



# the VISITOR

December 26, 2025  
Vol. 82, No. 21

**OUR MISSION**  
To know God and  
follow Jesus Christ.

## Happening Soon

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

No Coffee Hour, Sunday School, Youth Groups  
• One Worship Service, 9:30am

### TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30-31

No Bible Study or Choir Rehearsal

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

Church Office Closed, New Year's Day

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

- Worship, 8:30 & 10:30am
- Coffee Fellowship Hour, 9:30am, YFH
- Adult Sunday School, 9:30am, Cinema

### MONDAY, JANUARY 5

- Nominating Committee, 6:30pm, Zoom

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

- Bible Study, 10:30am, Morris Parlor
- Staff Meeting, 2pm, Morris Parlor
- Special Administrative Board Meeting, 6:30pm, Morris Parlor

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

- Midweek Connect, 10:30am, Zoom
- Bible Study, 12pm, Morris Parlor
- Bell Choir Rehearsal, 5pm, 3rd Floor
- Officers Meeting, 5:30pm, Zoom
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 5:45pm, 3rd Floor

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

- Worship, 8:30 & 10:30am
- Coffee Fellowship Hour, 9:30am, YFH
- Adult Sunday School, 9:30am, Cinema
- Children's Sunday School, 9:30am, 3rd Floor
- Youth Sunday School, 9:30am, Higbee
- Chi-Rho, 4pm, YFH
- CYF, 5pm, YFH



A congregation related to  
The Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
[www.disciples.org](http://www.disciples.org)

### 1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

DECEMBER 28TH

*"A Voice Was Heard in Ramah:  
Lamentation, Violence and  
Christian Response"*

MATTHEW 2:13-23

REV. DR. TOPHER ENDRESS, PREACHING

### 2ND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

JANUARY 4TH

*"Inheritance"*

EPHESIANS 1:3-14

REV. DR. BRAD STAGG, PREACHING

## 2 WORSHIP OPTIONS

IN-PERSON AT CHURCH @ 9:30 AM  
(8:30 & 10:30 AM ON THE 4TH):

In-person worship in the Sanctuary.

AT-HOME, ONLINE: Tune in to our  
livestream on Sunday mornings on  
YouTube, or watch the  
recording of the live service—available  
on Monday via email/YouTube  
channel/FCC Facebook page.  
*"First Christian Church  
(Columbia, Missouri)"*

## Christmastime Worship

### One Worship Service on December 28

Don't forget! This Sunday, December 28 we will gather for worship for **one service at 9:30 a.m.** There will be no Sunday School or Coffee Hour on Sunday for this holiday week. We'll return to our regular worship schedule with 8:30 & 10:30 worship, adult Sunday School and coffee hour on January 4.

Children's & Youth Sunday School and Youth Groups will return on January 11.

## Undecorate the Church

The sanctuary looked absolutely amazing for the Advent and Christmas season (special shout out to **Jessica & Steve Humble and Holly & Dan Gieseke** for their impressive work with the Christmas tree), but now it's time to restore the space to its previous glory. Help us put all the decorations away for another year. We'll be gathering to "un-decorate" the church on Sunday, January 11 immediately following worship.



## Special WORSHIP SCHEDULE

## Youth Groups Return January 11

### Youth Groups Return in January

Youth Groups will return on Sunday, January 11 with Chi-Rho (Grades 6-8) meeting at 4 p.m. and CYF (Grades 9-12) at 5 p.m. in Yonker Fellowship Hall. On Sunday, January 18, CYF will meet at 5 p.m. for Burns Night prep. All youth will be "all hands on deck" for Burns Night on Saturday, January 24. The youth then will take a well-earned break on Sunday, January 25!

### Church Office Closed

Thursday, January 1

Happy New Year!



THIS IS A DOUBLE-ISSUE OF THE VISITOR!

KEEP IT HANDY UNTIL JANUARY 9.

# JANUARY

## Birthdays

**December 29** - Paula Kurtz (92!), Becky Baumgartner, Kevin Crane, Scott Schaefer  
**December 30** - Jan Davis, Jerry Miller, Fred Mottaz  
**January 1** - Eva Bright, John Clark, Steve Gieseke  
**January 3** - Debbie Potthast  
**January 4** - Paige Freed, James Hoffman  
**January 5** - Lindsey Ingebritson, Hillary Nichols  
**January 6** - Allison Hardesty  
**January 8** - Bryan Garton, Sam Pine  
**January 10** - Samantha Fullington, Ava Hoenes, Darren Pine, Cindy Rose

## Anniversaries

**December 31** - Josiah & Anne Croushore  
Rich & Pamela Hoeppner  
**January 1** - Barbara & Richard Li  
**January 5** - **John & Julie Hickey (52 years!)**  
Carla & Howard Tanzey  
James & Debbie Taylor  
**January 8** - Ryan & Stacy Silverwood

## News of the People & Places

### Prayers of Health & Healing...

- Luke Stagg has back surgery scheduled for Tuesday, December 23 at Boone Hospital.

