

THE MESSENGER

Believing, Behaving, Becoming Like Christ

May 14, 2026

PASTOR'S CORNER

A Heart Full of Gratitude

As the school year comes to a close and we begin to turn the page into summer, I find myself doing a lot of reflecting on all that has taken place over these past months. May can feel like an odd time to talk about the "end of the year," but in the rhythm of church life, the close of the school year brings a natural pause—a chance to look back, give thanks, and recognize the many ways God has been at work in and through His people. And there is so much to be thankful for!

First, I want to celebrate another incredible year of God's Gang and Crossroads. These ministries are more than just weekly programs—they are places where relationships are formed, faith is nurtured, and students are reminded that they are seen, known, and loved. A huge thank you to Kim for leading God's Gang and to Angel for leading Crossroads. Your leadership and heart for students make a lasting impact.

And to the many others who serve so faithfully—thank you. Cindy and Megan Mathis, who cooked week after week. Coralee and Peggy for the creativity they bring through crafts. Mary K and Haley for teaching and guiding our students in their faith. Cody for investing in the middle school group. Our table parents, homework helpers, Tony and Joe on the bus, Cathy with the snacks—and so many others who show up consistently to serve. This ministry simply would not happen without you.

I also want to take a moment to recognize our music ministry. Jessica and Eric Hendrickson do such an incredible job leading both the choir and the bell choir. While the bells are always a special treat when we get to hear them, the choir is that steady, consistent presence week after week—a true backbone of our worship. I love the blend of ages in the choir and the way Jessica creates such a welcoming and encouraging environment, inviting people to step in, use their gifts, and find a place to belong.

And we would be remiss not to recognize Amy, our fantastic piano and organ player. Amy faithfully supports the choir, plays in the bell choir, leads our hymns, and brings a steady, calming presence—especially during those quiet moments of prayer before each service. Her consistency and heart for worship are such a gift to our church.

Another highlight of this season was our recent baptisms. It was truly a special and meaningful day—one I will personally cherish, especially getting to baptize my son Dawson along with ten other students. I loved being able to walk alongside these students during the Pastor's Class, helping them grow in their understanding of what they believe and find confidence in their faith.

I also want to give a huge thank you to Kim Woods, who helped coordinate the entire process—communicating with parents, organizing logistics, and making sure everything ran smoothly from the first class all the way through the baptisms. I am incredibly grateful for her partnership in bringing this to life. Thank you as well to Sammy for her behind-the-scenes support, and to Ellen, Barb, Jacob, Angel, and Coralee for helping make the day run so seamlessly. It truly was a team effort.

It was also a joy to celebrate our graduating seniors, Drew and Taylor. I was tempted to have them break into a number from *Hadestown* while they were on stage—but I showed some restraint! In all seriousness, they are both incredibly talented and thoughtful individuals, and I am excited to see how the Lord will continue to guide and use them in the years ahead. Drew and Taylor, know this church is still behind you, rooting you on as you take this next step in life!

And the truth is, this only scratches the surface. There are so many acts of service happening behind the scenes that often go unnoticed—passing out books to 1st graders, collecting and labeling popsicles for the Shrine Parade, planning VBS, coordinating the church bowling event, gathering items for the Relay for Life yard sale, and so, so much more. We simply cannot list everything that happens week in and week out, but please know this: whether it's something seen or unseen, big or small, you are making a difference. Even the quiet, faithful acts—folding these newsletters, placing labels on them, caring for the flowers out front, stepping in to help wherever needed—are all part of what keeps this church moving forward. You are appreciated, and you are valued.

It also takes faithful generosity. So thank you—sincerely—to everyone who gives financially to support the ministries of this church. Your giving makes all of this possible.

Continued inside Messenger



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FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)

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

*"Believing in Christ,
Behaving as Christ,
Becoming like Christ"*

FIRST CUTS FROM THE BOARD

MAY 2026

~ The Board approved funding to help cover 50% of summer church camp costs for students attending camp this year. We are excited to continue investing in our children and youth and helping make camp more accessible for families. We have 6 kids already signed up for summer camp!

~ Additional funding was also approved to help cover this year's God's Gang expenses, with the long-term goal of transitioning God's Gang into the regular church budget beginning in 2027.

