



First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

4520 Rosedale Road  
Middletown, OH 45042  
513-422-2853  
www.fcc-middletown.org

# Chalice Communicator

December 30, 2019

Number 12

## Senior Minister:

Rev. Dr. Willie Barnes-Jackson

## 1<sup>st</sup> Lady/ Associate Pastor:

Rev. Dr. Pamela Barnes-Jackson

**Assoc. Pastor:** Rev. Connor Thompson

**Stu. Assoc. Pastor:** Minister Jeff Wilder

**Music Director:** Michael Hefner

**Moderator:** Roger Byrd

## Elders:

Sharon Amburgey

Natalie Byrd

Beth Heinkel

John Heinkel

Dave Lombard

Lora Schueller

Guy Stone

Marilyn Strong

Cliff Thompson

Karen Thompson

## SEE YOU SUNDAYS:

Pastor's Sunday School Class—9:30 a.m.

Adult Sunday School Class—9:30 a.m.

Worship – 10:30 a.m.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Bible Study every Tues @ 1:00 & 6:00

Choir Practice every Wed @6:30 p.m.

**12/31** Youth Overnight Lock-in

**01/13** Church Women United Noon

**01/20** Elders Mtg. 7 PM

**01/26** Board Mtg. 11:45 AM

## STATISTICS:

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
<b>12/29/19</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>\$1373.00</b>
<b>12/22/19</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>\$1,373.91</b>
<b>12/15/19</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>\$1,386.00</b>
<b>12/08/19</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>\$1,717.00</b>
<b>12/01/19</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>\$2,299.00</b>

**Christmas- \$361.00**

**Garden Fund- \$1247.00**

## ***PASTOR'S WILLIE'S WORDS OF WISDOM***

Hello Everyone. Let me begin by saying I hope you had a Merry Christmas and an upcoming Happy New Year. Looking back over the year takes us to the point of discernment pertaining to the decision to keep the doors to the church open. In my opinion, it was the right decision, not just because I am thankful to be your new pastor, yet because I truly believe we serve a “Living God” who is about life and not death. It is the enemy who is about death, and whose task is to divide and conquer were possible.

As a result of your decision to serve God and honor Him through our faith in Jesus Christ, we have been blessed in the last few months to see and experience growth in the Church. Remember that God honors and rewards those who love Him and are faithful to His Purpose, which is to grow the Kingdom of God on Earth.

It is our time to help others unto the Kingdom which our savior says is so close that it is within us. Let's continue to reach out to others that we know, so that our light so shines that others can see our good works and Glorify God in Heaven. With six new members, visitors who can be potential new members, and a few members who have not attended for a time, worshipping with us, we are seeing more weekly attendance.

May God help us to remain excited through the new and upcoming year of 2020, about what is happening at First Christian Church (DOC) – Middletown. Each of us has gifts that can be utilized in the service of the Lord at First Christian, so let us ponder how we might contribute, then let others know.

It is by our love they will know that we are Christians, so let us love all whom we encounter, also let us prepare ourselves for the changes that are coming, with growth comes change, and we need to look at ourselves in ways that allow each of us to be a positive force adding to that change.

One way we can do this is to consider adding an extra dollar to our offering each week to establish a “Benevolence Fund” at the church, in order to eventually

be able to help those in and outside of the church who may need assistance at times. Also remember that God blesses obedience to His Will, which we derive from His Word, the Bible.

