

Life Together

December 2022 Edition

First Christian Church Wayne

Mark your calendars

- 12.2 Men's Christmas Meeting 6:30pm
- 12.4 FCCWC Holiday Dinner 6:00pm
- 12.7 Midweek Meal & Worship 6:00pm
Rooted in Christ Youth Group
- 12.9 Ladies of Grace Christmas 6:00
@Donna Greenwalt's.
- 12.10 WC Annual Light Christmas Parade
- 12.11 Leadership Meeting 4:00pm
- 12.14 Midweek Meal & Worship 6:00pm
Rooted in Christ Youth Group
- 12.18 Christmas Music Program 10:30am
- 12.21 Midweek Meal & Worship 6:00pm
- 12.23 Christmas Candlelight Service 6:00pm
- 12.25 Christmas Morning Service 10:00am
- 12.28 Midweek Meal & Worship 6:00pm
- 12.29 Red Cross Blood Drive 2:00-6:00pm
- 12.31 Church Rented/ New Year's Eve

Birthdays/Anniversaries

- 12.2 Ben Caldwell
- 12.7 Lena Mason
- 12.16 Angie Hedden
- 12.27 Mindy Dodson
- 12.30 Sherry Locey
- 12.31 Ron & Reba McCulley



Christmas is a time of love.

We see it all around us through the giving of gifts,
the making of meals and time spent together.

Without love, I'm sure you would agree,
Christmas would not be...Christmas.

Love is the foundation that Christmas was built on.
It is the reason that Jesus died on the cross for us.

But where did love come from?

It came from God. God chooses to love us and
gifted us with this love so that we can love others.

"We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

Love has the power to change lives! Take a
moment to remember the time you first felt the love
of God. In that moment, your life changed.
Experiencing the love of God changes us from the
inside out. Our thoughts change, our actions
change and our perspective on life shifts.

The love of God overpowers the weight of our sin
and anything else that hinders us from living in His
abundance. The love of God conquers every power
of darkness that may come against us. When we
stand firm in His love, we are unshakeable.

Knowing Jesus love for us, fills our lives with
freedom and hope. We are called to share His Love
with others so they may also experience the same!

This Christmas share of gift of Jesus with someone
who doesn't yet know Him. Invite them over for
food, take them out for coffee or leave them with
the best book they will ever read-the Bible.

Let this Christmas be one of love and life-change.

Christmas Choices

Tis' the season to be merry... and stressed. Although it should be a season of peace, this month can often make us feel more tangled up inside than that messy string of Christmas lights (which I usually end up throwing away.)

Some people dread the hustle, bustle, and emotions this time of year brings, knowing that irritability, loneliness, or depression may be lurking right around the corner. And yet others may love the Christmas season, but worry, busyness, family conflicts, and unmet expectations take their toll. In either case, we have a decision. We can choose to get be pressed down with stress and worry or... we can choose to bow down in worship.

Scripture gives us a beautiful picture of praise in Luke 2:13-14. When Jesus was born, an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds sharing the good news. Then many other angels joined together and praised God.

"Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.'" (NLT)

Angels serve as role models of worship. They bow down before Jesus. They shout with incredible joy as they praise Him. Through worship, angels spread the news of God's glory and exhibit holy reverence. Angels intentionally and deliberately spend time praising God. Keeping Christ in Christmas is more than just a cliché. It is an intentional act of worship. It requires a heart of adoration, much like the angels had. *When Jesus is the focus of our holiday, we're centered on His love, peace, and joy.*

This prompts us to be His hands and feet to others in need. When worship fills our hearts, it leaves little room for aggravation in long lines at the store. We focus on what Christmas is truly about—the amazing gift of a Savior—rather than stressing out over buying the perfect presents. We give grace to someone when we'd rather not. Worship turns our attention to giving thanks to Jesus for all He has done, rather than letting stress strip His joy from our hearts. And it might even mean joining in with the heavenly chorus to sing praises to Him, even if we can't carry a tune! The holidays can bring a flurry of emotions and can often result in an unhealthy level of stress which can prevent us from engaging in worship and praising the One we are supposed to be celebrating. There will be lots of choices to be made during the month of December: where to serve, what gifts to buy, and how many events to attend.

