

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Highland, IN

THE MESSENGER

Fall 2026



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
9540 FIFTH ST. HIGHLAND, IN
2026 Animal Blessing
October 18, 2026
4P.M.

WWW.FCCHIGHLAND.NET

ALL ANIMALS AND THEIR OWNERS ARE INVITED TO THIS BLESSING!
ALL CRITTERS MUST BE SAFELY SECURED OR ON LEASHES.
WE ASK THAT BITING ANIMALS USE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS OR BRING A COLLAR OR
SPECIAL TOY TO HAVE BLESSED ON ITS BEHALF. PICTURES OF YOUR BELOVED PETS
MAY BE BLESSED AS WELL, ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE NERVOUS BY NATURE.

LET US HONOR THE SACRED WORTH OF ALL ANIMALS - FURRY,
SPIKY FEATHERY, HAIRY SLIMY, FLUFFY, AND SCALY!

NEW THIS YEAR:
THERE WILL BE A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE
FOR OUR PETS WHO HAVE
CROSSED THE RAINBOW BRIDGE.



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH · HIGHLAND

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY



Why So Many Bibles?

A three-week study on how Scripture came to us — and why
every translation reads a little differently.

WEEK 1
Oct 11

WEEK 2
Oct 18

WEEK 3
Oct 25

Sundays · 7:00 P.M. · Zoom only

Zoom link will be emailed each week.

Table of Contents

- October calendar (pg. 2)
- Prayer concerns (pg. 4)
- Serving Schedule (pg. 5)
- Mission & Ministry opportunities (pg. 6-7)
- Remarks from Rebecca (pg. 8)
- November calendar (pg. 9)

Sundays @ FCC
Disciples Café & Youth Sunday School
9:30 A.M.

Worship
10:30 AM



www.fcchighland.net



219-341-4105



9540 Fifth St. Highland, IN
46322

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Homeless Lunch B: David Boban
4 World Communion Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Youth Group 5-7 P.M.	5 B: Bradley Brown, Wells Sundquist	6 Stitch of Time 10-12	7 Game Group 10-12	8 Lunch with the Pastor 10-12	9	10 B: Mia Higginbotham
11 Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Bible Study: 7 P.M.	12	13	14 Senior Food Box Distribution 10-12	15	16 A: Mike & Valerie Pennanen	17
18 Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Animal Blessing: 4 P.M. Bible Study: 7 P.M. B: Patrick Barczak, Kathy Jage, & Valerie Pennanen A: Brad & Carol Chandler	19	20 Stitch of Time 10-12 Board Meeting 7:00 P.M.	21 Game Group 10-12	22	23	24
25 Spooky Faith Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Cong. Meeting Bible Study: 7 P.M. B: Jeff Messmer	26	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween

FAITHFUL FCC KIDS CORNER



FYI



Annual Pumpkin Carving Contest For KIDS ONLY this year!

Pumpkins will be available after church
on 10/25 to take home and carve as
uniquely as you would like.
Bring it back on 11/1 and the pumpkins
will be voted on during the chili cook-off!



Sunday School

Join Pastor Becky in her office on
Sunday mornings at 9:30 for
Sunday School.

We will start with studying
"Following Jesus."

We will conclude at 10:15.

We know families are busy,
so just come when you can!



Color and cut out
Flat Jesus
and take pics
of him wherever
you feel the presence
of God! Share your
pics with Pastor
Becky!



Youth Group @ FCC!

Youth Group (Intermediate/Middle School
age) at FCC is **October 4th & November 8th**
from 5-7!

Once a month, there will be a youth group
"meeting" with study, activities, and dinner.

We will have tons of fun!

There will be a parent meeting on 10/4
complete with dinner, activities, and games.



Praying for our Friends & Family

Members of the Congregation:

Dolores Cave, Don Dean, Ashley Moss, Dave Frost, Natalie Peplin, David Michalak, Dorothy Barrett, Lori Bigger, Ron Higginbotham, Tom and Elaine Crary, Delia Helpingstine, Tom Cushing.

