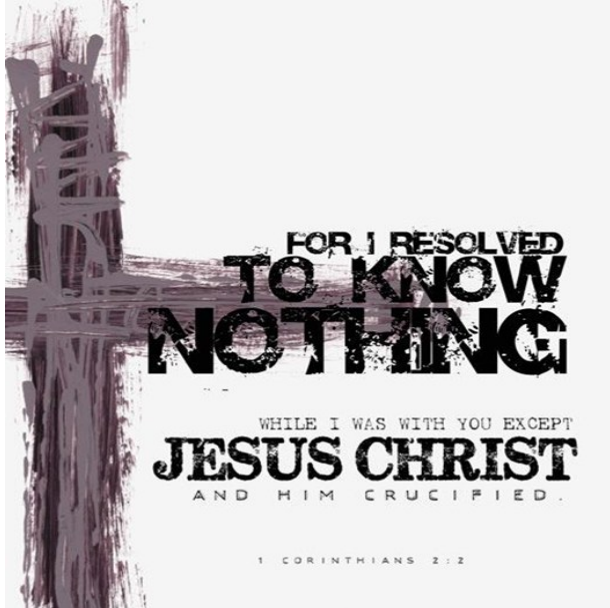




CONNECTING POINT

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

A New Year's Resolution Worth Keeping



I confess. I gave up on New Year's resolutions years ago. I long suspected what has now been verified: most resolutions have either been broken or discarded by the second weekend in January! But I went out on a high note, keeping my two last resolutions for the entire year. I resolved to eat more chocolate and to lose weight – and I did it! How, you may ask? The chocolate was Hershey's and the weight loss catalyst was Ozempic, but it still counts.

The Apostle Paul also made a decision he resolutely kept. He wrote this to the Corinthians: ***"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified"*** (***1 Corinthians 2:2***). Let's unpack that.

As a culture, the Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom and their eloquent articulation of that wisdom. Paul rejected this as a means to proclaim the gospel (***cf. 1 Cor. 2:1***). He would simply declare the testimony of a loving, faithful and unchanging God. Paul spoke from a wisdom based on divine revelation and not human astuteness. He would express clearly if not eloquently one central truth – Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The truth of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection was the lens through which Paul viewed all of life. He made it the core of his message, even knowing it would make the gospel more difficult for people to embrace.

"The message of the gospel is its most repelling aspect. Paul did not proclaim Jesus Christ as a great teacher, example, or leader; he proclaimed him as the one who had been crucified" (Fischer). It was, in Paul's words, "a stumbling block". (1 Cor. 1:21).

The adage says, *"the more things change, the more things stay the same."* We see that clearly in people's response to the gospel. The Jews in Paul's audience stumbled over the shame of a cursed death on the cross (***cf. Gal. 3:13***). The Gentiles in his audience stumbled over the sheer folly of declaring crucifixion as the chosen method of salvation (***1 Cor. 1:23***). The cross was and is a stumbling block. A loving God seems more acceptable than a crucified one.

Do we downplay the cross because it is objectionable to our audience? I think Paul would answer, ***"By no means!" (Rom. 6:2, 6:15, 7:13, 11:1)***. Instead, we embrace the stumbling block with the same resolve Paul evidenced. He resolved; he decided (note past tense) to have no other focal point to his message. It is not that he erased all else from his mind but would preach about the centrality of Jesus Christ.

My history with New Year's resolutions was a checkered one. Perhaps that explains why I gave up on them. But I think I'm ready to make one again – to lift up Jesus to this generation. This resolve comes with a promise: ***"But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself"*** (***John 12:32***). This resolution won't reduce my waistline but will expand the kingdom of God. That's a benefit lasting forever!

