



# The Link

Volume 42, Number 8

December 23, 2010

## Sunday Worship:

12/26/10 at 9:20 AM

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Suzanne Stout preaching

*"Giving Our Love"*

Colossians 3:12-17

1/2/11 at 9:20 AM

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Tim Diebel preaching

1/9/11 at 9:20 AM

FIRST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Tim Diebel preaching

## Prayer Themes:

December 25: **Christmas:** Give thanks for the Birth of Jesus, and for the coming peaceful reign of Christ.

January 1: **New Year:** Please pray for the new year, that we will let our light shine in our homes, workplaces, and neighborhood.

January 9: **First Christian:** We pray for all the members - new and old - as we honor those who joined in 2010, and gather all together and in our separate care groups.



## January 9, 2011

**9:20 am Sunday Worship**

*we will honor the new members  
who joined in 2010*

**10:45 am Friendship Time**

*convene members in Fellowship Hall*

**11:00 am Learning Hour**

*ALL Care Groups meet*

**12:00 noon LUNCH!**

*brief congregational meeting  
(to vote on proposed budget)  
followed by an all-church  
POT LUCK LUNCH*

***We invite ALL Members (of all ages)  
to be present for these activities!***

# SONG CENTRAL



Dear Church Family,

Among cars there is Buick and Cadillac, and then there's the Roll Royce. Among schools you have every other school, and then Harvard. In the world of choirs you have the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, but they are more about size than anything else. For size *and* artistry there is the Chicago Symphony Chorus, an all-professional chorus with the most Grammy Awards of any choir.

Among smaller choirs, however, there is Westminster and St. Olaf, a toss-up, and since St. Olaf's founder, F. Melius Christiansen, actually helped John Finley Williamson start the Westminster, St. Olaf pretty much gets the honor of the gold standard. I'm being slightly disingenuous, because, having sung in both ensembles, I can say it really is difficult to compare, and could attest to some of the subtle differences, the merits of each, etc. Westminster outdoes St. Olaf in the symphonic repertoire, and explores more secular music. But I will say with certainty that for an institution and choir which has never wavered in its service to the church, St. Olaf clearly is the leader.

The St. Olaf Choir is coming again to First Christian this January 28th, having been here four years ago, and having enjoyed our acoustics so much. They plan to make it a regular stop on their four-year cycle of destinations. To have this Rolls Royce/Harvard of choirs sing in our sanctuary is a great opportunity and privilege. Those of you who heard the choir in 2006 will need no encouragement. Those of you who missed that performance will have the opportunity to share this awesome musical experience of sacred choral music at its most inspiring level.

What sets them apart? The St. Olaf Choir sings entirely from memory, rehearsing two hours every day. Because of their renown, they attract the best singers from all over the country. The talent pool is very deep. Because they aren't holding folders, they hold hands to strengthen the unity in the group. They invented this practice among American choirs, and Iowa's own Nordic Choir from Luther College is one of many which has adopted the practice. St. Olaf is also responsible for popularizing a cappella choir-singing in the United States, beginning in 1912, and was the first such choir to tour this repertoire to the major musical centers of the East Coast.

There is also a deep spiritual commitment in the group. F. Melius always spoke about the choir being only one half of a circle, which is only complete when the audience is there. The strength of the musical experience comes from this sense of community. Student-led devotions and meditation take place before each concert. Did I mention the purple velvet robes? But with the very minimal white satin collars, the group has a look of humility and servanthood.

St. Olaf Choir tickets will make great CHRISTMAS PRESENTS!! Available in the church office or online at <[www.stolaftickets.com](http://www.stolaftickets.com)>, adults are \$20 and students are \$10. Please consider inviting a group of your friends to be with you for this concert. It is a fantastic evangelism opportunity, to have people hear this fine program in our building. Thank you for helping to support this event, and for your support of music at First Christian throughout the year.

Blessings for a joyous Christmas season!

**Ben Allaway**

Choir Director and Composer-in-Residence

# LOGOS




*LOGOS  
is on winter holiday*



## For LOGOS Volunteers

Wednesday, January 5 - 5:30 to 7 p.m.

### Second Semester Super Session

-  Soup Supper
-  Super Ideas for programming and loving discipline
-  Celebration

Volunteers, please RSVP by Sunday, January 2 to Jane or Suzanne.

Wednesday, January 12

Regular LOGOS ministry begins second semester: 4:25 p.m. for elementary; 5:00 p.m. for middle and high school.

