



# December

## Children's Christmas Program



Children's Church

## 5th Sunday Worship



Youth groups musicians and vocalists lead worship when there is a 5th Sunday in a month. Youth Group leaders Jordan, Alissa McKinsey, and Dan Kaupp lead the groups.

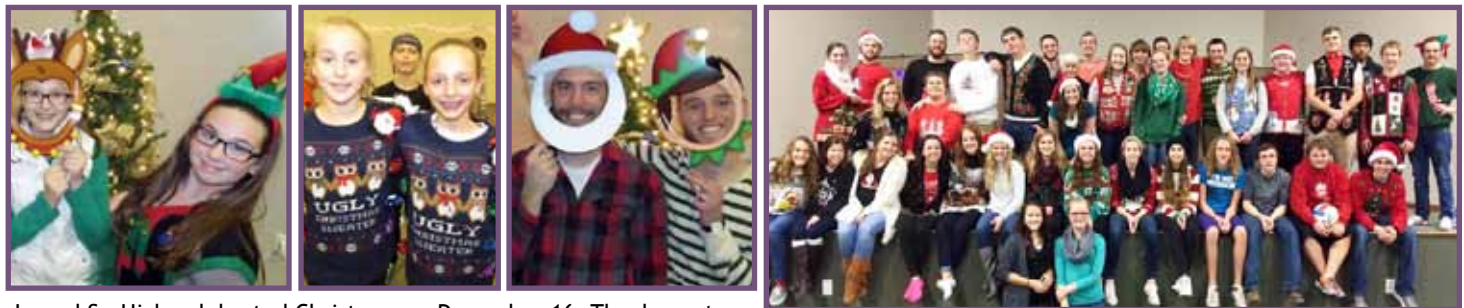


JAM



Bell Choir

## Youth Group Christmas Parties



Jr. and Sr. High celebrated Christmas on December 16. Thank you to Alissa McKinsey for the Youth Group photos (and the selfie!).

### Sunday Worship Services

Morning Worship 9 am-10 am

J.A.M. (ages 3 - PreK) every Sunday

K-3 Children's Church; 4-5th grades 1st & 3rd Sundays

Communion served 4th Sunday

Sunday School 10:30-11:15 am

406 W 7th Street, PO Box 280, Gridley, IL 61744 Phone 747-2299 www.christ-cc.org

### Youth Groups

Wednesdays

Jr. High 5:30 pm Jordan McKinsey, leader

Sr. High 7:30 pm Danny Kaupp, leader

### Pastoral Staff

Andy Huette, Sr. Pastor

Grant Stauter, Associate Pastor



# CHRIST COMMUNITY

CHURCH OF GRIDLEY

January 2016

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## Dear Church Family,

In December, Abby and I traveled to India and then to North Africa to spend time with couples whom our church supports in ministry overseas. The objective of the visit was to encourage them in their work, strengthen relationships with them so that our church can be better long-haul partners in their work, and to get a more complete vision of the work overseas that we support. We returned from the trip thankful for the many hours we had of meaningful conversation with each couple and with a sense of gratitude and appreciation for the pioneering work that each is doing in places where the church is virtually nonexistent.

On one of the flights, I was processing what I was learning about missions and I took out my laptop and started typing. Below you'll find some of my thoughts about sacrifice, the changing methodology of missions, and team unity.

**Sacrifice:** In some ways the modern missionary lifestyle appears starkly different from the stories of pioneering missionaries who traveled months by boat without modern communications to destinations lacking basic medical necessities. Today, missionaries have the luxury of air travel, iPhones, and even Amazon delivery services. Further, in order to be effective, missionaries need to assume a standard of living that is common to where they live. It would be counterproductive for a missionary seeking to share Christ with educated middle caste Hindus to live like a pauper. Such lifestyle choices would make no sense to neighbors and be a loss of credibility for the missionary, especially in a class-rigid society. To see "missions dollars" paying for a cleaning lady feels very strange, until it is understood that (a) to not have a house helper would be culturally strange for middle class Hindus and, thus one more reason not to trust a westerner, (b) lower caste individuals want jobs as house helpers (with little expectation of upward socioeconomic mobility, as is common in the West) and, (c) the small amount paid to the worker is negligible to the one paying it, but very significant to the one receiving it.

All that to say, modern missions doesn't seem—at first glance—like the "cross-bearing" of old. While the sacrifices of pioneer missionaries far outweigh the cost of most modern missionaries, there is certainly a cross to bear by those who cross cultures to make disciples.

Here are a few of the many sacrifices that became more real to me as we visited our overseas workers:

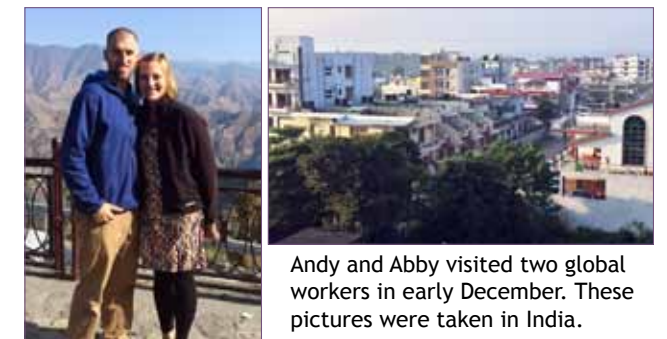
1. **Friendships:** It takes a long time to develop good friendships, and missionaries often feel extremely alone. In almost every social situation, they are outsiders. People may be kind to them, but it is extremely difficult to move past being acquaintances to the point of having really good cross-cultural friends.