Friends of the Congregation: (Please let me know if there are updates to this ongoing list) The Yuris Family, The Murphy Family, Jerry Zolmer, Liz Griffin, Taft/Weber Family, Marian Huizenga, Bill Murphy, Matt Murphy, Spencer Gordon, Michael Cole, Chris Cole, Tim Gasaway, Anne Fairfield, Kaden & Mara Luthringer, Jim Moss, Dave Horvat, Scott Bridges, David Cole, David Harding, Pam Wynne, Tony, Steve and Bethany Chemeil, Family of Dominick Certa, Lisa, Michael John, Elizabeth and Chris, Madge, Charles Fliter, Marie, Carol, Jasper, John, Lee Howard, Jack, Chris, Ashley Cushing, Martha & Flora Espinoza, Paul Mile, Pat Gragido, Hailey, Michael Beres, Joe, Phyllis, Arianna Rivera, Fabiola, Valerie, Kelly Cooper, Fabiola, Kim Fesler, Thomas, Tina, Carol Sundquist, Canon Surane, Pastor Lavonne, Kelly Cooper, Craig, Dale, Matthew Kristoff;

The Wider Community: War in Ukraine and War in Iran; Unrest in the U.S.; people struggling with food insecurity; Storm recovery in the region; Nepal/Tibet flood and landslide;

Joys: Welcome baby Della! Ryba Family Dedications; Samantha Boab's flute playing in worship.

Fifth Street Figures

Description	Offering
Worship (7/26/2026)	\$840.00
Nursery Refresh	\$200.00
Church Mutual	\$2743.75
General Assembly Host Stipend	\$150.00
TOTAL	\$3933.75
Worship (8/2/2026)	\$1776.02
Nursery Refresh	\$100.00
TOTAL	\$1876.02
Worship (8/9/2026)	\$332.42
Nursery Refresh	\$24.00
Craft Ministry	\$100.00
TOTAL	\$456.42
Worship (8/16/2026)	\$1691.72
Worship (8/23/2026)	\$815.83
Church Mutual	\$1.00
TOTAL	\$816.83
Worship (8/30/2026)	\$980.83

Fifth Street Figures Continued...

Worship (9/6/2026)	\$1455.83
Worship (9/13/2026)	\$2061.72
Reconciliation Offering	\$25.00
TOTAL	\$2086.72
Worship (9/20/2026)	\$1350.83

July 2026 Figures

General Fund

Income: \$9,483.38

Tsfr. from Capital Fund: \$5,500.00

Expenditures: \$13,211.65

Outreach

Income: ---

Expenditures: ---

August 2026 Figures

General Fund

Income: \$5,836.00

Tsfr. from CCF-SASS: \$5,500.00

Expenditures: \$9,482.98

Outreach

Income: ---

Expenditures: ---

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 Brenda Michalak (who is filling in as Treasurer for Delia Helpingstine) and she will be happy to share that information with you.

The mission of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Highland, IN: "to celebrate and share Christ's love though feeding the Body and the Soul."

This amendment was made in 2023 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.

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
9540 Fifth St. Highland, IN 46322 (219)924-5400
www.fcchighland.net email:
fcchighland9540@gmail.com

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



Pastor Office Hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday by appointment

Pastor Rebecca Sundquist
Cell phone: (217)341-4105 Email:
becky.sundquist@gmail.com

YouTube: First Christian Church Highland IN
Facebook: First Christian Church Highland IN
We are a Green Chalice Congregation.

News Around the Region

REGIONAL
OCTOBER 2-3, 2026 *Assembly*

INDIANA DISCIPLES
BUILDING TOGETHER
IN LOVE

EPHESIANS 4:16
From him the whole body,
joined and held together
by every supporting ligament,
grows and builds itself up in
love, as each part does its work.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

DAY	TIME	EVENT
FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER	9 AM - 4 PM	CLERGY RETREAT
	7 PM - 9 PM	ALL ASSEMBLY CONCERT At Avon Christian Church
SATURDAY 3 OCTOBER	9 AM - 4 PM	ALL ASSEMBLY CELEBRATION Fellowship, Bible Study, Worship, Plenary & Business, Exhibits & More At Geist Christian Church Promise Rd Campus

REGISTER NOW

Please pray for the following congregations in the Dunes Area who are in Search & Call: FCC Valpo and FCC Mishawaka. Please hold all of our sister churches of the area in prayer for ongoing ministry and community connection.