### CANCELLATION FOR BAD WEATHER

As a reminder, LOGOS is cancelled if Des Moines Schools are cancelled the same day for bad weather. If in doubt, call Jane's cell at 515/491-1698 or the church office. Stay safe!

### FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH STAFF

#### Senior Minister

Timothy C. Diebel ..... [tdiebel@fccdm.org](mailto:tdiebel@fccdm.org)

#### Minister of Community Life

Sondra Eddings ..... [seddings@fccdm.org](mailto:seddings@fccdm.org)

#### Minister of Family Life

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

#### Minister of Music

Carl B. Staplin ..... [Carl.Staplin@drake.edu](mailto:Carl.Staplin@drake.edu)

#### Music Director/Composer in Residence

Ben Allaway ..... [BENLMNOP@aol.com](mailto:BENLMNOP@aol.com)

#### Bookkeeper

Steve DeHaven ..... [sdehaven@fccdm.org](mailto:sdehaven@fccdm.org)

#### Custodian

Richard Shoemaker ... [custodian@fccdm.org](mailto:custodian@fccdm.org)

#### Office Administrator

Nanette Johnson ..... [njohnson@fccdm.org](mailto:njohnson@fccdm.org)



## LOGOS - Bible Study

*This article is part three of a multi-part series on the various aspects of our LOGOS program.*

Each week at LOGOS, the children spend time in Bible Study. In the elementary grades, in age-specific classes, the children focus on one study area for the school year. This year our older elementary class is learning about the elements of worship in our church, and our younger elementary class is learning about the friendship that God offers to us and making and keeping friends at home, at school, at church, in our communities and in the world. Our middle school and high school classes use a curriculum covering a variety of topics that allow them opportunity to discuss how faith influences their life choices. Regardless of the age and curriculum, the most important lesson our children and youth learn each week is that, created by God, they are each loved by God and by each of us.

## E.L.L. CHILDREN'S GIFT BAGS: *with love from LOGOS*

This semester our LOGOS ministry project had the children and their families create gift bags for the nursery children of our ELL students. On the last day of class for this semester, each ELL child was handed a cloth tote bag, decorated by our middle school youth, filled with both fun and practical items (such as coloring book and crayons, toothbrush and toothpaste). How wonderful it is to share the blessings God has given us with children new to our country.



## SUNDAY FLOWERS

The sign-up list is posted for 2011. Sponsor the flowers for your chosen week in honor of a special person or event. Cost is \$30. Please note that we do not purchase the vase from the florist, and it must be returned to them. This is to keep the cost reasonable and not wind up with a lot of excess vases at the church. If a donor wishes to take the flowers with them that Sunday after worship, please use an empty can (available in the kitchen) and leave the vase here.

**The Church will be CLOSED  
for the holidays:  
December 27-28 & January 3**



# WHY SHOULD I ATTEND MY CARE GROUP MEETING ON JANUARY 9 ????

## Nº 1 REASON –

Christ calls us to community and our Caring Connection groups are an effort to build community and thus fulfill that call. The groups have been designed to:

- Help us get to know one another better
- Help us be informed so that we can respond to each other in times of need as well as celebration
- Help us honor those who helped establish the church we experience today
- Help us assure that contact is maintained with all of our congregation regardless of their level of activity
- Help us share information about the church to generate support and active participation in the many opportunities for service that are available such as mission trips, serving at the homeless shelter, volunteering at the Farmers Market or the English classes
- Help us share the joy and love that is ours through Christ's community

Plan now to come on Jan. 9. All groups will convene at Friendship Time (10:45 am) in Fellowship Hall. Directions will be given and we will disperse for short meetings with our individual groups. This will be a time to update information, share concerns & joys, and plan for the coming months. At noon we will return to Fellowship Hall for a brief Congregational meeting followed by a Pot Luck dinner.

What a blessing we share in this great community – come and share the joy!!

– Sondra

## First Christian Foundation Completes Successful Year



Our church's Endowment Foundation serves a vital, but often misunderstood role for our congregation's life. It sometimes enables us to take a big step forward, as it did when it matched congregational pledges for our beautiful renovated Sanctuary. Sometimes, as it did more recently, it enabled the deteriorating brick exterior to be tuck-pointed. Every year it pays utility bills which exceed the limitations of our budget. It also enables youth to receive scholarships to go to camp and conference, and women to attend a national Quadrennial event.

