



# Christian Courier

First Christian Church of Minneapolis (Disciples of Christ)

November 21, 2009

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## Maintenance or Mission: What kind of church are we striving to be?

*Garry Hesser brought us this article from the newsletter of First Christian Church, Ponca City, Oklahoma. It was adapted from the writings of Herold Percy, author of "Good News People." Rev. Larry Metzger of FCC, Ponca City, was happy to share the article with us.*



1. In measuring the effectiveness, the maintenance congregation asks, "How many pastoral visits are being made? The mission congregation asks, "How many disciples are being made?"
2. When contemplating some form of change, the maintenance congregation says, "If this proves upsetting to any of our members, we won't do it." The mission congregation says, "If this will help us reach someone on the outside, we will take the risk and do it."
3. When thinking about change, the majority of members in a maintenance congregation ask, "How will this affect me?" The majority of

members in the mission congregation ask, "Will this increase our ability to reach those outside?"

4. When thinking of its vision for ministry, the maintenance congregation says, "We have to be faithful to our past." The mission congregation says, "We have to be faithful to our future."

5. The pastor in the maintenance congregation says to the newcomer, "I'd like to introduce you to some of our members." In the mission congregation, the members say, "We'd like to introduce you to our pastor."

6. When confronted with a legitimate pastoral concern, the pastor in the maintenance congregation says, "How can I meet this need?" The pastor in the mission congregation asks, "How can this need be met?"

7. The maintenance congregation seeks to avoid conflict at any cost (but rarely succeeds). The mission congregation understands that conflict is the price of progress, and is willing to pay the price. It understands that it cannot take everyone with it. This causes some grief, but it does not keep it from doing what needs to be done.

8. The leadership style in a maintenance congregation is primarily managerial, where leaders try to keep everything in order and running smoothly. The leadership style in a mission congregation is primarily transformational, casting a vision of what can be, and marching off the map in order to bring the vision into reality.

*continued on page 5*

## A Look at the Brite Side



Pastor Bob Brite

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*“Culturally speaking, Christmas, and the preparations therefore and therefrom, mark the pinnacle of Crazy Season activities.”*

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## Putting on a game face for the Crazy Season

As I told someone the other day, I can feel myself getting my game face on to gear up for the height of the Crazy Season. The Crazy Season (a cultural phenomenon I defined for myself) began in late August when the holiday decorations started appearing in Wal-Mart, and ends right after the Super Bowl. I define it as a time of heightened cultural expectation and cultural stress. The height of the Crazy Season (think of it as a Bell curve) begins roughly with Black Friday (so called because it marks the time of year when retail companies normally go into the “black” for the year), and the day after New Years. Of course, culturally speaking, Christmas, and the preparations therefore and therefrom, mark the pinnacle of Crazy Season activities.

In the Church we try to battle against the Crazy Season, usually without a lot of success. We offer the season of Advent, which is meant for reflection, repentance, and preparation for the birth of the Christ Child.

We try to proclaim that God’s joy is in our midst to harried, flustered, and frustrated souls. We work at helping folks move from darkness to light. The culture doesn’t listen very well. And we participate in all of that; we can’t help but do so. The frantic preparations, increased social activities, heightened awarenesses and demands all play on our souls.

I really love Advent and Christmas, and in recent years have tried to observe the activities with less franticness and more reflection. I’ve tried to distance myself from the cultural pressure, even though I feel such pressure every day. I’m trying this year to put on a game face that reflects laughter, and warmth, and God’s shalom even as I dash around a bit more than normal.

What are you planning to do and be in the midst of the Season?

I hope to see YOU on Sunday (in the Fellowship Hall, 11/22)  
Bob

## In our prayers

*Gracious God, we lift up these persons in our prayers, asking the blessing of your Grace and outpouring of your Love upon them.*

We pray in sympathy for the family of Grace Couture whose memorial service was Nov. 16; that **Karen Plantikow’s brother Charles** will continue to heal from his bypass surgery; for **Jay Hillestad’s brother Scott** and all others who are facing or struggling with unemployment; for **John Billman’s niece** who was diagnosed with cancer, and all others who are dealing with cancer and other serious illnesses; for **Earl Dunham’s nephew** who is in Afghanistan, and all others with family members and friends in the armed services, and especially those grieving recent deaths at Ft. Hood; for the Transition Team and all others working to build up the church in the community; for all our homebound members, especially Elaine Glore and Emma Armstrong; Amen.

## Gettin' Dirty for Jesus: Mission Project Notes

First Christian has been busy being church in various ways over the last month. I wanted to take a moment to summarize.

First, we had nearly 20 people take part in making food packets for Feed My Starving Children on October 24 at their new facilities in Coon Rapids. As usual, a fun time was had by all as we made a difference to children around the world who are not able to find food. If you have not gone before, I hope you will consider joining us at next event. We plan to go back to the Coon Rapids facility on March 27, 2010.

