



May 4, 2020

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST
Sunday School
Graduation Time!
A Letter to the Church

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First Christian Church News

(Disciples of Christ) Emporia, KS

VOLUME 69 NO. 10

MAY 4, 2020

Reflections

Greetings in the name of Christ. I hope this letter finds you well as we all endure the confines of our stay-at-home orders.

I received a letter from Steve Martin and the College of Regional Ministers and was asked to share it with the congregation. You will find it elsewhere in this publication.

Even as Governor Kelly laid out a plan for reopening the state and communities, Lyon County is keeping a closer watch. Please remember that we need to move slowly with good decisions about reopening the sanctuary. We are organizing a safety task force to provide guidance for safety precautions in reopening our building when the time is appropriate to do so.

The safety of each member of our congregation is paramount. As awkward as it is to worship over Facebook and Zoom, we are learning that it is possible. God is with us no matter where we are and it is comforting to know that so many have been able to participate virtually and through the emailed written worship service. Even though we physically cannot be together the church is all of us. We are one body in the one Lord. The last two Sundays, we have record of 44 and 43 people worshipping with us on three platforms (plus others unaccounted for). That's exciting! We've even had visitors! Please continue to be watchful of the way the coronavirus interacts with Emporia now that there are more cases here. It is time for us to continue to be more patient and more careful. Let's be very discerning to how we respond to "reopening guidelines." We have a great responsibility in taking care of each other.

God bless all of you in this time of uncertainty. Be strong in faith knowing that Christ is with us each and every day.

“. . . I trust in you, O Lord, I say, 'You are my God.'" (Psalm 31:14)

Shalom,

Pastor Lorraine

Join us for At Home Worship

At Home Worship on Facebook

Find us on Facebook at **First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Emporia, KS** to join us for worship at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays!

At Home Worship via Email

You are encouraged to open your email at 10:30 a.m. to be part of our worshipping community. Just sign-in and let us know you are with us. If you would like to be added to our e-mail worship service, send us an e-mail at fc Coffices@yahoo.com to let us know!

Zoom Worship

We have started worshipping together via Zoom on Sundays at 11:30 a.m. If you would like to join us for this more interactive worship service, please let us know at fc Coffices@yahoo.com, and we will send you an invitation to our next Zoom Worship Service!



Upcoming Serving Schedule



May 10, 2020—5th Sunday of Easter

Elder ~ Judy Moore
Worship Leader ~ Nancy LeClear
Children’s Message ~ Joy Frevert

May 17, 2020—6th Sunday of Easter

Elder ~ Jaylene Arnett
Worship Leader ~ Gary Lukert
Children’s Message ~ Nancy LeClear

May 24, 2020—7th Sunday of Easter

Elder ~ Robert Chatham
Worship Leader ~ Janece Bacon
Children’s Message ~ Cameron Moore

Lonnie Atchison (*cancer*); **Lea Beers** (*medical*); **Glenn Boyce** (*medical*); **Lisa Cress** (*uterine cancer*); **Lynn Cress** (*heart surgery*); **Marilyn Dalton** (*sprained ankle*); **Wanda Davis** (*hip rehab*); **Joe Denson**, (*hip surgery*); **Brooke Franklin** (*cancer*); **Brad Jones** (*heart problems*); **Steve & Ramona Langley** (*brother-in-law and sister of Betty Richardson*); **Joe Lozier** (*brain tumor, father of Jen Dalton*); **Steve Martin** (*stem cell cancer treatment*); **Jeanice Miller** (*sciatic nerve pain*); **Betty Pierson** (*medical*); **David Smith** (*cousin of Jeanice Miller, diabetic amputation*); **Andrea Vandruff** (*kidney issues*); and **Aubrey Wescott** (*stomach problems*).