This past year we accomplished several special goals - sponsoring a Seminar informing members about the hows and whys of wills and estate planning. We also created a meaningful plaque honoring the many deceased members whose commitment led them to a final act of stewardship to God through their wills. And every year, the Foundation helps to assure the future witness of First Christian Church by careful investment of its Endowment - which this year has shown good recovery from the economic downturn that has affected all of us.

We are already underway with plans for 2011, with a revision of our legal documents under the wise counsel of Bob Oberbillig. We will have a new Director on our Board, Jo Ann Zimmerman, and last year's officers were reelected. They are, beside myself, Jerry Aldrich, vice president, Nancy Dop, treasurer, Mary Jane Opland, secretary. Other Foundation members include Roe Wilkerson, Don Sanning, and Howard Williams.

– Richard Walters, President

## Annual Meeting Elects Leaders

It was a bitter, wintry morning on Sunday, December 12, but the Annual Meeting of the congregation nonetheless had a respectable attendance, warmed by good food and a common passion for our shared ministry. President Juanita Scriven called the meeting to order, and business proceeded from finances through leadership.

As to finances, Treasurer Don Sanning reported the status of the budget for 2011. Because current information suggests a significant shortfall in the coming year, the motion was made - and ultimately approved - to table adoption of a budget until a follow-up congregational meeting on January 9. In the interim, a letter detailing the situation with an invitation to supplement previous pledges has been mailed, which could alleviate the difficulty.

Jerry Mogensen, President-Elect and speaking on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the leadership nominees for the coming year. The slate adopted was:

President: Jerry Mogensen  
President-Elect: Tom Floren  
Secretary: Mary Jane Opland  
Treasurer: Don Sanning  
Worship Ministry: Barb Sanning  
Learning Ministry: Juanita Scriven  
Celebrations Ministry: Wende Barrett  
Witnessing Ministry: Terri Holmgren  
Personnel Committee: Beth Avery-Dokken  
Resources Committee: Jim Gieseke  
Council Member-at-large: Craig Wigton

Vivian Mogensen offered the slate of Elder Nominees which was adopted:

Ann Williams, Ann Merkley, Pat Oberbillig,  
Terri Holmgren, Linda Lighthall, Robert Merkley,  
Connie Ryan Terrell, Sally Nadolsky, Caryn Evans

Richard Walters, Chair of the Endowment Foundation, concluded the meeting by calling to order the Annual Meeting of the Endowment Foundation. The formal report is included in the 2010 Annual Report. He described the composition of the Foundation and stated the business agenda for this meeting was to elect three Directors of the Foundation to replace three members whose terms expire this year. The three members elected by the Endowment Foundation were Richard Walters, Don Sanning, and Jo Ann Zimmerman.

*If you were unable to attend the annual meeting, you may obtain a copy of the Annual Report from the church office - come in to pick up a printed copy, or request a pdf copy by e-mail <njohnson@fccdm.org>.*



## The Contemplative Corner

### *All I Really Need to Know*

There was a popular book years ago called, "*All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten.*"

I think I learn all I really need to know from my dog.

Take today for example. As I was pulling something from the kitchen cabinet, the corner of the door popped our beagle, Shelby, sharply on her head. I knew it hurt her. "I'm sorry," I gushed. She fell against my leg and stared eagerly into my eyes, wagging as if to say, "It's okay. Really."

If only we were so quick to forgive.

May we all find a little peace on earth by following the example of a dog named Shelby.

Blessings,

Mary Jo Franklin



## First Christian Church

2500 University Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50311  
515.255.2181

fax: 515.255.8759

Web: [www.fccdm.org](http://www.fccdm.org)

Christian Church in the Upper Midwest:

[www.uppermidwestcc.org](http://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:

January 5 (Jan. 13 issue)

# News Flash!



The TOWER CHIMES  
are in working order  
and are programmed  
to play on  
Christmas Eve

To watch a You-Tube  
video, go to:

[http://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=9VWVDpC1pOw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VWVDpC1pOw)

**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.**



*The Staff of First Christian Church wish you a very blessed Christmas. We thank you for all you do all year long to do the work of the ministry in this congregation and this neighborhood. Everyone in this church is blessed by the loving efforts you give to so many projects, programs, and people. May the light of Christ shine in your hearts, and the Love of our Creator radiate to all those around you, as in the coming year, you continue to serve God through the ministries of First Christian.*

*We invite you to worship here on Christmas Eve:*

*5:30 pm - Festive worship for all ages*

*11:00 - Quiet, intimate worship*

*Everyone is Welcome - invite your friends!*