



# Tidings

766 Graceland Ave.

Des Plaines, IL 60016



## December 2022 - Vol. 83 – No. 12

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

### **The Symbolism of Our Advent Wreath**

Welcome to the first season of the church calendar. This is a time of waiting, of hoping, of expectation. It is a time of listening for God's loving response. There is much to look forward to – gifts, special food, visitors, and parties. Yet we also wait for something far more significant: the gift of Jesus, God's Son. This is holy time. We remember centuries of hopeful expectation for the Messiah. We too look forward to the promise and wonder of Jesus.

In Advent, we count down the season with the symbols our Advent wreath. Our Advent wreath is a circular evergreen wreath with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the center. The circle of the wreath reminds us of God's endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. Candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of his son. The four outer candles represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent,

The colors of the candles vary with different traditions, but we use three purple candles, because the primary sanctuary color of Advent is purple. This is the color of penitence and fasting as well as the color of royalty to welcome the Advent of the King. The third candle, for the Third Sunday of Advent, is pink, and symbolizes Joy at the soon Advent of the Christ. It marks a shift from the more solemn tone of the first two Sundays of Advent that focus on preparation and hope, to a more joyous atmosphere of anticipation and expectancy.

The center candle is white and is called the Christ Candle. It is traditionally lighted on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The central location of the Christ Candle reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the season, giving light to the world. Jesus, the light of the world, has come to us. We light the white Christ candle to honor the One who blesses us.

Since the wreath is symbolic its main purpose is to tell the Christmas story. And it is the Christmas story that reminds us of God's presence. Emmanuel, God with us, Jesus, has come to earth. We are joyful and grateful yet again for the generosity of a loving God. In songs, prayers, and family celebrations we rejoice in the promise of God made visible.

Advent is therefore marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation, of longing. This Advent season, create space for some quiet time each week. In this way we focus our hearts and minds on the birth of Jesus the Christ in his first Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his second Advent.

May you all have a blessed Christmas.

With Love,

Co

# Worship Ministry

<b>December 4</b>	<b>Advent 2/Communion</b>	
	Service of Worship	9:00a – <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a>
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Jackie Schmitt
	Scripture Reading	Matthew 3:1-12
<b>December 11</b>	<b>Advent 3/Sunday School Christmas Pageant</b>	
	Service of Worship	9:00a – <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a>
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Flo Hoffman
	Scripture Reading	Matthew 11:2-11
<b>December 18</b>	<b>Advent 4</b>	
	Service of Worship	9:00a - <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a>
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Cindie Hoch
	Scripture Reading	Matthew 1:18-25
<b>December 24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b>	
	Service of Worship	5:00p & 11:00p - <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a>
	Fellowship	
	Lay Reader	
	Scripture Reading	
<b>December 25</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>	
	Service of Worship	10:00a - <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a>
	Fellowship	
	Lay Reader	Mary Pittman
	Scripture Reading	Luke 2:1-14

*Ushers are needed for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Please call the Church Office (847/299-5561) if you can assist.*

## Children's & Adult Ed Ministry

### Holiday News from our Sunday School

This year's **Christmas stocking donation for The Night Ministry** will include help from our Sunday School students. They have been collecting items from the congregation during the worship service and will do the stocking stuffing on **Sunday, December 4**, under the direction of Sue Almerigi. Donated items can be left in the sanctuary before the Sunday service or in the box marked Night Ministries during office hours. The Night Ministry also is looking for \$5 gift cards from fast food restaurants, \$10 cards from Walgreen and CVS and \$25 cards from Target, Jewel Osco and Walmart, which can be left in the Church Office with Paul. Thanks to everyone in advance. Please direct any questions to Charlie Warren at: [cmwarren0920@gmail.com](mailto:cmwarren0920@gmail.com).

Our **Sunday School Christmas pageant** is back and scheduled for Sunday, December 11, with dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 10. Please help continue this longstanding FCC holiday tradition by encouraging your children to participate! Watch for details in Notes from Co. Questions? Speak with Sue Almerigi.

## Diaconate Ministry

### 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 displayed on the Altar, flowers will be delivered to church members who are shut-ins and those who are ill or offered as an expression of sympathy and for special occasions. For more information, contact the Church Office.