Attendance and Giving Record

ATTENDANCE & GIVING RECORD

April 26, 2020 At Home Worship 44+

May 3, 2020 At Home Worship 43+

GIVING RECORD

Apr. 19, 2020 ~ Offering \$1,385.00

Apr. 26, 2020 ~ Offering \$1,902.44



May Anniversaries

- 17 Jeffry & Vicki Cole
- 24 Kurt & Sheila Steinkuhler

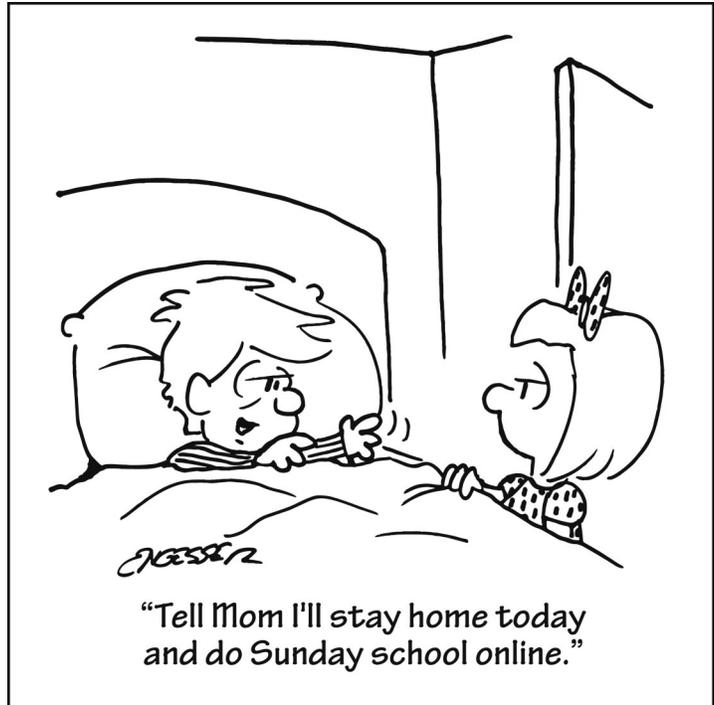
May Birthdays

- 04 Shelby Fuller
- 06 Maddie Roth
- 06 Bob Duncan
- 07 Joan Shumate
- 08 Michelle Harding
- 08 Jan Jones
- 10 Lincoln Roth
- 10 Jay Schaefer
- 11 Cindy Kuhn
- 15 Jami LeClear
- 17 William Calvert
- 23 Brandon Hopkins
- 25 Robert Hush
- 27 Robert Wells
- 28 Larry Gamblian
- 28 Nathan LeClear
- 31 Dennis Kelley



Mark The Dates

Until further notice, all scheduled “in-person” meetings are cancelled. Alternative meeting methods such as conference calls, meetings on Zoom, meetings through email, etc. will be used.



- Thoughts to Ponder**
- Every storm runs out of rain eventually.
 - Faith is personal, but never private.
 - Be like a duck. Remain calm on the surface even when you’re paddling like crazy underneath.
 - Whatever you do behind someone’s back is still in front of God’s eyes.
 - The happiest people don’t *have* the best of everything, they just *make* the best of everything.

THE SECRET PLACE

Devotions for Daily Worship
 The Spring 2020
 (March, April, May)
 Secret Place daily devotional books

have arrived and are located on the hall table.
 Still only **\$1.00 per copy so get yours today!**



Lectionary Readings

Lectionary Schedule

May 10—June 14 , 2020

May 10, 2020—5th Sunday of Easter

Acts 7:55-60
 Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
 1 Peter 2:2-10
 John 14:1-14

May 17, 2020—6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31
 Psalm 66:8-20
 1 Peter 3:13-22
 John 14:15-21

May 24, 2020—7th Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:6-14
 Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11
 John 17:1-11

May 31 2020—Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30
 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21
 John 20:19-23; 7:37-39

June 7, 2020—1st Sunday after

Pentecost
 Genesis 1:1-2:4a
 Psalm 8
 2 Corinthians 13:11-13
 Matthew 28:16-20

June 14, 2020—2nd Sunday after

Pentecost
 Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7)
 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
 Romans 5:1-8
 Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)



Sunday School Summer Vacation

Pre-School through 8th Grade Sunday School Classes are taking a Summer Vacation beginning June 7 through August 16. Pre-School through 8th Grade Sunday School classes will resume August 23.



