



Salt & Light

**Let each of you look not to your own interests,
but to the interests of others.
Phillippians 2:4**

As your new co-chairs of the Elders, Elaine and I feel blessed to have inherited a vibrant and productive group of returning elders and to add new perspectives as we bring on new elders. Carin has left some big shoes to fill, and so we've had a lot of discussions about how to make sure we continue the good work that the elders have done.

I often write down quotes that strike me, and I heard one once that has stayed with me at the back of my mind for some time. I made the mistake of never writing down who said it, and I haven't been able to track it down, but the quote is, "What makes a leader is the needs of the people."

As our church enters its eighth month without a pastor, it may be easy to think that what this church needs is a pastor. But the past few months have shown us something deeper, more meaningful, and more beautiful than that. We've created a "worship leader" position. We've taken turns being guest speakers and delivering our own testimonies. And every single person who has heard those calls has shown their leadership through loving service to each other and to the church. Our lay leadership has never been asked to do so much, and we are proud of how our congregation has met that challenge.

We are delighted to have Rev. Melanie Baker, a former Methodist pastor now ordained with the United Church of Christ joining us for the Lent season and through Easter. We look forward to the potential of soon calling an interim pastor, as many of our members met with a candidate last week.

"If, then, there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:1-3). Elaine and I look forward to continuing this path of servant leadership as we go forward into 2020.

Kelly Schalter & Elaine Simon

Camp Crystal Registrations go electronic in 2020!

Campers will sign up online at their convenience.

All six camps being offered by Michigan Disciples this summer have moved to a new online registration process, with the three youth camps active now.

There will be more information on this in the upcoming months, if you need assistance in registering, we will have the resources available to assist you.



Qualified Charitable Contributions from Your IRA

With tax time fast approaching, the Stewardship Committee wanted to make you aware of a potential tax saving device. The IRS mandates that those 70 ½ years old must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from their traditional IRA each year. This amount is normally taxable in the year it is withdrawn. However, if you donate funds directly from your IRA to a qualified charity, such as First Christian Church, you don't have to pay taxes on the money and it still counts towards your RMD. This will also lower your gross income, which may result in less of your Social Security being taxed, lower Medicare premiums for higher income taxpayers, or a chance to qualify for other deductions or tax credits that would otherwise not have been available to you.

As an example, if the RMD from your IRA for the year is \$4,000, this would normally increase your gross income by \$4,000, and cost you \$880 in additional taxes that year (at the 22% marginal tax rate). If you donated the total amount to a qualified charity, your gross income would be \$4,000 less and you would not owe any taxes on it. You can also choose to donate a smaller portion of it.

To do a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), you simply instruct the firm that manages your IRA to direct some or all of your RMD to one or more charities. The firm must send the money directly to the charity, or send you a check made out to the charity, which you forward (you can't collect the money and then donate it for the QCD to count).

There are a couple of things to keep in mind. If you donate directly from an IRA to a charity, you can not deduct it as a charitable donation on your tax return, although you can still itemize other charitable deductions if you have enough expenses to itemize. And this only works for IRAs. You can't use it with a 401k, 457, 403b, or other employer sponsored retirement savings plans.

For additional information, such as how to report this on your tax return, see IRS Publication 590-B or speak with your tax preparer.



Birthdays

Randy Black	02/02	Tamara Nash	02/12
Juanita Cade	02/03	Jenaye Nash	02/13
Shu-shin Chou	02/03	Douglas Miller	02/15
Jack Dunn	02/04	Sharry Wight	02/16
Yi Jiang	02/06	Larry Cass	02/19
Gerry Such	02/07	LillieAnn Sue Arnett	02/20
Mallory Arnett	02/09	Patricia Pope	02/22
Landon Morgan	02/09	Lu Wang	02/22
Rick Boyd	02/10	Hanna Fedewa	02/23
Ben Tumminello	02/10	Karen Evans	02/24
Paul Kelly	02/11	David Sturdevant	02/28