Serving Schedule

October 4, 2026
Elder: Sharon Worrell-Schroader
Deacon: Mia Higginbotham
Acolyte: Dean Perez

October 11, 2026
Elder: Brenda Michalak
Deacon: Don Dean
Acolyte: Ally Messmer

October 18, 2026
Elder: Debbie Benson
Deacon: Ashley Moss
Acolyte: Daniel Perez

October 25, 2026
Elder: Mary Ellen Carpenter
Deacon: Brad Chandler
Acolyte: Cameron Ferguson

November 1, 2026
Elder: Delia Helpingstine
Deacon: Rhonda Ryba
Acolyte: Wells Sundquist

November 8, 2026
Elder: Sharon Worrell-Schroader
Deacon: Linda Messmer
Acolyte: Dean Perez

November 15, 2026
Elder: Brenda Michalak
Deacon: David Michalak
Acolyte: Ally Messmer

November 22, 2026
Elder: Debbie Benson
Deacon: Tania Messmer
Acolyte: Daniel Perez

November 29, 2026
Elder: Mary Ellen Carpenter
Deacon: Marc Obregon
Acolyte: Cameron Ferguson



Ministry Opportunities

Youth Group Meals Needed!

If you are able to provide a meal for youth group, please see the sign up sheet in the office! We will only need food for 5-6 people.

Lunch Bunch News

2026 Serving Dates:

October 3

December 5.

If you are interested in being a part of this amazing team of servants, see Sharon W.S.!

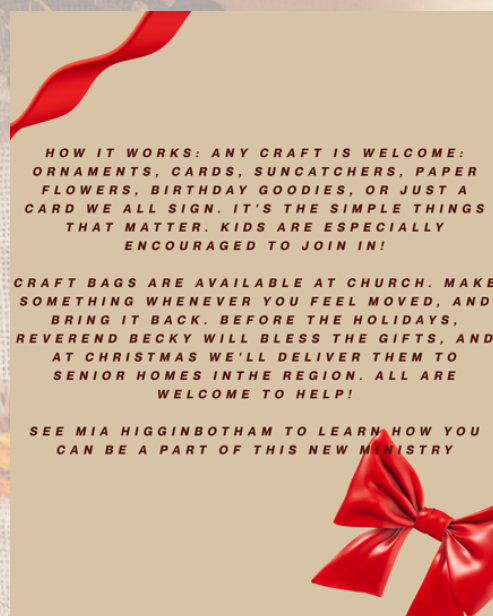
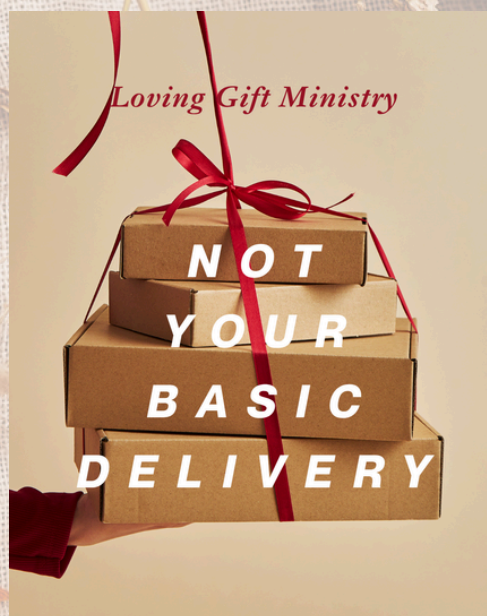
Senior Food Box Ministry

The SFBM meets every 2nd Wednesday of the month to distribute food for seniors in need. See Debbie for more information!

Upcoming Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.

Opportunities to Serve



2026 Reconciliation Ministry - Special Offering



Restoration - Hope in Action

Sunday, September 27th - Sunday, October 4th

Stitch of Time Update! New Schedule!

