

THE MESSENGER

Believing, Behaving, Becoming Like Christ

September 17h, 2026

Pastor's
CORNER



Finding Your Place This Fall

Fall is here, and if you have spent any time around FCC lately, you know there is a lot happening! The choir and bell choir are back. God's Gang is underway. Our women's circles and men's ministry are gathering. Adult Sunday School continues each week. GriefShare has returned. Bible studies are starting back up. Youth Group is launching something new. And this Sunday, we begin a brand-new sermon series on the Fruit of the Spirit.

It is an exciting time to be part of FCC! But with everything happening this fall, I also want to offer one important reminder: **The goal is not busyness. The goal is godliness.** We don't have ministries simply to fill up the church calendar, and we don't study the Bible just to know more information. Our purpose is to **make disciples who believe in Christ, behave as Christ, and become like Christ.**

That kind of growth requires intentionality, relationships, and opportunities to learn, grow, serve, encourage, and be encouraged. Discipleship cannot happen entirely in private. **We need one another.** Thankfully, there are lots of opportunities to take that next step this fall—but that doesn't mean you need to do everything! My encouragement is simply to **find the right place for you.**

Our **Pastor's Bible Studies** now meet on **Wednesdays at 10:00 AM and 5:30–6:30 PM.** Both groups cover the same material, so choose whichever works best for you. And for those who previously attended on Monday evenings, please note that our evening study has moved to Wednesday. **GriefShare meets Tuesdays at 10:00 AM,** offering encouragement, support, and hope for those walking through grief.

For our middle and high school students, **Youth Alpha launches September 20th.** Alpha is a great opportunity for students to explore questions about life, faith, and Jesus, and I hope all our students will join us! Youth Group continues **Sundays from 10:15 AM–12:00 PM**—so everyone can still get home in time for football!

And if you're not sure where you fit, I'd love to help. You can find me during **Community Office Hours every Monday from 12:00–2:00 PM at Stagecoach Coffee.** No appointment or special reason is needed. Stop by to talk about church, faith, life, —or just to say hello. You can always give me a call or stop by the church too!

Between Bible studies, Sunday School, God's Gang, Youth Group, GriefShare, choir and bells, women's circles, men's ministry, worship, and opportunities to serve, there are plenty of ways to get involved. But again, **the goal isn't to do more. The goal is to grow more.** To grow in what we believe. To practice behaving more like Christ. To increasingly become like Christ.

Because the purpose isn't just **information—it is formation.** Our ministries exist to help make and form disciples; **we don't make disciples simply to sustain our ministries.** So this fall, find your place. Find a place to learn, a place to grow, a place to serve, and people to walk alongside.

I am excited about what God is doing in and through First Christian Church, and I am so grateful for the wonderful people who call this church home. I want everyone to experience the joy of learning, growing, serving, and following Jesus together. And if you need help finding your place, you know where to find me. **I'll save you a seat at the coffee shop!**

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Isaac



THE MESSENGER

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)

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Office Hours: Mon.-Fri, 9 AM-1 PM

Pastor Isaac Mahler, Senior Minister

COME WORSHIP WITH US

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

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

•**Website Update:** The Board approved moving forward with an update to our church website. That project is now beginning, with the goal of creating a fresh, welcoming, and helpful online presence for FCC.

•**Church Directory:** Photos for our new church directory are complete! The project now moves into the formatting and design stage before the final directory is ready. We hope to have copies available by the end of the year.

•**Supporting Our Schools:** The Board approved a fundraiser to help FCC expand our support of local students, particularly in music and the fine arts. We recently hosted dinner for the Beacon Brigade before their first competition, and we hope to provide snacks for students during dress rehearsals and other special events. It is another way for us to meet students where they are, while continuing to welcome and serve them when they are here at the church.

•**Feeding Our Students:** That support extends beyond the arts! FCC is also hosting dinners for the football team and cross country team this fall. We are grateful for opportunities to encourage, feed, and build relationships with students throughout our community.

There was plenty more happening at this month's Board meeting! Look for more “First Cuts” in next month's newsletter as we share additional updates and news from around FCC.

PERMIT #147

Paris, Illinois
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDARS!

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Sept 20th: | Disciple Men's Outing |
| Sept 25th: | Honeybee Festival & Scarecrow Project |
| Sept 26th: | Honeybee Festival/Parade & Scarecrow Project |
| Oct 1st: | Elders Mtg 5 PM |
| Oct 6th: | Circle of Light 5 PM |
| Oct 8th: | Circle of Prayer 6 PM
Messenger |
| Oct 11th: | Pastor Appreciation |
| Oct 12th: | Staff Relations Mtg 6 PM |
| Oct 15th: | Koinonia 9 AM
PHS Football Dinner |
| Oct 17th: | Disciple Men Brkft 8 AM |
| Oct 21st: | Red Cross Blood Drive
@The High Rise |

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 & Dorothy Farnham, Marge Houghland, Jim Bennett, Betty Swanson, Sue Elliott, Lisa Young, Nila Hasler & Betty Kelly.

