



the VISITOR

April 3, 2026
Vol. 82, No. 33

OUR MISSION
**To know God and
follow Jesus Christ.**

Happening Soon

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 5

Easter Break for Sunday School & Youth Group

- Easter Worship, 8:30 & 10:30am
- Coffee Fellowship Hour, 9:30am, YFH
- Easter Brunch for Musicians & Pastors, 9:30am, YFH

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

- Bible Study, 10:30am, Morris Parlor
- Staff Meeting, 2pm, Morris Parlor

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

- Midweek Connect, 10:30am, Zoom
- Ladies' Book Club, 11:30am, Peggy Veatch's Home
- Bible Study, 12pm, Morris Parlor
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 5:30pm, 3rd Floor

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

- Bell Choir Rehearsal, 6pm, 3rd Floor

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off

- Worship, 8:30 & 10:30am
- Coffee Fellowship Hour, 9:30am, YFH
- Adult Sunday School, 9:30am, Cinema
- K-5 Sunday School, 9:30am, 3rd Floor
- 6-12 Sunday School, 9:30am, YFH
- Chi-Rho, 4pm, YFH
- CYF, 5pm, YFH



A congregation related to
The Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
www.disciples.org

EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 5TH

*"The People We Encounter
On Our Way From the
Cross: The Gardener"*

JOHN 20:1-18

REV. DR. BRAD STAGG, PREACHING

2 WORSHIP OPTIONS

IN-PERSON AT CHURCH @ 8:30 & 10:30 AM:

In-person worship in the Sanctuary.

-OR-

AT-HOME, ONLINE: Tune in to our
livestream on Sunday mornings on YouTube,
or watch the recording of the live service—
available on Monday via email/YouTube
channel/FCC Facebook page.

*"First Christian Church
(Columbia, Missouri)"*

Join us for

Easter Worship

Sunday, April 5

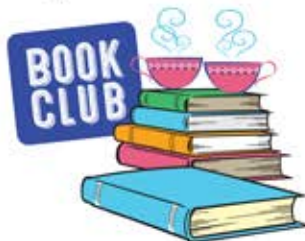
8:30am & 10:30am

Come celebrate the Resurrection of Christ at one of our two Sunday morning
worship services! Both services will feature music by the Chancel Choir and
Brass Musicians! Alleluia! Join us in celebrating the hope of the risen Christ!



Easter Sunday

April Ladies' Book Club



Location Change for this month's Ladies' Book Club Gathering

Ladies' Book Club will be meeting at the Veatch Home (6206
Upper Bridle Bend Dr.) for our meeting April 8 at 11:30 a.m.
(our regular time). Parking spaces at church on weekdays are
sometimes a problem. Those who wish may have lunch at the
Old Hawthorne Grill after the meeting. They are featuring a
new lunch special that includes half a sandwich with either soup or salad.

Peggy Veatch (meg4vteach@yahoo.com)

Congregational Meeting Results

Moderator **Mark Mills** successfully led the congregation through our
annual congregational meeting to approve the nomination slate for
the upcoming year, including new Elders, Deacons, and leaders for
the Administrative Board. The terms for our new leadership will
begin July 1. A big thank you goes to both the members of the Nominating Committee
for their great work this year on the nomination slate. Thank you all for the great work
that you do for this congregation!



Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off

This year's stewardship campaign will "kick-off" on Sunday, April
12. This year's theme is "What Shall We Bring?" and focuses on
the varied gifts that each of us can bring to the church, not just our financial support.
This is an exciting time of year, as we consider the gifts we'll bring to the church
financially or of our time & talents in 2026-27. Pledge cards and time & talent surveys
will be mailed to you in the coming weeks.

*What shall
we bring?*



News of the People & Places

Prayers of Health & Healing...

- One of our MDO students, **Lainey** (3 yo), was in the hospital over the weekend for RSV. She is now recovering at home!
- **Maria Clark's** grandson, Nazari, went to the ER over the weekend for a cough and congestion. He is now recovering at home!
- **Topher Otake** has been sick for the last week and is recovering from a virus.
- **Opal Stites** is in the hospital.

Congratulations...

