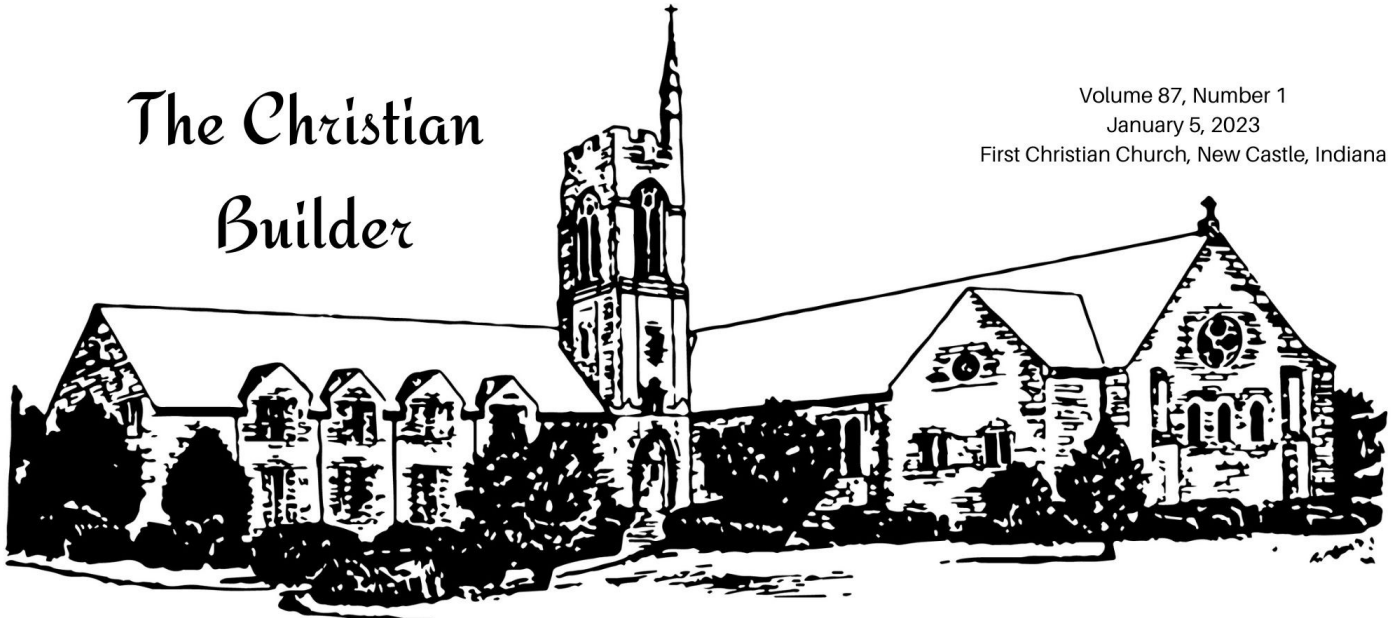


# The Christian Builder

Volume 87, Number 1  
January 5, 2023  
First Christian Church, New Castle, Indiana



## ***Pastor Ronn's Ponderings***

### **The Failure of an Un-Planned Plan**



A boy told his father, "Dad, if three frogs were sitting on a limb that hung over a pool, and one frog decided to jump off into the pool, how many frogs would be left on the limb?" The dad replied, "Two." "No," the son replied. "There are three frogs and one decides to jump, how many are left?" The dad said, "Oh, I get it, if one decides to jump, the others would too. So there are none left." The boy said, "No dad, the answer is three. The frog only DECIDED to jump."

I probably lead the parade of people who decide to do something, and then do not act! Of course, not in all things, but in some particularly important areas of life. I look back to last year and think that I wish I would have read the Scriptures more, been more kind, watched less television...and the list goes on. I need to pull out my 2023 calendar and look forward. What do I expect to accomplish this year? What are my purposes and plans? The New Year lies before me and it is full of opportunities for growth and positive change. What will I do with my New Year? Probably extraordinarily little unless I write it down and schedule it.

The New Year lies before you. It lies before you as an unspoiled page in your book of time. It is your chance at the art of living. It is your opportunity to practice what you have learned during the last twelve months. Keep in mind all the good that you tried for and did not achieve; all that you dreamed but did not dare to do.

*Continued on Page 4*



Worship Service with Children's Education Classes, 10:00 a.m.  
January 1-8-15-22-29

Bible Study, The Five Love Languages, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.  
January 5-12-19-26

Epiphany Christmas Tree Bonfire  
January 6 at 6:00 p.m.

Senior High Youth Group, January 8, 4-8 p.m.

Henry County Foster Closet Work Days  
January 10 and 17  
5:00 –7:30 p.m.

Fellowship Lounge Reserved for Private Events on  
January 8 (2-8 p.m.) and January 9 (late afternoon, evening)

Great Hall Reserved for Private Events on  
January 14 and 21





Thank you to my church family for the beautiful poinsettia in my sister's memory.

Jane Kissane

To My Church Family,

Thank you so much for all the hugs, prayers, calls and concern in my most trying time. It was all appreciated.

Also, thank you for the evergreen. I plan to plant it where I can watch it grow and remember the good times watching my son grow into the man he became.

