

# The Messenger

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Our Mission is to Celebrate and Share Christ's Love through feeding the Body & the Soul.



9540 Fifth St. Highland, IN 46322

219/924-5400

[www.fcchighland.net](http://www.fcchighland.net)

November/December 2023

## 2023 Advent & Christmas Celebrations

Advent 1 - November 26th

Advent 2 - December 3, 2023

Advent 3 - December 10, 2023

Advent 4 & Christmas Program - December 17, 2023

Blue Christmas Service - December 21st @ 7 P.M.

Christmas Eve Services - December 24

10:30 A.M.

10:00 P.M.

### Upcoming Church Events

- December calendar (p. 2)
- Prayer concerns (p. 4)
- Serving Schedule (p. 5)
- Mission opportunities (pp. 6-7)
- January calendar (p. 9)
- Remarks from Rebecca (p. 8)

Sundays @ FCC

Disciples Café—  
9:30 A.M.

Worship—10:30 AM



# December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1</b> Parent's Night Out @ Ridge UMC 5:30-8 P.M. A: David & Maribel Boban	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> Advent 2 Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. B: Ray Benson	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Game Group 10-12  Boomwhackers 6 P.M.	<b>7</b> B: Kathy Drury	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> Advent 3 Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. B: Dolores Cave, Jamie Neyhart	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Stitch of Time 10-12	<b>13</b> Senior Food Box Distribution 10-12	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Christmas Program Rehearsal 10-12 B: Max Schroader
<b>17</b> Advent 4 Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. Christmas Program	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Stitch of Time 10-12	<b>20</b> Game Group 10-12	<b>21</b> The Longest Night Blue Christmas Service 7 P.M.	<b>22</b> B: Andrew Bridges	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Service 10:30 A.m.  10:00 P.M.	<b>25</b> Christmas  (Office Closed)	<b>26</b>  (Office Closed)	<b>27</b>  (Office Closed)	<b>28</b> B: Linnea Sundquist  (Office Closed)	<b>29</b> B: Tania Messmer  (Office Closed)	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> New Year's Eve Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M.						

THIS ADVENT WILL  
LOOK A LITTLE  
DIFFERENT

# AN UNEXPECTED *gift*



*2023 Interfaith Thanksgiving Service*

Christmas Program Rehearsal  
Saturday, December 16, 2023  
10 A.M.—12 P.M.

FCC has a tradition of an easy and fun Christmas program with little prep work. We also LOVE when people of all ages participate—whether you are a wise man (or woman) or sheep. If you would like to participate, let Rev. Becky know and you will have a part! You will be blessed and this will add a lot of joy to your season. Join us!

Check out the seasonal adult coloring pages outside of the sanctuary. These pages are meant to help your focus during worship and/or serve as a prayer/meditation tool for your daily spiritual practice. New ones appear all the time. Try it out and see if it is a discipline that speaks to you and your spiritual life!

*Shepherds Assemble!*



Christmas Program  
December 17 ★ 10:30 A.M.

## **Dates to Remember:**

**Elders Meeting**  
**Sunday, January 14th after worship**

**Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Board Meeting**  
**7 P.M.**

## Praying for our Friends & Family

### Members of the Congregation:

Celia Newcomb, Phyllis Frost, Tim & Kathy Drury, Dolores Cave, Don Dean, Ken Cengel, Jeff Messmer,

### Friends of the Congregation: (Please let me know if there are updates to this ongoing list)

The Yuris Family, The Murphy Family, Dennis Chambers, Gary Barber, Cindy Williams, Jerry Zolmer, Liz Griffin, Mary Jones, Chris Dury, Al Eckert, Cherie Coolidge, Melissa Belar, Cathhart Family, Jim Pasour, Ron Straker, Nikki Sweeny, Barbara Blaze, Taft/Weber Family, Terry Mavity, Louis Spannik, Jeri Sears, David Coolidge, Tim Gasaway, Jack, Lee, Chris, Faith, Marty Chidalek, Laurel Higgenbotham, Sophia Morgan, Sandi Lamb, Jim Pasour, Terry, Renee, Valerie Rushing, Cindy Spicker, Virginia, Eileen Cushing, Jessa Vucko, Renee, Lucien Szczepanik, Paul Graegin, Joe Luis and Family, Lorie Kime, Ed Gnaidek, Pauline, Bob Margraf, Christine Phillips, Steven Neyhart, Mickey and Baby Amelia, George Cengel, Shirley Fliter, Susan Worrell, Nikki, Marian Huizenga, Martha, Shawn, Val Rushing, Larry Kristoff, Bill Murphy, Matt Murphy, Spencer Gordon, Cindy Bugno, Michael Cole, Chris Cole, Dave Horvath

