



The Link



Volume 42, Number 10

January 27, 2011

Sunday Worship:

1/30/11 at 9:20 AM
Tim Diebel preaching
"The Basics"
Micah 6:1-8

2/6/11 at 9:20 AM
Tim Diebel preaching
"Do What You Can"
I Corinthians 2:1-12

2/13/11 at 9:20 AM
Suzanne Stout preaching

Prayer Themes:

January 30: **Fifth-Sunday Offering:** Please pray for the Connections Café and those who participate in the free lunch program.

February 6: **Blanket Fund:** Please pray for the Church World Service Blankets+ ministry and the recipients of their world-wide relief and development assistance.

February 15: **Board Meeting:** Please pray for the quarterly meeting of our church board, for the wisdom and discernment on the part of all the new and old board members and church leaders.

Sweetheart

Dance

and

Reality Theatre

Friday, Feb. 11, 7-9 pm

By Reservation Only, Call: 255-2181

\$15.00 per Adult. \$5.00 per Student

Maximum per Family \$40.00

Fundraiser for Friends of Music

Come dressed in your choice-of-decade period attire
Enjoy the HILARIOUS competition for King and Queen of the prom! The Court:

Reigning King & Queen Bill Moulder and Louise Moulder
Ted Lyons and Virginia Lyons
Rich Richards and Lyn Loheed
Carl Staplin and Phyllis Roberts
Jerry Mogensen and Vivian Griffith

- ♥ Get advice on **L♥VE** from The L♥VE D♥CT♥RS, Dr. Tim Diebel and Dr. Lori Diebel
- ♥ Get your picture taken with your sweetheart
- ♥ Sweet Treats and Lovers Punch
- ♥ Hear some great love songs by soloists and choir
- ♥ Enjoy the LIVE BAND
- ♥ Buy chocolates and flowers for your love

Food for Thought



Hear Ye! Hear Ye!



I've spent some time in recent weeks looking back over the past year and gathering data to help me assess the value of our efforts in various mission projects which have occupied our time and engaged our prayers. Now I need for you to do likewise so that together we can plan for the new year.

Our ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING (also known as ESL) continues to flourish with over 100 students enrolled and with additional services being provided. The five very committed teachers from DMACC extend themselves beyond all expectation with their holistic approach to each student. Assisted by volunteers from our church, they have managed three clothing distributions and a successful food drive to benefit the students. Church members have contributed over \$1,000 and a Reconciliation Grant provided \$4,000 to help provide childcare during class time.

The BOYS & GIRLS' CLUB is currently averaging around 60 students in its after-school program. Its all-day summer program enrolled over 90 children since there was more staff available at that time. The First Christian unit of the club continues to get top ratings for efficiency and it has added a daily tutoring/mentoring session.

Nine CARING CONNECTION groups have been operating for one year and many folks have become reconnected to the church while others have found new friendships. Some groups have been more active than others but all have communicated at an improved level. Activities have included pot lucks at the church and in homes, tours of the church, gatherings at retirement facilities in order to include those who can't get out, sports events, and the always popular pizza party.

The congregation has supported many witnessing activities with generous contributions. The Alternative Gift Market raised \$1800 for Primary Health Care, Bidwell Riverside and our English classes. \$1843 was given for the Disciple Women Faith Fund; fifth Sundays raised over \$1000. Special offerings like Easter, Christmas and Week of Compassion collected more than \$15,000. Altogether, more than \$49,000 was contributed for needs beyond those covered in the budget.

The 2010 FARMERS' MARKET attracted 15-20 vendors and over 400 patrons per week and continued to be a positive force in the neighborhood to bring neighbors together in a positive fun and welcoming environment. A big thanks goes to the 20+ volunteers each week and to the extraordinary management of Ginny Gieseke. Ginny was the idea person behind the market and an original founder. She will be retiring in the next few weeks after 14 years of amazing service. A task force is already hard at work to prayerfully assess this situation and determine if the necessary leadership is available. Obviously, this ministry will be undergoing change.

Please take some time to consider all of the ministries which are a part of our church, in the light of our mission statement. Are we honoring our commitment and being faithful to God's call? We have been incredibly blessed with solid leadership and faithful volunteers working behind the scenes. Change happens and challenges us to find new opportunities. I and all the Witnessing Ministry and the special task force welcome your suggestions and covet your prayers.

With God's spirit working within us and leading us, we will press on to fulfill his calling for mission in our neighborhood. Blessings on all of your efforts to serve.

Sondra

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH STAFF

Senior Minister

Timothy C. Diebel tdiebel@fccdm.org

Minister of Community Life

Sondra Eddings seddings@fccdm.org

Minister of Family Life

Suzanne Stout [sstout@fccdm.org](mailto:ssstout@fccdm.org)

Minister of Music

Carl B. Staplin Carl.Staplin@drake.edu

Music Director/Composer in Residence

Ben Allaway BENLMNOP@aol.com

Bookkeeper

Steve DeHaven sdehaven@fccdm.org

Custodian

Richard Shoemaker ... custodian@fccdm.org

Office Administrator

Nanette Johnson njohnson@fccdm.org

LOGOS



Wednesday Evenings

Grades K-5: 4:25 to 7:00 p.m.

