



## SEPTEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

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<https://www.fcclc.org>

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#### **Text Message Updates**

Text FCCTextMe to  
(844) 467-1299

### *Weekly Schedule*

#### **Worship Service: Sun. 10:15am**

Hybrid Worship in Person &  
Streamed via Zoom and Facebook Live  
<https://www.fcclc.org/worship>

#### **Social Hours: Wed. 6:30pm**

1st Wed: Crafters Group  
2nd Wed: LGBTQ Group  
3rd Wed: 20s & 30s Group  
4th Wed: Book Discussion

#### **Spiritual Practices: Thu. 9:00am**

Every Thursday on Zoom  
Some practices we do regularly:  
Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, Christian  
Meditation, Bible Journaling, Scripture  
Doodling, and more!

## Announcements

- » To safeguard our members amid concerns of the rising number of Covid cases in the county, we have returned to requiring masks at all First Christian Church events. This requirement began June 1st and remain in effect until further notice.
- » We will continue to serve Communion at the front of the Sanctuary during our Sunday service.
- » We ask that participants form two lines at a safe distance, and keep masks on while in line and after being served.
- » Individual sealed communion elements are available if desired.
- » If you are unable to come forward, a deacon will serve you at your seat.
- » Rev. Bethany Meier-Evans is on a leave of absence effective 7/11/2022. The office will still be open for calls at (575) 524-3245 or emails at [office@fcclc.org](mailto:office@fcclc.org) if you need anything.
- » Rev. Richard Feyen has agreed to be our extended supply pastor. You can reach him at (920) 304-6245 or by email at [rfeyen@fcclc.org](mailto:rfeyen@fcclc.org).
- » To limit the length of the newsletter, the FCC Board Meeting Minutes will now be published as a separate document, available at <https://www.fcclc.org/community/>

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# WORSHIP COVENANT

In order to ensure that worship is a safe space for everyone who wants to return, we ask that you covenant with us to abide by the following safety guidelines:

- » Worship leaders, musicians, and speakers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Anyone up front as part of the service must wear a mask regardless of vaccination status.
- » We recommend face masks to be worn over both mouth and nose by all people over the age of five at all times indoors, even if you are fully vaccinated. Disposable masks will be available if you forget yours at home.
- » We ask that you wear your name tag or a disposable name tag, available by the front doors.
- » Please maintain a six-foot distance between you and other members at all times when indoors.
- » When you enter, please take a bulletin, then find a spot to sit with at least one empty chair between you and another household. We ask that all fellowship and mingling be done outside.
- » All who are able are invited to come forward for communion. Please keep your mask on while in line, until you receive the bread and juice.
- » If you are not able to come forward, a deacon will serve you at your seat. Individual sealed elements are available if preferred.
- » After the final hymn please make your way outside, taking your bulletin and any trash with you. There will be trash cans by the sanctuary doors.

## NOTES

This covenant will change as recommended safety measures in our county change. We will communicate any changes through email blasts and in person announcements.

The livestream recording begins at 10:10 am. At that time, any sounds above a whisper may be heard on the livestream. Anyone who gathers near the front of the sanctuary may be visible on camera.

If you have any questions about the covenant, please contact Pastor Bethany.

# CALENDAR

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sun.	10:15 am	First Christian Church Worship
	10:15 am	St. John's Catholic Church Worship
Mon.	6:30 pm	Celestial Sounds (Sanctuary)
Wed.	6:30 pm	FCC Social Hour (Parlor)
	6:30 pm	Mesilla Valley Swing (Sanctuary)
Thu.	9:00 am	Spiritual Practices (Zoom)
Fri.	12:00 pm	Al-Anon (Parlor)
	6:00 pm	New World Drummers / Dancers
Sat.	8:00am	HIV/AIDS Food Bank

## SOCIAL GROUPS

9/7	6:30 pm	Crafters Group
9/14	6:30 pm	LGBTQ Group
9/21	6:30 pm	20s & 30s Group
9/28	6:30 pm	Book Discussion Group

