

Another Word October 31, 2023

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

REMEMBER—turn clocks back this Saturday night!!

Considering that Donita and I will be in Birmingham with our daughter Betsy and Andre' on November 7th, along with our new grandson or granddaughter, I've decided to write our newsletter today.

There is a lot going on at FCC, so let's get started.

We will be honoring our family and friends who have gone on before us on Sunday, November 5th during our All Saints Service.

There will be a leadership meeting Nov. 5th immediately after the service. Our congregational meeting to approve the 2024 budget and slate of officers will be November 19th.

The Thanksgiving meals we are purchasing need to be brought to the church no later than November 5th. Ashland Head Start will pick them up November 6th.

We will decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas on November 26th after the service. If anyone has a Christmas Tree they are no longer using, we would love to add it to our forest. Just let us know.

November 6th at 7pm will be our next Jazz concert. We hope you can make it to hear some great music.

We will again be helping Fostering Families with a few presents for some youth in our community. We should be receiving the lists within the next couple of weeks.

Our scriptures for the next few weeks are as follows:

Nov. 5- Psalm 34: 1-10, 22. Todd Whitmer is our serving Elder. Matthew 5: 1-12 All Saints Sunday. We are blessed!

Nov. 12- Psalm 70. Alan Girard is our serving Elder. Matthew 25:1-13
Someone is coming; no dozing.

Nov.19- Psalm 65. Our serving Elder is Dale Campbell. 1Thessalonians 5:
14-18 Give thanks in all circumstances. Thanksgiving Sunday.

Nov. 26- Psalm 100- Lana Bell is our serving Elder. Matthew 25: 31- 46
When did we do all that?

As we go to prayer, please remember Ada Sue Workman for the passing
of her brother, Richard, and Monta Donelson's grandson Ethan who is
being deployed to the Middle East.

O God. You have bound us together in a common life. In the midst of
our daily struggles, guide us to work with one another, and give us
compassion for the lost, the weary, and oppressed. We hold up to You
our loved ones in need of Your comforting embrace. We ask for Your
care and protection for the men and women of our military, as well as
all those facing danger while protecting the innocent. We ask that You
cleanse our lives that we may be Your workers, worthy of sharing Your
love and truth to a hurting and needful world. This prayer we raise in
Jesus' Holy name, Amen.

I love refinishing furniture. Over the years I have worked on numerous
items to bring them back to life. But one of my best efforts is an old
desk I found at a secondhand store in the late 60's. It is a combination
desk, bookcase, and writing station with an ink well and slots for
personal papers. Pretty cool! However, it had been abused and was
not, shall we say, in the best of condition. But I could see that with
some love and a lot of work, it could be something that was worth
repairing and keeping.

When I brought it home, my mom took one look at it and said, "you're
not bringing that piece of junk in this house." Ouch!

I took it to the barn, disassembled it, and smuggled certain key pieces into the house and hid them under my bed for safe keeping.

Two years later Donita and I were married, and I forgot about the desk for another 4 years. (I'm still amazed my mom never found those pieces during that time.) One day I wanted a project to work on and remembered the desk. I picked it up, took it home, and began working on it.

I tried to keep as much of the original finish as I could, and over time, and board by board, it came back to life. My mom came for a visit, saw the desk, and couldn't believe that it was the same desk that I brought home all those years ago. It was rescued, restored, given new life, and a new purpose.

Our world is a place of brokenness and our lives at times, can be a place of deep despair. And I fear we can see the world and ourselves in the same way my mom saw the old desk; abused, beaten, and way beyond hope. However, God our loving father looks at us and sees beyond our brokenness. He sees our worth, and promises us a true restoration. Isaiah 65:17 states that God promises to, "create new heavens and a new earth." Isaiah 43:19 says, "see, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up. I am making a way in the desert, and streams in the wasteland." In other words, He will bring beauty out of our brokenness.

And how does this restoration begin? Look at The Apostle Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone and the new has come!" Do you see? If we are in Christ, His love and compassion will repair our souls for a new life. And for His glory, restore us to a new purpose.

In His Peace,

Rich