• **Elizabeth Gordon** married Al Samaniego at Kirkwood Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO on March 14, 2026 with Rev. Larry Thomas officiating. Elizabeth is the daughter of **Mary & Troy Gordon** and granddaughter of **Genie Rogers**. Elizabeth works as a licensed therapist in the intensive outpatient eating disorder clinic at St. Louis Behavioral Medicine Institute. Elizabeth was active in the college program at FCC while she was a graduate student at Mizzou working on her Masters Degree. Al is a purchasing assistant at Washington University in the Biology Department. Congratulations to Elizabeth, Al, and the Rogers family!



Thank You...

Mother's Day Out is overflowing with gratitude for **Scott and Shannon Schaefer**, who donated over 40 hours of time to coordinate, photograph, finish, and manage the MDO School Photos. Their talent, patience, and love for this entire community shine in every image of our preschool friends and staff. As FCC members, they don't just show up with cameras—they show up with heart. They see our preschool friends full of joy, personality, and the spark of who God is shaping them to be and somehow capture that spark perfectly for each friend. Their gifts of time and artistry help our families hold on to these sweet, fleeting moments and also strengthen the connection between our preschool and our church that has nurtured us for generations. *Scott and Shannon* - thank you for pouring yourselves into FCC and into MDO! Your generosity is felt deeply, and we are grateful for your support of the MDO Preschool ministry!



Hayley Batterson, MDO Director



Birthdays

- **April 7** - Anne Crousore, Ryan Stem
- **April 8** - Bill Carney, Chuck Scott
- **April 10** - Laura Daugherty, Erich Unterschultz

Anniversaries

- **April 7** - Steve & Sharon Smith

Mother's Day Out Report

Notes from MDO Director, Hayley Batterson

Mother's Day Out continues to be a thriving ministry of First Christian Church. This spring, we are caring for 59 children each week with a dedicated team of 23 staff members who provide consistent, loving, developmentally appropriate care from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Our classrooms remain full, and our waitlist has grown to 122 families—an encouraging sign of the trust our community places in this ministry.



Families are choosing MDO for full-day care at higher rates than ever before, especially in our infant and toddler rooms. This shift reflects the stability and predictability the program has built over the past year. We are also seeing stronger retention, with many families choosing to stay with MDO even when free alternatives are available.

MDO families continue to connect with the life of the church through events like the Easter Egg Hunt, Trunk or Treat, and holiday services—beautiful reminders that this ministry is often a family's first doorway into our FCC community.

As we look ahead, we are mindful of ongoing needs such as long-term staffing support, refreshed classroom and activity spaces, and improved resources for our teachers. These areas of partnership will help us continue offering the warm, reliable care that reflects the heart of First Christian.

Thank you for supporting this ministry. Your generosity and prayers make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families every single day of the week!

Hayley Batterson, MDO Director

Updates on the 3rd Floor

Changes to Sunday School Classrooms & Children's Ed Set-Up

If you've been upstairs recently, you may have noticed some exciting changes taking place on the third floor. The art room has found a new home, the castle room/library has been refreshed, and the stage room no longer has a stage, allowing more flexible use for the way kids play. Each update is part of our ongoing effort to clean up and organize the third floor to be welcoming, functional, and easy to use for all who learn (and play) in our building.

As time allows, we hope to continue this progress. Our next goals include transforming the kitchenette into a dedicated workroom for our teachers and giving the Sunday School room a thorough clean and reorganization so it can serve both children's worship and weekday ministry needs.

Our heart behind all of this is simple: we want the third floor to be a safe, bright and inviting space for current and future generations of children as well as a practical, well-organized space for the adults who faithfully teach and care for them.

These efforts would not have been possible without **Dr. Topher Endress** and our **CYF** group. Church members don't often get to see the live and finished projects of our youth group when they leave on mission trips, and yet this is exactly the kind of work these young people do while discovering that faith is something you live with your whole body. We hope you will check out the progress!

Thank you for your support, your patience, and your shared love for the next generations of First Christian Church!