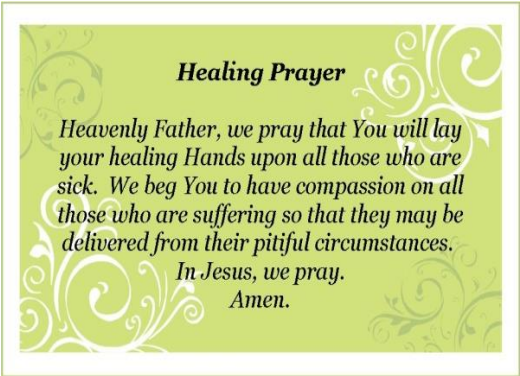
We should consider what commitments and pledges we have or are willing to make, in looking at our upcoming Finance Campaign, toward accomplishing the current fiscal year budget. Please remember your tithe, or tenth, as requested in the Word of God, in helping us be successful. Many thanks to you as the church family for all that you have done in pulling together to raise the funds required on the “Feed My Sheep” Community Garden project during this month of December 2019.

As a result of what we are doing towards building the Kingdom of God, He will continue to bless us, so let us be unified and in one accord in all that we do in the name of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who strengthens us. Let this next year 2020 be as fruitful for First Christian Church, and each of us and our families, as 2019 has been for the Church.

Rev. Dr. Willie J. Barnes-Jackson,  
Senior Pastor

**ELDER MOMENT**

2019 has been a year of transition and change for our Church. It is the Elders hope that we have served you, our members, faithfully and properly throughout this time of change. We pray that 2020 be a time of spiritual growth and fulfillment for our congregation as we endeavor to carry Christ’s word to a world in need of receiving his message.



**Prayer List:**

**Health:** Becky Brodt, Emily Cox, Zach Roark, Allen Stone, Guy Stone, Walter Strohm

**Special Needs:** Jean Greathouse, Helen Hall, Lois Murphy, Janet O'Neal

**Other:** All those affected by disasters. Caregivers, children and teachers, first responders, the homeless, SHALOM, heroin epidemic, racism and all human rights, our Country, war, violence, our church, congregation and church leaders



I’m so blessed to be a member of First Christian Church on Rosedale Rd. that I call my Church family. A very special thanks to the Reverend Willie and his wife, the Reverend Pamela Jackson-Barnes for their 3 or 4 visits to the hospital before and after surgery and also David Lombard. Your prayers and visits were so appreciated. I’m not forgetting you too Conner. Thank you and a special thanks to those of you that called with Conner.

In Christian Love,  
Peg Burgress

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To My Church Family,

Your cards, visits and especially your prayers have meant so much to me. This faithful support has been extra special. A great big thanks to each of you.

Helen Morgan



## ***OUTREACH***

It took two vehicles to transport all the wonderful Christmas gifts and food our congregation donated to the Salvation Army this year. The same day the Outreach Team made the deliveries, there was an appeal on a Cincinnati TV station from the Middletown organization for gift donations. Thank you for your very generous giving to the families we adopted. We will continue to offer our support throughout the year.

We ask for your prayers for volunteers and SHALOM guests as we begin our first week of hosting today. This is the fifth week this year for area churches to provide food and lodging to the homeless. We are so very thankful to all the volunteers who work together to support the program and we are thankful we are in a position to offer help. It not only touches lives, it saves lives!

Our thanks go to everyone who volunteered to wrap Christmas gifts this month at Central Academy and especially Karen Thompson who works in liaison with the school.

We also thank the volunteers who hosted the first and second graders from Central Academy during their annual "Day of Giving." Larry Steele coordinated the entire program and it was really a fun day for the children and volunteers.

It is through your generosity and support of Outreach that we can continue reaching out. Thank you!

## ***WIGG'S CORNER***

Happy New Year to everyone! I am so excited to introduce WIGG, Women In God's Grace! Ephesians 2:8 tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God..." Women, it is a new year, and it is our season to continue doing the works God has for us to do. We walk by faith and not by sight!

I attended the OWM (Ohio Women's Ministries) planning meeting on October 26, 2019. It was held at Bethany Christian Church in Columbus, Ohio. There was a video from Rev. Dr. Pat Donahoo, Executive Director for the OWM, regarding the topic "Where does Ohio Women's Ministries go from here?" We conversed about our challenges and struggles within our individual churches. We also spoke about our triumphs and programs that are working within our churches. It was suggested we host a one-day Women's Retreat/Conference in order to rejuvenate, revive, restore, and renew OWM. The tentative date is April 18 or 25, 2020. There will be more information forthcoming!