The most important choice we can make is to worship and sing praises to our Lord. For His gift. For His love. For His peace.

And when our hearts are at peace, our holidays can be too.



December, the lights of our tree shine through the darkened room where I sit in quiet peace, a time of reflection really. Reflection= serious thought or consideration. 2022 has been a year for listening, learning and loving. I try my best as a part time church office assistant to listen to everyone. I'm listening to the hearts that enter the door or on the other end of the phone—some are broken, some are joyful, others full of anxious worry, sometimes anger, but all of them seeking something. While I'm listening, I'm also learning... how to pray for you, how to be a better listener, how to be a better friend. I can't do any of the above without love. I have been praying to love better. Love others because God loves them too and calls for us to love one another. This is not always easy. Especially if I felt I was wronged, snubbed or treated callously but....what if God treated me that way? What if He didn't love me when I was unlovable? This usually pulls me back on track. It takes focus and prayer. And I've had to practice it a lot. In a few short weeks I will put 2022 behind me as the year I devoted my first morning moments to reading God's word daily. As the year I started my goal of reading the whole Bible, (I'm on day 123 currently). The year I knew God heard my prayers... 2023. I believe this is the year we all can experience victory together with some goals to strive for.

1. Prayer

“Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.” Jeremiah 33:3

If praying has become plan B in your life, there is no better time than now to change that. You know, prayer isn't just sitting in silence trying to think of something churchy to say. It is 80% listening and 20% talking. Find a comfortable chair in a quiet place. Close your eyes, focus and allow God to gently speak to your heart what's in His word. Prayer is a game changer, my friend.

2. Reading the Bible

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105

You have to open your Bible, there is just no way around that. It seems like a huge undertaking, but trust that the Holy Spirit will lead you down the right path. Give yourself grace—knowing you probably aren't going to understand everything you read—and that's OK. The Bible says that the Word of God never returns void. You will be blessed for your commitment to grow and learn in the Word of God.

3. Attending Church

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” Matthew 18:20

It really does strengthen your faith to worship alongside other believers and be with the body of Christ. When you take the time out of your busy schedule to physically go to church, you are showing that God and His people are first priority in your life. Start this weekend—and just go.

4. Share the Gospel

“He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” Mark 16:15

It is impossible to be obedient to the Word and avoid telling people the good news of the Gospel when God gives opportunity. Brothers & Sisters, we've got some work to do. Everyone of us has a story. Everyone of us has been saved . . . we've passed from darkness to light . . . and the God who did that awesome work wants us to tell others how awesome He is . . . to show forth His praise.

Let's focus on setting goals that help us to go deeper in our walk with Christ—and by the way, you don't have to wait until the first of the year to get started! Take that first step to grow and strengthen your faith—I promise, you will be blessed for your obedience.

Rachel Bailey



2022 will soon be gone and thanks to each one of you, we were able to keep everything going at church. Here are some highlights from this year.

We have maintained about a 75 person average this year.

We were able to replace the office Heat/AC and have plans to replace the church foyer system in the future.

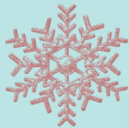
We had been blessed with an abundance of kids in the Children's church area and were out of room, so a portable building was purchased to help us with space as we continue to grow.

The church has always wanted a community building big enough for basketball, tennis and an indoor walking area. So, when the Piper Family ground became available, which is connected to our current property, we purchased it for our future expansion plans.

In 2023, we have in mind to replace the shrubs as well as cleaning up the front of the church area, to give it an updated curb appeal.

We always try our best to give each one of you a beautiful place to worship.

Thank you again to each of you for your generous giving!



Quality over Quantity

"Well done, my good and faithful servant."

These are the words I am reflecting on this Christmas Season. As I look forward to the new year, I am excited about the opportunities and victories to come. I know that God has so much in store for FCCWC Youth-Rooted in Christ, yet I don't want to get ahead of myself.

Having a large youth group with many students is a very enticing idea/thought but, God is calling me to focus on quality over quantity. Jr/Sr High can be hard, especially as we move closer to Jesus triumphant return. The world is ever-changing, becoming darker and can be scary. Our children are having to make decisions that will impact their future more than they know. We will ensure we use

Biblically sound curriculum that will engage the students, provide Biblical teaching and life application while also having fun.