## Membership & Communications Ministry



A relaxing *Ladies' Night Out* was held in November, at Uncork, Unwind in downtown Des Plaines. Pictured (clockwise, l to r) are Debbie Walusiak, Joyce Goerne, Ellie DuToit, Sue Almerigi, Jana Haas, Sharon Urry and Sandy Allen.

### **Creative Conversation Underway – All are Welcome**

Creative Conversation is FCCDP's book club. It meets once a month, on the second Monday of each month, at 10 a.m. for about an hour. All are welcome. Each member of the group has the option of reviewing a book of her/his choosing, which others can read from the library (ordered ahead), audio book or on a tablet. The choice is the reviewer's and every genre is open for discussion. Reviewers may choose their own patterns for the review, which will ultimately involve opening the discussion to the others present. There have been some really powerful discussions in the past. The December 12 selection is *The Dearly Beloved*, by Cara Wall. Whether you've had a chance to read the book or not, we hope you'll join us for what we expect to be a lively discussion.

### **Evening Circle Continues Daytime Meetings**

Evening Circle's next meeting is at **1:30pm** on Tuesday, December 13, in the Barwick Room. All women of the church are invited to come and join in the fun and fellowship. Please bring a favorite treat to share – cookies, an appetizer, etc. – for our "Make and Taste," along with a White Elephant gift to exchange.

Evening Circle also wants to THANK ALL of you, the bakers/crafters and buyers, for your wonderful support of our recent fundraising Bake and Craft sale. Our final total for this sale was \$1,287.00!

### **Come and Carol with Us!**

All are welcome to join the FCC Christmas Carolers and spread some holiday cheer on Sunday, December 18. Plan to meet inside the West Entrance at 3:00pm, and we will carpool to various local destinations. Rev. Co and Ellie are hosting a chili supper afterwards, for the caroling group. *Please speak with Ralph Murdy or Debbie Walusiak if you have suggestions for the caroling itinerary.*

### **Staying Connected**

Printed copies of our updated FCCDP church directory are available upon request by contacting the Church Office. A digital version of the directory is updated regularly, with additions/revisions to addresses and phone numbers. For details contact Paul Whittenhall from 9:00am – 1:00pm, Monday through Friday.

### **We Want to Hear from You!**

Is there a particular social activity you'd like to enjoy with other church members and friends? If so, we'd like to hear your suggestions. Theater, sporting events, wine tasting – what might interest you enough to participate? Please share your ideas with MAC Ministry members Ralph Murdy or Debbie Walusiak. You also can leave a note in the Suggestion Box, outside of the Church Office. Thanks!

## Mission & Outreach Ministry

### Backpack Program Seeks Special Holiday Donations

We wish to extend many thanks for the generous donations that made the Thanksgiving backpacks so successful. For the coming Christmas delivery we would appreciate donations of pancake mix (requiring only water), smaller plastic bottles of syrup, boxed stuffing mix, larger packages of flavored mashed potatoes (those that require 4 cups of water), boxed spaghetti (not over one pound), and jello (or similar gelatin mix). The weekly bags will need items beginning with the New Year and any contributions from the general backpack list are welcome. Especially needed are: oatmeal packets, condensed soup, canned pasta, fruit cups, and jelly ( $\pm 20$  oz., plastic containers). Donated items can be brought to the church and left on the bench at the bottom of the stairs at the West Entrance — mark them CBP. Questions? Contact Lowell at [handytreesh@att](mailto:handytreesh@att)

## Music Ministry

### Come to the Cantata!

Our church's Chancel Choir and guests will present a Christmas music celebration, *His Name Shall Be...*, featuring Christmas classics and new arrangements on other Christmas favorites. The program begins at 4:30pm on Sunday, December 11, in the sanctuary and will be followed by light refreshments in Webster Hall. Watch Notes from Co for details. Questions? Speak with Scott Emerick.

## Property Ministry



A dedication of recent memorial brick additions was held in our church's Memorial Garden on All Saints Sunday in November.

## Youth Ministry



### **PF Drop-in, Cookie Walk this Month**

A casual PF **drop-in** is scheduled for Sunday, December 4 beginning after the worship service and ending at 12:30pm. The annual PF **Holiday Cookie Walk** is scheduled for 9:00am – 12:00pm on Saturday, December 10, with donation drop-off and cookie baking from 5:00pm – 8:00pm on December 9. Bakers needed! Watch Notes from Co for details. Questions? Contact Matt at [matthew\\_kyle80@hotmail.com](mailto:matthew_kyle80@hotmail.com).