Happy New Year,

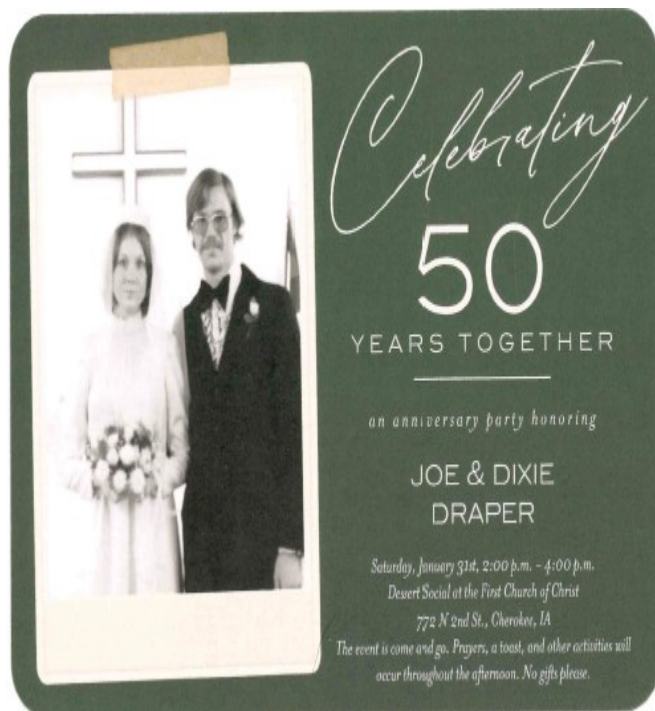
Pastor David





Proverbs: Walking in Wisdom

The biblical book of Proverbs is in a section of the Bible that is often referred to as Wisdom Literature. Wisdom is a main theme in the book and biblical wisdom is so needed and helpful for living a healthy and fruitful life. This winter on Sunday mornings we will study several themes that run through the book of Proverbs. We will come to understand that wisdom begins with a comprehension that true wisdom does not lie in us, but outside us. Wisdom involves the humility of recognizing God's deity and our finitude. Come learn through the wisdom of the book of Proverbs how to better know yourself, better know how the world works, and better know the God who wants you to experience deep abundant living.



If you have a report that you would like to have included in the annual report, please get it to Julie by Monday, January 12th so it can be included. You can send an email with an attachment (or just in the body of the email) or type or write it out (legibly, please) and put it on the desk in the office by the computer monitors.

Thank you!!



Spiritual Healthy Goals

Read John 14:15-17 (ESV)

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

Reflect

This New Year, how can you resolve to love God more and obey His commands?

Happy New Year! Despite any challenges of the past year, if you are reading this then you have been blessed to see another year. What are you planning to do with this gift? Do you have any resolutions for 2026?

Getting healthier is the most common New Year's Resolution. Many people pledge to eat healthier, exercise more, and lose weight. But what about your spiritual health? What about spiritual fitness? Getting physically healthy is important, sure. But it is temporary. In 1 Timothy 4:8, Paul wrote: "For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the one to come." In other words, physical health is only of value here and now, but spiritual health is valuable now and forever.

If I were to set a goal to get into better spiritual shape, my goal would say "To know and love Jesus more and to become more like Him." If you followed along with us as we studied Jesus' life this past fall, I hope it resulted in you knowing Jesus more which in turn has increased your love for Him. In today's verses, Jesus said that those who love Him obey His commands.

If you are a parent, you understand this. Nothing is more disheartening than to have your kids say, "I love you" but then continue to disobey you at every opportunity. You understand that the greatest expression of love your children could give to you is to obey your rules because they are for their own good. Employers also experience this frustration when their employees say "Ok, boss" to their faces but then turn around and disregard their orders.

In Luke 6:46, Jesus said, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord' and not do what I tell you?" In other words, why do we call Jesus our Master and our God if we don't follow His orders? Why do we call ourselves Christians if we aren't seeking to follow Christ?

Friends, this New Year, I pray that you resolve to make Your spiritual fitness a priority. I pray that you would know Him more, which leads to loving Him more, which leads to increased obedience. The more time we spend with Him, the more like Him we become.

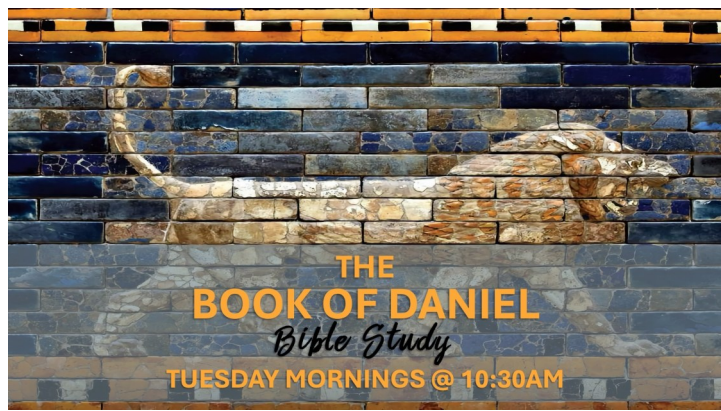
But be encouraged. You do not have to do this on your own. In today's verses, Jesus said that He will send us a Helper who will be with us forever. This Helper is the Holy Spirit! We have been given God's Spirit! He resides in all believers forever. Jesus called the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth." Jesus elaborated on the work of the Holy Spirit in John 16:7-15. In John 16:13, Jesus said, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