**The Wider Community:** War in Ukraine; global natural disasters; violence throughout the nation; wildfires in Canada & Maui; Hurricane in Florida; Earthquake in Morocco; Flooding in Libya; Crisis in Israel & Palestine ; Earthquake in Afghanistan; Mass shooting in Maine;

### Joys—Advent & Christmas opportunities; new youth ministries, Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

#### Fifth Street Figures

Description	Offering
Worship (10/8/23)	\$1008.86
Worship (10/15/23)	\$2236.89
Reconciliation	\$30.00
TOTAL	\$2266.89
Worship (10/22/23)	\$1423.64
Sober School	\$1200.00
TOTAL	\$2623.64
Worship (10/29/23)	\$1105.22
Chili Cookoff & Pumpkin Decorating	\$89.59
TOTAL	\$1194.81
Worship (11/5/23)	\$1470.22
Worship (11/12/23)	\$2083.86

## Fifth Street Figures Continued...

Worship (11/19/23)	\$1892.91
TOPS	\$200.00
Total	\$2092.91

Worship (11/26/23)	\$425.22
Thanksgiving Offering	\$25.00
Total	\$450.22

### July 2023 Figures

#### General

Income: \$7333.05  
Transfer from Capital Funds: \$3774.00  
Expenditures: \$10,110.93

#### Outreach

Income: \$251.00  
Expenditures: —

### August 2023 Figures

#### General

Income: \$ 5813.00  
Transfer from Capital Funds: \$4000.00  
Expenditures: \$11,375.17

#### Outreach

Income: 0  
Expenditures: 0

Thank you for your faithful giving to the ministries of our beloved church!

If you are interested in receiving the financial statements for First Christian Church, please contact Delia Helpingstine and she will be happy to share that information with you.

Created to be a  
Steward

How are you called to  
care for Christ's Church?



Many thanks to all who pledged for  
2024!  
Blessings to you in your support of the  
ministries of FCC!

The mission of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Highland, IN:

“to celebrate and share Christ’s love” to “Our Mission is to celebrate and share Christ’s love though feeding the Body and the Soul.”

This amendment was made to identify our passion for food justice as well as spiritual growth in God in all we do.

**Our Mission Statement is to  
celebrate and share Christ's love through  
feeding the Body and the Soul.**

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(Disciples of Christ)  
9540 Fifth St. Highland, IN 46322  
(219)924-5400  
[www.fcchighland.net](http://www.fcchighland.net)  
email: [fcchighland9540@gmail.com](mailto:fcchighland9540@gmail.com)  
Check us out on Facebook!

Disciples Café 9:30 A.M.  
Worship: 10:30 A.M.



Pastor Office Hours:  
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday  
(9:30 A.M.—1:00 P.M.) or by appointment  
Pastor Rebecca Sundquist  
Cell phone: (217)341-4105  
Email: [becky.sundquist@gmail.com](mailto:becky.sundquist@gmail.com)  
YouTube: First Christian Church Highland IN  
Facebook: First Christian Church Highland IN  
Instagram: [fcchighland](https://www.instagram.com/fcchighland)

#### News from the Christian Church in Indiana!



Rev. Rick Spleth has retired as the Regional Minister and President of the Christian Church in Indiana. Dr. Christal Williams has been called to serve as the new Regional Minister and President and will begin in January 2024. It is exciting to welcome her!

Additionally, Rev. Anita Cobb has been called to serve as the Program Director for quest: a Journey of Faith. This call is the first step in launching the grant-funded quest program, made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc. This is a new initiative to support faith formation at home! If you would like weekly e-news from the Christian Church in Indiana please send an email to [info@indianadisciplesorg](mailto:info@indianadisciplesorg)!



