

WHY READ THE BIBLE?

Each New Year we often are challenged to read the Bible through in the year ahead. Well here we are 2024 and a great opportunity lies ahead to read the Bible through this year. There are all kinds of plans to select even devotional books that provide a daily guide for reading plans.

Why read the Bible each day of the year. In this devotion let's talk about why we read it. In God's sight motive counts for more than action.

Jesus reproved the Pharisees for doing good things for bad reasons, such as praying to be heard of men and giving alms to be praised by men.

Read Psalm 1 verse 2 which describes the blessed man, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law does he mediate day and night."

Law is more than statutes, more than the Ten Commandments. It means "teaching" all that God says in order to save our souls and direct our lives. For us, it is the whole Bible, and needs to have a place in our thinking day and night.

Some people read the Bible "superstitiously". Just as an apple a day is suppose to keep the doctor away, they seem to think a chapter a day from the Bible keeps the devil away. So they read a prescribed amount, not meditating on it, nor listening to it, not applying it to their lives, just skimming through it to get it over with.

Some read the Bible "dutifully". They don't desire it, they don't delight in it, but it's something Christian people ought to do so they grudgingly do it. They resolve to do it, and they set out with fierce determination and patient resignation to do it. Very few keep it up.

Some read the Bible "critically". They look for faults. They pore over the Bible in a determined search for errors, contradictions, and discrepancies. When they think they have spotted some, they publicize them with glee. They have made themselves judges of the Word, refusing to allow the Word to judge them.

Be sure to follow the conclusion to Why Read The Bible? in next issue of First Christian Church Messenger.