I also attended the CWU meeting on Monday, December 16, 2019. It was wonderful! The children's choir came from Central Academy and sang for us and played instruments as well. It was such a delight! The members passed out treats for the children.

I look forward to working with the women at First Christian Church and pray we show others how FCC Women are not only **Talking the Word but working God's Word** as well.

May God continue to keep us in His Grace as we continue to be willing workers for Him.

Peace & Love,

Your First Lady & Associate Pastor,  
Rev. Dr. Pamela Barnes-Jackson

## ***CWF NEWS***

Sarah Circle is taking a short break and will not meet in January of 2020. We are planning another visit to the Close To Home Assisted Living Center in the near future. We visited them in December to sing Christmas carols and have an afternoon of Bingo. They loved singing with us.

Esther-Rebekah Circle will not meet on January 1<sup>st</sup> because of the holiday. They will resume meeting in February. CWF wishes all a Happy and Healthy New Year!

# ***BIOGRAPHY OF MINISTER JEFF WILDER***

Born and raised in Middletown, Jeff Wilder has a true heart for the young people of this city. He has just recently began his formal education at Phillips Theological Seminary, but has had the unique opportunity to study under some of the areas great ministers and theologians. Jeff is an active volunteer with The Boy Scouts of America for 13 years. He has been recognized as Scoutmaster of the Year, Cub Master of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year, as well as being a Vigil Honoree in the Order of the Arrow (BSA Honor Society). In 2018, Jeff was recognized by Kingswell Ministries as Man of the Year for his work with the youth in Middletown and Mason of the year for Jefferson Lodge Middletown Free and accepted Masons. He has previously served as an outreach minister, an elder, and a youth program coordinator. Jeff's family has absorbed his love for serving, his wife, Kelly, works as a home health care giver for adults with disabilities and youngest son, Kobi, is an Eagle Scout whose Eagle project was an anti-bullying campaign. They currently live in Middletown. He is also the proud father of seven of who, son, Glenn South is a missionary to Turkey. Daughter, Courtney is a preschool teacher, daughter, Carly is a student of Cincinnati State for hospitality and business management and Jeff is an even prouder grandfather of four. His favorite verse is "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18). In ministry, as in life Jeff has lived and ministered from the precept that God Gives Us "it is ok to give the wrong person a break but not break the wrong person."

# ***YOUTH EXPLOSION BY JEFF WILDER***

Our culture is changing rapidly, and it's easy for the church to fall behind. We cling to what is familiar. We enjoy the memories of blessings God has bestowed on us in our past. The future sometimes looks scary. Especially, since the church, as a whole, seems to be on a downward spiral. It seems we are doing circles in the desert, lost in the wilderness like Moses on the way to the Promised Land! We long for the days and things of old. We long for the former things. Why? Because it is safe. We know what to expect in the former. But God's word says,

**Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.**

God is doing a new thing at First Christian Church! His new thing is a Youth Explosion! The word explosion triggers images of chaos, and destruction in the form of noise, debris, and in this case crumbs, glue, glitter, masking tape, drawings on everything not nailed down and every conceivable stain or spill you can possibly imagine. But let me offer 5 positive points that also come with this youth explosion.