As you make plans and set goals for the New Year, pray. Commit to spending time in the Word and in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit for help and guidance. Our spiritual fitness should be our number one priority. But we don't have to go it alone. We have a Helper.

Pray

Lord, thank You for another New Year. As I make my plans and set my goals, keep my focus on You. By the power of Your Spirit, guide me in truth and strengthen my resolve to know You more. May I be more like You at the end of 2026 than I am today. May I continually demonstrate my love for You by obeying Your Word. Amen.





How do we faithfully follow the Lord while living in a place and culture opposed to the very things of God?

That's precisely the question Daniel faced. In this Bible study through the 12 chapters in the book of Daniel, you'll discover how Daniel resisted the pressure to comply.

The book of Daniel is a fascinating mix of stories about Daniel in exile and his prophecies about coming kingdoms and the end times. This Bible study explores Daniel's life in Babylon and his prophetic visions in which earthly rulers and heavenly powers collide.

*We are resuming our study on **TUESDAY morning, January 6th** at 10:30 a.m.*

Hope to see YOU there!



From the Church Secretary:

The holidays are over and a new year is begun. If you need an announcement on the screen or in the bulletin, please get the information to the office by close of business on Wednesday before the you want the announcement to run. And let me know how long you would like it to run.

I'm still in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays about 9 am and will be there until the day's work is done (1-4 hours typically). If you need something and I am not here, just leave a note on the desk . Thanks.

Julie

Church Election Results

All nominees on the 2026 Election Ballot were elected last Sunday morning, December 14, to serve beginning January 1, 2026.

Thank you so much for your vote of confidence!

Those elected to serve include:

Elder

Larry Heschke

For Deacon

Tom Mortenson

Mark Patten

Kevin Schmillen

For Trustee

Mark Casey

Guy Fishman

Please remember these men and our church in your prayers.

New Officers for 2026

Chairman – Larry Heschke

Vice Chairman – Mike Sparks

Secretary – Tom Mortenson



Thursday is the beginning of a new year and the perfect time to start a Bible-reading program. The absolute best place to find one is the app: [YouVersion](#). We highly recommend the **Proverbs 31-day** plan for everyone as you will be reading the corresponding Proverb for each day of the month. **Psalms and Proverbs** is another great one. They also have **Read Through The Bible plans** and many more. Get started preparing today.

Reading the Bible every day will have a big impact on your life and help make the new year ahead your best ever.

FCC SHUT-INS

The Gardens

Darlene Nelson (#108) 712-434-5311
Delores Wheeler (#402) 712-229-5418

Heartland Care – Marcus

Charlotte Barnes (#209) 712-229-3244
Della Rupp (#201)
Connie Johnson (#212, Assisted Living)

Accura – Cherokee

Randy Cox (#206)
Glenn Wallace (#206) 919-815-0334

The Beck

Joanne Nelson (#106) 712-229-9202

Home

Bea Carver 1123 W. Bluff St. Cherokee 712-225-2656	Claudia Schulke 5503 Gordon Dr., Apt 208 Sioux City, IA 51106 claudiams@midco.net (She would appreciate a visit if you go to Sioux City.)
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UPDATED

INFORMATION

It's a new year. If you aren't sure if your contact information is correct, please call Julie when she is in the office on Tuesday or Thursday morning to check, or take a form from the table in the foyer, complete it and leave it in the office. Thank you!