Grades 6-12: 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Weekly Themes:

February 2 – Chinese New Year
Year of the Rabbit.

February 9 – Neon Night
Everyone needs an excuse to wear something so bright it hurts your eyes.

Worship Skills:

Sunday, January 30

Middle School: Interpretative Movement,
Joys & Concerns

Sunday, February 6

K-2: Sing during Offertory

Middle School: Worship Leaders

Contemplative Corner



I have a fascination with vanity license plates. I'm not sure why, but I do. I'm always wondering why people share what they do.

For example, the blue Honda Civic with "Shoe 39." What's up with that? Does it mean she owns 39 shoes? Has she been collecting shoes for 39 years? Or is 39 the minimum number of shoes you should own?

There is one vanity plate lately that keeps crossing my path: ABOVAVG. The woman who drives the car with this vanity plate works in the same building as me. Two days this week I followed her down Jordan Creek Parkway and pulled into the parking lot behind her. My eyes lock onto her plate and it makes me wonder. Does she hold a secret to life I should pay attention to? Does she know something I don't? About success? About happiness?

ABOVAVG

We are taught—especially in the middle part of the United States—to work hard and do the very best we can. It's a religion. If we just work, work, work, we'll be happy and success will follow us.

But I wonder if my coworker hasn't locked onto something worthy of pondering.

What if we strove to be not perfect, not excellent, but above average? What if we didn't knock ourselves out to be the best at everything? I was taught that "anything worth doing is worth doing well." And I believe that but does it mean I have to kill myself for every little thing? I know this: when I am focusing on perfection it keeps me from trying new things—just for fun. It prevents me, for instance, from having people over to my home—after all—the house will have to be clean and I'll have to COOK (what's that?) and, and, and... By the time I've calculated all I have to do I've talked myself out of it.

What if, instead, we low-balled our expectations and decided ABOVE AVERAGE was just plain good enough? It's counter-cultural and a little wicked, isn't it? And makes us squirm. But, I wonder if more wouldn't ultimately be accomplished if we lowered our expectations and accepted less than perfection from ourselves and others. Maybe we won't walk the 30 minutes we planned, but 20 minutes is a whole lot better than nothing. Or maybe we don't clean out the entire garage or basement, but straightening a corner of it is still something. I have a feeling one action—no matter how small—will lead us to the next and the next and the next.

As 2011 begins and visions of New Year's Resolutions dance in our heads, how about taking my coworker's advice and considering that above average is good enough? She just might be onto something.

Blessings on your journey,

Mary Jo Franklin

First Christian Church

2500 University Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50311
515.255.2181
fax: 515.255.8759

Web: www.fccdm.org

Christian Church in the Upper Midwest:

www.uppermidwestcc.org

Sunday Morning Schedule:

9:20 am -- Morning Worship
10:45 am ---- Friendship Time
11:00 am ----- Learning Hour

OFFICE HOURS

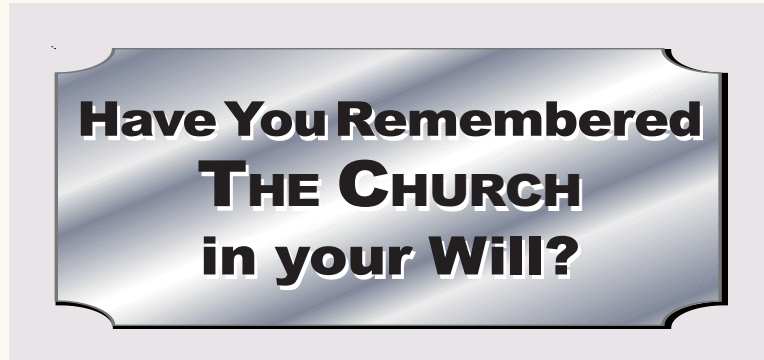
Mon-Thurs — 8:30-4:30
Friday — 8:30-1:00

The Link ...

... is published twice per month.
Submissions are due Wednesday of
the previous week and may be edited
for length, clarity, or for consistency
with other articles.

NEXT DEADLINE:

February 2 (Feb. 10 issue)



WE ARE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, an Open & Welcoming community of faith, called to witness to God's creative power in the midst of a richly diverse neighborhood. We are challenged to share in a vibrant Spirit-led common life. As we mature in the Spirit and respond to God's calling, we are empowered and compelled to reach out to neighbors near and far in a reconciling ministry partnership.

5th Sunday Offering - Jan. 30

The January "5th Sunday Offering" beneficiary is The Bridge/Connection Café. The Connection Café serves lunch in downtown Des Moines five days a week to homeless and low income individuals and families. Under the direction of a paid coordinator, volunteers from more than 30 churches, schools and civic groups donate and serve lunch to an average of 126 people on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. In 2009, more than 1750 volunteers served more than 33,000 meals.

The Connection Cafe is a program created by The Bridge, a collaboration of four downtown Des Moines churches as part of their mission to minister to the poor. St. Ambrose Cathedral, St. John's Lutheran church, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral and First United Methodist church created The Bridge as a private non-profit group. The Connection Café became a program of The Bridge as a means to help enrich the lives of those living, working or worshipping in downtown Des Moines.



compiled from
<www.theconnectioncafe.org>