## EVENTS

9/20	10:00 am	Weaving for Justice Sale
9/25	11:30 am	Atrium Beautification

## MEETINGS

9/8	7:00 pm	Faith Action Committee
9/10	10:00 am	Mission & Vision Strategy Meeting
9/17	10:00 am	FCC Board Meeting
9/18	10:00 am	Worship Committee Meeting

## BIRTHDAYS

9/6	Charlotte Brooks
9/9	Kamy McKenzy-Shaw
9/16	Reuben Mason
9/27	Esther Devall

## ANNIVERSARIES

9/6	Grady & Joan McCullough
9/6	Bruce & Sandra Weber

# ELDERS & WORSHIP LEADERS

September, 2022

**Sunday, Sept. 4 10:15 am**

Speaker: Kamy McKenzy-Shaw  
 Worship Leader: Karen Holmes  
 Offering: Scott Hays-Strom  
 Communion: Kamy McKenzy-Shaw

**Sunday, Sept. 11 10:15 am**

Speaker: Rev. Richard Feyen  
 Worship Leader: Melissa McKenzy-Shaw  
 Offering: Deb Cook  
 Communion: Paul Cook

**Sunday, Sept. 18 10:15 am**

Speaker: Rev. Richard Feyen  
 Worship Leader: Deb Cook  
 Offering: Melissa McKenzy-Shaw  
 Communion: Esther Devall

**Sunday, Sept. 25 10:15 am**

Speaker: Rev. Richard Feyen  
 Worship Leader: Sue Stefford-Grey  
 Offering: Deb Cook  
 Communion: Melissa McKenzy-Shaw

October, 2022

**Sunday, Oct. 2 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Melissa McKenzy-Shaw  
 Offering: Sandy Weber  
 Communion: Deb Cook

**Sunday, Oct. 9 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Eric Hays-Strom  
 Offering: Esther Devall  
 Communion: Sandy Weber

**Sunday, Oct. 16 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Hilda McKee  
 Offering: Scott Hays-Strom  
 Communion: Esther Devall

**Sunday, Oct. 23 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Esther Devall  
 Offering: Patrick Crocker  
 Communion: Scott Hays-Strom

**Sunday, Oct. 30 10:15 am**

Worship Leader: Karen Holmes  
 Offering: Kamy McKenzy-Shaw  
 Communion: Patrick Crocker



## BOARD PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*Scott Hays-Strom*

### Three Words that Summarize First Christian Church

Most religions are extremely complicated because they think that you have to follow some really difficult laws or rituals or long to-do-lists in the hopes of climbing the religious ladder to get to heaven. But I don't think that's true about being a Christian, or how we are as a church body here at First Christian Church.

At our summer congregational meeting, we approved a new vision statement and mission statement that tells people in Las Cruces what we believe and how we treat everyone. We have an opportunity this coming fall at Pride Fest Las Cruces to show the city who we are.

Three words best summarize our mission and vision statement. They also summarize what it means to be a Christian.

The first word is "Believe" That's what we teach and follow. We believe that Jesus taught us The Way to become Christians. By listening to his lessons and believing that that is the gift of Grace that God has given us, we believe that eternity is ours by following The Way of Christ.

The second word in expressing who we are is "Abide." This means that we grow in our relationships with each other through Christ. We listen to each other. We show love and concern about helping each other grow. We inspire and help transformation happen to make us spiritually fruitful and spread the joy and love of God to those that we touch.

The final word is the hardest to apply to our lives. That word is "Love". Think of it this way, God has given us the dominion as a gift forever. IT's up to us to not waste that opportunity trying to be religious. Instead, it's up to us individually, and as a church to continue to love our neighbors. To show the love that God has shown us to everyone. We are more than a welcoming church. We try to our best to welcome everyone where they are and be with them while they are growing their relationship with God.

Being a Christian church is simple, but I don't say that it's easy.

It's hard sometimes to accept the free gif that we've been given. The world is full of needs and so loving our neighbors can be hard. But in the end, it's enormously satisfying.

No, living the Christian life is not easy.

But it's simple: Believe, Abide, and Love.

## FROM THE BOARD

*Extended Supply Pastor*

During Bethany's medical leave, the board has been working to supply pulpit fill, and the Elders have been trying to provide spiritual care as much as possible for FCC. As you know, this can be a huge task for everyone.