Anniversaries

Steve & Lisa McAlvey	James & Jill Dimmitt	Elijah & Jessica Burton
02/11/1995	02/26/1983	2/26/2005

Opportunities to Help the Youth

Hello everyone! I wanted to let you know about some exciting opportunities coming up to work with the youth in our church! First, we are looking for a volunteer to organize a community egg hunt the day before Easter, April 11. The organizer would help organize the use of Slater Park and organize volunteers to stuff and donate materials to stuff eggs. (Time for the kids to help stuff eggs can be arranged on a Thursday night.)

Second, we are looking for volunteers to volunteer between 6:30 and 7:30 to help the kids with a craft. The craft will be prepared and ready, you only need to keep the children company and help them as needed.

Third, we will soon be organizing a meeting about what kind of teen group we would like to create for the church. All parents of teens, teens, and people who would like to work with teens will be welcome to this planning session which will likely be in February. Please be praying to see if God is leading you to volunteer with older youth.

Lastly, as you go through your homes and start spring cleaning, there are some things we could use in the education wing:

- A working dvd player with remote so Sunday school and other children's programming can use educational videos as needed.
- Larger size scissors as many of our children are growing older and their hands are also growing.
- Felt for crafting.
- Markers to replace those that are drying out.

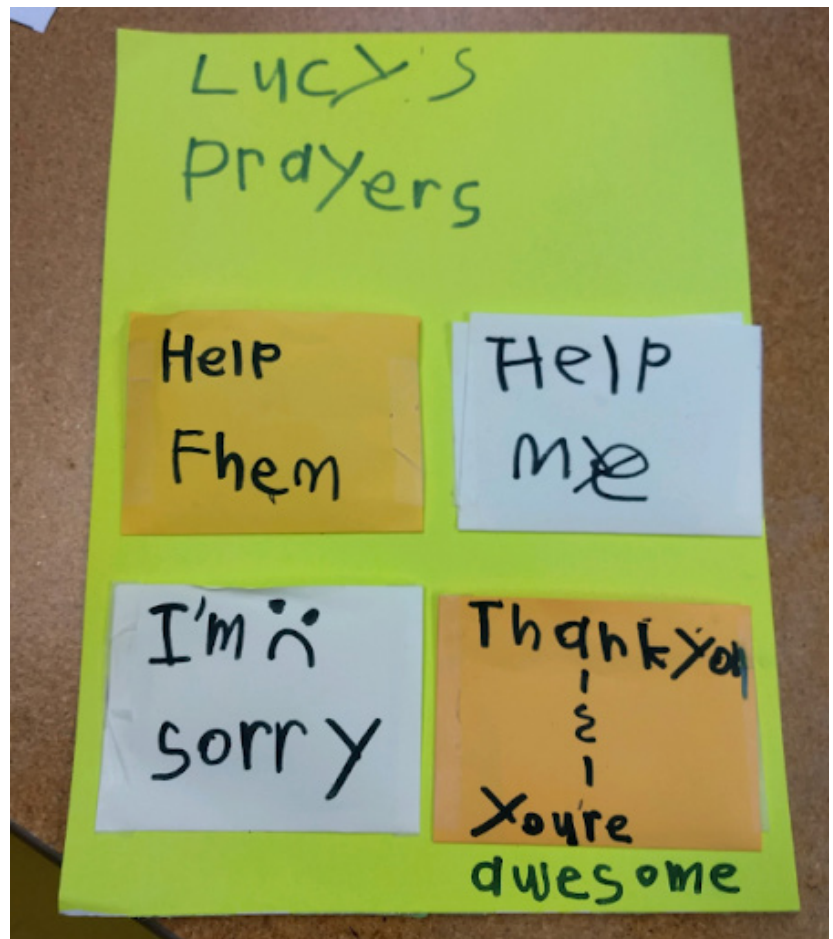
Thank you so much and I look forward to working with all of you in any that God leads you to help teach our youth about God and his love.

