



**First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

327 N. Van Rensselaer St.

Rensselaer, IN 47978

Office - (219) 866-7871

Pastor Jeff: (574) 242-8076

Office Hours: Mon, Wed, & Fri 10 am - 3 pm

Office Email: [fcc.manageroff@gmail.com](mailto:fcc.manageroff@gmail.com)

**The Christian Visitor**

**March & April 2025**



From Pastor Jeff:

March 5th is Ash Wednesday which begins the season of Lent in the Church year. It is a 40-day period (excluding Sundays) which leads up to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. Working with the First Presbyterian Church and Trinity United Methodist Church this year, First Christian will be hosting the Ash Wednesday service at 6pm on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. This is an exciting time to be Church. May God bless our joined efforts to witness to all those around us.

Then we have the financial situation here at First Christian Church. During last year, we met our financial budget goal two months out of twelve. I say that is a good thing for those two months. We had extraordinary expenses. We installed a new boiler system for a cost of \$60,000.00 dollars. We also did extensive renovations in the Parsonage next door. My understanding is we will try to rent it out soon as work is almost finished. Between the two things, we have been able to pay for all these through funds that we had available in the bank and investment funds. Still, it is a big deal for all of us. I cannot write a check for 60K to replace what we paid for the boiler, and probably you cannot either. I can give an extra offering to help offset this cost. I urge you to do the same.

There has been a lot of talk about our future. I think the word we need to think about here is sustainability. We need to look at our present reality. How it really is, not how we remember it in the past or what we would hope for in the future. Here and now. When it comes to personal finances, I know how it is, because for the last fifteen or so years, I have handled the household budget. There is such a thing as living within your means when it comes to finances and the Church is no different. We might need to take a long hard look at our future together. There are some practical things we can do about it. You heard me say at the last Board meeting that it has always been my dream to work without getting a salary from the Church. It is still a dream and probably not feasible at this time. Another way is to go back to being your part time Pastor instead of full time, going back to three days a week instead of five. That will save the Church some money. We can all pledge to give more. That is another way. Chasing after people who used to be active here is not the answer. I have reached out to numerous ones with not much success. People leave for reasons that are dear to them, and most likely they are not coming back. They worship somewhere else, or they have moved on in one way or another. The Church is a free association. People come because they believe in what we are doing here. There is no forcing people to come and worship with us or forcing people to give more. It just does not work.

The prophet Malachi who I quote often when we are getting ready on Sunday morning to take up our offering might be relevant here.

**Malachi 3: 10. *Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an everlasting blessing.***

When we think of sustainability, there are other options to consider. Is the building the Church or is it the people who attend here? Are there other ways to do Church here in Rensselaer that we have not thought about? Should we really expect people who do not attend to support the Church? It is a conversation, yes, a difficult one, but a conversation we need to have. It is our Church, our future.

Blessings and peace,  
Pastor Jeff Seger

## **News & Announcements**

**Beginning Monday April 7:** we will begin back with Balance exercises followed by a Bible Study.

We will start at 9:30 am and take about 15-20 minutes to do a few exercises and then will start Bible Study immediately after in the church basement. It will be a 10-week Bible Study on the book "Ten Women of the Bible One By One They Changed the World" by Jenna Lucado Bishop and Max Lucado. I need to know if you are interested by March 17. The books are \$14 payable at the first session. I will order and have them shipped to the church so that they can be picked up by March 30. You can start the first Lesson on March 31 and we will discuss Lesson 1 on April 7. As we study the lives of the women in the Bible, we find important truths that God wants us to grasp. They lived in a different world than our own, but we find ourselves facing the same issues they faced. Yet even more, these women show us there is a God who see us where we are and loves us for who we are. He is the one who hovers over all the pages of the Bible, shaping lives, rescuing hearts, healing sicknesses, raising what was dead to life and assigning high callings to those who choose to follow him and have faith in him. In this ten-lesson workbook, Max Lucado recounts some of his favorite stories of these ten women - Sarah, Abigail, Esther, the Samaritan Woman, Mary Magdalene, and others -and describes what set them all apart. Please contact Karen Wiseman by call or text 219-869-3513 or [karenr6403@gmail.com](mailto:karenr6403@gmail.com) by March 17 if you are interested in attending. Missing you all!

**April is First Christian Church's:** month to volunteer at The Good Samaritan Food Pantry. As you know, the pantry provides a vital service to our community and with the new location, volunteering is easier than ever. The pantry is open each Tuesday morning from 10 a.m. to noon and Thursday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 3. Please sign up for one of these times on the sign up sheet at the back of the church. Thanks in advance for volunteering.