The board made the decision to seek what is called an Extended Supply Pastor to step in and provide Sunday services, pastoral care, and attend studies and groups and certain meetings. We received recommendations and had an individual volunteer to help us. Last week we interviewed Rev. Richard Feyen from Sturgeon Bay Wisconsin. He's agreed to be our ESP. He will begin on Sunday September 11 until 13 November 2022. Our agreement is to work 20 hours a week, including Sundays.

As way of introduction here's a little about Rev. Feyen. He and his wife Peggy visited us last March while they were in Las Cruces. They fell in love with the city, but things haven't worked out to move here as they wanted. Both Richard and Peggy are retired UCC ministers and have worked in Texas and the Upper Midwest. They permanently reside in Sturgeon Bay Wisconsin but are going to spend the rest of summer and fall here in Las Cruces. Peggy has some commitments and won't be here for three weeks.

Richard agreed to have us pass on his contact information and office hours once he arrives.

Welcome him!

## AN INTRODUCTION

### *The Reverend Richard Feyen*

Stories are meant to be told in person, for the most part, but our opportunities are limited and my time here perhaps short. Getting to know one another happens when we share our stories and I look forward to hearing yours. For now I will give you some basic background about me as we begin this journey together and in the coming months I hope we can find a way for me to hear your stories.

I am 70, I was born on the south side of Chicago, Illinois and grew up in Wheaton, Illinois, a western suburb. I am one of six children with one brother and three sisters still living. Together Peggy and I have five daughters, and seven grandchildren. Peggy is also a UCC minister, recently retired after forty years serving churches large and small.

I found my way into the United Church of Christ as a layperson in 1973 after meeting a minister who opened my eyes to the far more accepting theology of the United Church of Christ. I was raised in the somewhat conservative Christian Reformed Church. I spent twenty years as an active layperson in the UCC in Texas before entering seminary in Houston. I was ordained in 1995 and last June 25 I celebrated the 27th anniversary of my ordination

I have a wide variety of interests which include: stained glass, photography, painting, I enjoy fishing, and am a former member of the National Ski Patrol. Peggy and I have owned a horse, a boat, an airplane, we still have a motorcycle, a motorhome and now love road trips using our little Airstream.

Peggy is the most important person in my life. We have a lot of fun together, share the same interests, and love to be together. Her experience in ministry has led to strengthening mine and vice versa. One of many projects we have worked on together over the years is our home. We have restored and remodeled the former Alaska Graded School. It is located five miles south of Algoma and five miles north of Kewaunee in the community of Alaska, Wisconsin, known mostly for its golf course, cheese and the former Alaska Supper Club.

Peggy and I continue to work on our home while in our free time we play golf together taking advantage of the Alaskan Golf Course just one half mile from our home. Other leisure time activities include snow shoeing, skiing, hiking, road trips with Peggy, walking the beach, or simply enjoying a cup of coffee on the deck. Come the warmer weather of summer I enjoy leisurely trips riding my motorcycle sometimes with Peggy on the back and sometimes not.

One of the most significant periods of my life occurred in 1990 when, in a period of six months, six people who I was very close to died. It was during this difficult period that the tides of my life turned my focus towards ministry.

These are just facts though, the stories will be told in the weeks ahead as we journey together on our spiritual paths. I look forward to being able to help First Christian Church while Pastor Bethany is on leave.

Blessings to you now as we journey forward.

Richard

Contact me at 920.304.6245 or rfeyen@fccclc.org



## MISSION OF THE MONTH

### *Disciples of Christ Reconciliation Ministry*

*2022 Special Offering September 25th and October 2nd*

The Reconciliation Ministry has a special offering that is taken each year in the Fall. In the Summer of 2011, Reconciliation Ministry launched the Reconciliation Ministry Annual Fund. The Annual Fund complements the resources needed to support the granting programs of the ministry.

### *History of the Reconciliation Ministry*

#### *The Beginnings*

Reconciliation Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was born out of the civil unrest that ensued following the martyrdom of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968. His murder brought to fore in the life of our church the dis-ease of our living in two separate societies – one which benefits one group of people and one which systemically marginalizes the poor and powerless. Beginning with Resolution 29 of the International Convention of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in 1968, our Church has persistently pursued ways to address the sin of racism through resolutions and direct action in our congregations, Regions, General Ministries and Recognized Ministry partnerships.

