

Another Word Aug. 6,2024

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

We have begun worshipping outdoors. If the weather is good, bring your lawn chairs or set in the pavilion as we praise God in the midst of His beautiful creation. This coming Sunday looks (at the moment at least) like a perfect day to be outside. See you there.

On Aug. 18, we will have an all church picnic after our service. The church will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, and cold drinks. There will be a sign-up sheet on the back table for different dishes for you to bring and share. Invite a friend to come along for this fun event. And, there just might be a surprise or two happening during the afternoon!

Monday evening, one of God's children committed her life to following Jesus and was baptized in our sanctuary. It was a beautiful and joyous occasion.

Believe it or not, LifeWise will begin again in about 6 weeks. We are expecting around 120 students this fall and the call is going out for a few more volunteers. We need a few more helpers, especially here to either prepare meals for the students or to help set up the classrooms. The commitment is approximately 3 hours (9:30 to 12:30) on Wednesdays. It can seem a little chaotic at times, but boy is it rewarding. Please pray, and if you feel God's tug, let me know that you would like to help.

I am exploring another Bible series that I would like to start sometime after Labor Day. Stay tuned for more details.

Oh, and by the way, I believe that Monday, September 9th will be the first Jazz Concert of the season.

Our scriptures for the next few weeks are:

Aug. 11- Psalm 130 and John 6:35, 41-51.

Aug. 18- Psalm 111 and John 6:51-58.

Aug. 25- Psalm 84 and John 6:58-69.

Let us go before God in prayer.

Eternal Father in Heaven. We come to You this day filled with awe and wonderment. You are so gracious and giving as well as forgiving. You wait patiently for us to give ourselves to You. For that we are truly thankful. There are so many in need. Please hear our prayers as we lift up to You our families and friends in need of Your comfort, love, and healing touch_____. You come to us with strength. Please guide us through Your words of truth, giving us hope and courage to face our daily challenges of life. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.

Who are we as individuals? Who are we as a gathering of believers? Have you ever really considered who we are, as a congregation? Are we alone in who we are, or are we possibly a part of a larger group of like-minded people all around the world?

I have thought a lot about us. Who we are. How we act and interact with each other. How we pray for those we don't even know. Note the blank spot reserved for our silent prayers above. We are encouraged to add others to our prayers. Why? Because we are a part of the "body of Christ." And every name we hold up, whether they are in our congregation or in another state or country, they too are a part of the "body."

I was reminded the other day about a book I read a few years ago and am now reading again. It is "Life Together" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

In it he wrote, "The body is the proper metaphor for the Christian community. We are members of a body, not only when we choose to be, but in our whole existence. Every member serves the whole body, either to its health or to its destruction. This is a spiritual reality." Heady but such true words. Bonhoeffer goes on to write, "A Christian Fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or (without intercession) it collapses."

In other words, if we hold up others to the throne of God, being an intercessor in their behalf, those we pray for will feel your love, your commitment, and experience the power and majesty of God! They will know they are not alone and will be strengthened.

It comes down to, as my friend pointed out, "when we learn to suffer and rejoice with each other, we will visibly display what we are- 'the body of Christ.'" Martin Luther said about the church; "The body of Christ is what God is using for the healing of humanity."

I wanted to pass this on to each of you. We are truly a part of His body. I have seen you weep. I have seen you cry tears of joy. Not only for ourselves, but even strangers. I pray for you each day, and thank God for bringing us together, not just as a congregation, but a loving and caring fellowship, a wonderful part of the "Body of Christ."

In His Peace,

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