

# THE CALLER



## FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ) OWENSBORO, KY

From the Preacherman....

As the current year draws quickly to a close I have been wondering what the new year holds. I used to make resolutions, but don't anymore. I respect those who do, and especially those who make habits into lifestyles. I've just never been good at any of it, so I don't even try. I am partial to a quote from an old John Lennon song: "Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans." Don't miss the gift right in front of you for something down the road. Life is going to happen no matter what you plan.

Long has it been an important practice for churches to develop strategic plans, guidelines to follow over the course of the next three to five years. In my three decades of being a pastor I have been a part of a number of plans, both in churches and in community organizations. However, I have always seen the same points delineated in church strategic plans: Churches want better publicity, more youth involvement, deeper congregational participation in all ministries and outreach to any and all who would come. That's it. Shuffle the order and change the wording, but we plan to do what we have always planned to do. Then we print it up, put it on a shelf and return to it in five years to come up with the new, improved, but same plan.

So, this is my question: How are we to faithfully follow Jesus now, today, not 5 years from now? It is a gigantically difficult, yet deceptively simple question. Jesus calls disciples to follow him early in Mark's Gospel (1:17): "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." In two separate incidents, Peter and Andrew, then James and John, all drop their fishing nets and go with Jesus. What in the world makes someone do that? Mark says "immediately" in connection with both callings, employing the word more often in his Gospel than all of the rest of the New Testament combined. "Now" really matters to Jesus. How about us?


I will be away from church for four Sundays in January and early February because I need to work on what that question means to me as a pastor, husband, father and disciple of Christ. I have some books to read and some people to talk to and some time to listen for God to speak. For me "now" means patiently discerning how to preach, talk, study, pray and listen for God in this world today. So, despite my argument to the contrary above, I do have a very important resolution for the new year.

I have charged eight people from our congregation to answer for themselves the call of Jesus in Mark 1. Why do they follow Jesus today as disciples? What is next for them as individuals and as church? Their deep discernment will be important for us to hear and acknowledge. I hope for answers that are as honest and different as they are as people.

The question poses itself to the rest of us to answer, too. How do you answer the call and claim of Christ today? Plenty of people have decided that the call to be a follower of Jesus doesn't really matter much anymore. Does it matter to you?

Peace.... Chris

# JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <i>Happy New Year</i> Church Office Closed	2 <b>DWM</b> 1:00 @ FCC.	3  Youth Group starting back up @ 6:00 p.m.	4 Refugee Food Pantry 1:30 pm	5	6
7 Worship/Sunday School Deacons/Elders Orientation 5:00 p.m.	8	9	10 <b>DWM</b> 12:00 p.m. Men's Fellowship 6:30 am Youth Group	11	12	13
14 Worship/Sunday School	15	16	17 Youth Group Men's Fellowship 6:30 am	18 Refugee Food Pantry 1:30 pm	19	20
21 Worship/Sunday School	22	23	24 Youth Group Men's Fellowship 6:30 am	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 Youth Group Choir Starts back up!			

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

## Birthdays

- 1 Amanda Evans
- 2 Lucas Ruckdeschel
- 5 Jack Lee
- 6 Martha Quisenberry
- 6 Joyce Bennett

- 6 Ronnie Forrester
- 8 Maxwell Baur
- 10 Barbara Beane
- 11 Henry Connor
- 11 Teresa McKinley
- 12 Riley Glenn
- 13 Cori Douglas

- 15 John Clay Ford
- 15 Elizabeth Yager
- 16 Zeke Douglas
- 16 Becky Gordon
- 18 Joseph Berry
- 18 Cathryn Gaddis
- 18 Mark Luckett
- 20 Camryn Kyle

- 20 Gary Tunget
- 20 Janet Luckett
- 20 Pearl Simon
- 22 Julie Burg
- 22 Millie McDannel
- 23 Stacy Castlen
- 27 Norris Cotton
- 27 Francyn Miller

- 27 Mike Tichenor
- 27 Scarlett Roark
- 29 Natalie Johnson
- 31 Tres Sterett

## Anniversaries

- Terry & Patty Brownson
- Chris & Laura Michael
- John & Gloria Strehl
- Pavel & Katherine Zboril

## October Financials

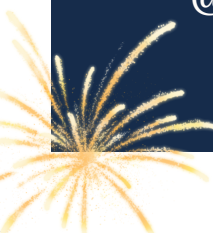
Offering for the Month:	\$69,038
Other Revenue Month:	\$333.95
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$69,372</b>
Expenses for the month	\$62,081
Year-to-Date Offering	\$492,832
YTD Other Revenue	\$19,928
YTD Revenue	\$512,760
YTD Expenses	\$441,094
Net for the year	\$71,665
<b>Outreach:</b>	
West Area Disciples CC	\$2,179
Disciples Mission Fund	\$3,667
HELP Office	\$900
Misc.	\$18,500

**Deacons & Elders Orientation**  
**Sunday, January 7th @ 5:00 p.m.**  
**in the Sanctuary!**

january

DWM Meeting- 1/2  
@ 1:00 FCC

DWM Meeting- 1/10  
@ 12:00 FCC



Dear First Christian Church,  
Thank you so much for the generous donation to our Pajamas, Sock hat drive. Because of your gift, every student will receive a new pair of PJ's, and sock hat! We can't thank you enough for helping our students feel just a little bit more special!  
Sincerely,  
The Staff & Students of Estes



Youth

Youth Group will start back up on January 3rd @ 6:00 p.m.



A big THANK YOU to those who participated in the Salvation Army Angel Tree program. We are so thankful for your generosity and know you each played a part in making someones Christmas magical!



**Closed**

The Church Office will be CLOSED on 1/1/24 to celebrate the New Year!



## Choir Break!

Our Choir will be taking a well deserved break in January. We will resume rehearsals on January 31st!  
Our guest singers during that time will be:

- 1/7 -- Tracy McGhee
- 1/14 -- Bree Sommerville
- 1/21 -- TBA!
- 1/28 -- 1st/3rd Quartet

HAPPY  
New Year