It's Graduation Time!!!!

Usually around this time, graduation announcement cards are being readied. Caps and gowns sized and ordered. Final exams are fast approaching. Parties are being planned. Diplomas are being printed. While some of these things may not get to happen as planned this year, it is still an exciting time! Do you have a child, grandchild, or relative that is graduating from kindergarten, middle school, high school, technical college, or college? If so, please e-mail us at fccoffices@yahoo.com to let us know! We will honor our graduates when we come back together to worship at the church.

A Letter to the Church on Being the Church in This Moment

Dear Disciples of Christ,

We are thankful to be your Regional Ministers. We know that you are wrestling with questions about how and when to resume in-person worship and church activities. We are asking the same questions and endeavor to walk with you as we discover answers together.

We miss being with you in the spaces where we worship God together, witness the baptisms of eager youth full of hope, and share the bread and cup at the Lord's Table. It has been months now since last we hugged or shook hands. It has been too long since we have seen you in person. However, like the Apostle Paul, we thank God for you every time we think of you. Our hearts are overjoyed and inspired by your acts of service and leadership that we see online, and we continue to celebrate your ministry and share your story. It troubles our spirits to know that we cannot be physically present for funerals, visit at hospital bedsides or join in the celebrations of commissioning, ordinations, church anniversaries, and clergy retirements, just to name a few high times in church life.

We are living in unprecedented times of challenge and uncertainty. We acknowledge and grieve the death of tens of thousands of people; they are our family members, friends, church members, and neighbors. More than a million confirmed cases are reported in the U.S. and Canada, and the numbers continue to rise. Even medical experts are not ready to declare that they fully understand how this very contagious virus works, the range at which it can spread, or what therapies or vaccines are appropriate.

The disease does not discriminate, but we can take steps to protect the most vulnerable among us.

First and foremost, with great concern and conviction, we write to encourage you to be patient, take your time, and do not rush back into full in-person activities before we are confident it is safe to do so. We also write to ask that you prayerfully join us in considering these questions when you discuss whether and how to be together again in sanctuaries, fellowship halls, classrooms, offices, and other special, sacred spaces, including children and youth activities.

**Continued on next page*

In addition to logistical questions about how to share communion, have appropriate social distancing, and disinfect the sanctuary, etc., consider these deeper, theological questions also:

- How have you found ways to share in ministry without gathering as you did before the pandemic?
- If you hosted online worship, Bible study, or other ministries, what have you discovered that may be encouraging or helpful for the times ahead?
- How have you been reminded of God's love, and the purpose and meaning of your life and ministry?
- Who are the people among you who have shown themselves to be strong, loving, and wise companions in this challenging time?
- We are often acutely aware of what we miss in a time such as this. However, we have discovered somethings on the journey. Has your congregation gained gifts or strengths, or have you realized gifts or strengths that you had before the pandemic but did not realize?
- In what ways might the congregation be affected if, because of contracting the novel coronavirus at your next in-person gathering, a member or visitor's illness resulted in death?
- Jesus said to the first disciples: I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. John 13:34 (NRSV) How can we be an example of Jesus' love in the same way when the medical community continues to call attention to the risks of in-person meetings?

We do not presume to have all the answers for you. Every congregation will prayerfully and carefully discern for itself how and when to reconnect onsite. What we can offer is to tell you how we Regional Ministers and leaders of the General Units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are dealing with our gatherings.

We will not make onsite visits for the time being. We believe that we have a responsibility to exercise an abundance of caution for the safety of all those we serve. We will reconsider other decisions when there is more medical evidence that the pandemic is no longer a threat!