### Thank You...

- Thank you to the amazing Advent volunteers, **Jessica & Steve Humble** and **Dan & Holly Gieseke** who arrived at the church early on Friday morning to put up our glorious Christmas Tree in time for the cantata and Christmas Eve! They hauled "the big ladder" up to the sanctuary TWICE to make sure it looked just right. Thank you all for your hard work!

## Year End Giving

Any gifts to be given for the year end should be dropped off in the church office by noon on Wednesday, December 31.



## Special Board Meeting

**Board Meeting Scheduled for January 6, 2026**

There will be a special Administrative Board meeting held on Tuesday, January 6 at 6:30 p.m. in Morris Parlor. An email with business items and a zoom link will be sent out to the board ahead of the meeting.



## Staff Christmas Fund

**Deadline for gifts on Monday, December 29**

The Administrative Dept. provides an opportunity for church members and friends to contribute to a *Staff Christmas Fund*. The fund recognizes our excellent church staff during the Christmas season for their combined efforts in helping make our church one in which we can all take great pride. Checks should be made to First Christian Church with "Staff Christmas Fund" noted in the memo line. **The deadline for contributions is Monday, December 29.** This will be included in the staff's paycheck on Friday, January 2. Your generosity will be divided evenly among the staff: ministers, office staff, music staff, and custodian. Thank you!



*Genie Rogers, Administrative Department Chair*

## Organ Renovation Update

**Grates reinstalled, scaffolding down, sanctuary ready for Christmas**

Last week, Reinhardt Construction returned to FCC to reinstall the grates in the sanctuary, take scaffolding down, and restore our sanctuary to its previous glory - and it is wonderful to have the sanctuary "back" for Christmas! A huge thanks to **Bob Hutton** and team (**Jeff Underwood, Dan Backues, Fred Mottaz, Mike Randerson**) who spent time on Tuesday afternoon dusting and cleaning the grates before they were reinstalled. Levens Organ Company will return in January to finish the work of reinstalling the organ pipes. We can't wait to have our organ back and running in the new year!



## Office Donation Bins

**Collection for Services for Independent Living**

The Church Office is collecting items for Services for Independent Living in December & January. Services for Independent Living (SIL) empowers people with disabilities, seniors, and veterans to maximize their independence



in the community. SIL is currently asking for donations of a variety of personal hygiene items, listed here: shampoo, conditioner, body wash/bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, lip balm, hand sanitizer, wet wipes, disinfectant wipes, dish soap, bed pads, and laundry soap/pods. We will donate these items at the end of January, so please consider giving generously to this collection!

# Your Support Changes Lives!



## Reflecting on the impact of youth mission trips

When I first started at FCC, one of the first tasks was figuring out if there was any way to fit in a last-minute mission trip for the youth. Typically, these events are planned 8-10 months out, but my hiring date gave us less than 3 months to pull something together. Luckily, and through the grace and influence of the Spirit, **Stacy Silverwood** agreed to help chaperone, despite having never met me!

Although I hadn't lived there for quite some time, I still knew a good amount of ministers in town and was pretty familiar with most of the major nonprofits, so I thought a trip would at least be possible. I called every church I had served in, worshiped with, or just played basketball in, and found a willing host. Then, service opportunities started to flood in. People called friends and neighbors on our behalf, and our schedule filled up completely. Despite the short planning runway, we ran out of room for all the work offered up!

Our trip quickly found a theme in "revitalization." Often in mid-to-large cities, low income neighborhoods will undergo quick turnarounds, with older homes demolished in favor of fancier apartments. This causes a spike in housing prices, which can be good for people who are able to sell, but also causes a quick rise in rent and property tax, which forces others out. There is also, as we learned, a historic connection to redlining and racial discrimination in these neighborhoods. Evansville has its share of similar problems, but one group was working to do ministry work that was "revitalizing" neighborhoods without falling into the trap of pricing residents out.

As we served alongside them, we discovered how the prayerful way they worked on homes and rebuilt in the poorest neighborhood in the city, Tepe Park, was helping decrease crime, increase school attendance, and provide safe outlets for families - all without accidentally pricing out long-term residents. When the goal was to create a community, not turn out a huge profit, they could go slower, build better relationships, and work with the neighbors to meet real needs. We got to see this work first-hand, and much of our week was spent doing physical labor and learning from these neighbors.

Two years ago, we returned to Evansville. We saw the work we began on some houses finally completed, with one we helped tear rotting walls out of transformed into a move-in ready home for a family. Walking the neighborhood was shocking in

a great way - entire blocks looked restored! As we spent another week engaging this work, we could see how building community takes not just hard work, but lots of patience.