**To The Women of FCC:** Please join us for a See You Later party as we celebrate the journey ahead for our dear friend Abbie Parmele as she heads off to San Diego! Sunday, April 6th, from 2pm till 4pm, lower level Carnegie Center. Please RSVP to 219-866-1133.

**Easter Lily:** If you are interested in ordering an Easter Lily In Memory or Honor of a love one this year, there is an order form located in the narthex. This year, the cost of a Lily is \$24.00.

**Lenten Services:** Maundy Thursday, April 17th, at 6:00 pm CT, Trinity United Methodist, with Rev. Sean Johnson. Good Friday, April 18th, 6:00 pm CT, First Presbyterian, with Rev. Michelle J. Bartel.

**Happy 90th Birthday:** Phil Lewis will be celebrating his 90th birthday on April 5th, 2025. His family invites friends to join in celebrating this special milestone with a "Card Shower". Cards can be sent to Phil Lewis - Room 208, Rensselaer Care Center, 1309 East Grace Street, Rensselaer, In 47978.

**Lenten Luncheon Schedule:** Serving Times: 11:45-12:45  
3/26 — Brushwood  
4/2 — St. Luke's  
4/9 — Trinity UMC  
4/16 —

**List of Youth Group:** "Wacky Wednesday" dates and meal volunteers.

April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Mindy Pettet

April 9<sup>th</sup> - Eileen Phegley

April 16<sup>th</sup> - Jenny Craig

April 23<sup>rd</sup> - Mindy Pettet

April 30<sup>th</sup> - Helen Putman and Betty Ploughe

## First Christian Church Board Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2025

Rick Williams called the meeting to order with the September minutes approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rick stated the beginning balance for January 1, 2025 was \$14,892.60, deposits were \$5,640.00, disbursements of \$15,688.93 with an ending balance of \$4,843.67. Our investments are at \$227,793.46 and our money market is at \$18,734.74. Rick stated that there were only two months that we met our budget needs, that was September (Beef and Noodle Dinner) and December. The Board discussed a stewardship letter to help with our finances.

**Trustee's Report:** The parsonage rehab is almost finished. Some small items need to be finished before it can be rented. Rick asked for the Board to look for possible renters that will be responsible renters.

**Worship Department:** Will look into going back to the regular way of serving communion and preparation of said communion.

**Old Business:** The Board would like a monthly visitor. We have hired a new custodian. Her name is Luci Barrientos.

**New Business:** Since we had not had a meeting since September, we needed to vote in the officers for 2025. All officers, deacons, deaconesses, elders, Board Chair and Vice Chair had agreed to serve another year.

The Lenten luncheons schedule was discussed. First Christian Church date will be March 19, 2025.

**Minister's Report:** Jeff gave us an update on his visitations and meetings.

With there not being anything else brought before the Board, Jeff closed the meeting in prayer.

**Attendees:** George Cover, Alice Gaard, Ron & Betty Lintner, Betty Ploughe, Helen Putman, Joannie Witherington, Ote Wood, Phyllis Smith, Viana Lewis, Rick Williams and Rev. Jeff Seger.

# Birthday's and Anniversaries

## March Birthdays

- 3 - Viana Lewis
- 4 - Kris Bailey
- 5 - Pauline Amsler
- 6 - Matt Beehler, Stephen Nicole
- 7 - Charles Griffin, Kalyn Hall
- 8 - Haylie Newcomb
- 9 - Andy Morris, Ali Phillips
- 10 - Cathy Eldridge, Addie Dobson
- 11 - Josh Eldridge
- 14 - Sandy Todd
- 15 - Regina Sanders
- 18 - Cody Lintner, Heidi Phillips
- 19 - Laura Lefler-Kinnaird, Jim Lefler
- 21 - Craig Jackson
- 23 - Casey Boose
- 25 - Travis Mattocks
- 26 - Jeff Phillips

## April Birthdays

- 1 - Helen Putman
- 5 - Phil Lewis
- 6 - Claude Grow
- 7 - Kathy Williams
- 10 - Patrick Williams, Jenny Craig
- 12 - Chase Eldridge
- 13 - Randy Grow, Ellis Gastineau
- 14 - Crystal Cover, Chad Maxwell
- 15 - Nathan Bailey
- 16 - Lisa Jackson
- 19 - Bethel Ford
- 21- Marcia Smith-Wood
- 24 - Verna McNeal
- 29 - Eileen Phegley

## March Anniversaries

- 3 - Dennis & Pam Sayler - 1973
- 6 - Marcia & Ote Wood - 1982
- 26 - Gary & Regina Sanders - 1988

## April Birthdays

- 14 - Claude & Kim Grow - 1984
- 16 - Richard & Cathy Eldridge - 1983

**Go into the world, you are the body of Christ.  
And may the blessings of Almighty God, Father, Son,  
and Holy Spirit be with you now and even forevermore.**