#### Elder & Deacon Serving Schedule

November 19, 2023  
Elder: Debbie Benson  
Deacon: Tania Messmer

November 26, 2023  
Elder: Sharon Worrell-Schroader  
Deacon: Don Dean

December 3, 2023  
Elder: Brenda Michalak  
Deacon: Olivia Sundquist

December 10, 2023  
Elder: Debbie Benson  
Deacon: Brad Chandler

December 17, 2023  
Elder: Mary Ellen Carpenter  
Deacon: Linnea Sundquist

December 24, 2023  
Elder: Delia Helpingstine  
Deacon: Linda Messmer

December 31, 2023  
Elder: Sharon Worrell-Schroader  
Deacon: Ken Cengel

January 7, 2024  
Elder: Brenda Michalak  
Deacon: Ken Cengel

January 14, 2024  
Elder: Debbie Benson  
Deacon: David Michalak

January 21, 2024  
Elder: Mary Ellen Carpenter  
Deacon: Tania Messmer

January 28, 2024  
Elder: Delia Helpingstine  
Deacon: Don Dean

If you are interested in serving as a lector/  
worship leader on Sunday mornings, please  
see Brenda Michalak or the church office  
for open Sundays. Your voice is important  
in worship leadership!



### Blessing Box Needs!

We are in desperate need of hygiene products and cleaning supplies for the Blessing Box. Our shelves are pretty empty of these high demand products. Any help you can offer is greatly appreciated!

### The Senior Food Box Ministry Thrives

The Senior Food Box Ministry continues to thrive as it serves 45 clients with a monthly supply of food staples. Each box helps offset the cost of food so that seniors don't have to make the difficult decisions like choosing between food and medicine. If you know of anyone over the age of 60 that could benefit from this service, please contact Debbie Benson. If you would like to help with this important ministry, see Debbie for volunteer opportunities. The boxes are distributed every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 10 to 12.

## Opportunities to Serve

### Outreach Updates

The Outreach Department is busy this holiday season. We are working hard to live our motto, "We Feed The Body and Soul". We are working to bring hope, joy, and love to those in need. Again this year we are working with the Schools of Highland to provide gifts for the towns "Angels" for Christmas. The response from our people was just awesome as usual all 12 Angels will be blessed by your generosity. We also joined Love, Inc to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas gifts and dinner to a family here in Highland. The gifts for the family will be on the tree December 1<sup>st</sup>. And finally the Homeless Lunch Bunch will be serving Christmas dinner to the Hammond Shelter on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. All food for the dinner is supplied by the group. If you would like to help with providing food or help serving please see either Sharon Worrell-Shroader or Delia Helpingstine. We give thanks for all of you for sharing and bringing love, hope, peace and joy to others this season.

### Lunch Bunch News

The Lunch Bunch is serving a homeless lunch on Saturday, December 2nd. They will also be serving a special Christmas meal on Saturday, December 23rd at the Hammond Rescue Mission. If you want to be a part of this important ministry in the future, please reach out to Debbie Benson or Sharon Worrell-Schroader!

The Mission of First Christian Church is to celebrate and share Christ's love through feeding the Body and the Soul.  
- amended August 7, 2022

FCC Highland is now accepting gently used and clean clothes for women, children and men for

## SOJOURNER TRUTH HOUSE



Donate gently used or new clothing to those in need. Please also make sure they are clean.

Collection is in the narthex of the church.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
9540 FIFTH ST.  
HIGHLAND, IN 46322

[www.fcchighland.net](http://www.fcchighland.net)



Hygiene Products and Cleaning Supplies Needed for the Blessing Box! We can't keep these supplies on the shelves for our neighbors in need of a helping hand. Please consider donating these important products to our pantry. Dollar stores have many inexpensive options. Thank you!

## Many Thanks

Thank you to all who have given toward this year's Angel Tree and Thanksgiving Meal!

Thanks to Brenda and David Michalak, and Linda Messmer for decorating the sanctuary for Advent & Christmas. It looks beautiful!

Thanks also belong to Debbie Benson, Linda Messmer and Sheila Cushing for organizing the Chili Cook-Off & Pumpkin Contest. What a fun day together!

*Thank You!*

Regularly Scheduled Office Hours will be changed to accommodate Rev. Becky's schedule. Office Hours are now Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9:30-1 or by appointment.

## A STITCH OF TIME

A Ministry of First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) of Highland, IN  
Creating handcrafted blankets for those undergoing  
chemotherapy.