Now, as we seek to return this summer, we are eager to see how the work we've begun has been added to by other groups in the last two years. We hope to see more transformation (and less poison ivy). Not just because this particular neighborhood in a mid-sized city two states away is somehow uniquely important, but because it speaks to the Kingdom that God offers us. As kids grow and leave for colleges or jobs near and far, they are tasked with being a living stone in God's beloved community - caring for others through hard work and relationship building. Critically, it takes lots of patience. Having a dedicated site where we have been able to see the fruit of labor and patience together is an incredible gift for our youth as they head to their next communities. I hope and trust that they will carry the lessons learned from Tepe Park to Columbia, and beyond to wherever the Spirit takes them next.

That's partly why I'm passionate about Burns Night. Yes, I love any excuse to bust out my kilt, and yes, I love the sticky toffee pudding, but really, any event that raises money to get these mission trips off the ground is worth our full attention. Burns Night is a way to showcase our youth, the work they are doing, and the ways they are bringing God's light into communities across the country. So please, come and join the fun! It supports a phenomenal group of kids doing great things. If you can volunteer on the day-of, especially in the kitchen (and washing dishes), or can help find items for the silent auction, it will go a long way toward making the night - and the trip - a great experience for all. Please reach out, I'm more than happy to get you involved, and would love to share more about this ministry!

*Topher Endress*

## Burns Night 2026

Saturday, January 24

Buy tickets now:

<https://firstchristian.org/burnsnight>



JAN. 24  
**BURNS  
NIGHT**  
DINNER AND  
CEILIHD DANCE  
@ FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

5:45-10 PM

[FirstChristian.org/BurnsNight](https://FirstChristian.org/BurnsNight)

A youth service fundraiser





Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Columbia, MO  
Permit No. 75

101 N. 10th Street  
Columbia, MO 65201  
573-449-7265  
email: [fcc@firstchristian.org](mailto:fcc@firstchristian.org)  
web: [firstchristian.org](http://firstchristian.org)

Electronic Service Requested



WEBSITE

GIVE

## First Christian Church

**Our Mission: To know God  
And follow Jesus Christ.**

### Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Brad Stagg, Senior Minister  
[brad@firstchristian.org](mailto:brad@firstchristian.org)

Rev. Dr. Topher Endress, Associate Minister  
[topher@firstchristian.org](mailto:topher@firstchristian.org)

### Music Staff

Topher Otake, Director of Music Ministry  
[totake@firstchristian.org](mailto:totake@firstchristian.org)

Dr. Rochelle Parker, Organist  
Travis McFarlane, Early Service Musician

### Mother's Day Out Pre-School

Hayley Batterson, Director  
Sam Dunnings, Assistant Director

### Columbia Older Adult Ministry

Rev. Sally Robinson, Director

### Support Staff

Maria Clark, Weekend Custodian

Justin DeWick, Business Manager  
[businessmanager@firstchristian.org](mailto:businessmanager@firstchristian.org)

Erin Perry, Office Manager  
[fcc@firstchristian.org](mailto:fcc@firstchristian.org)

## Worship Serving Schedule

**Sunday, December 28, 2025**

**OFFICE RECEPTIONIST:** Don Mosby

**WELCOME STATION:** Susan Gray

**FLOWER MINISTRY:** Dave & Debbie Potthast

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** No Coffee Hour

**EARLY SERVICE HELPERS:**

Mary & Laura Daugherty

**COMMUNION PREP:** Tori & Abby Pine

**GREETERS:** Stacy Silverwood (N. DOOR),

Ryan Silverwood (S. DOOR), Chuck Scott  
(atrium), Carrie Batterson (PORTICO)

**AV TEAM:** Cliff Judy

**LITURGIST:** TBD

**8:30 ELDER:** Mary Daugherty

**10:30 ELDERS:** Steve Evers, Tracy Evers,  
Allie Schomaker (Balcony)

**DEACONS:** The Hunsaker Team

**CHILDREN'S WORSHIP:**

No Children's Worship

**OFFERING COUNTERS:**

Sarah Storm and TBD

## Worship Serving Schedule

**Sunday, January 4, 2026**

**OFFICE RECEPTIONIST:** Tracy Fuemmeler

**WELCOME STATION:** Steve Humble

**FLOWER MINISTRY:** TBD

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:** Paula & C.K. Hoenes

**EARLY SERVICE HELPERS:**

Natalie & Richard Banard

**COMMUNION PREP:**

Amy Marrero & Ryan Stem

**GREETERS:** Steve Humble (N. DOOR),  
Jessica Humble (S. DOOR), Gerald Ramsey  
(atrium), Susan Ramsey (PORTICO)

**AV TEAM:** Chris Fuemmeler

**LITURGIST:** Paige Freed

**8:30 ELDER:** Cherry Hinderberger

**10:30 ELDERS:** Jeff Underwood, Tori Pine,  
Ryan Hunsaker (Balcony)

**DEACONS:** The Potthast Team

**CHILDREN'S WORSHIP:** Holly Gieseke

**OFFERING COUNTERS:**

Sarah Storm and Jean Juba