

Tidings

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December 2021 - Vol. 82 – No. 12

Following Christ, We Connect a Diversity of People with each other and with God!

Merry Christmas, Happy Christmas, or Blessed Christmas?

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them." - Luke 2:16-18

Our traditional Christmas Day greeting way back in South Africa, "Geseende Kersfees!" Translated it means "Blessed Christmas." Sounds like a great way to greet each other on Christmas Day. And now, twenty years later, I have been exposed to greeting each other with a "Merry Christmas!"

According to Jennifer Brownell, UCC Daily Devotional, Dec. 25, 2017, it is more accepted in other parts of the English-speaking world, to greet one another as the holy day dawns with a more sedate, "Happy Christmas." Merry is an old word, and a bumptious one, with its suggestion of parties and revels, of celebrations spilling over from homes into streets, of private moments transforming into public ones. Someone once said that "Happy," is an emotional condition, while 'merry' is a behavior.

The angels sung the first glorias, but it was the shepherds who ran into the streets of Bethlehem and beyond to shout the first, "Merry Christmas!" The shepherds were uneducated and marginalized and they probably smelled strongly of, well, sheep. And yet, as they spoke of the wonders they had seen in the manger, "all who heard it were amazed." Their happy emotional condition overflowed into merry behavior that has caught our imagination for two thousand years.

So, like the shepherds, let us make merry this Christmas Day. Like the shepherds, let us tell of the Child in such a way that all who hear are amazed. Like the shepherds, let us shout "Merry Christmas!" so boisterously that the words echo into the street, the neighborhood, the nation, the world.

It is a Merry Christmas, and it is a Happy Christmas, because it is a blessed day indeed. May the Child, born to us transform our amazement into merriment as we celebrate him. Gloria, In Excelsis Deo!

With love,

Rev. Co, and family

Worship Ministry

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| December 5 | Second Sunday of Advent/Communion | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00a – www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00a |
| | Lay Reader | Rhonda Yost |
| | Scripture Reading | Luke 3:1-6 |
| December 12 | Third Sunday of Advent | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00a – www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00a |
| | Lay Reader | Flo Hoffman |
| | Scripture Reading | Luke 3:7-18 |
| December 19 | Fourth Sunday of Advent | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00a – www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00a |
| | Lay Reader | Cindie Hoch |
| | Scripture Reading | Luke 1:39-45 |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve/Chrismons & Candlelight | |
| | Service of Worship | 7:00p - www.fccdp.org |
| | Scripture Reading | Luke 2:1-14 |
| December 26 | | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00a - www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00a |
| | Lay Reader | Deb Alde |
| | Scripture Reading | Luke 2:41-52 |



Church members (l to r) Paul Meincke and Rich Weihsmantel gave a presentation in November about Honor Flight Chicago, whose mission is to thank and pay tribute to our senior veterans by flying them to Washington, DC for a day of honor and remembrance. Rich, a Korean War veteran, was accompanied on the trip last summer by Paul, a journalist and HFC board member. Paul produced and shared a video about the trip, and Rich talked about his experience. Thank You for your service, Rich and ALL of our veterans.



Children's & Adult Ed Ministry

Advent Coin Calendars Available

Advent coin calendars are available outside of the Church Office. It's easy – just fill your calendar with quarters during the season of Advent and then return it to church when you're finished. Proceeds will benefit our CAE Ministry...thanks!

Diaconate Ministry

Have You Ordered Your Poinsettia?

Poinsettia plants will be available to order from December 5 through December 15 at church. Cost is \$20. Order forms will be included in Sunday worship bulletins. Plants can be ordered in honor of or in memory of a loved one and picked up after the 7:00pm Christmas Eve service. For details call the Church Office at 847/299-5561.

About Those Flowers...

Were you aware that the altar flowers on Sunday mornings can be designated in honor or memory of a loved one? Make a contribution of \$25 or more to the Flower Fund and designate the flowers for a specific Sunday to commemorate a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion. The honoree and occasion will be printed in the Sunday bulletin. After they are used on the Altar, the flowers will be delivered to shut-ins or those dealing with illness or loss or perhaps celebrating a special occasion. For more information, contact the Church Office.

Membership & Communications Ministry

Christmas Caroling, Anyone?

Save the date of Sunday, December 19 for spreading some holiday cheer with your fellow church members and friends! We will meet at church at 3:00pm and carpool or walk to nearby destinations for some caroling. If you plan to join us for caroling, **please sign up** through our website www.fcccdp.org or call the Church Office at 847/299-5561 to add your name to the list. Also, if you have a suggestion for one of our destinations, please contact Debbie Walusiak at 847/337-1443.



Beat those Mid-winter Blues!

