

The Messenger

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST



September 2026



How to Eat an Elephant

I'm sure you've heard the old joke about eating an elephant: you do it one bite at a time. It's humorous, partly because nobody is literally going to eat a whole elephant. But it's also a pretty important life lesson.

It's easy, when you've got a major project in front of you, to become overwhelmed by it, perhaps to the point of immobility. You just stand in the middle of the mess and don't even know where to start.

Say, perhaps, it's time for fall housecleaning. Maybe the summer has been busy (I don't know why every year we think, "Things will be slower when summer gets here," because it never happens that way), and some things have gotten more cluttered or messy than you'd like. But you want the house cleaned before the weather gets cold and you're cooped up indoors—not to mention before winter holidays mean more decorating and possibly more guests. But where to begin?

It can be the same with our spiritual lives. We want to pray, to be closer to God, to grow more like Christ—but where do we start? We want to read the Bible and know it better, but if we just begin with Genesis 1, we'll find ourselves bogged down somewhere around chapter 4 or 5 when all the genealogies start. We want to pray, but the people we hear praying in public always seem to use such fancy language, and we don't know how to talk like that. So, what do we do?

"One bite at a time." You can say the Lord's Prayer if you know it, or the Prayer of St. Francis (it's in our hymnal, or you can find it online). There's nothing wrong with praying someone else's words; God knows what's in your heart. Or use the formula I often teach youth: "Dear God, thank you for... Help me with..." You don't need fancy language; one new Christian I knew years ago used to start his prayers with, "Good morning, God..."

Do you want to read the Bible? Start with the Gospel of Luke: almost immediately you'll hear familiar words, because Luke 2 contains the Christmas story. Or I've made up bookmarks that have some passages that are helpful in various situations. Remember that if you don't know where to find something, the Bible has a table of contents just like any other book. (A lot of people have been surprised to know this; I guess they think we just magically know where things are in the Bible.)

It's never necessary for us to have it all together before approaching God. All we need is a desire to know God and a willingness to take a first step.

Sharla



September Serving Schedule

Communion Preparer: John & Judy Daniel

September 6

- **Elder:** John Daniel
- **Deacons:** Carol Hedrick & Lyssa Lile
- **Greeter:** Lile family
- **Scripture Reader:** Lyssa Lile

September 13:

- **Elder:** Phyllis McBrayer
- **Deacons:** Gary Coffman & Judy Colburn
- **Greeter:** Carol Hedrick
- **Scripture Reader:** Jennifer Schmehl

September 20:

- **Elder:** Justin Quick
- **Deacons:** Steve Hedrick & Carol Lewis
- **Greeter:** Carol Lewis
- **Scripture Reader:** Chuck Lewis

September 27:

- **Elder:** Diana Rich
- **Deacons:** Bob Thomas & Jennifer Schmehl
- **Greeter:** Carol Roberts
- **Scripture Reader:** Justin Quick



Attendance

August 2

- **In-person:** 28
- **Online:** 7

August 9

- **In-person:** 27
- **Online:** 4

August 16

- **In-person:** 33
- **Online:** 8

August 23

- **In-person:** 28
- **Online:** 5



Budget

July Income

\$7,795.33

July Expense

\$9,605.55

YTD Income

\$80,040.69

YTD Expense

\$72,481.33

Complete financial reports are available in the church office.



Events

Worship: Sundays @ 9:30 am

Life Group: Sundays @ 10:30 am

Youth Group: Sundays @ 6 pm

Choir Practice: Wednesdays @ 6 pm

Disciples Women: Tuesday, Sept. 8 @ 6 pm

Elders Meeting: Sunday, Sept. 13 @ 10:30 am

Community Cafe: Tuesday, Sept. 15 @ 5:30 pm

Board Meeting: Sunday, Sept. 20 @ 10:30 am

Announcements

Disciples Women



The FCC Disciples Women enjoyed a fun summer outing at the Bates County Museum, featuring a tea luncheon followed by a few games and a tour of the museum's many interesting exhibits.

The FCC Disciples Woman will host a salad supper on September 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall. The supper is open to all women in our church. Feel free to bring a friend and your favorite salad. Our meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month from September through June. All women are invited to join our fellowship.

Fellowship Dinner



The Membership Department invites everyone to stay after worship on Sunday, October 4, for a church fellowship dinner. Enjoy a delicious lasagna meal and a time of food, fellowship, and conversation with your church family. We hope you will join us!

Outreach Project



During September, we will be collecting essential supplies for the church, including Kleenex, paper towels, 6-inch foam plates, napkins, Lysol, hand sanitizer, AA and AAA batteries, plastic storage bins for VBS supplies, and adjustable air freshener cones. