

# The Messenger

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES  
OF CHRIST

February 2026



## Should we really pray like this?!

As we begin Lent this month, many of us are considering ways to deepen our spiritual lives. Some of us will give up things we feel are getting between us and the relationship with God we want to have. Others will seek to take up a new spiritual practice, one of the spiritual disciplines like confession, fasting, or service. Others might wish to try a new way to pray, and I want to address one that many of us haven't tried, perhaps because we consider it to be shocking or even wrong.

It's called imprecatory prayer, and it's found throughout the Psalms. For instance, while we often stop reading Psalm 139 at verse 18, it continues from there. Verse 19 says, "O that you would kill the wicked, O God, and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me..." An even more dramatic example is found at the end of Psalm 137:

O daughter Babylon, you deviator!  
Happy shall they be who pay you back  
what you have done to us!  
Happy shall they be who take your little ones  
and dash them against the rock! (Psalm 137:8-9)

Psalm 137 clearly arose out of the experience of exile, in which the Babylonian Empire destroyed Jerusalem and God's Temple and carried many of the into a foreign land. It's an expression of a nation's profound grief. From that grief they cried out to God to exact retribution on those who have killed and exiled them. And yes, they pronounce blessing on those who bring about that retribution.

Is it appropriate for God's people to pray for revenge, or even the death of their enemies? Or is it a sin even to have such feelings?

The presence of such prayers in the Psalms, in the Bible, seem to indicate that we can bring the whole of our experience to God in prayer. If we are angry or grieving, God is there to hear our cries and even our rage. And if from our grief and rage we cry out for God to harm those who have harmed us, I think that's okay.

The late Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann said about the cry for revenge at the end of Psalm 137 that when God's people lay at God's feet our desire for retribution against our enemies, we give God the responsibility for taking such action, and let go of any desire to take it into our own hands. This makes room in our hearts and lives for something even more important: hope.

So yes, if you've been hurt, if you see wrongs being done that are being ignored, justified, or otherwise not made right, bring it to God in prayer, even if that prayer is an imprecatory prayer asking for retribution or the destruction of those who are doing harm. God hears the prayer, and recognizes the pain that prompts it. And when we put our desire for revenge in God's hands, God can unclench our angry fists so that we might bless and be blessed, and find hope for a better future.

*Sharla*



## February Serving Schedule

Communion Preparer: Carol Roberts

### February 1

- **Elder:** Chuck Lewis
- **Deacon:** Don Cole & Debbie Cole

### February 8

- **Elder:** Shawn Quick
- **Deacon:** Carol Hedrick & Lyssa Lile

### February 15

- **Elder:** Phyllis McBrayer
- **Deacon:** Gary Coffman & Judy Colburn

### February 22

- **Elder:** Justin Quick
- **Deacon:** Steve Hedrick & Carol Lewis

- **Greeter:** Judy Taylor

- **Scripture Reader:** Phyllis McBrayer

- **Greeter:** Lile family

- **Scripture Reader:** Lyssa Lile

- **Greeter:** Bob & Peggy Thomas

- **Scripture Reader:** Jennifer Schmehl

- **Greeter:** Carol Hedrick

- **Scripture Reader:** Chuck Lewis



## Attendance

### December 28

- **In-person:** 34
- **Online:** 7

### January 4

- **In-person:** 38
- **Online:** 3

### January 11

- **In-person:** 37
- **Online:** 3

### January 18

- **In-person:** 30
- **Online:** 3



## Budget

### December Income

\$8,652.63

### December Expense

\$10,291.63

### 2025 Income

\$147,188.56

### 2025 Expense

\$122,443.74

Complete financial reports are available in the church office.



## Important Events

**Worship:** Sundays @ 9:30 am

**Life Group:** Sundays @ 10:30 am

**Disciples Women:** Feb. 3 @ 6 pm

**Elders Meeting:** Feb. 8 @ 10:30 am

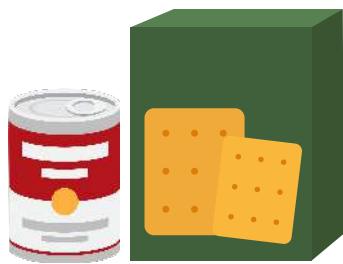
**Board Meeting:** Feb. 15 @ 10:30 am

**Community Cafe:** Feb. 17 @ 5:30 pm

**Ash Wednesday Service:** Feb. 18 @ 6:30 pm

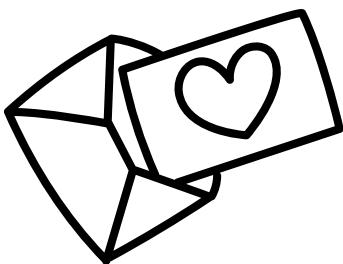
**Choir Practice:** Wednesdays @ 6 pm

## Announcements



### Outreach Project

Throughout the month of February, we will be collecting soup and crackers to support the Community Food Pantry. Donations may be placed in the collection bin located in the foyer. Please remember to check expiration dates before giving.