2nd &  
3rd  
Tues-  
days  
10-12



## News From the Pews

### Staff Love Gift

It's that time of year again when we all are busy preparing for the holidays. We have

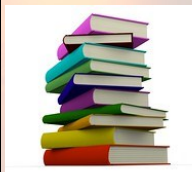


eaten the last of the turkey and pumpkin pie and our thoughts turn to Black Friday Deals, tree decorating, Christmas dinner and gifts to give. Speaking of gifts

to give, Christmas is the perfect time to thank those people who give their gifts and talents to the church all year, our church staff. They have provided faithful worship, beautiful music, caring hearts and listening ears, to everyone whether in person or those on-line, every week without fail. Our staff is Pastor Becky Sundquist "Our Journey Guide, Kevin Messmer "Mr Tech Man", David Boban "The Music Man", and Melinda Hawley "The Cleaning Lady". Debbie Benson will be collecting for our "Staff Love Gift". You can give it to her in person, or you can mail it to her 2585 Tulip Lane, Hobart, In. 46342. Please have it to her by 12/22.

### Books Needed!

The Book Nook is filled a couple of times a week and your donations are greatly appreciated. We will gladly take any of your old books to share with others! We accept books for people of all ages.



### Boomwhackers Rehearse for Advent!

The Boomwhackers Musical Group will be rehearsing for Christmas on 11/29 & 12/6 at 6 P.M. If you are interested in learning more, please see Rev. Becky.



### Game Group

Take some time out of your busy schedules to have some fun! The Game group has a ball every time they gather AND its not just limited to the ladies! If you are looking for some fellowship with some all star people and a relaxed atmosphere with classic games, then check out the Game Group! We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 10:00 to 12:00. Bring your favorite game - bring a friend - and come join us for fun and fellowship. See Debbie Benson for details. There is always a lot of laughter and fun!



*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of<sup>1</sup>Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. Isaiah 11:10*

Dear FCC Sisters and Brothers,

We are nearing the end of 2023 and looking ahead to 2024. In the middle of these markers of time, we are encountering once again, these Christmas gifts that have become a “regular” part of our Christmas season. What do they really mean to you, especially as we look forward to a fresh start? What if we learned to hope with everything we’ve got? What if we worked toward peace with as much passion as we hold for our families? What if we found joy because we learned that we deserve to feel it to the very marrow of our bones? What if we loved like Jesus loves us? It can be hard to answer those questions for ourselves. Sometimes we start off thinking well that is too hard to answer so I will skip it. Perhaps we get a glimmer of an answer but we are unsure of where that could lead. There are so many what ifs, but our “what ifting” is preventing us from experiencing the greatest gifts Jesus wants for us to know.

There is a lot of uncertainty in our world and a lot to be afraid of. What if instead we focus our eyes on the joy that is bursting forth right before us? What if we actually look to the future trusting in these blessings Jesus brings? None of us knows what the future holds and sometimes bad things do happen, but in the middle of it all these profound blessings of hope, peace, love, and joy are giving us the life Jesus wants for us.

Let’s keep dreaming together.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Becky

### **Grief Share Group Coming Soon**

Coming in February 2024, Rev. Becky will be offering a grief support group. More information will be coming in January, but if you know someone who could benefit from this ministry, please let them know.



A SERVICE OF HOPE & HEALING  
FOR THOSE WHO FIND THE HOLIDAYS DIFFICULT

# THE LONGEST NIGHT BLUE CHRISTMAS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST  
7 P.M.  
IN-PERSON & ONLINE

❄️ ❄️ ❄️

# January 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	<b>1</b> New Year's Day  Happy New Year! 2024 Blessings!  (Office Closed)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Game Group 10-12	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> The Feast of the Epiphany  B: Carol Coolidge
<b>7</b> Epiphany Sunday Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Stitch of Time 10-12  B: Carol Chandler	<b>10</b> Senior Food Box Distribution 10-12  B: Tim Brown	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. Elder's Meeting	<b>15</b> Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	<b>16</b> Stitch of Time 10-12  Board Meeting 7 P.M.	<b>17</b> Game Group 10-12	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M.	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> B; Grace Kristoff	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Amazing Race @ Ridge UMC 6-8 P.M.	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Disciples Café 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

### Poinsettia Order Form

If you wish to purchase a Christmas poinsettia to honor the memory of a loved one, you may place your order with Linda Messmer. Please use the following form (the form will also be in the weekly bulletin):

I would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia plants at \$8.00 each in memory  
of: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

Please give the form to and make checks payable to Linda Messmer.