Second, on November 14, four people from First Christian went to Community Emergency Service to help restock their foodshelf. CES is located in the Phillips Neighborhood and is a full service agency that tries to work with and uplift people living in South Minneapolis. Ann Wolverton, Val Dunham, Amy Fredregill and myself took part. Restocking the foodshelf at CES is an interesting adventure. The agency is located in a former Methodist Church and uses the former sanctuary as the warehouse for non-perishable food. We would gather the food needed and take it downstairs to the foodshelf. The sight of seeing all this food going to needy people in what was once a sanctuary, was a clear example in my mind of what being church is all about.

During our time at CES, Volunteer Coordinator Don Rudrud told us about the need for hygienic products like toilet paper and soap. To

that end, I want challenge people to drop off hygiene products during Advent, which begins November 29. CES needs toilet paper, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo and diapers. Bins will be made available in which to drop off the items. Please consider giving generously.

Finally I want to uplift two opportunities to be the church.

The first is Project Homeless Connect on December 7. Project Homeless Connect is a one-stop shop for delivering services to people experiencing homelessness. Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis work with service providers, businesses, citizens, and faith communities to bring resources to one location where people can come to find the services they need. These services include housing providers, employment specialists, medical care, mental health care, benefits specialists, eye care, haircuts, food, and clothing. The goal is to end homelessness, one person at a time

Project Homeless Connect is looking for volunteers to help on December 7 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. If you are interested in taking part, please sign up at the Project Homeless Connect website at [homelessconnectminneapolis.org](http://homelessconnectminneapolis.org).

Also, if you have any gently used children's books you would like to get rid of, consider donating them to Project Homeless Connect.



They are looking for books to give to children during the event. If you are interested, please drop off your books on November 29.

That's all for now. Go and be church.

-Dennis Sanders  
Associate Pastor for Mission and Diversity


### 20's – 30's to gather for baking fest Dec. 12

Saturday afternoon, Dec. 12, from 1- 4 p.m., the 20's and 30's+/- group will gather in the church kitchen to do Christmas baking – cookies, bars, balls, cakes, pheasant under glass, and whatever.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!!

### FCC Advent Devotionals ready Nov. 29

This year our book of daily devotions for Advent will be produced in-house, with FCC members providing their own offerings, thoughts, and reflections on the Advent season. These books will be ready to pick up on Sunday morning, November 29, the first day of Advent.

<h2>December, 2009</h2> <h1>First Christian Church</h1>				<h3>Regular Worship Hours</h3> <p>9:15 Church School Classes 10:30 Worship 11:45 Fellowship Time in Lounge</p>		
		1	2	3	4	5
			9:00 Nikkei 6:00 Lectionary Bible Study 6:30 Bell Choir 7:45 Choir 7:00 Advent Vespers (GR)	9 am Handcrafters		9 am- Men's Group 10 am Women's Brunch Noon – Decorating for Advent
6	7 8 pm AA	8 11 am Mpls. Retired Teachers Luncheon 7 pm- Property Committee	9 5:30 Finance Committee 6:00 Lectionary Bible Study 6:30 Bell Choir 7:45 Choir 7:00 Advent Vespers (GR)	10 9 am Handcrafters 7 pm Carter Circle @ Barb Rusk-nak's	11	12 9 am- Men's Group 1-4 pm 20s/30s Bake Fest 7 pm Nicholas Carter Christmas Concert
13	14 8 pm AA	15 7 pm <b>Board Meeting</b>	16 6:00 Lectionary Bible Study 6:30 Bell Choir 7:45 Choir 7:00 Advent Vespers (GR)	17 9 am Handcrafters	18 <b>Amahl and the Night Visitors Opera at FCC</b>	19 9 am- Men's Group 10am Laura Lynne/ Naomi Circle 6 pm Dinner for St. Stephens shelter 7 pm Nicholas Carter solo concert
20 <b>Food Pantry Sunday</b> 12n Elders Meeting	21 8 pm AA	22	23 6:00 Lectionary Bible Study 7:00 Advent Vespers (GR) 7:45 Choir	24 8 pm FCC Christmas Eve Service	25 	26 9 am- Men's Group
27	28 8 pm AA	29	30 6:00 Lectionary Bible Study --No Choir--	31		

	Elders	Worship Leader	Bus Driver	Diaconate	Greeters
<b>Dec. 6</b>	Garry Hesser Arlene Hillestad	Garry Hesser	Mike Hesano 651-645-6758	Team 1 Grace Madsen	Val Dunham
<b>Dec. 13</b>	Martha Harris Karen Kandik	Mike Brady	Mike Morgan 612-926- 9384	Team 1	Ardie Armstrong & Shirley Draine
<b>Dec. 20</b>	Karen Kandik Martha Harris	Ardie Armstrong	Garry Hesser 612-721-4905	Team 1	Karen Kandik
<b>Dec. 27</b>	Mary Hurlocker Max Hurlocker	Ann Wolverton	Mike Hesano	Team 1	Martha Harris

## Women's Ministries Brunch Dec. 5

The annual brunch of the Women's Ministries will be 10 am on Dec. 5. A women's trio including Amy Dunlop will sing "Songs for the Baby Jesus."