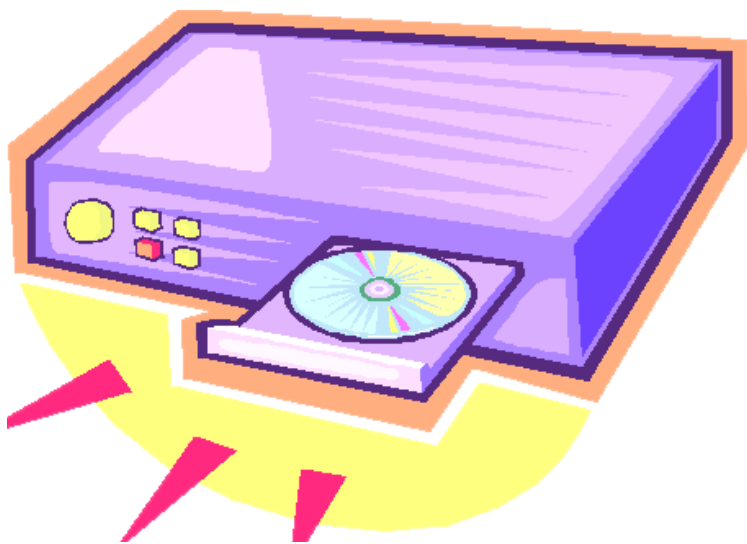
- Shawna

On Thursday nights, our children have been learning about prayer and God's answers. Here is a picture of one of our children's prayer board the children made recently.

In our older class, the children reworded the Lord's Prayer in their own words with beautiful and heartfelt results. They are such a blessing!

In February, the children will celebrate black history month by learning about black Christians who have used their faith to make the world a better place and some that are continuing to work even today. Pray for us that the children receive the message of God's love and how they can continue to make that a verb for change in the world through the stories of his people.





DVD Player Needed!

The Christian Education department needs a DVD player with remote for the educational wing of the church. The one that we have been using is no longer serviceable. We have tried several 'fixes' that have not worked. If there is anyone that would be willing to donate a working player and remote it would be much appreciated. If so please notify Danielle, Shawna, Pam or leave a message at the church office so we could make any necessary arrangements. Thank you.

Adult bible study starts
February 2nd at 9:30am
led by our very own Dawn
Epstein. Come and join us.
We'd love to see you there!



**Sunday Morning
Adult Study**



Pancake Supper
Tuesday
February 25th
6:30-7:30

Interracial Fellowship

Monday February 3rd, 12pm lunch, 1pm program

Mt Hope Church 202 S Creyts Rd

“Words Have Power”

All ladies welcome!



Disciple Women's Fellowship

Tuesday February 11th, 9:30-11:30am

A Church on a Mission

Please come join us in the church parlor for a great lesson. Fellowship and light lunch. All ladies are welcome. Hope to see you there.

Interfaith Day

Tuesday February 25th, 9:30-2pm

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

1701 East Saginaw Street, Lansing, Michigan. Tickets \$12

Please contact Jan Ewing for more information on tickets.

Any questions about the above, contact Wanda Thompson
517-580-4664. Thank you.



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First Christian Church (DOC)

1001 Chester Rd., Lansing, MI 48912

517.482.6063 | lansingdisciples.org

Sunday School
Adult Classes & Kids Classes
9:30am

Sunday Morning Service
10:30am


Coffee fellowship to follow
afterwards!



We have copies of the monthly newsletters and the weekly bulletins available on the website!

The church calendar is also available online.

You can text the church.
(And we can text you back)

Did you
know? 

If you have anything that you think would be great for the website, please let Kat know. This could be content that would be a great resource for current members of the congregation, or information to attract people who are considering in making FCC their home church.

Check it out at LansingDisciples.org