The initial focus of Reconciliation was to ensure our programs be motivated by “a conscientious Christian concern for these our brethren who before God are equal with us; and be directed . . . to the radical removal of basic underlying causes.” In 1969, the General Assembly adopted a resolution that called for the church to work for legislative change to change the plight of the poor, “many of whom are minority persons”. As a result of these and other resolutions and initiatives of the whole church, some positive results have occurred including but not limited to:

- » Reconciliation was established in 1967 and reaffirmed in 1969, 1971 as a permanent office and fund for working to support racial reconciliation and anti-racist projects (grants).

- » The General Nominating Committee began using the 20% racial-ethnic minority provision for all boards and committees it established following the 1969 General Assembly.
- » The Short-Term Employment Experiences in Ministry Program to prepare African-American and Hispanic persons for Ministry was created; the David Kagiwada scholarship was initiated to set up assistance for American Asia seminarians.
- » The Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries and the North American Pacific and Asian Disciples offices were established.

#### *Addressing Racism*

Racism is a spiritual and theological dilemma as well as a social evil. In 1996, the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) approved the formation of a church-wide process to discern the nature of racism in North America and to develop ways of helping congregations address racism. In its first meeting, the Steering Committee (assigned to guide this process) agreed on the following three realities: 1) Racism is a spiritual and theological dilemma as well as a social evil, 2) Racist practice exists throughout the life of the church and needs to be addressed (even as local and national issues of racism are addressed), and 3) Racism is a systemic problem with root causes that have developed over hundreds of years. It is a combination of racial prejudice and institutional or economic power.

#### *The Vision of the Church*

In 2001 the General Assembly adopted the 2020 Vision which named four interconnected mission priorities. Becoming a Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racist Church alongside developing new leadership, establishing 1000 new churches and transforming 1000 churches were identified as critical initiatives for our 21st Century church. Reconciliation Ministry was restructured in 2002 in accordance with the mission priority to strengthen the Church’s effort to achieve this mission priority.

The ministry which formally functioned out of Church Finance Council began to report directly to the Office of General Minister and President to plan and implement strategies to dismantle and eradicate racism within each expression of our Church.



The Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Initiative was founded upon the need to make visible God's beloved community. It invites the church to listen to the once silenced voices of its racial/ethnic communities, learn from their wisdom and gain insight from their leadership. It calls the church to discernment and prayer, study of the scriptures and reflection, dialogue and table fellowship. The true goal is to transform, strengthen and deepen the church's spirituality, resulting in a community that understands its mission to be about bringing justice and salvation to the world.

### *Breaking Down the Dividing Walls*

The Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism initiative has made steady progress. In 2007, Regions were urged to assume primary leadership in enabling congregational involvement in the work of racial reconciliation. In 2008, eight Regions of the Southeast Regional Fellowship called a minister to serve as minister of Reconciliation and Anti-Racism Ministries. In addition, the Regions of the Northeastern Regional Fellowship are working together to provide a week-long Bridge Building Camp for Youth representatives from the seven regions.

### *Give to Reconciliation Ministry*

Your gifts help support pro-reconciliation / anti-racism programs through education, camp and conference, and relationship-building in each expression of our Church. Thank you in advance for your support.

### *How to give?*

You can give online at <https://reconciliationministry.org/give/>, or send your gift to the Office of the General Minister and President Treasury Services via mail. Please designate your gift, and if you are mailing it, send it to:

**OGMP Treasury Services  
Reconciliation Ministry Offering (Memo)  
P.O. Box 1986  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1986**

*Copied from the Disciples of Christ web site*

## FROM THE COMMUNITY

### *HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO SADIE!!*

*Karen Holmes*

My name is Sadie and I'm 16 years old on August 27th. I can no longer hear and can't see well but I enjoy being with all of you at church. I appreciate all of you allowing my parents, Ralph and Karen Holmes, bringing me to church because I get anxious when I'm left home alone. I like everyone and hope I don't surprise you when I bump into you. I'm simply saying hi and don't mind getting a return pat.

