



The light that
shines in
darkness!



The Link

Volume 41, Number 9

January 14, 2010

Sunday Worship:

1/17/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching
"Many the Gifts"
I Corinthians 12:1-11

1/24/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching
"A 'Zero' Year"
Luke 4:14-21

1/31/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching
"Growing Up Into Love"
I Corinthians 13:1-13

Prayer Themes:

January 17: **Food Pantry Sunday:** Please pray for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry, and for our help in providing for those in need of basic provisions.

January 24: **LOGOS:** Please pray for our weekly program for youth and children; for all the leaders, volunteers, and participants.

January 31: **Community Council:** Please pray for the new and returning members of our congregation's leadership in this new year.



Staff Office Hours

New Year, New Staff Schedules

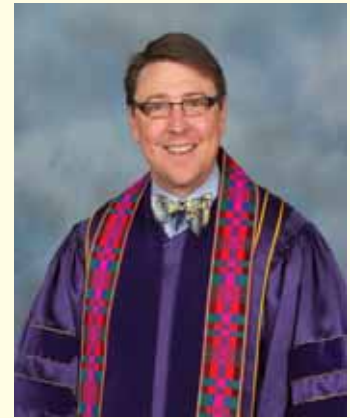
The new year brings with it some changes in the work schedules of our pastoral staff. The most significant of those changes is that Sondra Eddings has moved to part-time hours. Sondra plans to be in the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and, of course, active on Sundays. Otherwise, one of the pastors will be in the office Monday through Friday. Suzanne will be taking Friday off, while Tim will now be out of the office on Mondays. Of course "office hours" don't always literally mean physically in the office, so feel free to leave a message if necessary.

The church office will continue to be open
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday;
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. On Friday.



CAPTions:

I have been awarded a grant. Technically I should say “we” have been awarded a grant, since I will be sharing the \$10,000 with three colleagues over the next 24 months. The money – granted through the College of Pastoral Leaders at Austin Theological Seminary in Austin, TX – is a Lilly Foundation-supported program to encourage the renewal and growth of pastors from all denominations who create cohorts of 4-6 pastors, design a project, and make a proposal. Perhaps it won’t surprise you that the project I conceived and proposed has its roots in food.



An old culinary idea – what the French call “terroir” – suggests that place has taste, or more literally that the land imparts flavors unique to its location. The implication is that a turnip grown in central Iowa tastes differently from a turnip grown in Virginia or Texas or, hypothetically, even northeastern Iowa. So, our cohort will be experiencing this concept in New York State, rural Vermont, downtown Chicago, and Oregon.

And what might any of this have to do with pastoral excellence, or congregational vitality? My argument is that “terroir” applies not simply to food but also to congregational identity and expression. What it “looks like” or “tastes like” to be a congregation on Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago is different from what it looks like to be a congregation in rural Vermont or Des Moines, Iowa. Just as food is reduced to blandness when it is made uniform anywhere and everywhere, so are congregations when every church tries to look like every other, following a “cookie-cutter”, out of a box notion of what it ought to be doing and sounding like. Locations, I believe, impart taste.

Is this important? I think so. I think churches – sometimes our own – beat themselves up because they aren’t like some other one across town or across the country that has gained some notoriety. Instead of trying to “taste” like them, I believe that churches should seek to be authentic – reflecting the “terroir” of their location; the taste of their place.

That, at least, is the idea, and the one that four of us will be exploring over the next two years. It isn’t, of course, just my conversation; it involves you and our shared and constant process of seeking to be the best expression of the congregation that God is calling us to be in this particular place. We aren’t, after all, called to be the church in general. We are called to be the church in this place and time. I’ll keep you posted.

And I look forward to seeing you Sunday – if not before.

Timothy Cap Diebel



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH STAFF

Senior Minister

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Minister of Community Life

Sondra Eddings seddings@fccdm.org

Minister of Family Life

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

Minister of Music

Carl B. Staplin Carl.Staplin@drake.edu

Music Director/Composer in Residence

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Bookkeeper

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Custodian

Richard Shoemaker (no e-mail)

Office Administrator

Nanette Johnson njohnson@fccdm.org

LOGOS

Wednesdays Evenings
Grades K-5: 4:25 to 7:00 p.m.
Grades 6-12: 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.