Pages from one of Pastor Jim's old library books...
"TAKE A BIBLE BREAK" by W.E. McCumber

~~~~~ DEDICATION OF LEADERS

Sunday, January 14, during the 9:00 AM worship the new 2024 church leaders will be dedicated for their year of service. We ask that these new leaders be present on that day.



Blanket Sunday

Each year on the third Sunday of January, FCC takes up an offering for the CWF Blanket outreach. For over 75 years, Church World Service has been helping people of faith bring God's hope and healing to people in the U.S. and around the world. When difficult times happen, (ie. hurricane/ tornado/flooding/displaced people) a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the CWS Blankets program was created—to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.



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

Home from Hospital: Chantell Whitezel

Continue prayers for: Janice Nicholson,
Louise Bridwell, Randy Creech, Bob Martin,
Marge Houghland

Our sympathies to Martha Stephen on the
passing of her niece.



-- Cody Vaughn, Cathy Melendez,
and Taylor Shewey for the
Children's Sermons;
-- Sammy Milam, Barbara Dick, and
Candi Milam for leading Children's Church;
-- those who volunteer to help with the church
ministries and committees;
-- those who participated in the Giving Tree
outreach.

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

"Every good endowment and every perfect
gift is from above, coming down from
the Father of lights with whom there is no
variation or shadow due to change."

- James 1:17

JANUARY PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank You for a new beginning with
the new year. Thank You for being with us
through all the blessings and trials of 2023. Help
us to lean on You more and grow deeper in our
faith this year. We praise You, our Father of
lights, for Your love. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

There are still several 2024 Offering Envelope
boxes on the hall table. Please check to see if
there is a box for you. If you did not receive
offering envelopes and would like to, or you
would like to give electronically this year, please
see Patty Waters.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- ♦ Elders, Thursday, Jan. 4, 5:00 PM
- ♦ Trustees, Thursday, Jan. 4, 6:00 PM
- ♦ Board, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 7:00 PM
- ♦ God's Gang Planning, Wed., Jan. 10, 4:30 PM
- ♦ Worship Committee will be "un-decorating",
Saturday, Jan. 13, 9:00 AM

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY

President Ronald Reagan was the first president
to designate the third Sunday of each January as
a *National Sanctity of Human Life Day*. January
21, 2024 commemorates the 40th year our nation
has *officially* observed the sanctity of human life.
Despite the passage of years and the dismantling
of "Roe vs. Wade", the need to pray for a culture
of life in our community and nation is still vitally
important. Abortion continues to occur -
especially within the State of Illinois, which has
maintained its legalization. Choices Pregnancy &
Health is appreciative of the spiritual and
monetary support you have provided our ministry
in defense and proclamation of life! Blessings.

PROGRAM COMMITTEES

On Sunday, January 28, at 2:00 PM all the
Program Committees will be meeting in the
Fellowship Hall to go over their yearly ministry
responsibilities. All Program Chairs of the
Christian Education, Community Outreach,
Disciples Outreach, Evangelism, Membership,
Stewardship & Finance, and Worship
Committees will need to have their committee
member list turned in to the office by Friday,
January 19.

Chairs - please follow through by contacting
your committee members to make sure they will
be attending the meeting. Board Chair, Jacob
Thomas, will be leading the meeting and handing
out yearly calendars to all the Committee Chairs.
It is vitally important that every Chair and every
committee member attend as schedules will need
to be turned in to the office the following Monday,
January 29. Thank you all for volunteering and
supporting FCC ministries!

2024 SCHEDULES

The 2024 schedules for Elders, Deacons, Jr.
Deacons, Deaconesses and Ushers have been
sent out. If you did not receive a copy, please let
the office know. Copies of the schedules are
posted outside the office door on the hallway
bulletin board. If there are any changes to the
schedule, please notify the office. Thank you!

WINTER SECRET PLACE

"The Secret Place" devotionals for the winter
quarter are available if you would like to pick one
up or share with others.

2024 DESK CALENDARS

The FCC 2024 Desk Calendars are out at the
entryways for your to pick up and share. Supplies
are limited, so get your calendar soon!

Christian Women's Fellowship

JANUARY CIRCLES

CIRCLE OF PRAYER: meets at 6:00 PM on Thursday, Jan. 11, in the church parlor.

FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE: meets at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, Jan. 16, in the church parlor.

KOINONIA CIRCLE: meets at 9:00 AM on Thursday, Jan. 18, in the church kitchen.

DISCIPLE MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Disciples Men will meet on Saturday, Jan. 20, at 8:00 AM in the church kitchen. Tony Peel will bring the devotion and breakfast. Please sign-up if you will be attending.

OPEN HOUSE BIRTHDAY

On January 14, from 2:00-4:00 PM, there will be a 90th birthday celebration for Marge Houghland in the Fellowship Hall.

EMAIL UPDATES

If you would like to receive the Monday congregational update email, please send your email address to the office at:

office@fccparis.org