Our church has reserved the date of Saturday, January 8 for swimming at the new Prairie Lakes Aquatic Center. All ages welcome! We will have all three pool areas to ourselves from 7:30pm to 9:30pm. (Lap swimming, a warm-water wellness pool and a splash pad for kids) Watch Notes from Co for details...sign-up information coming soon!

Thanks From Evening Circle

(From Nancy Meyer) Evening Circle thanks ALL its bakers and crafters and ALL its buyers! We added almost \$2,000 to our bank account (including some cash donations) after standing in 32-degree sunshine on November 22, to deliver our goodies! THANK YOU!!! I believe this is a record!

We've decided to have a REAL meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 7:00 pm in the Barwick Room. All ladies of the church are invited to join us. Please bring a wrapped "white elephant" gift to exchange. Wear your favorite holiday apparel. During the meeting we will decide this year's beneficiaries for our benevolence giving.

If you are not able to come in person, you can join us on Zoom using the same link we've been using.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84366718741?pwd=dDlXcmdpVG8rUEl2UjJmRi84VE04Zz09>

Meeting ID: 843 6671 8741

Passcode: 755514

You can also dial in with your phone: 312-626-6799

Welcome to the world, Grayson Francois DuToit.



Born on 11/11/21 in California, he is the first child of Francois & Lauryn Smith DuToit and the first grandchild for Rev. Co & Ellie DuToit. Congratulations, everyone!

Mission & Outreach Ministry

Community Backpack Project Update

Thank you very much for the Thanksgiving food donations. Those bags have been delivered and we have on hand the items for the Christmas holiday bags. With the number of children our church serves, seventeen, up from twelve, we have need of more food donations for the weekend bags. We are especially in need of stew and stew substitutes (chili, hash, chicken a la king, chunky soup), as well as, 8 oz. canned vegetables, condensed soup (10-11 oz. cans), oatmeal packets, individual-serving cereal boxes, Vienna sausages.



Helping Homeless Teens and Others

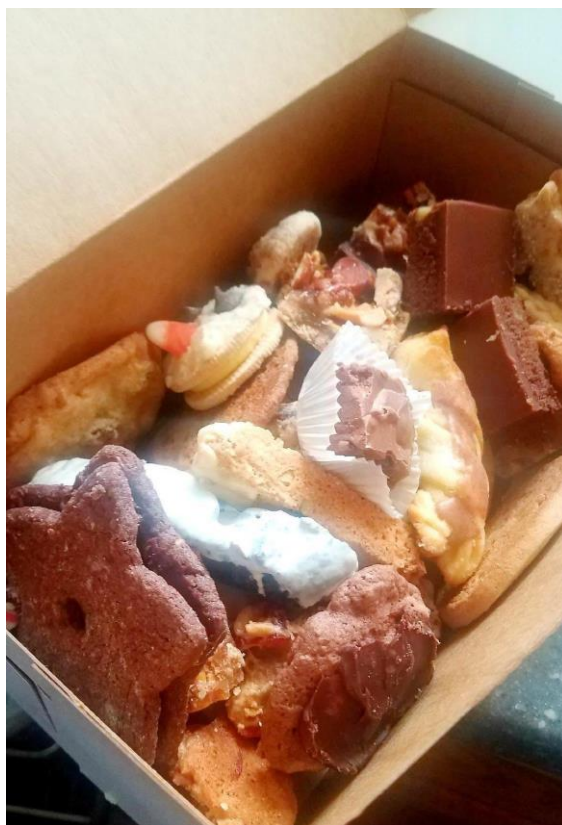
Thanks to everyone who donated personal care items, snacks and cold weather gear to fill stockings for The Night Ministry in Chicago. Pictured (l to r) are Joanne Kimball and Charlie Warren.

Music Ministry

It's Just Around the Corner...

Our Christmas cantata this year is titled, "Behold! A Savior!" by Jay Rouse, and Scott Emerick, FCC music director, is busy preparing for the December 12 (4:00pm – 5:00pm) performance. "Behold, A Savior!" is a portrait of the fulfillment of God's promise to us. Each song and story will take you on a journey—from the longing of Zechariah, the joy and acceptance of Mary, the courage of Joseph to the accounts of the shepherds and wise men. Doors will open at 3:30. Arrive early so that there are no distractions for the participants. Please join this beautiful presentation by our own Chancel Choir. For details contact Scott at Scott_fccd@yahoo.com.

Youth Ministry



Cookies, Cookies and more Cookies...

Our PF youth will host the annual holiday cookie fundraiser on Saturday, December 4 from 9:00am to Noon outside our West Entrance, to help raise money for their summer service trip to Adam's Camp. They will be home-baking and pre-packaging a delicious assortment of goodies for you. You can help by baking/donating your best cookies ever! Cookie donations can be dropped off on Friday, December 3 between 5:00pm and 8:00pm at church. Cookies will be sold on a first come, first served basis on December 4. Cost is \$10 for a small box and \$20 for a large box.