The SOT knitting group will meet every 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month. Join this knitting/crocheting ministry on Tuesdays - October 6th & 20th and November 3rd & 17th 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. Join us!

THANKSGIVING SPECIAL OFFERING



SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION

Bringing Students and Resources Together

Word of the Year



News from the Pews

Labyrinth Updates

Due to the August 11th storm, the labyrinth is temporarily closed until it can be repaired.

Until then, it is unsafe to walk it. In the meantime, Rev. Becky will continue to provide labyrinth walk guides using a finger labyrinth. May they your fingers do the walking as your heart opens to the movement of the Spirit.



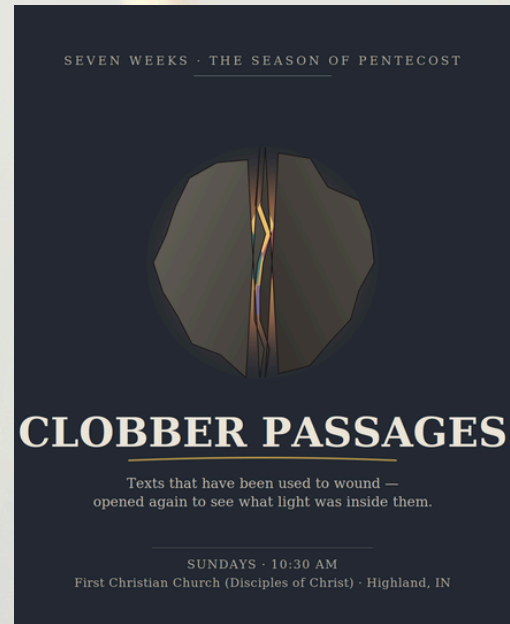
Address Updates:

Dorothy Barrett's new address:
Brentwood of Hobart 1420 St. Mary's Circle Hobart,
IN 46342

Linnea Sundquist
Studebaker West, Rm. 788
Ball State University
1401 W. Neely Ave.
Muncie, IN 47306

Olivia Sundquist
321 S. Walnut St., Apt. 315
Bloomington, IN 47406

**There will be a
congregational
meeting after worship on
10/25 to vote on the 2027
budget.**

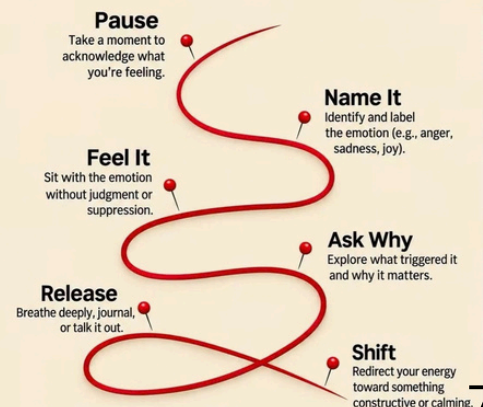


CLOBBER PASSAGES

Beginning this October, we will embark on a seven-week series called, "The Clobber Passages" to complete the season of Pentecost.

Certain verses have been swung like weapons for so long that we stopped asking whether they were ever meant to be. This Pentecost, we're taking seven of them down from the shelf — texts that have been used across generations to wound the LGBTQIA+ community, women, immigrants, and others pushed to the margins — and reading them again, slowly, in context, alongside the rest of scripture's own witness. Some of what we find will be uncomfortable. Some of it will be a relief. All of it is an invitation to see what these texts actually say, and to let the Spirit that fell on "all flesh" at Pentecost have the last word.

HOW TO PROCESS YOUR FEELINGS



STEWARDSHIP 2026



Room at the Table

All things come from you, and of your own have we given you.

1 CHRONICLES 29:14 · FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Chili Cook Off 2026

Sunday, November 1, 2026
after worship

Enter your favorite chili recipe to
win the coveted Wooden Spoon
Award and bragging rights!



All Saints Sunday

November 1, 2026
Remembering loved
ones who have gone
before us.

love

If you have saints you would like honored who have died this year, please give important dates and pictures to Rev. Becky no later than October 25th. Members are already taken care of!