Let's Celebrate

Birthdays

7th—Izabelle Stephenson
11th—Marcia Nelson
16th—Jeanna Morgan & Nancy Nelson
24th—Mark Casey
25th—Josiah Rosentrater
30th—Chris Weinreich
31st—Devin Scott



Anniversary

31st—Joe & Dixie Draper (50 years)

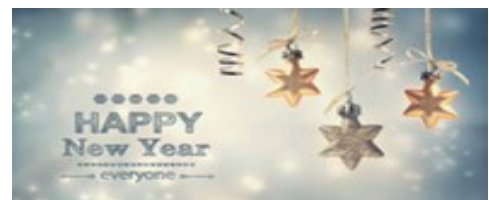
If you have a January birthday (or anniversary), and I missed getting you on the list, please let me know and I will get our records updated. I apologize if I did miss someone. Thank you. *Julie*



MCS Birthday Party
January 10th
Kirk Nelson hosting

Weekly / Monthly Activities

- ☐ **Bible Study** - Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.
- ☐ **Bondage No More** - Tuesdays 6:45 p.m.
- ☐ **Homemakers** - 2nd Thursday 9:30 a.m.
- ☐ **Scout Troop 107** - Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.
- ☐ **Bible Buddies** - Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.
- ☐ **Quilt Batts Meetings** - 3rd Tuesday 7:00 p.m.
- ☐ **Quilt Batts Connections (Sewing Days)** - First Weekend after the Tuesday Meeting (Friday @ 9 a.m. & Saturday all day)



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WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE

January 2026

4	11	18	25
Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Dixie Draper	Angela Hall
Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Dixie Draper	Angela Hall
Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion
Kirk Nelson	Larry Heschke	David Hall	Kevin Schmillen
Communion Coordinator	Communion Coordinator	Communion Coordinator	Communion Coordinator
Mike Sparks	Larry Heschke	Kirk Nelson	Barry Nelson
Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message
Mike Sparks	Kirk Nelson	David Hall	Guy Fishman
Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader
David Hall	David Hall	David Hall	Sharon Henkel
Piano	Piano	Piano	Piano
N/A	Eleanor Johnston	N/A	N/A
Singers	Singers	Singers	Singers
Angela Hall	Larry Heschke	Angela Hall	Nancy Nelson
	Nancy Nelson		Larry Heschke
PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint
Nancy Nelson	Braella Inman	Nancy Nelson	Braella Inman
Sound	Sound	Sound	Sound
Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks	Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks
Janitorial	Janitorial	Janitorial	Janitorial
Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman
Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman

BOARD OF ELDERS & DEACONS

MONTHLY MEETING



January 11, 2026

Following the Morning Worship Service

CHRISTIAN HOMEMAKERS


JANUARY 8TH, 2026

MEET AT THE CHURCH **AT 9:30** TO CARPOOL TO VISIT

SHUT INS IN CHEROKEE

THEN WE WILL GO TO WHISKEY THROTTLE FOR LUNCH


Date	Offering	Attendance
12/7/2025	\$2,079.00	On Campus: 35 Online: 31 Total: 66
12/14/2025	\$5,085.00	On Campus: 46 Online: 15 Total: 61
12/21/2025	\$9,625.00	On Campus: 71 Online: 14 Total: 85
12/28/2025	\$NA	On Campus: 20 Online: 33 Total: 53



BIBLE BUDDIES

WEDNESDAYS AT 6:30 PM
PreK - 5th Grades

First Church of Christ
772 N. 2nd Street
Cherokee, IA 51012
(712) 225-2667



BIBLE BUDDIES
Mission

Please continue to collect pull tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House. Bring them to the church anytime. Let's see if we can collect 14




Snack Donations

We are still seeking monetary donations to purchase the treats that we need for the Bible Buddies snack time each week. We have a donation container on the foyer table for your donations.

Thank you for helping making our Bible Buddies program a success.

First Church of Christ
772 N. 2nd Street
Cherokee, IA 51012
(712) 225-2667
www.cherokeefcc.com

MISSIONS THE CHURCH SUPPORTS



Handbags With Hope

Purses And Toiletries For Women In Need
Accepting Donations Of New Or Gently Used
Purses Or Handbags And Toiletry Items
To Fill Our Handbags With Hope
To Bless Women Who Are Struggling
From Abuse And Addiction

Items Needed

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Mouthwash
- Deodorant
- Pads
- Tampons
- Lotion
- Body Wash/soap
- Shampoo
- Conditioner



For questions contact:
Minister Tamerra Henderson
(309) 231-5216
Items can be delivered to:
First Church of Christ
772 N 2nd St
Cherokee, IA 51012
Pastor David
(712) 225-2667