Who took this picture? Oh yeah Rev. Bethany. Sorry, I couldn't help it. The board meeting wasn't very interesting.

### *2022 LUNAFEST*

*Esther Devall*

I am president of Soroptimist International of Las Cruces. We are a global women's organization that seeks to empower women and girls through education.



You are invited to attend the 2022 LUNAFEST – eight short films made by women about women. The content is appropriate for males and females age 13 and up. You can check out the previews and buy tickets by following the links on our website: [www.silcnm.org](http://www.silcnm.org).

Tickets are only \$15 and they are FREE to high school and college students. After the films become available on September 17 at 7:00 MDT, you'll have 48 hours to start watching. Once you begin, you'll have 48 hours to finish watching. The total running time is 80 minutes.

The 8 short films are:

- » How to Be at Home – an animated poem about coping with isolation during COVID.
- » Close Ties to Home Country – an immigrant dog walker finds connection in the hearts of the wealthy pets she cares for.
- » Generation Impact: The Coder - a 13-year-old girl designs and builds a mobile app to help kids stay connected to their incarcerated parents by sending photos and letters.
- » Proof of Loss - when a fire takes their home, a father and daughter must find a way to salvage what remains; each other.
- » When You Clean a Stranger's Home – a first-generation high school student describes what she and her mom learn about people when cleaning their homes.
- » Between the Lines: Liz at Large – frustrated with the lack of character diversity in The New Yorker's cartoons, an artist submits her own illustrations, becoming the first black woman cartoonist in the magazine's near-century run.
- » Wearable Tracy – a Bronx woman's accidental social experiment connects her with fellow New Yorkers who might otherwise remain strangers.
- » To the Future, With Love – an animated self-portrait of a nonbinary trans teen caught between the expectations of his Guatemalan immigrant family and his dreams of living happily every after with his long-distance boyfriend.

LUNA FEST, through Chicken and Egg Productions, gives women filmmakers a chance to showcase their talents AND it gives non-profits, like Soroptimist, the opportunity to raise money for programs that elevate women.

I think you'll love the films. Each one focuses on issues that are worthy of attention and discussion. I hope you will join me at LUNAFEST!



## STAR WORDS MEDITATION

September 2022

**How could you use your star word and your journey with it to teach someone about faith?**

If you do not have a Star Word focus for the year, please select one from the list below:

*ability, abundance, accept/acceptance, action, adoration, affection, alert, amaze/amazement, anticipation, aspire, astonish, awake/awakening, aware, balance, beauty, beginning, blessed, boldness, breathe, brilliant, calling, caring, celebrate, challenge, change, charity, cheerfulness, complete/completeness, courage, create/creativity, dare/daring, dazzle, delight, determination, devotion, discipline, dream, embracing, energy, enlightenment, excellence, expectant/expectation, explore/exploration, exuberance, faith, festivity, forgiveness, gentleness, glory, gratitude, harmony, holy/holiness, hope, humility/humble, imagination, invitation, Joy, knowledge, laugh/laughter, liveliness, maturity, meaning, memory, mercy, miracle, mystery, nourish/nourishment, offering, opportunity, overflowing, passion, patience, perception, perspective, plenty, possibility, precious, promise, provide, quietness, radiant, ready/readiness, receive, recreate, refine, release, renewal, restoration, sacred, satisfaction, seeing, service, simple/simplicity, sincerity, sparkle, stillness, surrender, teaching, tenderness, testimony, thanksgiving, thoughtful, together, triumph, trust, understanding, vision, whole/wholeness, wisdom*



# WHO ARE WE?

First Christian Church affirms the Good News of Jesus the Christ as revealed through Scripture, tradition, experience, scholarship, and reason. Within the community of faith, we are called to discern through prayer, study, and discussion God's message for today.



**The Newsletter is published monthly by First Christian Church. It is available free of charge to members and friends of FCC. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and to inspire, and to invite participation in the life of the congregation, the community, and the world. Submissions are welcome, including announcements of activities of interest to members, prayer concerns, thank-you notes, directory updates, etc. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. The due date for submissions is each month on the 25th.**