### Thank you!

A very special thanks to the Disciples Women for the delicious cookies and cards. Thanks for the cards everyone else sent. A special thanks to Carol Lewis for delivering them! God's Blessing on all of you!  
-Norma Morgan



### Thoughts & Prayers

#### Current

Raymond Crist, Ron Dunlap, Marilyn Eneff, Kiley Foster & Jaxon Pitts, Becky Franklin, Larry Hacker, Cheryl Kinsman, Denver Lesmeister, Doris Jane Lollar, Mark Lovelace Jr., Gary Maggard, Everett & Phyllis McBrayer, Daniela Potts, Nancy Gardner Simons, Sam Wheeler, and Sherry Wilson

#### Ongoing

Greg Arnold, Kathy Bunch, Eunice Cobb, Mike Crow, Caroll & Pam Dodds, Shelby Duffield, Joyce Fitzpatrick, Debbie Fortner, JM Grizzell, Lona Grosshart, Joyce Guffey, Jim Herrell, Lori Koepsel, Rory Kutz, Betty Lemon, Terry Lodge, Nick McBrayer, James Mitchell II, Charlie Padgham, Stella Plunkett, Rocky Redinger, Judy Shubert, Julie Snell, and Dolly Studards

#### At Home

Julie Lewis and Linda Wix

#### Currently Serving in the Military

Everett Chapman, Carter Coffman, Jordan Lopez, Jordan Olson, and Rick Warren

#### Sympathy

To the families of Mindy Lethco-Kohler, Wilma Reeves, Lyle Howard, Janet Burch, Airen Andula, Rick Zellmer, Carol Parker, Gary Ferrell, and Vernie McElwain

### Birthdays

3 Kimberly McGuire

4 Terry Agnew

20 Chelsea McConkey

4 Paula Brede

9 Beth Ann Davis

### Weather Cancellation Policy

The decision to cancel worship services will be made jointly by the Pastor and Board Chair, with input from Phyllis. A final decision will be made by 7:00 AM on Sunday morning. We will communicate cancellations through the following channels:

- **WDAF (Fox4)**
- **KSHB (Channel 41)**
- **FM 92.1 - [www.921news.com](http://www.921news.com) - Facebook page ( 92.1 News Now)**
- **Mid America Live/Bates County Live**
- The church's **Facebook page**: [facebook.com/FCCButlerMO](https://facebook.com/FCCButlerMO)

If you have not seen or heard any updates by 8:00 AM, you can assume that worship will proceed as scheduled. However, please use your judgment about whether it's safe to travel. Your safety is our priority, so if conditions are hazardous, we encourage you to stay home.

In the event of a service cancellation, all other Sunday activities—including Life Group and meetings—will also be cancelled.

Weekday Closures: If Butler schools are closed due to inclement weather, the church will also be closed, and all scheduled activities for the day will be cancelled.



## Upcoming Sermons

### **February 1, 2026 (4th Sunday after Epiphany)**

Scripture: John 3:1-21 (RCL: 1-17, Lent 2, Year A, and Trinity, Year B; 14-21, Lent 4, Year B)

Psalm: 139:13-18

Theme: Jesus and Nicodemus

Title: "Nobody can do that!"

### **February 8, 2026 (5th Sunday after Epiphany)**

Scripture: John 4:1-42 (RCL: Lent 3, Year A)

Psalm: 42:1-3

Theme: The Samaritan woman at Jacob's well

Title: "An awfully long walk to get a drink"

### **February 15, 2026 (Last Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration)**

Scripture: John 4:46-54

Responsive Reading: Isaiah 40:27-31

Theme: Jesus' second sign: the official's son

Title: "At that very moment..."

### **February 22, 2026 (1st Sunday in Lent)**

Scripture: John 5:1-18 (RCL: 5:1-9, Easter 6, Year A)

Psalm: 40:1-5

Theme: Jesus' third sign: healing a disabled man at Bethsaida

Title: "Learned Helplessness"

*All are welcome*

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH	660-679-3066
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# Board Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2026

**Board Members present:** Deacons: Gary Coffman, Jennifer Schmehl, Carol Lewis, Carol Hedrick, Judy Colburn, and Judy Daniel. Elders: Shawn Quick, Justin Quick, Phyllis McBrayer, Diana Rich, and John Daniel. Voting Member: Carol Roberts.

Others present: Rev. Sharla Hulsey, Carol Ann Winburn, and Claudia Hulsey.

The meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Carol Roberts, chairperson. Opening prayer was given by Diana Rich. The agenda was reviewed and requests to add Outreach, Pastoral Support, and Memorial committee reports were made. The agenda was approved unanimously after a motion was made by Justin Quick and seconded by Phyllis McBrayer.