Welcome back to LOGOS Spring Semester.
Invite a friend to LOGOS this semester.

Upcoming Themes:

January 13: Winter Wonderland
January 20: Hats Off to LOGOS (Crazy Hats!)
January 27: Beach Party

Sunday Morning Worship Skills Participation:

January 17:

K-2 - Bulletins
3rd - 5th Grade - Ushers/Greeters

January 31:

3rd - 5th Grade - God Rods

Please arrive by 8:55 a.m. for rehearsal/duty.



Making a difference in the life of a child...

As part of our children's Sabbath worship celebration in October 2009, we were each asked to pledge ways we could, individually, make a difference in a child's life. Your responses were varied and overwhelming - here's a few:

- ⊗ be an encourager for all children
- ⊗ donate books
- ⊗ support health care efforts
- ⊗ be a volunteer mentor
- ⊗ volunteer in one of FCC's programs with children/youth
- ⊗ donate to the food pantry
- ⊗ spend more time with the children in your own family & their friends
- ⊗ pray for them

How wonderful it has been to witness your dedication to the children of this church - through the many ways you volunteer your time, and simply through the ways you interact with them; and to the children of this community - through a fabulous book drive for the ELL students and their children, and through your continuing support of our community's food pantry.

Heading into this New Year seems a good time to dedicate ourselves, once again, to finding ways to nurture all of God's children. As one person pledged: "I will keep my ears, eyes, and heart open to recognize and act each time I see an opportunity to help a child or parents when they have a need." I can only begin to imagine the difference we can make in the life of God's children simply by being willing to act where God prompts us to.

What will you pledge to do in the coming days, weeks, and months to continue to make a difference in the life of a child?

- Suzanne Stout



**WARM
FUZZY
THANKS!**

A really BIG THANK YOU to all who contributed to our Warm & Fuzzy Tree a total of 227 articles such as scarves and mittens. Donations were delivered to: Homes of Oakridge, New Directions Shelter, and the DM Public School administrative office (to be distributed to school nurses at various locations).



SHELTER MEALS

The 2010 calendar is filled for the 20th of each month! Here's the list of the wonderful folks who are helping with the ministry of cooking a meal for the homeless shelter once a month:

- January - *West Des Moines Christian Church*
- February – *Paul & Jeannette Davis and Family*
- March – *Corinthian Baptist Church*
- April – *First Christian Choir*
- May – *First Christian Elders*
- June – *Des Moines Mennonite Church*
- July – *Peoples Sunday School Class*
- August – *Christ Community Church*
- September – *Disciples Men*
- October – *Corinthian Baptist Church*
- November – *First Christian Youth*
- December – *Church of the Holy Spirit*

Many “everyday items” are always welcome at the Shelter, such as: socks, toothpaste and brushes, personal and feminine hygiene items, soap, shampoo, shaving cream, disposable razors, magazines, first-aid items, and duffel/ gym bags. Towels, sheets, and blankets are always needed. At this time of year, warm jackets and coats are especially needed. Your donations can be delivered to the Shelter at 205 15th Street.

For more information about Central Iowa Shelter, visit <www.centraliowashelter.org>.



From the Gideon Bible folks, who visited recently for worship:



“On Behalf of the Gideons of our area and the Gideons International, I want to express my sincere thanks to you for your support of the Gideon work. The offering which was given in the amount of \$104 is tangible evidence of the love your congregation has for making the Word of God available to those who otherwise not have a copy. This will enable 20 Bibles or 75 New Testaments to be purchased and placed. We can pray that many precious souls will come to a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of these Scriptures being distributed.”

SOJOURNERS CLASS
WELCOMES DR. DIEBEL



Winter Lessons
to Study

Paul of Tarsus

New class begins January 17

Sojourners Class is pleased to announce that our winter study on the writer responsible for more of the New Testament than any other will be taught by our pastor, Tim Diebel. The title of a new book by Marcus Borg and John Crossan, “The First Paul” gives a clue that this study will break some new ground, and the heading on the first chapter sums up the tension we will be exploring: “Paul: Appealing or Appalling?”