My goal for 2023 is to build up a youth ministry that guides our students on their journey throughout the Jr/Sr High School years; a ministry where every student matters from the moment they show up and are encouraged even after they leave their youth behind and move into adulthood.

Prayerfully expecting that God will move and build up the youth ministry in 2023, I am looking forward to providing a ministry that is measured by quality not quantity.

Rooted in Christ Youth Ministry Leader-Lacie Dailey

“THE POWER OF FOCUS”

By Randall Shively

This past Sunday we heard a powerful message on “What is our focus?” Don't you remember. It was the message that Brother Ryan delivered during worship on Sunday morning. Maybe we were focused on something else.

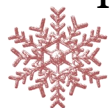
I've had more thoughts this week on this subject. How focused am I towards what God really wants from me? Did you know that what we are focused on mostly we tend to establish and form our habits. Let me list a few of our habits that we are focused on daily. The preparation we do to make it to work on time. The fuel we put in our vehicle so we can make it to work. The laundry we do to make sure we have clothes for work. The food we buy to stay healthy so we can perform well at our work.

What I'm trying to say is that we are focused almost constantly on our daily work. Our work is important to us because we do have goals we want to accomplish. Goals to make a certain amount of money so we can have nice things in life. Even though our work and our money is very important in our lives, they are still only temporary.

Our habits will determine our future. What is a habit? Simply stated, a habit is something you do so often it becomes easy. In other words, it's a behavior that you keep on repeating. If you persist at developing a new behavior eventually it becomes automatic. Up to 90% of our normal behavior is based on habits. The big question is that, is the church and your personal spiritual growth anywhere in that top 90% of your normal daily behavior.

If we were to list our top 3 priorities in our life most of us would probably say work, family, and faith. Or we might list them this way, family, work, and church family. If we do place a high emphasis on all three we will most likely turn out okay. But if we focus on one and ignore the others then something or someone will suffer.

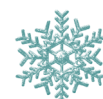
Here are a few quotes and a scripture to FOCUS on:



“Successful people have successful habits.”

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.” Stephen R. Covey

“If you keep doing what you've always done,
you'll keep getting what you've always got.”



“But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says.” James 1:22



The Way up

Luke Chapter Two opens with the commitment of Joseph taking Mary to register at Bethlehem for the census. There are two things from this passage I feel must be remembered.

First was the “lineage” or family line that required a response. Being in the family of David, Joseph had a duty and responsibility as a member of the Family to be obedient.

Second we see that “elevation” comes into play as they went “UP” geographically to Bethlehem. They were climbing up elevation during Mary’s hardest moment of pregnancy.

2022 has brought us good times and hard times. It’s brought celebrations at our door and also left scars and hurtful moments. As the year closes, and we look into the New Year...

What can we take from 2022 and help us have “Victory” in 2023?

Think of Joseph’s faithfulness and commitment. He had a task to do even though it wasn’t easy or practical. So what was his motivation?

It was the right thing to do.

FCC we have the responsibility of being in God’s family to do the right things.

2023 is our “New Chance” to show our passion and loyalty to Jesus!

When we look at the “elevation climb” Mary endured we see that she made it to Bethlehem! Then very quickly she gave birth. Mary even though tested and exhausted she got her “Victory”.

FCC we are in a “climb” to reach and receive God’s “Victory for us in 2023! It won’t be easy. It won’t be without scars. It takes dedication, work, picking people up along the way, but the greatest thing will happen..... We will get our “Victory” because Jesus never fails!

Personally in my life, I must be focusing on “Victory” and I must become a better leader and pastor. I must continue the commitment. I must continue the climb. I will fall and I need for you to help me back up. I will make mistakes and I will apologize. I will need your mercy and forgiveness. But we will reach “Victory” together!

Please stay on this path as we move upward. We are stronger together. We need each other. I’m sure Joseph and Mary needed each other on their climb!

As we blink this Christmas season will be over, and if Jesus tarries we will usher in a new and wonderful year of hope and vision. We will see “Victory” together!

We are climbing! You coming?

Pastor Steve

