

Another Word November 17, 2020

To our friends and family of First Christian Church

During our leadership meeting last Sunday morning, it was decided to suspend our regular church services until the first of January because of the dramatic rise in cases of the Covid-19 virus. Your health and safety is our number one concern. We will miss seeing your “mask-covered” smiling faces, but feel this is for the best.

Of course we will continue recording services and posting them on our website and YouTube so we may gather each Sunday to worship together. For those who don't have access, the service will again be shown the following Tuesday at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary. Leadership will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed of any changes. This was a very hard decision to make, especially as we are so close to Thanksgiving, The Advent Season, and Christmas. So let us be thankful for this ability to come together to worship and praise God for all His blessings.

15 Thanksgiving meals and 21 turkeys were picked up Sunday evening. The staff of Ashland Head Start is very grateful for our open hearts! Because of you and your actions, there are many families who will see a little more clearly, the power of our great and generous God.

The cards collected last Sunday were delivered to Kingston. We hope you won't stop bringing cards because of the suspended services. We have made a promise that cards will come all the way through December. You may fill out cards and drop them off at the church. I am always here on Tuesdays. (Leave them in the mail box if no one is here.) If you want to leave a handful of cards, I will see that they get

distributed over the following weeks. If you can't get to the church, I will be happy to come by and pick them up. Thank you for your continued willingness to reach out and put a smile on someone's face.

We also have a solution for our all church meeting scheduled for Dec.13th to discuss and approve our 2021 budget and slate of officers. For those who are computer savvy, both will be posted on our website. For those that receive this letter by mail, copies will be included next week. Look them over and call with any questions or comments. Starting December 1, you may call the office and vote as to whether or not you approve. (You do not need to leave your name.) The deadline to vote will be December 9th at 5p.m. This way, when we record the service for Sunday, we will be able to announce your decision.

I am happy to announce that our Bible study, "Because of Bethlehem" will go on as planned. There are a few spaces left if you are interested. Just call the office and let us know which time. Classes will begin at 10:30 a.m. or 6 p.m. every Tuesday in December (1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd.)

Our scriptures for this Sunday are Psalm 100, and Ephesians 1: 15-23
"We are blessed by God."

May we pray.

Our Father in Heaven, it seems there are so many things wrong in the world, and in our lives. There is hatred, greed, poverty, hopelessness. Many are feeling abandoned or caught in deep despair with no way out. But then we hear your voice. You may send it through a neighbor, a friend, a stranger, or from your very word. It may be a shout, or just a whisper, but your voice and message is clear; you are our God, and you are in charge and you are in control. No matter what we are facing,

whatever problems befall us, you love us, and you give us peace. You guide us and give us the promise of everlasting life with you in Heaven. That knowledge fills our hearts with joy and gives us strength to rise each day and spread your good news. Our prayers are not for ourselves as much as for those who need protection, need healing, and need comforting that only you can provide. Please hear our cries, our pleadings, our whispers, as we lift up to you those who weigh heavy on our hearts..... Give us each day, opportunities to reach those in need of your love and saving Grace. In Jesus' precious name, Amen

One of my favorite cities is Cincinnati, Ohio. A city with so many things to see and do. It is also one of my favorites because it is the home of our oldest daughter and family. By the way, today is Torie's birthday so, Happy Birthday to you.....

If you have visited Cincinnati, one of the neatest buildings there is The Union Station. It is a wonderful example of the Art Deco movement of the 30's. The building was designed to look like a curved top radio, very modern for the day. Inside, with its high curved ceiling and painted murals, it told the story of hope and the resilience of our country to weary travelers during the height of the depression.

One little known fact of the building is that if you stand inside the front left of the domed ceiling, and your friend stands inside to the front right, you can whisper to them and they will hear you nearly a hundred feet away, even if the building is full of talking people. It is explained that because of the shape of the domed ceiling, and the low intensity of sound waves, your whispered message gets through.

Don't know if you noticed, but I used the word whisper in our prayer. I think we all long to be certain that God hears our cries, our pleadings, our whispered prayers. The Psalms are full of examples that He hears us; "In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help." (Psm 18:6) Throughout the Psalms we see examples of pleading, "Hear my prayer", "Hear my voice", "Hear my groans." And sometimes the psalmist expresses their prayers in whispers; uttering a soft "Hear me", or "my heart contemplated, and my spirit asked." (Psm 77:6)

Those are all good examples of our prayers, but the question still remains; does God hear? David gives us our answer in the second half of Psalm 18: 6 when he wrote, "From His Temple He heard my voice; my cry came before Him, into His ears."

God hears us in His Heavenly home. He hears us even through the noise and clutter of our daily lives. Our cries, our pleas, our whispers race across the mighty dome of heaven, and He bends low, gives us His full attention, and yes, He listens.

In His Peace,

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