~ Financially, the church remains in stable overall condition. Mission giving continues to be strong, investments remain healthy, and the Building Fund currently sits at approximately \$496,000. However, regular General Fund giving is currently running behind expenses for the fiscal year while operating costs have remained similar to last year.

~ We celebrated the baptism of 11 students! What a powerful reminder that God is continuing to move in the lives of the next generation here at FCC.

~ Vacation Bible School preparations are already well underway, and summer ministry opportunities are quickly approaching. Please continue praying for our volunteers, students, and families as we head into a busy summer season.

~ The Evangelism Committee is preparing once again for Shrine Parade outreach. Over 3,000 popsicles have been donated and prepared to help us connect with families in our community. Additional walkers are still needed to help distribute popsicles during the parade.

~ Our new summer sermon series, Back to the Basics, begins May 31st. This series will revisit classic Bible stories and key passages of Scripture that continue to shape and strengthen our faith today.

~ The Building Committee shared updates from the recent congregational survey regarding future building discussions. Leadership continues to prayerfully evaluate next steps and long-term ministry opportunities as conversations continue moving forward.

~ Thank you to everyone who continues to serve, volunteer, give, pray, teach, visit, encourage, and support the ministry of FCC. There is a tremendous amount of ministry happening every week, and it truly takes the whole church working together.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDARS!

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS:

May 16th: Disciple Men's Breakfast

May 17th: VBS Meeting 10:30 AM

May 21st: Koinonia 9 AM

May 24th: Memorial Service

May 31st: Bowling at Iron Pin

June 2nd: Circle of Light 5 PM

June 4th: Elders 5 PM

June 8th: Staff Relations Mtg 6 PM

June 11th: Circle of Prayer 6 PM

June 11th: Messenger

June 12th-13th: Relay for Life
Yard Sale

June 13th: Shrine Parade

June 18th: Koinonia 9 AM

June 28th: VBS Meeting 10:30 AM

July 13th-17th: VBS

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Paris Healthcare: Martha Stephen, Ron Odle, Chuck McClarey & Chuck Dean

Pleasant Meadows: Linda Driver

Twin Lakes: Irma Julian

Continued Prayers: Carol Winemiller, Brad Farnham, Marge Houghland, Sue Bennett, Nancy Weger, Betty Swanson, Karen Jobst, Dorothy Farnham, Jim Bennett, Tom Webb, Sue Elliott, Larry Elliott & Anita Martin

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

MAY PRAYER

Heavenly Father, In this season of renewal, let me spread your joy and happiness to the world around me. May I recognize and appreciate the many blessings you have bestowed upon me in my life. In Jesus name we pray,
Amen.



RELAY FOR LIFE YARD SALE

Items for the yard sale may be dropped off in the first upstairs classroom at any time before the June 10th. The sale will be held Friday, June 12th, from 9 AM to 5 PM and Saturday, June 13th, from 9 AM to 12 PM. Volunteers for setup and teardown are greatly appreciated!

SHRINE PARADE

The Shrine Parade will be Saturday, June 13th, beginning at 2:00PM. There is a sign-up sheet at the welcome desk for those who would be willing to walk in the parade to hand out popsicles. You may also ride the Church Bus and help pass out popsicles to the walkers.

FCC GRADUATES

We would like to congratulate all of our FCC members on their graduation.

High School

Katherine Jones, Mya Smittkamp, Taylor Shewey & Drew Templeton

College

Ava Huddleston - Bachelors Degree, Marquette University

Sammy Milam - Associate Degree, Danville Area Community College

NEW BUILDING UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in the recent congregational meeting regarding the future building discussions at FCC. Nearly 100 ballots were submitted, and while there was a wide range of responses, two clear themes emerged from the feedback: strong interest in pursuing a new building, along with a strong desire to avoid taking on long-term debt as a church family. The New Building Committee continues to prayerfully evaluate possible next steps. One likely option being discussed would involve restarting the capital campaign that began before COVID for a set period of time and then building using only the funds raised during that campaign. The church’s Building Fund currently stands at approximately **\$496,000**, and we remain grateful for the generosity and vision that has made that possible. No formal decisions have been made at this time, and additional prayer, conversation, and planning will continue moving forward. For anyone interested in a more detailed breakdown of the survey results, please contact Tony Peel or the church office.