Stacy Silverwood & Hayley Batterson

Playground Upgrades

THANK YOU to **Shannon, Scott, Lillian, and Teller Schaefer, Topher Endress, and Matt, Hayley and Ryley Batterson** for helping with the mulch removal and artificial turf application on the church's playground during Spring Break! This update improves the safety of our playground by offering a stable and predictable surface no matter the season while also providing

low long-term maintenance and upgrading the aesthetic of our outside space. Take a peek at this exciting upgrade!



Youth Group Schedule



Join this Sunday!

No Youth Group (Easter) • April 5

Chi-Rho • 4pm • CYF • 5pm • April 12

CYF • 5pm • April 19

Strategic Planning Update

First Christian Church continues to move forward in shaping a clear, shared vision for the years ahead. In late 2025, the Administrative Board approved the creation of a Strategic Planning Team (department) to guide this work and help align our ministry, programs, staffing, and partnerships with God's call for our congregation.



Earlier this spring, at the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Team, the Board approved a contract with Rev. Dr. John Wimberly to serve as consultant for the planning process. Dr. Wimberly brings extensive experience in congregational strategic planning and will guide FCC through a structured, participatory approach grounded in listening, broad engagement, and practical implementation.

The Strategic Planning Team has already been at work, vetting consultants, reviewing a planning framework and timeline, and preparing for the first major listening opportunity. This initial step will take the form of a Strategic Planning Leaders Retreat, bringing together Board members, staff, the Planning Team, and congregational leaders.

At the retreat, participants will reflect together on two core questions: *What do you love most about First Christian Church?* and *What should be the church's primary purpose over the next three to five years?* Insights from this gathering will inform a draft purpose statement, which will then be shared more broadly through congregational focus groups, both in person and virtual, to ensure wide participation and shared ownership.

Following this listening phase, the Planning Team will work to finalize a purpose statement, develop three to five strategic goals, and invite small teams to propose strategies to support those goals. The Administrative Board will review and approve the final plan and oversee its implementation. We look forward to this season of prayerful discernment as we listen together for God's vision for FCC's future. We invite you to watch for opportunities to share your voice along the way.

Bryan Garton, Strategic Planning Department Chair



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PAID
Columbia, MO
Permit No. 75

101 N. 10th Street
Columbia, MO 65201
573-449-7265
email: fcc@firstchristian.org
web: firstchristian.org



WEBSITE



GIVE

Electronic Service Requested

First Christian Church

*Our Mission: To know God
And follow Jesus Christ.*

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Brad Stagg, Senior Minister
brad@firstchristian.org

Rev. Dr. Topher Endress, Associate Minister
topher@firstchristian.org

Music Staff

Topher Otake, Director of Music Ministry
totake@firstchristian.org

Dr. Rochelle Parker, Organist
Travis McFarlane, Early Service Musician
Madi Myers, Bell Choir Director

Mother's Day Out Pre-School

Hayley Batterson, Director
Sam Dunnings, Assistant Director

Columbia Older Adult Ministry

Rev. Sally Robinson, Director

Support Staff

fcc@firstchristian.org
Maria Clark, Weekend Custodian
Justin DeWick, Business Manager
Erin Perry, Office Manager

Worship Serving Schedule

Sunday, April 5, 2026

OFFICE RECEPTIONIST: Carla Tanzey

WELCOME STATION: Steve Humble

FLOWER MINISTRY: Easter Lilies

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: Carla Tanzey

EARLY SERVICE HELPERS: N/A

COMMUNION PREP:

Scott & Shannon Schaefer (8:30)

Debbie & David Potthast (10:30)

GREETERS: Jerry Miller (N. DOOR),
Kathy Miller (S. DOOR), Don Mosby
(ATRIUM), Bud Batterson (PORTICO)

AV TEAM: TBD

LITURGIST: Paige Freed

8:30 ELDER: Steve Evers, Tracy Evers, Fred
Mottaz (Balcony)

10:30 ELDERS: Eric Seaman, Mark Mills,
Ryan Hunsaker (Balcony)

DEACONS: The Hunsaker Team (8:30)
The Potthast Team (10:30)

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP: No CW

OFFERING COUNTERS:

Deb Batterson and Cindy & Doug Smith