## Everyone invited to help Deck the Halls for Advent Season on Dec. 5

It's time to get out the boxes of wreathes, the angel banners and all the other Christmas decorations that help brighten the Advent season.

Everyone is invited to help decorate the church hallways and sanctuary on Saturday, Dec. 5, following the Women's Ministries brunch.

Decorating will start at noon and end around 3 pm. Come and help us deck the halls!

## Handcrafters Sale Postponed

The Handcrafters sale originally scheduled for Dec. 6 has been postponed.

Several members of the handcrafters group are experiencing a variety of physical challenges, and the group decided that they weren't quite ready to put on a sale at this time.

### A Word of Thanks

A big THANK YOU for your gifts of food or money to the Groveland Emergency Food Shelf! This is especially needed now when food shelves are experiencing a 30% increase in people asking for help.

Those who have lost their jobs are having to chose between rent or food. At St. Stephen's men's shelter they must hold a lottery to decide who will be given their limited bed space. The food shelf at Groveland and Nicollet (just north of Franklin) is trying very hard to meet the needs of those who don't have enough to eat. You are helping too.

Warren and I very much appreciate your contributions of groceries or cash (incidentally, cash is multiplied eight times when the food shelf purchases food) to the food shelf. I think God is pleased also.

--Karen Westphal

## AAUW Brings Bustle to FCC Mondays

The American Association of University Women, Minneapolis branch, began meeting weekly on Mondays and bi-weekly on Tuesdays at First Christian Church on November 1st, until renovations to the Gale Mansion, their usual home, are completed at the end of April 2010. In the meantime, they bring great energy and vitality to FCC, hustle and bustle!

With over 500 members, Minneapolis AAUW has a vibrant, active organization. Each week, women gather to hear august speakers on several topics from health and aging, to the history of Minnesota, world religions, and global issues, to artists and persons in the government. AAUW women also conduct committee meetings, eat a meal together, have discussions about literature and special interests, and have monthly special interest groups.

Many AAUW women have expressed their thanks to FCC for hosting their organization during this time, and have commented favorably on the beauty of the sanctuary, and the spaciousness of the Fellowship Hall and Gathering Room.

*Continued from page 1*

### *Mission and Maintenance Churches*

9. The maintenance congregation is concerned with their congregation, its organizations and structure, its constitutions and committees. The mission congregation is concerned with the future, with understanding how secular people think and what makes them tick. It tries to determine their needs and their points of accessibility to the Gospel.

10. When thinking about growth, the maintenance congregation asks, "How many [Disciples] live within twenty blocks of this church?" The mission congregation asks, "How many unchurched people live within twenty blocks of this church?"

11. The maintenance congregation looks at the community and asks, "How can we get people to support our congregation?" The mission congregation asks, "How can the Church support people?"

12. The maintenance congregation thinks about how to save their congregation. The mission congregation thinks about how to reach the world.

## Bi-Weekly Calendar

**Sunday Worship at 10:30 am**

**Before Worship (9:15 am):**

Art of the Covenant Class	Hearthstone Class
Bible Study Class	Prayer Circle

**After worship: Fellowship Hour 11:45 am**

### *This Week at FCC*

Sunday, Nov. 22  
Worship in Fellowship Hall  
Thanksgiving Dinner following Worship

Wednesday, Nov. 25  
No Choir

Thursday, Nov. 26  
Thanksgiving Day

Friday, Nov. 27  
Items for next Courier due

Saturday, Nov. 28  
Men's Group                      9 am

### *Next Week at FCC*

Sunday, Nov. 29  
First Sunday of Advent

Monday, Nov. 30  
Transition Team meeting    7:00 pm

Wednesday, Dec. 2  
Lectionary Bible Study      6:00  
Bell Choir                      6:30  
Chancel Choir                7:45

Thursday, Dec. 3  
Handcrafters                 9:00

Sat. Dec. 5  
Men's Group                    9:00  
Women's Ministry Brunch   10 am  
Christmas Decorating Party 12 n

## Reflections on the Word *From readings of Sunday 11.22*

“[Jesus said,] ‘Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’ Pilate asked him, ‘What is truth?’” (John 17: 37b-38)

Pilate’s question both seeks and chills. But Jesus expresses a deeper relationship to the truth than *knowing*, which is *belonging*. Jesus’ power is not from his being called a king, but from his relationship to God, as God, and to us.

*Prayer:* God of all truth, guide us in the way of wisdom, and lead us in the paths of righteousness. For you are the way, and the truth, and the life. Amen.

--Chris Wogaman

*A Thoughtful Church in the  
Heart of the City*

### Ministry Team

All Members of the Congregation  
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*Christian Courier* is published bi-weekly. Send items and ideas to church office or to Martha Harris [harrismartha@mac.com](mailto:harrismartha@mac.com) by Fri . Nov. 27, for next issue.

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