ASAP so that we can get them to the chairs who are forming their committees. Thank you!

### *Thank You!*

You sowed seeds of kindness... and God made blessings grow! Thank you so much. The sock donation made to preschool students of Paris Union School District #95 is very much appreciated!

- With thanks from our students and Staff!



Hello from 412 Youth!! I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and were able to celebrate with your families. The youth group is going through a series going over the books of the New Testament. We watch the Bible project videos and then discuss what there is to learn from that book of the Bible. I like this because it gives a lot of information and a good overview of the New Testament, all while being a good curriculum if kids are coming and going a lot and need to miss a few weeks.

We have several youth signed up for SpringHill, which is our annual winter retreat!! I am very excited about that. The cost is \$150 and is due on January 4th if you have a student who has signed up. I have 2 more spots reserved if anyone is wanting to join at the last minute - this is the time as I will cancel those spots soon.

This will be the last Wednesday of God's Gang and we will have our fancy night dinner. The kids will be so excited and it always turns out so lovely!! Thank you to all of our volunteers who came together to make this semester possible. It truly has been such a blessing to work with you all and I know the kids love it. We will gear up for another spring semester on Jan. 31, with a planning meeting date of Jan. 10th at 4:30pm. Hope to see old and new faces then to help with this great ministry!!

#### Upcoming Events:

Dec 6 - last Wednesday night of God's Gang for fall semester

Dec 10 - youth group at the church 6-8pm

Dec 17 - no youth group

Dec 24 - no youth group

Jan 4 - money due for SpringHill winter retreat

Feb 9 -11 - SpringHill winter retreat

Faith Milam, Youth Director

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### CIRCLE OF LIGHT "GIVING TREE"

The Circle of Light is sponsoring the "GIVING TREE" and it is out by the sign-up desk. The tree has a two-part "ornament" with a name on one part and list of Christmas gifts on the other. You pick an ornament, purchase the gifts from the list, pack them in a Christmas bag and attach the ornament with the resident's name onto the bag and return it to the church for distribution by Friday, Dec. 15th. There are still 7 ornaments available! Thank you for making Christmas special for a Paris resident.



# THE MESSENGER

## FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)

201 S. Main St., Paris, Illinois 61944

Phone: (217) 466-3255 • Email: office@fccparis.org

Web page: www.fccparis.org • Facebook: FCCParis

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8 AM-12 NN, 1-5 PM

Pastor Jim Blue, Interim Minister • Faith Milam, Youth Director

PERMIT #147

Paris, Illinois

Non-Profit

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### COME WORSHIP WITH US

COFFEE BAR AT 8:00 AM • SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 8:15/10:15 AM • WORSHIP AT 9:00 AM

*MISSION STATEMENT* First Christian Church's mission is to grow disciples who are:

*"Believing in Christ,*

*Behaving as Christ,*

*Becoming like Christ"*

### ATTENDANCE

*We count because you count*

Nov. 26: 9:00-123 Nursery-2 Online-views 53/79\*

**TOTAL 204\*** SS = 16

Dec. 3: 9:00-109 Nursery-1 Online-27/41\*

**TOTAL 151\*** SS = 23

\*Per CCIW Regional Office: to allow for additional people watching electronically, the formula is - view count x 1.5

### OFFERING TOTAL

|                       | Nov. 26             | Dec. 3, 2023       |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| General Fund          | \$6,513.25*         | \$5,427.99*        |
| Sunday School         | 28.00               | 29.00              |
| God's Gang            |                     | 100.00             |
| Food Pantry           | 10.00               | 50.00              |
| Love Offering         | 1,665.00            | 1,146.00           |
| Disciples Missions    | 170.00              | 548.75*            |
| Week of Compassion*   |                     | 75.00*             |
| Thanksgiving Offering | 150.00              | 50.00              |
| Life Center           | 1,150.00            | 200.00*            |
| Heated Sidewalk       | 4,620.00            | 1,270.00           |
| Memorial Fund         | 100.00              | 25.00              |
| Scholarship Fund      | 750.00              |                    |
| Building Fund         | 735.00              | 657.50*            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>\$15,891.25*</b> | <b>\$9,579.24*</b> |