**Continued on next page*

We are carrying on with our work online, many from spaces in our homes. We are meeting once a week by Zoom, and connecting with pastors and lay leaders by ZOOM, phone, email, text, and social media. We are sharing some of the best information and creative resources available. These are accessible on disciples.org, regional websites, and social media outlets. Frankly, we would be devastated if the health of any one of us was compromised because another of us was, unknowingly, carriers of the virus. By God's grace and your support, we have the means to keep in touch, do the work you have come to expect from us, and pray with you.

We, Disciples, are a people bound by nothing more or less than a covenant with God and one another. When we read together in worship the Preamble to the Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we conclude with this powerful reminder of the extent of our shared calling:

In the bonds of Christian faith, we yield ourselves to God that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end. Blessing, glory, and honor be to God forever. Amen.

With you, we desire to bless, glorify, and honor God in this moment and always.
Affectionately yours in Christ,
The College of Regional Ministers

Thank you!!!!

Thank you to everyone who donated toilet paper to our food pantry at the church. We had several packages donated over the past couple weeks, which has been more than enough to allow us to continue including this in our food pantry bags!



COVID-19 Mask Pageant

Put on your favorite mask and send us a picture for the next newsletter. It will be fun to see everyone peeking out from behind your masks!



First Christian Church
Lorraine W. Bailey,
Transitional Minister



“The mission of First Christian Church is to inspire each other to reach out to the un-churched and to serve and share with our community by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

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Office Hours

8 a.m. until Noon, Monday through Friday.
Pastor Lorraine—8:00 am to 11:00 am, Tuesday through Friday. Afternoons by appointment.



Next Newsletter Deadline
May 18, 2020 & June 1, 2020



May 2020

3 • 10:30am At Home Worship	4 Newsletter Deadline	5 Cinco de Mayo • 4:30pm Bible Study	6 • 10:30am Lyon Co. Ministerial Alliance • 6:15pm DWF Night Group via Zoom	7 • 5pm Leadership Team	8	9 ESU Spring Graduation
10 Mother's Day • 10:30am At Home Worship	11	12 • 4:30pm Bible Study • 6:30pm Christian Ed.	13 • 9:30am NE KS Clergy-Topeka • 6:15pm Stewardship Committee Meets	14 • 5pm Elder's Study	15 • 8:30am CWJ Friendship Coffee	16
17 • 10:30am At Home Worship	18 Newsletter Deadline	19 • 4:30pm Bible Study	20 • 5pm Worship Ministry Meets • 6:15pm Board Meeting	21	22	23

Spotlight on Disciples

Information for this article came from the book, *Disciples: Who We Are & What Holds Us Together* (2019) by Michael Kinnamon and Jan Linn, St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, pp. 3-5

Why We Are Disciples (part 2)

The Vision Team of 2008 presented the “Principles of Identity” as an update of the 1909 “the chief things for which this movement stands” document. The two documents resonate well with the stability of our heritage.

Our Disciples’ identity today:

- we confess that Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim him Lord and Savior of the world. Nothing more—nothing less.
- scripture is central—we have the freedom and responsibility to study God’s Word within the community of the church.
- believer’s baptism—God’s grace demands a response of faith and discipleship.
- gathering as often as possible around the Lord’s Table.
- a covenant community—emphasizing accountability to each other through our shared obedience to Christ.
- participation in global missions, working with partners to bring healing, justice, and peace to the whole human family.
- we proclaim that there is unity within diversity.
- we witness to the Gospel of God’s saving love for the world in Jesus Christ while continuing to struggle with how God’s love may be known to others in different ways.
- we affirm the priesthood of all believers—rejoicing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- we celebrate the diversity of our congregations.
- we affirm that God’s church and God’s mission stretch from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.
- we anticipate God’s coming reign—seeking to serve God—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.