## Finance Committee

### **Financial Report**

For the month of October, we had income of \$20,888 and expenses of \$26,620, for a monthly shortfall of \$5,732. That brings our positive "cushion" down to \$12,616, after the first 4 months of our fiscal year. Thank you for keeping up-to-date with your pledges and offerings.

### **Recurring Electronic Giving an Option**

Many of our church members take advantage of electronic giving for their pledges and offerings. They like the convenience and comfort in knowing that even if they are not able to attend worship, their contribution is still available to further God's work in our church and the community. Electronic giving can be scheduled weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. And, it's easy to get started. Just contact Larry Schimka or the church secretary for more information.

### **Last Date for Gift Card Orders is December 11**

There's still time to purchase gift cards for yourself or for holiday gifts, but our Annual Gift Card 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. Order forms will also be included weekly in Co's Notes. Orders can be placed at the church after Sunday worship, by emailing Rod Beets at [rodbeets99@gmail.com](mailto: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.

Orders placed by 2:00 pm each Sunday, will be available for pick up at the church the following Sunday. Remember, the final order deadline for this year's Gift Card Sale, is Sunday, December 11, at 2:00 pm.

## **Donations Sought for Talent & Gift Auction**

Plans are currently underway for our 2023 Talent & Gift Auction, 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 the last couple of years. Plus, we hope to be able to accept in-person bids, during fellowship hour, after Sunday worship. The success of our Talent & Gift Auction doesn't depend just on people placing bids, it also depends on the donation of Auction items.

Please give some thought to what you might be able to 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 Auction item. Please contact Sharon Urry at [surry1024@comcast.net](mailto:surry1024@comcast.net), by the end of December.

## **“Second Time Around” Sale Drop-off Update**

Thank you to those who have donated items for the April 29, 2023 sale. **Important Update:** There **will** be a December drop-off date after all! This month's early drop-off is scheduled for 9:00am-11:00am on Sunday, Wednesday 14. After that, the next drop-off dates are Sunday (they are all Sundays) January 22; February 19 and March 26, 2023. We greatly appreciate you labeling your treasures to help us organize the storage areas. As a reminder we are not accepting household furniture this year. For further information, contact sale co-chairs Ellen ([ealdefccdp@gmail.com](mailto:ealdefccdp@gmail.com)) or Chris ([ctomsic@mac.com](mailto:ctomsic@mac.com)).

## 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.*

Dave Quam	03-Dec	Robbin Muhr	18-Dec
Chris Anderson	04-Dec	Kristina Haas	19-Dec
Stacy Hahn	04-Dec	Danielle Rehder	24-Dec
Inge Eschenbach	09-Dec	Tom Fink	25-Dec
Betty Brodie	11-Dec	Mike Kaplan	27-Dec
Brad Schuller	14-Dec	Dr. William Grice	30-Dec
Mark Schuller	14-Dec	Rob Goerne	31-Dec

## Congratulations!

Best Wishes to Paul Meincke & Wendy Ellis on the birth of their second grandchild on November 6. *Sylvie Ellis Meincke* is the daughter of Dan & Sophie Meincke, of Los Angeles.



## In Memoriam

Melanie J. Schimka  
November 12, 2022

## Gifts & Memorials

In Loving Memory of Melanie Schimka from Joanne Kimball  
In Loving Memory of Melanie Schimka from Bob & Barb McCullough  
In Loving Memory of Melanie Schimka from Jim & Kathy Foster

## From the Community



Thanks to all those who supported Scout Troops 6 and 12 by enjoying a scrumptious pancake breakfast in Webster Hall, in November.

### **Check This Out...**

The Park Ridge Chorale will perform a holiday show, My Favorite Christmas Album, at 7:00pm on December 10. The performance takes place at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Park Ridge, 205 N. Prospect Ave. Advance tickets are \$16 for adults and \$14 for seniors. Children under 18 are free. Tickets also can be purchased at the door. For details and to purchase advance tickets, contact Corrine Bachar at 847/903-4051.