There will be a time to honor ANY saints you wish to honor regardless of when they made their heavenly journey home.



Thanksgiving Sunday

November 22, 2026

Holy Gratitude



GRATITUDE HOLY HIKE

Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve
Chesterton, IN
November 25, 2026
10:00 A.M.

www.fcchigland.net



WE GIVE THANKS FOR OUR VETERANS

November 8, 2026

"The greatest among you will be your servant." Matthew 23:11

Join us in honoring those who have served on Veterans Sunday.

Spiritual direction with Rev. Mike Pennanen

Are you looking for a deeper awareness of God's presence and leading in your life? Rev. Mike Pennanen is prepared to go alongside you on your journey toward greater depth. At one time the pastor of First Christian Church (1993–2004), Rev.

Mike is now retired from full-time ministry. He assists Westminster Presbyterian Church (Munster) as their Parish Associate. Rev. Mike earned his certificate in spiritual direction (companionship) from the Claret Center in Chicago. As spiritual director, his role would be to support you in noticing signs of divine presence and promptings in any dimension of your life. With Rev. Mike as guide, the work would be yours; it would honor the unique character of your spiritual experience. The hour-long sessions, once monthly, would include a modest charge, negotiable based on your financial situation. Though he doesn't have his own office,

Rev. Mike can arrange to meet with you at a mutually accessible location such as Westminster in Munster or at First Christian. If necessary, you can arrange to meet by Zoom.

One exception applies here, due to Rev. Mike's previous role as FCC pastor. Out of respect for ministerial ethics, he will not meet with anyone for whom he was once pastor. Even if you didn't become a member until after he left, he would only meet with you if referred by Pastor Becky.

Does this opportunity pique your interest? Rev. Mike would be willing to have an initial conversation at no charge, by Zoom or in person, to help you assess whether spiritual direction holds promise for you. For that matter, he'll meet

with any of your friends who's curious to learn more about it. You can reach him at finnfriends@att.net.

Interfaith

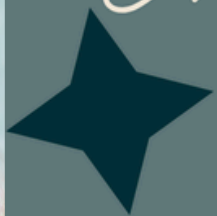
Thanksgiving SERVICE



24 November, 2026
7:00 pm

Location TBD

Mindful Meditation Group



*Tuesday Evenings
in Chesterton
6:30 P.M. - 7:45 P.M.*

(See Rev. Becky for address.)

Storm Damage Update

I hope everyone has recovered from the storms on August 11th. It has been a trying time for everyone. The church was lucky that no damage was done to the building; however, we had a lot of tree damage and damage to the Labyrinth. A huge branch, the size of a tree, fell down on the Labyrinth taking out the arbor entrance, bench and lighting. We hired a tree service to remove the entire tree as the damage compromised the safety of the remaining tree. The tree was moved to the street for pick up by the town. The town picked up part of the pile, but we had to move the pile closer to the street so it could remove the rest. The equipment the tree company used to move the tree then caused more damage to the Labyrinth and yard. It's heart breaking to see our lovely Labyrinth in such terrible shape. The company that installed the Labyrinth has given us an estimate of \$8,000 to restore it. We are currently looking into a grants and other forms of assistance through the denomination to help with the repairs. Our lawn company, Reliable Maintenance, will take care of the yard after the Labyrinth work is completed. There were a lot of broken branches to the front yard trees that we took care of ourselves. The line of trees along the back of the property are badly leaning and will need some work. We don't have a timeline for the repairs to the Labyrinth but we will keep you updated.

Ray & Debbie Benson

Autumn
shows us how
beautiful it is to
let things go. 

Lunch with the Pastor!
October 8th &
November 5th
12:00 P.M.
Les Cafe in Highland

Pastor's Pen Dear FCC Friends & Family,

What a summer it has been. Again and again, we watched the sky darken, listened to the wind rise, and wondered what we would find in the morning. Many of us cleared fallen branches, waited out power outages, and checked on neighbors. Here at church, the storms left their mark on our labyrinth and its entry trellis, a place so many of us go to slow down and breathe.

So as we turn toward October and November, I'll confess my hope: I'm praying for a gentler season. Crisp mornings.