\*Pay Pal ~ \*Electronic Giving Included

### HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church offices will be closed for the Christmas and New Year's holiday the week of December 25 - January 1. The last newsletter of the year is schedule to be mailed on Wednesday, December 20 and will include the January calendars.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### SERVING SCHED.: Dec. 10, 2023 - Second Advent

**8:00 / 8:15&10:15 AM: Coffee Bar / Sunday School**

**9:00 AM: GREETERS:** TBA

**WORSHIP ELDER:** Candi Milam

**BREAD ELDER:** Pete Templeton

**DEACONS:** Team 2, Kenny Milam, Capt.

**JR. DEACONS:** Team #1, Ethan Smittkamp, Capt.

**DEACONESS:** Gloria Magers

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH:** Faith Milam

**CHILDREN'S SERMON:** Faith Milam

**PROJECTION/SOUND:** Tony Peel

**NURSERY ATTENDANT:** Cathy Clawson

**ADVENT CANDLELIGHTERS:** Nels & Autumn Kasey

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13

**SERMON:** The Joy For Every Longing Heart: "LOVE"

by Pastor Jim Blue

### SERVING SCHEDULE: Dec. 17, 2023 - Third Advent

**8:00 / 8:15&10:15 AM: Coffee Bar / Sunday School**

**9:00 AM: GREETERS:** TBA

**WORSHIP ELDER:** David Dick

**BREAD ELDER:** Barbara Dick

**DEACONS:** Team 3, Patty Waters, Capt.

**JR. DEACONS:** Team #2, Drew Templeton, Capt.

**DEACONESS:** Connie Bean

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH:** Sammy Milam

**CHILDREN'S SERMON:** Cody Vaughn

**DEC. USHERS:** Steve Cochran, Dan & Dean Smittkamp

**DEC. FRIENDSHIP VISITOR:** Cody & Katie Vaughn

**ADVENT CANDLELIGHTERS:** Cody Vaughn family

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 126

**SERMON:** The Joy For Every Longing Heart: "JOY"

by Pastor Jim Blue



**TURN  
IN**

***"Plan of Giving"***

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
Paris, Illinois  
for 2023

**TURN  
IN**

► As a steward of the Lord, I plan to give to God through FCC

\$\_\_\_\_\_ weekly, \$\_\_\_\_\_ monthly, or  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ annually in the year 2023.

► Please let us know how you want to divide that amount:

|                    |         |
|--------------------|---------|
| General Fund       | \$_____ |
| Disciples Outreach | \$_____ |
| Building Fund      | \$_____ |
| New Building       | \$_____ |
| Other _____        | \$_____ |
| _____              | \$_____ |

► For your information:

\_\_\_\_\_ I plan on giving electronically. (See office, go online: [www.fccparis.org](http://www.fccparis.org), or ask the Financial Secretary for the form to be filled out.)

► Note:

\_\_\_\_\_ I will support the work of the church, but I do not wish to plan an amount.

► NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand this voluntary "Plan of Giving" may be changed at any time and is not considered legally binding. Only the Financial Secretary sees this form and knows my giving.*

☞ This is the **CHURCH COPY**. Please turn it in. ☛

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FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
Paris, Illinois  
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☞ This is **YOUR COPY**. Please keep as Your Record. ☛

## **GIVING BASICS**

To help understand how your giving is used by FCC, we offer the following information:

1) Monies given with no designation are used in the General Fund for day-to-day operations such as utilities and insurance, salaries, and committee work. It is the first and primary need for the budget.

2) For your giving to be used for any other fund, you must designate – mark your gift for a stated purpose. The funds that are supported only by designation include:

- Disciples Outreach – General & Special Offerings
- Building Fund – General & Special Projects
- Memorial Fund – Individual Funds & Scholarships
- Youth Fund
- Permanent Fund
- Emergency Assistance Fund
- New Building Fund

We are glad to help. Please ask questions. And use our individualized offering envelopes, or the pew envelopes for your giving.