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”
1 John 4:11-12

SEPTEMBER PRAYER

Dear Lord,
Let your love radiate through me! Let me perceive each person I encounter as your child and treat everyone and everything in my life as the gifts you have bestowed upon me.
Amen.



FOOTBALL DINNER

FCC will be hosting a football dinner for the PHS football team and staff. It will be Thursday, Oct. 15th at 5:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall.

Date	Worship Elder	Bread Elder	Deacons	Deaconess	Jr. Deacons	Ushers
Sept 20th, 2026	Barb Free	Lisa Young	Team #1	Connie R	Team #2	Team #3
Sept 27th, 2026	Candi Milam	Tammy Terry	Team #2	Margo Y	Team #1	Team #3
Oct 4th, 2026	Nels Kasey	Dean Muchow	Team #3	Evie G	Team #2	Team #1
Oct 11th, 2026	Dennis Thiel	Chris Milam	Team #1	Nicole B	Team #1	Team #1

THE HONEYBEE PARADE

The parade will take place on September 26th at 11 AM. We will load the bus at 10 AM at the church and move to our assigned location at by 10:30 AM. Walkers are needed and appreciated. If you are interested, please visit the sign up sheet at the welcome desk. If you have any questions, please contact the office or Emily Thomas.



PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

October is Pastor Appreciation month. We invite you to show your appreciation to Pastor Isaac with cards or gifts during this time! We invite you to a Pastor Appreciation Reception immediately following the worship service on Sunday, October 11th. We encourage every-one to participate in showing gratitude. Let’s make this month special for Pastor Isaac.

SOCKATOME

We will be collecting socks for Paris preschoolers in October. Please help fill the big socks!! If you have any questions, please see Tammy Terry



CIRCLE NEWS

Circle of Light will meet Tuesday, October 6th at 5:00 PM.

Circle of Prayer will meet at 6:00 PM on Thursday, October. 8th

Koinonia will meet on Thursday, October 15th, at 9:00 AM.

SCARECROW PROJECT

Our scarecrow project will take place during Honeybee weekend which is September 25th & 26th. If you have any long pants, shirts, or accessories you would like to donate, please bring them to the church. For further information, please see Coralie Smittkamp.



THANK YOU!

Thank you all for supporting our tailgate party. We hope everyone had a great time!
- The Membership Committee

Fall Ministry Kickoffs & Fun

- Our mid-week and special programs are up and running with so much enthusiasm:
- Junior Disciples Launch:** We officially launched our new Junior Disciples program, giving our younger youth special opportunities to step into roles of leadership and service.
 - God’s Gang Returns:** God’s Gang is off to a great start with a total of 25 kids registered!
 - Kid’s Night Out:** We hosted a super fun Kid’s Night Out event where 16 kids came together for an evening of playing games, enjoying movie night treats like popcorn and candy, and sharing lots of laughter.....especially playing Pastor Isaac’s rendition of “Follow the Leader!”
 - Honeybee Parade:** Come join me and walk (or ride in the bus) in the upcoming parade on September 26!



YOUTH GROUP FUTURE DATES

- Sept 20th: Youth Group & Club 3–5
Sept 27th: Youth Group
Oct 4th: Youth Group & Club 3–5
Oct 11th: NO Youth Group

KID’S CORNER

As we transition into a new season, our children’s ministry continues to be filled with energy, growth, and wonderful moments of faith! The joy from our summer activities has carried us right into a bustling autumn (although the weather still screams summer), and we are so blessed to see how God is moving in the lives of our kids and church family.

Moments of Faith & Celebration

We recently celebrated a beautiful Promotion Sunday as our young people moved up to their next classes! It was a deeply meaningful morning as we presented Bibles to 22 children and youth to guide them in their walk with Christ. We also gathered together in prayer to lift up all of our students starting the new school year, our Sunday school teachers, and the community teachers, staff, and school board members who are part of our church family. Promotion Sunday was also the kickoff to our kids returning to their weekly Sunday school classes! One of my personal favorites for last month was the opportunity to share the Sunday Sermon on August 9! I truly appreciate all of the cards, texts, and positive comments I received.

Looking Ahead

We are so blessed to have wonderful opportunities to serve and encourage our local youth! Just recently, we had the joy of serving a Taco Dinner to approximately 80 energetic teenagers to fuel and support the Beacon Brigade prior to their very first competition. If you'd like to partner with us in wrapping our youth in love and support as they explore the fine arts, please drop by the envelope fundraiser wall near the sanctuary. Selecting an envelope is a simple, meaningful way to directly impact these kids—helping cover costs for their upcoming high school and junior high competitions and long drama/musical rehearsals this season. Every bit helps us show them how much their church family cares! Thank you for continuing to bless me with the opportunity to serve First Christian Church. I appreciate all you do!
Warmly,
Miss Kim