



THE SHAWNEE CHRISTIAN

January 5, 2016

Attendance		Giving	
Sunday Worship	61	Giving for operations	\$1,685.70
Emerging Worship	--	Giving for Capital	-0-
Total	61	Giving for Outreach	-0-
Sunday School	35	Giving total	\$1,685.70

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;...Isaiah 43:1-2a NRSV



Dear FCC Family and Friends,
I read an interesting article this week titled "Why Many Welcoming Churches Are Dying Churches." The title caught my attention because, I believe, we here at First Christian Church think of ourselves as welcoming to everyone. We recently amended our church constitution to state that everyone, regardless of race, age, gender, or sexual orientation is welcome to be a member of our church and eligible to participate in all areas of church life.

However, according to the author of the article, Joseph Yoo, a United Methodist minister, the problem is not with being welcoming, but that being welcoming isn't enough in the secular world in which we live.

He points out that those of us in the church take too much for granted. One of the points he makes is a conversation that a couple of radio personalities were having over the top nine religious carols in the U.S. One of the radio personalities could only name one, "O Holy Night." However, he was surprised that "Silent Night" was a religious song. He recognized the tune to "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," but again, he didn't know it was religious.

Yoo said he got to church that morning and was working with some preschoolers and was humming "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" when one of the children asked him what the song was.

He began asking the children about other "well known" songs of Christmas, and to his surprise the children didn't recognize any of them. The children also didn't know what a manger was.

Yoo writes, "It's no secret that our culture is becoming increasingly 'secular'. What's frustrating is that a lot of our churches still operate with the assumption that everyone knows about the church. And when we meet people that don't know the Lord's Prayer, instead of trying to teach it to them, we become more outraged at the secularity of our culture."

One of the things that has really pleased me the last couple of years is that we again have children in our church. Through Pastor Josh, Shelley, Kyle, and Becky, they are learning about Jesus; they are hearing the stories; and they are be exposed to the life within the church and what the church is supposed to be all about.

In the last two years we've had seventeen baptisms, and those who have been baptized have been through a pastor's class and understand what their baptism is all about. I believe we really need to let the people who have been working so well with our children and youth know how much we appreciate them.

Yoo says where he believes his church and other churches fail is in failing to meet people where they are and joining in on the conversations they are having. "We still seem to want people to meet us where we are," he writes.

He also tells about a recent visioning meeting he attended where people were speaking on how to reach out into the community. He says a majority of the ideas were something along the lines of a facelift for the campus so that the church could look fresh, brighter, newer for the people driving by. "If they see a new landscape, they might think there's life in the church and may want to check us out," he writes.

Yoo says while such actions might be good, he doesn't think the color of the building will bring people in.

He says that, in his opinion, the second mistake we make is to assume that the majority of our neighbors know about church, and we "look at outreach through the lens of the question 'How do we get people into our pews' rather than being missional."

He says many churches are welcoming...and happy, gracious and grateful to meet new families. *But a welcoming church can easily become a dying church.* "Welcoming suggest passively waiting for people to come to be embraced." (emphasis mine)

Yoo writes, "What's not okay is for us to mistake the word of Jesus to 'Go' for 'Stay and wait for people to come—no matter how welcoming we may be.'" (emphasis mine)

One of the things that I have also noticed over the past couple of years is that it is our youth and children who are inviting people to our church. If I go back in time, Linda and I came to First Christian Church the first time because Nelda Ward invited us, and neither she nor we were children. I'm guessing that most of you who were not here as children are here today because someone invited you to come. If we want our church to grow we need to ask friends, neighbors, and co-workers to come, and then let them see how welcome they are here—not only by us, but more importantly by Christ.

This coming Sunday is Baptism of the Lord Sunday and Pastor Josh will be preaching.

If you are able, be in worship this week, and ask at least one person to come with you or meet you here.

Pastor Ray

Keep Us Informed

Please contact your church if you or a loved one is ill, injured, in the hospital, needs special prayer, wants a visit, or has other needs.

Pastor Ray's: Cell Phone-405-833-2272
Email-raybelford@hotmail.com
Office: (405) 275-1525

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Lunch times vary
Email: office@fccshawnee.com
Church Website: www.fccshawnee.com

Orphaned dishes, platters, & bowls, Oh My! Did you bring goodies to church and never pick up the containers? They're waiting... and waiting...



Canning Jars

If you'll return salsa canning jars, we will save them for salsa-ing again!



We are collecting **EXTRA-HEAVY** sacks for the take-out service of our February Ground Hog Dinner,



THANKS!

Ground Hog Dinner containers will also sit flat in



Save 'em up and send 'em in!

THANKS, once more!