Sincerely,

Bev Potts

Dear Congregation,

Thank you so much for my Christmas gift. Coming into the office each day is such a joy! I appreciate each one of you and I am so happy to be a member of this beautiful church family. I look forward to all of us serving God together in 2023. May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Christ's Love,

Sherry



Wisdom from MLK

I am convinced that love is the most durable power in the world. It is not an expression of impractical idealism, but of practical realism. Far from being the pious injunction of a Utopian dreamer, love is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization. To return hate for hate does nothing but intensify the existence of evil in the universe. Someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate and evil, and this can only be done through love.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Continued from Page 1,

***Pastor Ronn's Ponderings,***

For me, the best way to move from decision to action is to prayerfully sit down and write out my life purpose and write down the priorities I have for the coming year. I would encourage you to write out your plan to fulfill those priorities and make them happen. Start today! Begin to say no to some things and cut out other things. God, through Christ, can help make all things new!

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21:5

***Pastor Ronn***



*Reset Sermon Series*

*1/1/2023, Reset: A Fresh Start to a New Year*  
*Listen and Seek*  
*Luke 2:41-52*

*1/8/2023, Reset: A Fresh Start to a New Year*  
*Loving the Unlovable*  
*Luke 2:41-52*

*1/15/2023, Reset: A Fresh Start to a New Year*  
*Surrender*  
*Luke 7:36-50*



God, you are always doing "a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19) in the world and in my life. On the cusp of this new year, open my heart to your good plans.

Amen





God has entrusted us with a beautiful building. We are charged with being good stewards of all the gifts given to us by our Heavenly Father. Therefore, from time-to-time, we must take a good look at the condition of our spaces. Recently, the General Board of FCC placed a task before a group of volunteers—refurbish one of our most used spaces—our Fellowship Lounge.

The remodel is almost complete and it is time for us to think about going ***Forward in Fellowship***! Jennifer Hood was named as Chairperson of an effort to fund this project. The Forward in Fellowship committee invites you to prayerfully consider giving \$10 extra each week for 52 weeks. If we have 50 people participate in this manner, we will raise 26 thousand dollars and we will be well on our way to fully funding the Fellowship Lounge refurbishment!

Join us on Sunday, January 8th for more details. Don't forget you can watch us online, too!

## RESET SUNDAY IS JANUARY 8

### When you enter, we'll invite you to select a Star Word

#### A Reflection before we receive our Star Words

When extraordinary things happen in the sky, we stop and notice. We look for comets, shooting stars, full moons. We watch for rocket launches, satellites drifting in space, and the space station circling our orbit. The Magi were paying close attention to the sky when they saw something different—a star that shone so brightly, they were compelled to follow it.

Just as the Christmas star once shined for all people to see, the light of Christ still shines for all people. May we use these star words as reminders of the Christmas star we invite into our lives so that we might be led toward Jesus Christ.

#### A Responsive Prayer to Pray and Share with Family and Friends

ONE: We are seekers—just like the Magi.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: We are looking for hope, peace, joy, love and so much more that Christ brings.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: We long for the abundant life God promises.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: May this star word be one of encouragement.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: May this word guide our intentions in the days to come.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: May we pay attention to where God is present.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you.

ONE: May God use these words to show us how to live and love in the world.

ALL: Light our paths and lead us closer to you. Amen.



## News from our Youth Pastor, Yvette Oren

### Senior High Youth Group

This year the Senior High Youth Group theme is Discipleship. As we learn about being disciples of Jesus, we will be studying a book, serving other people, and learning how we can best love each other.

Dates for Senior High Youth:

January 8th

January 22th

4pm to 8pm

6:30pm - 8pm

### Christmas Play

All ages came together to do a two-part Christmas play. Act I, the Unexpected King was performed on December 18th during Worship. This play centered around the angels having a conversation with God about His son the Prince of Peace sent to Earth in order that People on Earth could better know God.

Act II was performed on Christmas Eve at the candlelight service, with the narration by Claudia Jackson, as she read the Christmas story from Luke 2 what a blessing to see the nativity acted out before our eyes while hearing many of our favorite Christmas songs. Special thanks to all who participated, including the costume crew and set design crew.



To the left,

Tristan Oren as Joseph  
and Alyssa Thrasher  
as Mary during the  
December 18, 2022,  
Christmas play.

### Living out scripture

When Texas suffered an uncharacteristic winter storm in February, one couple's act of kindness toward a stranger demonstrated the power of living by the Golden Rule.

Chelsea Timmons, a grocery store delivery driver, got stuck in the ice-covered driveway of customers Doug Condon and Nina Richardson. Because towing companies were inundated, the couple invited her to stay with them — which she ended up doing for five nights! The three shared meals and conversation, and Chelsea baked them a cake and befriended their dogs. In short, Nina and Doug say, she became “part of the family.”

“Do to others what you would have them do to you,” says Jesus (Matthew 7:12, NIV). Doug echoes Jesus closely when he explains one reason behind their actions: “We have daughters, and we hope if they were ever in a situation like this that there would be someone who would open their house and help them.”

Perhaps Doug and Nina also experienced the delight of another Bible verse: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Hebrews 13:2, ESV).

**First Christian Church  
2000 Bundy Avenue  
New Castle, IN 47362**