Still evenings. Leaves that fall on their own schedule instead of being torn loose all at once. I think we could all use some quiet.

I've been sitting with the story of the disciples in the boat in Mark 4, crying out to a sleeping Jesus while the waves crashed over the sides. When Jesus wakes, he speaks to the wind: "Peace! Be still!" and the sea grows calm. What strikes me is that Jesus was in the boat the whole time. The storm didn't mean they had been abandoned. Calm came, but presence came first.

I saw a small sign of that presence this summer. Near the damaged trellis, a hummingbird came to feed at the honeysuckle, completely unbothered by the broken wood around it. Life keeps finding its way back, and joy doesn't wait for everything to be repaired.

For the final weeks of the Pentecost season, we begin a new sermon series called "Clobber Passages." Together we'll look honestly at scriptures that have been used as weapons against women, immigrants, people of color, and others pushed to the margins. Some of these texts have caused real storms in people's lives, and in our own. My hope is that we can read them carefully, in context, and hear the God who calls every one of us beloved. These may be tender conversations, and I invite you to bring your questions, your history, and your heart.

And as the harvest season arrives, we're inviting everyone into our stewardship campaign, "Room at the Table." It celebrates this community, where there is always another chair and always enough to share. Please watch for more information and prayerfully consider how you'll help set the table for the year ahead.

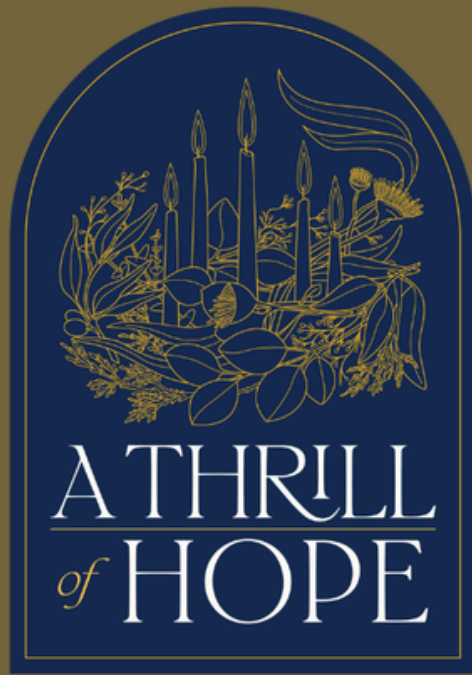
As we move through All Saints' and toward Thanksgiving, may this season bring you rest after the wind, gratitude for what has held firm, and the steady assurance that we are never in the boat alone.

With love and hope for a calmer fall.

Grace and Peace
Pastor Becky

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 All Saints Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Chili Cook-Off	2	3 Election Day Stitch of Time 10-12	4 Game Group 10-12	5 Lunch with the Pastor 12:00 P.M.	6	7
8 Veterans Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Youth Group 5-7 P.M.	9	10	11 Veterans Day Senior Food Box Distribution 10-12	12 B: Dawn Wolak	13	14
15 Commitment Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30	16	17 Stitch of Time 10-12	18 Game Group 10-12	19	20	21 B: Natalie Peplin
22 Celebration Sunday Thanksgiving Sunday Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30 Decorating the Church for Christmas!	23	24 Interfaith Thanksgiving Service 7:00 P.M. B: Amelia Bridges	25 Holy Hike: 10 A.M.	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
29 Advent 1 Sunday School & Disciples Cafe: 9:30 Worship: 10:30	30					11



Advent 2026

We live in a weary world, fractured by division and despair. Yet across generations and cultures, humanity clings to the hope of restoration, and God continues to draw near. Advent reminds us that suffering is not the final word.

The Messiah has saved us.

The Messiah is saving us.

The Messiah will save us.

On this journey toward Christmas, we watch for God's saving work unfolding all around us, bringing healing where there is hurt, courage where there is fear, and hope where there is despair.

The miracle of Immanuel did not end in Bethlehem.

The thrill of hope persists.

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Phone: 219-924-5400

E-mail:

fcchighland9540@gmail.com

Website: www.fcchighland.net

Please
place
stamp
here