Children Are...
AMAZING, acknowledge them
BELIEVABLE, trust them
CHILDLIKE, allow them
DIVINE, honor them
ENERGETIC, nourish them
FALLIBLE, embrace them
GIFTS, treasure them
HERE NOW, be with them
INNOCENT, delight with them
JOYFUL, appreciate them
KINDHEARTED, learn from them
LOVABLE, cherish them
MAGICAL, fly with them
NOBLE, esteem them
OPEN MINDED, respect them
PRECIOUS, value them
QUESTIONERS, encourage them
RESOURCEFUL, support them
SPONTANEOUS, enjoy them
TALENTED, believe in them
UNIQUE, affirm them
VULNERABLE, protect them
WHOLE, recognize them
XTRASPECIAL, celebrate them
YEARNING, notice them
ZANY, laugh with them

The Shepherds (And NOT the Ones in the Fields)

Tom and Nick Shepherd were honored this week by Tim Burg, executive director of the Shawnee Economic Development Foundation, for their contributions promoting what is good about Shawnee.

Burg cited their love for Shawnee and for their optimism about our community. Burg took a representative of a prospective new business by Shepherd's Mens Wear, and according to Burg, after making the introductions he stepped back, and the brothers took over the "selling of Shawnee."

Each week Burg has a place in his weekly column titled "We Like 'em A Lot!" Here, he gives praise to people in our community who are heavily involved in Shawnee activities but often fly under the radar. Of course, we've know for many years that Tom and Nick are top-notch. They also promote our church whenever they can.

Regional Pastor Visits

Sunday, we had the pleasure of a visit from our Regional Pastor, The Reverend Pamela Holt, with her husband, Randy. They were here for a visit and to enjoy worship. It was nice to have them, and I hope you had the opportunity to meet and greet them.



Called Meetings

Board Meeting



There will be a called board meeting on Sunday, January 10, following worship with the only business item the consideration and possible action on the proposed 2016 church budget.

Congregational Meeting



There will be a called meeting of the congregation on Sunday, January 17, to consider action on the 2016 church budget. This second annual meeting has become our normal budget approval method for the last several years, so that we have the final giving statistics for the previous year from which to plan.

Slaw "Sweeties"

Cole slaw for the Ground Hog Dinner will be prepared by all who volunteer to help on Friday, January 29. Gaye Shepherd and Mary Ann Luman, dinner co-chairs, will be here at 9:00 to begin. Please join the fellowship, too.

Wed., Jan 6—Boomer Bridge, noon - 5:00 p.m.

Sat., Jan 9—2016 Pumpkin Patch Committee Meeting, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Sun., Jan. 10—Epiphany Sunday. Josh Preaching.

Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m. Fellowship 9:30-9:50 a.m.

United Service 10 a.m. Chancel Choir 11:15 a.m

Youth 4-6 p.m.

Wed., Jan. 13—Boomer Bridge, noon - 5:00 p.m.

Sun., Jan. 17—Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m.

Fellowship 9:30-9:50 a.m. United Service 10 a.m.

Chancel Choir 11:15 a.m Youth 4-6 p.m.



ASSOCIATE MINISTRY MATTERS

Millennial Minute

Our Youth Group had a wonderful time at last weekend's lock in! They enjoyed seeing the new Star Wars movie followed by endless games and junk food! Thank you to everyone who participated in this event. The annual New Year's Lock-In would not be possible without your help.

We return to our regularly scheduled events this week. **Sunday school is at 9:00 A.M. Youth Group is on Sunday evenings from 4:00-6:00** and will include Table Worship (with dinner), games and the occasional service project. We look forward to a great year!

Evening Study and Worship

We have a **new class and worship experience for adults** that begins this Sunday! We will begin the year studying the teachings and mystical experiences of Emmanuel Swedenborg at **4:00**. **Liturgical worship** in the chapel will follow at **5:00** and a light **soup supper** will be served at **5:30**. Join us for this time of study, worship and fellowship!

Music Notes

The Chancel Choir will return to rehearsals this Sunday following worship. They will return to the Chancel to lead us in worship on the 17th. If God has blessed you with musical abilities, please prayerfully consider joining our lively choir. We have a great time praising God and look forward to singing some beautiful music this year!

Happy Epiphany,

josh



Ground Hog Fundraiser

A month away, Tuesday, February 2, this is another way our church benefits community organizations. The majority of the labor for the dinner is short-term, over few days. We will have tickets to sell, food prep to do, and set-up of the take-out area, kitchen, Fellowship Hall, and the dessert prep areas.

Tickets will be going on sale soon, and everyone is encouraged to help with ticket sales.

The menu typically includes: two hog (sausage) patties, mashed potatoes, green beans, cole slaw, applesauce, roll, drink, and dessert. YUM!



Square Dance Lessons

The Shawnee Square 8's square dance club will begin providing lessons for those who are interested in learning to allemande left, do sa do, promenade, swing your partner, circle left or right, or to just make some new friends. All are welcome to attend the lessons which will run for 10 weeks. They will held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7-9 p.m. in our Fellowship Hall. The lessons will begin on January 19. See Richard MacMillan for more details.