2. **Personal Validation:** Though we often seek validation in sinful ways, we all want to matter. We want our lives to count for something. At "home" we know how to get validation because we grew up in a culture that discreetly taught us what "matters." In a foreign culture, far from home, it is easy to feel like you are making no difference and no one really knows or cares about what you're doing.

3. **Kids:** Missionaries do not sacrifice the well-being of their kids by living in another culture, but often it feels like it. It's a constant struggle to determine what elements of a culture should be adopted, what elements of "home" should be retained, what is appropriate for schooling, and what is healthy and reasonable for relationships with family back home.

4. **Church:** On one hand, it can be spiritually rejuvenating to find a few believers in a foreign land with whom you can worship and share Christian fellowship. Yet, imagine leaving a church that you really loved, where you looked forward to the weekly worship gathering and understood the sermon and music and had rich fellowship with like-minded people. It'd be tough.

5. **Money:** Many of our overseas missionaries have advanced training and employable skills that could be providing a very nice standard of living elsewhere. They may not be living in the slums, but they're not living as nicely as they could be living here in the States.



Andy and Abby visited two global workers in early December. These pictures were taken in India.

Letter with more pictures continued on insert inside

# Book Groups - 2016

February is "Book Group" month for adult Sunday School. The adults take a break from the normal routine and take four weeks to read and discuss books about spiritual matters. Sign-up for a group in January. You may order a book from the church or order your own copy (hard copy or Kindle version). If ordering from the church, please place and pay for your order by January 24 so that we have time for delivery.

## Counter Culture by David Platt

David Platt shows Christians how to actively take a stand on such issues as poverty, sex trafficking, marriage, abortion, racism, and religious liberty, and challenges us to become passionate, unwavering voices for Christ.

## Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by Paul Tripp

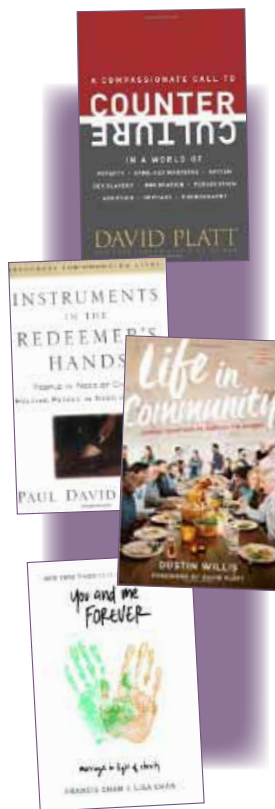
In many ways, the church today has more consumers than committed participants. We see church merely as an event we attend or an organization we belong to, rather than as a calling that shapes our entire life. This is a comprehensive treatment of how God uses people as tools of change in the lives of others, people who themselves are in need of change.

## Life in Community by Dustin Willis

When people live in community moved by the gospel and marked by the Spirit, great things happen. They commit to one another. They grieve together, sing together, eat, pray, and play together. They love, serve, honor, encourage, and provide for each other gladly. And they live on mission together. *Life in Community* inspires us to live in love unbounded.

## You and Me Forever by Francis Chan

Francis Chan joins together with his wife Lisa to address the question many couples wonder at the altar: How do I have a great marriage? Setting aside typical topics on marriage, they dive into Scripture to understand what it means to have a relationship that satisfies the deepest parts of our souls.



Book Groups will meet February 7, 14, 21, 18.

## Read thru the Bible in 2016



"We desire to be a church that opens the Bible often, whether in public or private, to know the truth of God's Holy Word." from our Open Bibles Core Value statement.

One of the many beauties of Scripture is that there are always more diamonds to pull from it. There is always more truth, more wisdom, more grace that you continually find. Over time you start to learn who God is and what He is like. I know that you can learn about God from listening to good teaching and other avenues but there is something special when it is just you and the Bible—and God shows you things that you've never seen before.

This past year, some of you followed the Project 51 reading plan and you read through the New Testament and the Psalms. For some, it was for the first time. It brings me so much joy that you stuck with it. The Word always has a transforming effect even when we don't realize it.

For 2016, I want to again challenge the congregation to read through, not just the New Testament portion of the Bible, but the entire Bible. We will again use a plan from the You Version app (called *Bible in a Year* from Tabletalk magazine). We will also have a paper copy at the Welcome Center. The beauty of this plan is that there is a daily Old Testament reading and a New Testament reading. But if you don't want to do the whole Bible, you can still read just the New Testament with everyone else. But I say, go for the whole Bible. You won't regret it.