## FROM OUR HISTORIAN, NANCY MEYER

*Having just celebrated our 153th anniversary in October, I remembered a question had been asked of our Pastor Emeritus, Dr. Grice, about moving to our current church in November 1929, as it is not specifically mentioned in our Centennial History book. Here is his reply, continued from last month, including memories of his aunt, Savena Abhe Gorsline!*

The congregation didn't have any difficulty getting the construction loan and mortgage, which the Websters (a local DP banking family and church members) surely had a hand in procuring. While the new building was larger than immediately necessary, they knew it would be a building they would "grow into." And indeed they did, albeit after World War II. -- Then, as with most formerly main-line Protestant churches, church membership growth peaked between 1968 and 1973. I believe the UCC peaked a bit earlier in 1967 because of the "liberal" stance they publicly proclaimed regarding political and social issues regarding the Viet Nam War, Civil Rights, the Women's Movement, etc. FCC lost some members during these years, too; with some transferring membership from FCC to Christ Church or other local congregations.

Yet, all of this would come later. On that November 1929 Sunday morning, the worshippers filed out of their first church home. With tears representing their joys and sorrows, and with songs in their hearts and voices, they slowly walked in procession along Graceland, climbed the front steps of the new church, and entered its massive sanctuary (which did not have the Life of Christ Window or carpeting.)

From the old church, the Flame which represents the Holy Spirit of God, was carried from the altar in the sanctuary, out the church doors and along Graceland, and eventually entered the new sanctuary, where the Flame was placed on the altar. Carrying the Flame from the old church into the new church symbolized the presence of God leading (or continuing to lead) the congregation. It was carried in a single candle, as Savena recalled; probably a "tall" and "thick" ecclesiastical type of candle. The Flame led the way, along with the minister, then the choir, then the congregation. Hymns were sung the entire distance. I don't remember that Savena detailed any other "organization" in the procession - such as church leaders or Sunday School classes, etc. And I can't recall who she said carried the candle, perhaps a young boy or the moderator? From what Savena said, as I recall, I believe they wanted to emphasize and maintain the "family" nature of the occasions, meaning families should walk together and then sit together in the new church pews. Choir members would have processed directly to the chancel and into the choir loft as they followed the Flame and minister.

Inside the new sanctuary, names of pioneer families and faithful members were present on the brass plaques attached to pews, the pulpit, doors, and other places around the church. One is there for my grandmother who died during the time the church was under construction. In a rather symbolic and nostalgic way, these names preserved the family and personal ties between the two churches, the two sanctuaries.

The experience of leaving the old church and going to the new church was quite meaningful for Savena. It was one of those "definitive moments" which she said truly touched the hearts and minds, souls and spirits, of many people. I do not recall the details, but I do recall how Savena and other women and men of her generation who participated in that special and unique day would tell their stories and share their memories. I felt then - as I continue to feel now - privileged to have heard their stories. And while specific details are absent in my memories, the sense of what their stories preserved affirms that it was a great day in the life of First Congregational Church.

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**

766 Graceland Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois

[www.fccdp.org](http://www.fccdp.org)

847/299-5561

# December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Fundraisers:</b>				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4 Communion</b> <b>Advent 2</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00a Confirmation Night Ministry Stuffing	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  6:00p Membership & Communications 7:00p Worship Ministry	<b>7</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 11:00a Pre-School Christmas Show 6:30p Music & Drama 7:00p Chancel Choir	<b>8</b>  6:00p Pre-School Christmas Show	<b>9</b>  PF Cookie Walk	<b>10</b> 8:00a Pageant Rehearsal 9:00a PF Cookie Walk
<b>11 Advent 3</b> <b>Christmas Pageant</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00am Ministry Staff Breakfast 4:30p Christmas Cantata	<b>12</b> 10:00a Creative Conversation 6:30p Finance Xmas Party 7:00p Wholly Ringers	<b>13</b> 12:00p Administrative Staff 1:30p Evening Circle 6:00p Personnel Meeting	<b>14</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study	<b>15</b>  7:00p Let's Talk TBC	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18 Advent 4</b> 9:00am Worship Wholly Ringers 10:00am Fellowship 10:00a Confirmation 3:00p Caroling	<b>19</b>  6:30p Property 7:00p Wholly Ringers	<b>20</b> <b>Tidings Deadline</b>  7:00p Chair Meeting	<b>21</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study and Christmas Brunch 6:15p PRC 7:00p Chancel Choir	<b>22</b> Preschool closed until January 9	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  5:00p Chrismon Tree Service 11:00p Christmas Eve Service
<b>25 Christmas Day</b> 10:00a Worship 11:00a Fellowship	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>