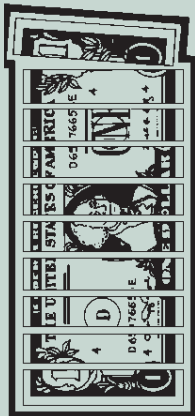
Paul of Tarsus has always been controversial. Alternately viewed as a radical liberal for his dismissal of Jewish laws, and as a narrow conservative for his teaching on the role of women in the church, this controversial church founder has made an enduring impact on our view of what it means to be a Christian.

This study hopes to deepen our understanding of the church’s most influential apostle, and perhaps help us reclaim “the radical visionary behind the church’s conservative icon,” as Borg and Crossan describe Paul.

Sojourners invites anyone who wants to stretch their understanding of the faith to join the 20 and more of us who meet every Sunday in the second floor lounge at 11:10 a.m. each Sunday – beginning January 17. The study will continue for eight weeks. We think serious Christians will find this an opportunity too good to pass up. We look forward to welcoming new class members. Do join us!

– Richard P Walters

FOUNDATION RECEIVES NEW BEQUEST



First Christian Church, and our Foundation, has received a bequest from the estate of Mark Kiddie, who died recently. His gift of \$44,800 will be added to our Endowment Fund, to enhance the many things the Foundation does to support our ministries.

Mark's gift is especially significant because it emphasizes the importance of early planning of church member's estates. Mark never expected to die at such a relatively young age, but nonetheless he had already made plans so that the church's work would continue to have his support.

What a lesson that is for anyone who has thought about remembering the church in their will or estate, but thinks that might be something to do in the future. Why not now? One does not have to be well off to do this. If you have a love for God's work, the most modest will can designate a charitable 5 or 10 per cent. With God, many small gifts can add up to amazing things. We plan to tell you more about how you can link up with First Christian's Foundation in the months ahead - but just now, remember the witness made by Mark Kiddie!

- Richard P Walters <walters@radiks.net>

Member News and Prayer Needs

Recently Hospitalized:
Evelyn B., Mariann C.

Wilma & Tom T. have moved to a new apartment in the same building: #2436.

Maxine I. has moved to The Cedars in Madrid.



All interested singers are invited to become members of the Drake University/Community Chorus. No audition is necessary to join this ensemble, which rehearses weekly on Tuesdays, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Monroe Hall in the Harmon Fine Arts Center, 26th and Carpenter. Spring semester rehearsals begin on Tuesday, January 19, for the Chorus' April 18 concert for social change, "Where You Belong," based on the concept of home, and focusing on such issues and ideas as homelessness, immigration, safe homes, affordable housing, homeland, and eternal home. The Chorus is conducted by Dr. Aimee Beckmann-Collier, Director of Choral Studies at Drake. For more information, contact her at 271-2841.

FRIENDSHIP TIME

We need *groups* to sign up for a month at a time for Sunday coffee and/or treats. The sign-up sheet for January-March is posted in the Fellowship Hall. (Please contact Sondra if you are interested in hosting a later month.)



First Christian Church

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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:

January 20 (Jan 28 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.



An Evening with Carrie Newcomer

Mark your calendar for a delightful evening of music featuring singer/songwriter Carrie Newcomer on Thursday, February 18 at 7 pm. An Indiana native, Carrie performed at the General Assembly of the Christian Church this past summer in Indianapolis, and also led a workshop on writing as a spiritual discipline. As her press release puts it, "Newcomer is a rare breed of singer/songwriter: the kind who illuminates life with startling depth, humor and clarity, blending her rich alto voice with a poetic lyricism to music with folk roots and Appalachian and even classical influences."

Carrie is a gentle, centered individual and musician with a winsome personality. She writes of ordinary people and experiences, and discovering the sacred in the everyday. She has worked with the likes of novelist/essayist Barbara Kingsolver and writer/lecturer Parker Palmer with whom she shares a Quaker background.

Tickets are available in advance from the church office or online through iowatix.com, or at the door. Cost is \$20, but church members may purchase advance tickets for \$15 on Sunday mornings or weekdays through the church office.