I look forward to finding even more diamonds with you in 2016.

**Grant Stauter, Associate Pastor**

## Coming Up In January

### ● Covenant Sunday-January 17 ●

On January 17, we will reaffirm our covenant commitment to one another. The covenant addresses how to live out Christ Community's core values: *Open Bibles, One Another, Beautiful Feet, Spiritual Growth, Authentic Worship.*

### ● Annual Meeting-January 17 ●

We will hold our Annual meeting after the worship service on January 17. Annual reports will be available on January 10. The nominees to be voted on are posted at the Welcome Center along with proposed changes to the Policy Handbook

### ● Baby Dedications-January 24 ●

Dedications for babies and toddlers will be held on Sunday, January 24. If you have a child to be dedicated, please see Pastor Andy.

### ● New Member Class-January 24, 31 ●

A class for those interested in becoming a member will be held on January 24 and 31. If you are interested, please see Pastor Andy or Pastor Grant.

## Sending and Going to Ghana



Christ Community is sending Grant Stauter, and Mike Wahls to Ghana, Africa on January 3-15.

Grant and Mike will be joined by two Ugandan pastors who lead the Pastors Discipleship Network (PDN), an organization committed to teaching and training African pastors in solid theology. They will be leading two pastor conferences in Kumasi and Banda. In addition to teaching the pastors, they will also be doing street evangelism in non-Christian areas.

Ghanaian pastors are poorly trained and most have been brought up on the prosperity gospel (which is no gospel at all). Mike and Robin Wahls, former missionaries to Ghana, have a deep desire to address the theological famine.

Mike traveled to Ghana in 2014 to begin making arrangements with a local pastor to host and coordinate the conferences. Mike's hope is to establish ongoing teaching in Ghana. It's a long-term goal because several Ghanaian leaders must first be found to lead the training.

Christ Community's missions team is a partner in this trip and will be assisting with the expenses. We will be considering and praying about the possibility of sending teachers from Christ CC to participate regularly in the conferences, evangelize and learn first-hand about cross-cultural mission work.



Ghana is considered a "reached" nation (more than 2% evangelical), but there are unreached people groups within Ghana. Mike and Grant will be spending time with the Ligbee people, a people unreached with the Gospel of Christ.



Mike and Grant met with Pastor Ronnie Nalera and his wife, Rita when they visited the U.S. in October. Pastor Ronnie shares time between PDN and Global Hands of Hope, a ministry that secures the well-being of vulnerable children.

Learn more about Pastors Discipleship Network and Global Hands of Hope at [www.pdnafrica.org](http://www.pdnafrica.org) and [www.globalhandsofhope.com](http://www.globalhandsofhope.com).

## Meet some of our long-time members

Christ Community Church of Gridley has a rich heritage originating from the two oldest churches in Gridley—Union Congregational Church, and the United Methodist Church— whose beginnings date back to 1862. The two congregations merged in 1981 becoming First United Church of Gridley and moved into the present building in 1983.

In 2015, the name was changed to Christ Community Church of Gridley to more accurately reflect our nondenominational identity.

This month we want to recognize some of our long-time members. Mary Ferguson has been a member of our church family for the longest time. She became a member of the Methodist Church in 1937. Three years later, in 1940, June Freed became a member of the Methodist Church. June currently lives at the Blair House in Normal. Maralon Stauter

is next, having become a member of the Congregational Church in 1942. And the following year, in 1943, Pearl Rinkenberger became a member of the Methodist Church.

We can learn from their example of commitment and faithful service through the years.



Pearl Rinkenberger will celebrate her 101st birthday January 19.



Mary Ferguson served as organist and choir director for many years.

## January Birthdays

- 3 Haze Welsch
- 4 Trent Kaupp
- 5 Sloan Gentes
- 8 Robert Carr
- 9 Sophia Allen
- 11 Harper Deckard
- 11 Glen Smith
- 12 Franki Finck
- 12 Brent Kelly
- 12 Traci Kelly
- 13 Bill Roth
- 14 Carrie Dixon
- 15 Katie Albritton
- 16 Jacob Krone
- 19 Pearl Rinkenberger
- 19 Caroline Wettstein
- 23 Megan Bridgers
- 25 Frankie Finck
- 25 Mark Ludy
- 26 Edith Wilson
- 28 Aydra Richard
- 29 Trevor Neal
- 29 Jason Porzellus
- 29 Brady Carrion

## Anniversaries

- 15 Glen & Joan Smith

## Attendance & Offering

12/6	293	\$10,958
12/13	351	\$ 7,697
12/20	374	\$12,627
12/27	293	\$ 6,883

## 70+ Years

### 510 Combined Years of Gridley Church Membership

We have seven members who have been part of this church family for more than 70 years.

- Mary Ferguson  
1937 Methodist
- June Freed  
1940 Methodist
- Maralon Stauter  
1942 Congregational
- Pearl Rinkenberger  
1943 Methodist
- Evelyn Grace  
1944 Congregational
- Joan Widmer  
1944 Congregational
- Georgia McKinley  
1945 Methodist