We are still experiencing problems with sending emails to gmail accounts. Nick Sanders is in contact with the provider to correct this problem.

Thank You!

Thank you for the Christmas cards and birthday cards. She is thankful for her loving church family that care about her and pray for her. She loves you all!
- Linda Driver

To my wonderful church family, I send much love and many thanks for all you did for me during the passing of my wonderful Richard. The prayers, flowers, calls, cards, food and visits meant the world to me and my family. Our boys were amazed at how great our church family and friends were to us. Thank you to Pete and staff at Templeton's, as well as to Pastor Blue and Rev. Mike.

Much love, Cathy Melendez & family

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost & Found basket under the hall coatrack is filling up. There is a necklace hanging on the bulletin board over the sign-up desk. Please claim any item/s that are yours!



Hello from 412 Youth! The past few weeks have been quiet as far as youth group happenings, but I am sure it has been festive and busy for everyone with holiday gatherings and get-togethers. I hope your Christmas was very merry and was a time of rest and reflection for you, along with being a time spent with family and friends.

I am hoping and praying for great anticipation for what this year will hold for 412 Youth. As many of our active members get older and will soon (but not too soon) be off to college and adulthood, I am trying to soak in all of the opportunities we have right in front of us to make memories together with these students. The Lord has surely blessed this church with many upstanding youth members who truly are good people, beyond just the church walls. What a blessing!

Upcoming Events:

Jan 7- youth group at the church at 6pm

Jan 14- youth group at the church at 6pm

Jan 21- youth group at the church at 6pm

Feb 4- youth Sunday

Feb 9-11- SpringHill winter retreat

Faith Milam, Youth Director

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## GOD'S GANG / CROSSROADS

This semester of God's Gang and Crossroads is set to begin on Wednesday, January 31! Helpers are asked to please attend the planning meeting coming up on Wednesday, January 10 at 4:30 PM.

Parents - please be watching your mail for registration forms from Faith Milam. These need to be turned in prior to the beginning of God's Gang / Crossroads so that the schools can be notified of the list of students that will ride the bus. They cannot ride without written permission.



## 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

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PAID



### 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*

Dec. 24 AM: 9:00-(no report) Nursery-1  
Online-(not working) **TOTAL ?\*** SS = 8

Dec. 24 PM: 7:00-178 Nursery-5 Online-views 66/99\*  
**TOTAL 282**

Dec. 31: 9:00-82 Nursery-3 Online-52/78\*  
**TOTAL 163\*** SS = 17

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

| <u>OFFERING TOTAL</u> | <u>Dec. 24</u>                | <u>Dec. 31, 2023</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| General Fund          | \$5,382.26 <sup>+</sup>       | \$3,722.00*          |
| Sunday School         | 4.00                          | 5.00                 |
| Envelopes             | 3.00                          |                      |
| God's Gang            |                               | 25.00                |
| Food Pantry           |                               | 100.00               |
| Youth Fund            |                               | 150.00               |
| Disciples Missions    | 450.00                        | 250.00*              |
| Week of Compassion*   |                               | 75.00*               |
| Christmas Offering    | 335.00                        | 40.00                |
| Life Center           | 150.00                        | 75.00*               |
| Heated Sidewalk       | 650.00                        | 290.00               |
| Church Bus Fund       | 75.00                         |                      |
| Memorial Fund         |                               | 150.00 <sup>+</sup>  |
| Building Fund         | 790.00                        | 4,490.00*            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>\$7,839.26<sup>+</sup></b> | <b>\$9,372.00**</b>  |

*\*Pay Pal ~ \*Electronic Giving Included*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



### SERVING SCHEDULE: Jan. 14, 2024 - New Leader Dedication Sunday

**9:00 AM:** GREETERS: TBA  
 WORSHIP ELDER: Peg Dixon  
 BREAD ELDER: Candi Milam  
 DEACONS: Team 2, Autumn Kasey, Capt.  
 JR. DEACONS: Team #2, Graham Templeton, Capt.  
 DEACONESS: Steve Webb  
 CHILDREN'S CHURCH: Edna Creech  
 CHILDREN'S SERMON: Angel Templeton  
 PROJECTION/SOUND: Tony Peel  
 NURSERY ATTENDANT: Cathy Clawson  
 JAN. USHERS: Mary Carriere, Tammy Terry  
 JAN. FRIENDSHIP VISITOR: Jacob & Emily Thomas  
 SCRIPTURE: Genesis 13:1-13  
 SERMON: "Three Important Lessons Learned from Abraham" by Pastor Jim Blue

### SERVING SCHEDULE: January 7, 2024

**9:00 AM:** GREETERS: TBA  
 WORSHIP ELDER: Cody Vaughn  
 BREAD ELDER: Kim Woods  
 DEACONS: Team 1, Dustin Whitezel, Capt.  
 JR. DEACONS: Team #1, Morgan Coombes, Capt.  
 DEACONESS: Lisa Young  
 CHILDREN'S CHURCH: Cassie Boatman  
 CHILDREN'S SERMON: Jacob Thomas  
 PROJECTION/SOUND: Tony Peel  
 NURSERY ATTENDANT: Cathy Clawson  
 SCRIPTURE: Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13  
 SERMON: "New Year Same God" by Guest Speaker, Pastor Isaac Mahler  
 SHUT-IN COMMUNION: Peg Dixon, Kim Woods