The minutes of the December 2025 meeting were reviewed. No additions or corrections were made, motion to accept the minutes was made by John Daniel, seconded by Shawn Quick. Motion passed unanimously.

**Financial Reports**—Carol Lewis reviewed the financial reports for December 2025.

Budget vs. Actual  
Total Income—\$8,652.63 (budget \$10,291.63)  
Total Expenses—\$15,038.92 (budget \$10,291.41)  
Net Income—\$-6,386.29

Carol noted that we had paid the annual workman's compensation fee, quarterly insurance fee and Building Repair and Maintenance costs that resulted in the negative income.

Budget vs Actual YTD  
Total Income—\$147,188.56 (budget \$123,500.00)  
Total Expenses—\$122,443.74 (budget \$123,500.00)  
Net Income—\$24,744.82

Balance Sheet  
Total Assets—\$54,605.31  
Owed to Special Projects—\$9,941.06  
Total Liability and Equity—\$54,605.31  
Total Cash in Bank—\$44,592.68

(Full financial reports are available for review in the church office.)

Motion made by Phyllis McBrayer to approve the financial reports, seconded by Diana Rich, and passed unanimously.

**Minister's Report**—Rev. Hulsey stated she had conversations with members in person, via telephone calls and texts. She attended the Disciple's Women meeting, the Elders meeting and the Ministerial Alliance meeting during the month. She also met with Jim Henry, Butler mayor, on behalf of the Ministerial Alliance concerning the need for a warming center in Butler during the cold weather. This center will not be available until next winter. She continues her daily morning prayer on Facebook. She is planning to take a brief vacation the weekend after Easter.

## Old Business

There was no old business.

## New Business

-2026 Committee/Department Chairs—Carol Roberts stated that according to the by-laws the Board must vote on the 3 people selected by the board chair be on the Personnel Committee. Jennifer Schmehl, Don Cole and Sandee Hubbard have all agreed to be on the committee. The board voted unanimously for these 3 to serve as the personnel committee. The committee/department chairs for 2026 are as follows:

Christian Ed—Carol Lewis	Worship—Carol Ann Winburn
Evangelism—Shawn Quick	Memorials—Judy Daniel
Membership—Carol Hedrick	Nominating—Judy Taylor
Outreach—Phyllis McBrayer	Personnel—Jennifer Schmehl - Chair
Stewardship—Diana Rich	Don Cole
Property—Co: Chuck Lewis, Everett McBrayer	Sandee Hubbard

Motion to accept these candidates as Committee/Department Chairs was made by Justin Quick, seconded by Phyllis McBrayer. Passed unanimously.

-Memorial Gift Committee—Judy Daniel, committee chair stated that Judy Colburn wants to use the memorial contributions made in her husband, Lyndall Colburn's name for a lighted flagpole for the church yard. After some discussion it was decided to give the board's blessing on this. Judy Colburn will return to the board when details are complete. Motion made by Shawn Quick to approve this action, seconded by Diana Rich, passed unanimously.

## Departmental/Committee Reports

—Carol Roberts stated that she has received the year end reports from the department and committee chairs as she requested. She said that she will write a brief summary of all the reports for the Church Newsletter. She thanked everyone for their reports.

-Pastoral Support Committee—Shawn Quick stated that the committee will meet on Jan. 28, 2026.

-Outreach—Phyllis McBrayer states that Community Cafe will be a little different this year, as there will be 4 Tuesdays that we normally would prepare food for that will be donated by outside sources. We will still provide the workers. The Outreach project for January is monetary donations for the Ministerial Alliance.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Justin Quick for adjournment at 11:07am. Seconded by Judy Colburn, passed unanimously.

## Closing Prayer

Rev. Hulsey gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jennifer Schmehl, Board Secretary



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REV. SHARLA HULSEY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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# The Messenger

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## 2026 Lenten Services - "At the Table with Jesus"

- Services start at 6 p.m.
- A meal will be served after each service.
- An offering will be received each night to benefit the Butler Ministerial Alliance's emergency fund.

### FEBRUARY 25

Location: First Christian Church  
Preacher: Marla Kash  
Hosted by: First Christian Church

### MARCH 4

Location: Church of the Nazarene  
Preacher: Julie Nelson  
Hosted by: Church of the Nazarene

### MARCH 11

Location: Ohio St. United Methodist Church  
Preacher: Sharla Hulsey  
Hosted by: Community of Christ

### MARCH 18

Location: Ohio St. United Methodist Church  
Preacher: Jeremy Henderson  
Hosted by: Ohio St. United Methodist Church

### MARCH 25

Location: First Christian Church  
Preacher: Lori Ostrander  
Hosted by: Butler Ministerial Alliance