

Another Word November 16, 2021

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

“Snow, snow, when are you falling? Snow, snow, none of your stalling! Autumns gone, and winter is here, it’s just about that time of the year, for snow... just a beautiful snow.” These words were the beginning of a song we learned in 9th grade choir. (More than a few years back for me.) For some reason, they always come to mind with our first snow of the season. But wait! The first snow shouldn’t have happened almost 2 weeks before Thanksgiving! Well, it did, even though it’s now melted. So let’s just say, “It came, it’s gone, and hope it doesn’t show itself for at least another month.” There’s more to come about the “Weather” in a bit.

We will again be collecting items to put in Christmas gift bags for the 15 members of our congregation who are unable to attend services with us. Ellie has made a list of needed items and it is posted in the gathering area. The deadline for this outreach is the Sunday before Christmas.

We will be decorating our building for Christmas this Sunday, the 21st, immediately after services. Lunch will be provided if wanted.

Our “Thinking of you” cards will be delivered to Brethren Care this week.

Our next Bible study, “Because of Bethlehem,” by Max Lucado, will begin Tuesday November 30th. This is a 4 week study ending on

December 21st. There will be two sessions, one at 10:30 am and one at 6pm. The signup sheet and books are in the gathering area.

Our annual church congregational meeting will be Sunday, December 5th, immediately after our service. We will be voting on our 2022 budget and slate of officers. As was done last year, if you can't be present but would like to vote, please call the office for a copy of each and then place your vote by phone before Dec. 4th.

For our Advent offering this year, we will be collecting snacks and one cup meals for "The Lord's Pantry" in West Salem. Because of their current need, we have started collecting now through the end of December. Pastor Mike and his team are helping 300 children in the area by supplying backpacks, one cup meals, single serving boxes or packs of cereal, and individual snack packs of cookies and crackers. There is a selection of items on a table in the gathering area as ideas for what is needed. Mike and his staff are very grateful for our willingness to help.

Our scriptures for this Sunday are: Psalm 132: 1-18, and Revelation 1: 4-8. "The Alpha and the Omega." Mona Campbell is our Elder.

May we pray;

God of life, we stand in awe of Your greatness. We ask that You guide our every step and place Your peace in our hearts. We pray for Your comfort, strength, and healing for those, in the midst of the storms of life, who need physical and spiritual healing. Protect those who work tirelessly to keep us safe, for they are an extension of Your love. Thank You for Your gift of life through Jesus, the Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.

Before our "snowstorm" on Sunday, there was another weather incident last Thursday. If you didn't notice, it was really windy with sustained

winds of between 25 and 30 miles per hour for almost 2 days. (Gusts even higher.)

On that day, I decided to put away our patio furniture, and organize the garage for the upcoming winter season. As I worked, I was amazed at the wind and its effect on the plants, ornamental grasses, and trees in our back yard. In fact, I think every leaf in a 5 mile radius tried to fly into our garage. At times, the tall grasses were bent over almost to the ground and the branches of the trees were being whipped violently and uncontrollably in every direction. In fact, I half expected to see a tree uprooted in the unrelenting wind. However, the trunks of the trees were unmoved; they were deeply rooted in a firm foundation.

As I watched nature in action, I was reminded of a few verses I had read recently. They were from Paul's letter to the new believers in Ephesus. He wrote that he longed to see them "deeply rooted and established in Christ's love," (Ephesians 3:17) and to no longer "be blown here and there by every wind of teaching." (Ephesians 4:14)

When the storms of life blow, it is easy to be caught up and tossed around, and pulled in every direction. Very much like the branches I observed in our trees last Thursday. Paul is reminding us that we need to be, not unlike the trunks of our trees, firmly grounded in Christ Jesus. If we are, then we will be safe and secure, regardless of how strong the winds blow.

Be sure you are not living on your own; in the branches where you will feel insecure, fragile, and blown around by the winds of life. Instead, be sure that your roots are deep, firm, and held strong by the power and beauty of Christ.

In His Peace, *Rich*