**Deadline is December 17<sup>th</sup>!**



# New Year's Eve Sunday!

GIVE THANKS FOR THE BLESSINGS  
OF 2023 & MAKE WAY FOR 2024!  
12/31 10:30 A.M.

*The Feast of the Epiphany*  
*Saturday, January 6th*



*Epiphany Sunday*  
*January 7th*

## Youth Corner

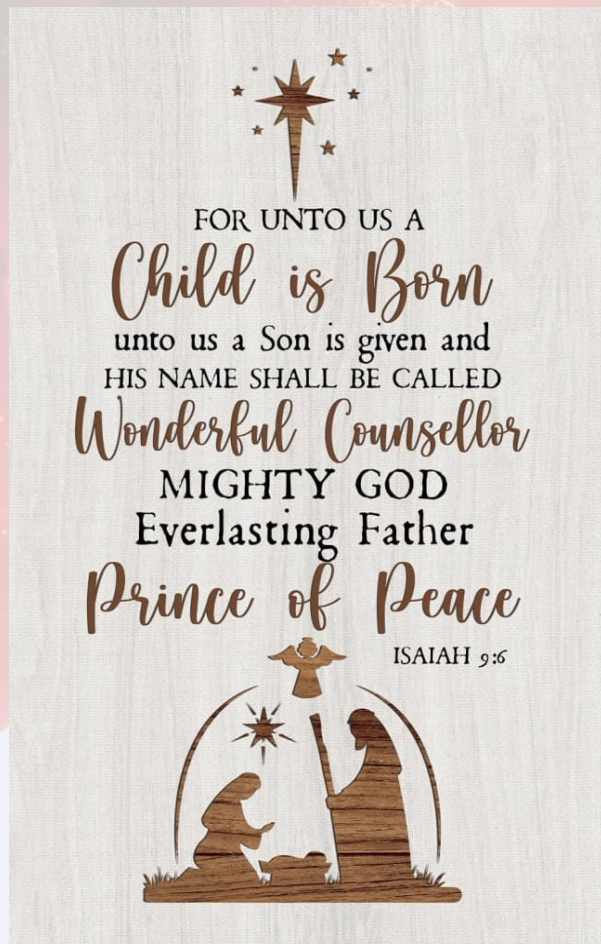
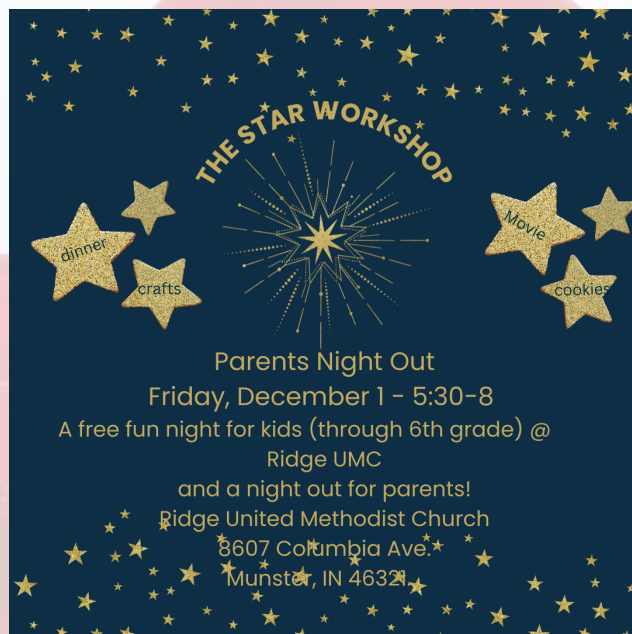
### Weekly Youth Group

In partnership with Ridge United Methodist Church, FCC offers weekly youth group meetings for Senior High & Junior High Youth  
every Sunday  
5-6:30 P.M.

Check with Rev. Becky about each weekly gathering as sometimes we will be doing an activity somewhere outside of the church.

In February, we will be going on an over-night ski trip!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 17th for a Christmas Party and Nativity Escape Room!  
Bring a gag gift to share  
(no more than \$25)!



## THE AMAZING RACE

A Night of Thrilling Family Fun to  
cure the Winter Blues!

Friday, January 26  
6-8

Will you dare?



*Christmas Eve* ❄️  
*Candlelight & Communion*  
*Worship*

❄️ SUNDAY,  
DECEMBER 24TH  
10:30 A.M.  
10:00 P.M.

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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