'Want to make sure you get a box of these handmade cookies? Send an email to Mary Cameron at: marycameron710@gmail.com and we will make sure that at least **the first 20 people** that order a LARGE box will get an extra treat of two Norwegian hand-rolled krumkake cookies, in addition to your box. Email marycameron710@gmail.com with your name and number of LARGE boxes wanted. You can pay when you pick them up on December 4. If you are one of the 20 and need to pick up during church on Sunday, December 5, we can possibly arrange that - make sure to mention it in the email!

Finance Committee

Financial Report

For the month of October, we had income of \$26,317 and expenses of \$35,000, for a monthly shortfall of \$8,683. That brings our positive "cushion" down to \$18,756 after the first 4 months of our fiscal year. Thank you for keeping up-to-date with your pledges and offerings.

Gift Card Sales End Soon!

There's still time to purchase gift cards for yourself or for holiday gifts, but our Annual Sale ends soon. Pick up an order form and full list of available cards from the credenza outside the church office, or call our church secretary at 847-299-5561 to have one sent to you. The deadline for submitting your final order is 2:00 pm on Sunday, December 12, with gift cards available for pick-up after worship the following Sunday, December 19. Orders can be placed at the Church on Sunday mornings, by emailing Rod Beets at rodbeets99@gmail.com, or by calling Rod at 847-253-3293. Gift cards should be paid for at the time of order. To maximize profits, we will only be able to accept payment by check (made payable to the church) or by cash. Our Holiday Gift Card Sale is one of the Church's largest fundraisers of the year. All profits benefit the church's general budget.

| 2021 FCCDP Gift Card Sale | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Sale Period | Order Deadline | Pick up at Church Sunday after worship or during Monday Morning Drop-Off |
| October 24-31 | Sunday, Oct. 31, at 2 pm | November 7 & 8 |
| November 1-7 | Sunday, Nov. 7, at 2 pm | November 14 |
| November 8-14 | Sunday, Nov. 14, at 2 pm | November 21 & 22 |
| November 15-21 | Sunday, Nov. 21, at 2 pm | November 28 |
| November 22-28 | Sunday, Nov. 28, at 2 pm | December 5 & 6 |
| Nov. 29-December 5 | Sunday, Dec. 5, at 2 pm | December 12 |
| December 6-12 | Sunday, Dec. 12, at 2 pm | December 19 & 20 |

A New Financial Administrator for FCC

Jana Haas will be retiring on December 18, after 25 years of service to our church as bookkeeper and Financial Administrator. We thank her for her dedication, her talents and her love for our church. We will miss her immensely. At the same time, we are excited to welcome long-time church member, Larry Schimka, to the position of First Congregational Church's new Financial Administrator. Welcome, Larry!

Donations Sought for Talent & Gift Auction

Our 2022 Talent & Gift Auction is set to begin in mid-January, and we need your help to make it successful. We're anticipating that bidding will be done on-line and by telephone, as was done last year. Plus, we hope to be able to accept in-person bids as well, during fellowship hour, after Sunday worship. But, the success of our Auction doesn't depend just on people placing bids, it also depends on the donation of Auction items.

What can you donate? Baked goods or a home cooked specialty? A craft project or artistic creation? A service or lessons you can provide? Some of our most popular items in past years were theatre tickets, sporting events, artwork and vacation packages.

If you can donate an item for FCCDP's Talent & Gift Auction, please contact Sharon Urry, at surry1024@comcast.net, by the end of December.

"Second Time Around" Donation News and More...

Thank you to everyone who brought donations and/or helped with our first rummage sale 2022 early drop-off! Our next drop-off will be on Sunday, **December 19**, from 10:00am to 10:30am.

As we continue to accept donations, there is a pressing question as to whether we will have sufficient volunteers during the sale week. (April 25 – April 30) At this time, we do not need to know what day or time you will be available but **WE DO NEED TO KNOW IF YOU WILL BE THERE TO HELP.** Please contact Ellen Alde at ealdefccd@gmail.com if you plan to volunteer in some capacity. *Room chairs do not have to reply.* Also, just an FYI, as of now face masks will be required of workers and shoppers.

If you have any questions, please contact Ellen at the address above or STA co-chair Chris Tomsic at ctomsic@mac.com. Thank you and see you on December 19!

Scout Troop 6 hosted a very successful drive-through pancake breakfast at our church in November and provided breakfast to some Des Plaines firefighters and police officers.



Happy Birthday to You!!

Congratulations to the following church members/friends on their birthdays!!
If you would like to add a birthday, please contact the church secretary Paul Whittenhall at 847/299-5561.

