

THE CALLER



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)
OWENSBORO, KY

No. 1 Vol. 18 ~ January 31, 2022

From the Preacherman....

The toughest people I know are Christians. That's an odd union of words, tough and Christian. After all of these years as a pastor I have no doubt that the most determined, resilient, and courageous people I have known in my life are Christians. They are people who have lost much and suffered incomprehensible losses yet found it within themselves to help others out of their own pain and struggle. They are people who risked life and reputation because they stood with those who were oppressed, left out or shunned. The kindest, gentlest souls I have ever known often had backbones of steel and souls of iron. The world is a tough place to live, yet they were tougher.

Tough does not mean "mean." It means kindness and patience and fierce determination for justice in the face of injustice. It means a willingness to choose conversation and argument, peacemaking and cooperation, with people we share little in common with, except faith in Christ. It means choosing to love even those who despise and hate because we are convinced that love will ultimately win. We follow One whose life was spent among losers, the lost and the lonely. He died a criminal's death, a loser deserted by his friends and followers. Jesus knew about meanness, but he chose another way. So shall we.

I know other people of tough faith as well. Over the last three months I have been blessed to get to know some of the Afghan refugees who have settled here in Owensboro. They helped Americans during my country's long involvement in Afghanistan and when America left, these refugees had to leave, too, or face punishment, even death, from the Taliban. They faced death because they helped my country. I have been glad to get to know some of them while they cooked in our church kitchen.

Last week some of my Afghan friends were attacked with mace by masked strangers. Law enforcement and medical assistance responded to help in the crisis. Friends showed up to offer their support. The crisis of the moment passed, but fear and anger remain, a deep sense of unrest about what may come next. Well, we know what comes next. The gnawing sense of uneasiness about evil in our midst is not going away. The meanness revealed in the attack simply reveals what has been there all along. There is no place on the planet we can go to be away from racism, sexism and a hundred other "-isms" that destroy human souls. It is naïve to think this or any place is free of the cunning power of sin to degrade and dehumanize other people.

Do you know what else comes next? Something deeper and truer: the fierce, powerful, tough resilience of people who care about what is right and good. Those things, profoundly important to me as a Christian, are not just Christian traits. They are traits of my Muslim friends, too. They are people of deep faith dislocated from home and country and family, yet still kind and good. And now they are my neighbors. Jesus was kind of clear about how to treat them. Love your neighbor, he said. So, I shall.

And you? What about you?

Peace... Chris

FEBRUARY

CALENDAR

February 3-

2:30 p.m. Refugee Food Pantry

5:30 p.m. Finance Committee

February 6- Worship/Sunday School

5:00-6:30 p.m. HS Youth Game Night

February 7-

6:30 p.m.- OCTC Chorus

February 10

5:30 p.m. Elders Meeting

February 13- Worship/Sunday School

February 14- Valentine's Day

6:30 p.m.- OCTC Chorus

February 17

2:30 p.m. Refugee Food Pantry

February 20- Worship/Sunday School

February 21- President's Day

February 27- Worship/Sunday School

Weekly Meetings:

Sunday:

Worship and Sunday School

Wednesday:

6:30 a.m.- Men's Fellowship*

6:00 p.m. - Choir Practice

BIRTHDAYS

2 Chris Castlen

3 Jim Quisenberry

6 Sue Boling

8 Austin Schrecker

8 Elton Smith

11 Carroll Hayden

12 Ethel McElwain

13 Joanne Berry

16 Mitch Stapleton

16 Lou Bellamy

17 Brian Hedges

17 Wendell Thompson

21 Marjorie Flowers

21 Mike Glenn

21 Wayne Goodaker

23 Michelle Whitmer

24 Gina Kane

24 Ken Lawson

24 Laura Michael

25 Patrick Whitmer

25 Ashley Webb

26 Drew Johnson

26 Holden Aud

27 Holly Roark

28 Annie Sue Newman

28 Emily Sullivan

ANNIVERSARIES

1 Flem & Becky Gordon

2 Bob & Patty Hines

14 Scot & Gina Kane

14 Rodney & Joanne Berry

16 Ginger & Terry Norris

18 Bobby & Patty Schrecker

December Financials:

Offering for the Month:	\$82,685
Other Revenue Month:	\$97
Total Revenue:	\$82,782
Expenses for the month	\$38,573
Net for the month	(\$44,209)
Year-to-Date Offering	\$510,581
YTD Other Revenue	\$18,170
YTD Revenue	\$528,751
YTD Expenses	\$415,588
Net for the year	\$113,162
<u>Outreach:</u>	
West Area Disciples CC	\$1,071
Disciples Mission Fund	\$6,285
HELP Office	\$450

*Men's Fellowship meets at Panera- 4600 Frederica St

DWM- Disciples Women's Ministries

DWM The DWM Arm Chair Bazaar is the project for February. All donations are appreciated and will help DWM with their Mission work. We will also support Friends of Sinners during the month of February, who are in need of pillows (5-7), toilet paper, and laundry detergent. The day group will meet February 1st at the Church at 1:00. The night group will meet on Thursday, February 10th at 6:00 at Leslie Mobley's home-- 633 Pin High Drive



Game Night

The High School Youth will be having a game night on February 6th, from 5:00-6:30 pm, in the Fellowship Hall. Join us for a time of fun and fellowship.



Dear Church Family,
We want to thank everyone for the cards and prayers sent our way. That and the skillful surgeons and nurses pulled Calvin through.
- Calvin and Wanda Gilbreath



Thank you FCC-
prayers during my family's illness.
Your kind words meant so much.
-Michael Ervin



FCC-
Thank you for the beautiful flowers and an assortment of gifts. The blessings from our church are appreciated.
- Martha and Jim Quisenberry



Outreach News

Did you know that:

- a) Your contributions to the Christmas outreach project netted \$2431, thus enabling us to give checks of \$486.20 each to the five city/county middle school resource centers to be used for children with the greatest needs.
- b) Dollars from your Legacy Fund made possible a \$4500 grant to the Charity Care Fund of the Community Dental Clinic. This fund is used to provide dental care to families and individuals who have no means of payment. Most recently, professionals from the clinic provided preventative check ups as well as emergency dental care for the newly arrived Afghan refugees.
- c) A grant from your Legacy Fund prevented a family from becoming homeless due to monumental medical bills following a cancer diagnosis. After becoming aware of this family's problems, your DWM also provided assistance for food and other needed items.
- d) A minimum of FORTY volunteers from our congregation have worked tirelessly to transition over 150 new refugees into the community. Members have assisted the refugees in renting and setting up apartments, have procured health and dental care for them, have transported food to and from the hotel, have shuttled individuals to appointments, and have served as hosts to the Afghans cooking in our kitchen. You have organized, sorted and sized hundreds of clothing items, and purchased (out of your own money) warm clothing that you determined was needed. Your generosity of time and compassion has truly been overwhelming!
- e) Your Outreach Committee was awarded a \$2000 Week of Compassion Afghan Assistance Mini-Grant. Please thank Aloma Dew for writing this grant which will enable us to partner with the Islamic Center in providing Halal meat and fresh produce to both the refugees who are utilizing our kitchen to prepare meals as well as to those we serve via the twice monthly food deliveries.

I would like to thank First Christian Church for their recent gift to the OCTC Foundation, Inc. I appreciate your support and am excited about the positive impacts it will have on our students. Please know your gift to the Burmese Heritage Scholarship will help students stay on the path to earning their degree. Your kindness and generosity assists students with the cost of tuition, textbooks, and class materials, so they can focus on furthering their education and making a better life for themselves and their families...

Partners like you change lives in our community.

Sincerely,

Scott Williams, Ph.D, Owensboro Community and Technical College

Fresh Start for Women's Board of Directors and families want to express our extreme appreciation for the generous gift FCC provided through the Legacy Fund. The \$6,000 was quickly put to use replacing the exterior doors on our 12-unit apartment complex. Several of the women have commented on the difference now that the doors seal and there is no air rushing in...

Again, thank you for assisting us with transforming this apartment complex so we can transform lives.

We look forward to providing an opportunity for you to come take a tour and meet our families.

- Carol Adkins-- Fresh Start for Women