**#1 Intrinsic Value: Children and youth are valuable as they are made in the image of God and are a visible sign of the extended mercy of God.**

**#2 Gift of Passion: The raw, idealistic passion of adolescents is a gift to the body of Christ. It pushes adults beyond comfort and cynicism.**

**#3 Agents of Ministry: Youth are not merely objects of ministry. They are rightful agents of ministry today, as part of the larger, intergenerational family of God.**

**#4 Relational Impetus: Teenagers remind the broader church that relationships, rather than structures, are the conduit for gospel movement.**

**#5 Learning Laboratory: Ministry to youth keeps the church aware of the changes in culture and the local context.**

Ministry among youth can give the church a "first look" at coming changes. Youth ministry provides us an opportunity to experiment with how to bring the unchanging Word to an ever-changing culture, giving us a snapshot of racial, social-economic, familial, and value diversity in our community. Ministry to, and among youth in our community helps the church connect to and stay abreast of the changing context of our community. Yes, the explosion of noise and controlled chaos is worth the uncomfortable the church feels with a youth explosion. To



expand further the youth explosion teaches us to remember how we first loved Christ; with a sense of wonder, excitement, and an unconditional expectation of possibility! Children believe that nothing is impossible! They expect wonder and miracles. Each time they come into the church they are expecting to learn something new, experience something miraculous, and feel something empowering. Jesus knew this, that's why he wrote:

**Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.**

In our haste to maintain "control" and "order" let us not forget none are in control but Jesus. And If he commands us to forbid not the children to come to him, who are we to change the rules of his house? Growth is hard, it is painful. But in the end, it is necessary to move closer to God. We are in the new beginnings of a youth explosion! God has seen your faithfulness and has chosen our church to facilitate Growth! Do we continue to be faithful and embrace the changes and growing pains? Or do we stifle it because we are so accustomed to the way "We" do things that we chase our blessing out of the church? Do we long for the former ways and consider the things of old? Or do we cling to and believe God's word and expect a new thing!

## ***FROM THE MEDIA DEPARTMENT***

As many of you know, at FCC we strive to have a top of the line media abilities. We strive to keep our social media presence top notch, including promoting worship services, events, and news from our church to the rest of our community. If you see something, we have post on a social media platform, Like it! Share it! Invite a friend! All of these things help grow our church in an increasingly digital age.

**“According to Grey Matter Research, 17 million Americans who don’t regularly attend church visited a church website. While most are searching for church hours or programs, 26% are streaming video and another 26% are streaming audio. So yes, a website is vital for reaching more people and increasing your members.”**

Watch our website, while it is not updated daily, you will find sermons, videos of worship, info about major upcoming events, and archives of the Chalice communicator. Stay tuned for other forth coming technology upgrades in future months!

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## ***HELP THE PASTORS HELP YOU!***

Do you know someone who is in the hospital? Is stuck at home for recovery? Is just feeling a little down, and would appreciate a visit? Let us know. The Pastoral staff very intentionally make Pastoral visits to members in various locations and situations every week! We can only do this if we know they are needed. If you know of someone who is admitted to the hospital or is in need of a visit, let the Pastors know.

A graphic with the words "Happy New Year!" in a large, blue, 3D-style font. The text is decorated with colorful streamers and confetti, giving it a festive appearance.

# January, 2020



Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	December 30 <b>SHALOM</b>	31  <b>Youth Overnight Lock-in</b>	January 1 <b>SHALOM</b> 	2	3 <b>SHALOM</b>	4
5	6	7 <b>Bible Study 1PM / 6 PM</b>	8 <b>Choir Practice 6:30 PM</b>	9	10  <b>Sharon Amburgey</b>	11  <b>Betty Stacy</b>  <b>National Human Trafficking Awareness Day</b>
12	13 <b>Church Women United Noon</b>	14 <b>Bible Study 1PM / 6 PM</b>	15 <b>Choir Practice 6:30 PM</b>	16  <b>Rev. Dr. Willie J. Barnes-Jackson</b>	17	18  <b>WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY January 18-25</b>
19	20 <b>Elder Mtg. @7 PM</b>  <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b>	21  <b>Peggy Byrd</b> <b>Bible Study 1PM / 6 PM</b>	22 <b>Choir Practice 6:30 PM</b>	23	24	25
26 <b>General Board Mtg. @11:45</b>	27  <b>MacKenzie Lovin</b>	28 <b>Bible Study 1PM / 6 PM</b>	29	30	31	