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------|------------------------|---------|
| Christopher Anderson | 04-Dec | Robbin Muhr | 18- Dec |
| Stacy Hahn | 04-Dec | Kristina Haas | 19-Dec |
| Carol Bates | 05-Dec | Jeffrey Hubert | 23-Dec |
| Inge Eschenbach | 09-Dec | Danielle Rehder | 24-Dec |
| Betty Brodie | 11-Dec | Thomas Fink | 25-Dec |
| Alex Smith | 12-Dec | Mike Kaplan | 27-Dec |
| Brad Schuller | 14-Dec | Rev. Dr. Wm. Grice III | 30-Dec |
| Mark Schuller | 14-Dec | Bob Goerne | 31-Dec |

A New Address

Kathy Reiten
21601 W. Field Ct., Apt. 413
Deer Park, IL 60010-7398

Ginny Van Scoyoc
300 Lake Ave. NE
Unit 302
Largo, FL 33771-1693

Michelle Herrera
5912 Ashley Falls Lane
Flowery Branch, GA 30542
847/338-5718

Michelleherrera48@gmail.com

(From Michelle Herrera) Thank you for the lovely send-off and all the kind words. There are not enough words to express how it made me feel. A special thanks to all who participated in the set-up and clean-up. This is not a good-bye.

This is "I will see you all soon." This is the sign (**below**) that greeted me when I pulled into the driveway of my family's home, where I am living now.

Prayers, hugs and love to all. Happy Holidays!



In Memoriam

James A. Jaeschke
November 7, 2021

Gifts & Memorials

In Loving Memory of Wendy Wallace from Marcia Vedral
In Loving Memory of Carolynn Wendt from Hans & Inge Eschenbach

FROM OUR HISTORIAN, NANCY MEYER

"Children's Ministries"

NOVEMBER 21st

- "Thanksgiving Sunday"
- Grades 1st - 4th begin in Webster Hall for Rehearsal.
- Grades 5th - 8th begin in the sanctuary with their parents.
- "Sunday School Singers", 1st - 4th as well as preschool/Kindergarten will sing during the 9:30 service.
- PAGEANT REHEARSAL: 10:45
Grades P3/4 - 8th
(REMEMBER YOUR FOOD OFFERING!)

Rehearsal Schedule:

Sunday Nov. 21: 10:45-12:00 (Everyone)
(Read through and sing, entire script)

Sunday Dec. 5: 10:30-12:00 (Everyone)
(Run-through with everyone incl. soloists)

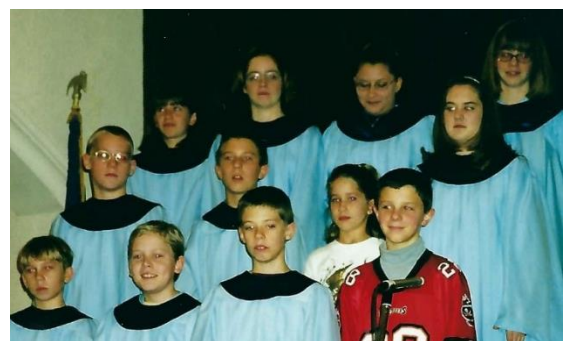
Friday Dec. 10: 6:00pm (JYC & Leads)
(Pizza etc., meet in Loesch Chapel)
STAGE SET-UP TO FOLLOW!

Saturday Dec. 11: 9:30-12:00
(Run-through with everyone, incl. soloists)

Sunday Dec. 12: 9:30 Performance



I received a tub of photos from Janet Thompson this fall. Included were these photos from our Christmas pageant in 1999. No names, but great to look at. Can you identify anyone in your family?



First Congregational United Church of Christ
766 Graceland Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois

www.fccdp.org

847/299-5561

December 2021

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| WWW.FCCDP.ORG | | | | | | |
| 5 Advent 2 Communion 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00a Confirmation | 6 10:00a Drop-Off 7:00p Wholly Ringers | 7 | 1 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:30p Music & Drama 7:00p Chancel Choir 8 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:15p PRC 7:00p Chancel Choir | 2 7:00p Membership & Communications 9 | 3 PF Cookie Walk | 4 9:00a PF Cookie Walk |
| 12 Advent 3 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00a Ministry Staff Brunch 4:00p Christmas Cantata | 13 11:00a Creative Conversation 7:00p Finance 7:00p Wholly Ringers | 14 12:30p Administrative Staff Luncheon @ Giacomo's 7:00p Evening Circle | 15 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:00p Staff Party at DuToit Home | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 Advent 4 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00am Confirmation 3:00p Christmas Caroling | 20 Tidings Deadline 10:00a Drop-Off 6:30p Property Ministry 7:00p Wholly Ringers | 21 | 22 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study Brunch | 23 | 24 7:00p Christmas Eve Service | 25 Christmas Day |
| 26 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship | 27 Office Closed | 28 | 29 9:00a WWC | 30 | | |