CIRCLE NEWS

Circle of Light will meet Tuesday, June 2nd at 5:00 PM.

Circle of Prayer will meet at 6:00 PM on Thursday, June 11th.

Koinonia will meet on Thursday, May 21st at 9:00AM.

COMPASSIONATE CLOTHING CLOSET

July is our church’s month to volunteer to work each Monday and Tuesday at the CCC. The hours are Mondays 10:00-1:00 & Tuesday 11:30-2:15. Please check your calendars and sign up so our church can show our support of this worthy cause.

PASTOR’S CORNER CONTINUED

As we look ahead to the summer months, we are excited to continue building on this momentum. Like last summer, we will prioritize fellowship, connection, and community. Our summer theme will be “**Back to the Basics,**” and I am especially looking forward to bringing back our community coffee shop time starting Monday, June 1st. With the shift in schedule, our Monday and Wednesday Pastor’s Bible Studies will take a break for the summer, but we are excited for new opportunities to gather, connect, and grow together in different ways.

Finally, thank you to everyone who shared feedback at our recent congregational meeting. Your voice matters, and your engagement in the life and future of this church is deeply appreciated. As we continue to discern where the Lord is leading us, I invite you to stay tuned for next steps and continue praying for wisdom and unity.

We are part of something special here—a church with a rich history and a bright future. As we look ahead toward celebrating 175 years of faithful ministry in 2030, I truly believe the best is still to come. I am grateful to serve alongside you, and I can’t wait to see all that God has in store for our church in the days ahead.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Isaac



YOUTH GROUP FUTURE DATES

May 17th: Middle School, High School Youth Group, & Club 3–5
May 24th: Middle School & High School Youth Group
May 31st: Family Bowling
Jun 7th: Middle School, High School Youth Group, & Club 3–5

KID’S CORNER

It has been a beautiful, bustling month in our children’s ministry! As we look back on the moments that shaped our past few weeks, I am struck by the cooperation, dedication, energy and faith filling our building.

Moments of Faith & Celebration

We kicked off the month with a truly moving experience on May 3rd. It was a privilege to work alongside Pastor Isaac to organize **eleven baptisms**. For those who couldn’t join us, I encourage you to visit our YouTube channel to watch the service; the statements of faith written and read by our youth were deeply inspiring and a powerful testament to their growing journeys with God.

Our **God’s Gang** finale on May 6th was the perfect “exclamation point” to a fantastic semester. We’ve averaged about 22 children each week, and we sent them into summer with a bang—complete with a music program from the kids, an ice cream truck, and a very “spirited” silly string attack on Pastor Isaac and myself!

Looking Ahead to Summer Fun

The momentum isn’t slowing down... **Vacation Bible School** planning is in full gear! We are currently recruiting help for the week of July 13-17. If you have a heart for serving children, we’d love to have you!

It’s also time to think about **Summer Church Camp** and we already have several children registered! Check the table near the parlor for information on Camp Illiana in Washington, Indiana and Camp Walter Scott in Effingham, Illinois. Reach out to me directly if you need help with the registration process or have questions.

A Note on Our Summer Schedule

To give our dedicated teachers and families a well-deserved rhythm of rest, we will be **pausing K-2 Crew and Club 3-5 during June and July**. We look forward to a grand “Promotion Sunday” restart in August, which will include a new class for **Preschool** children!

As always, **thank you so much** for the opportunity to serve First Christian Church as your Children’s Director! I am humbled by the amount of support and encouragement I have received.

Warmly,
Kim Woods

Date	Worship Elder	Bread Elder	Deacons	Deaconess	Jr. Deacons	Ushers
May 17, 2026	Lisa Young	Tammy Terry	Team #2	Joel G	Team #2	Team #2
May 24, 2026	Chris Milam	Candice Milam	Team #3	Emily T	Team #1	Team #2
May 31, 2026	Ellen Webb	Steve Webb	Team #1	Jill C	Team #2	Team #2
June 7th, 2026	Tammy Terry	Nels Kasey	Team #2	Megan M	Team #1	Team #3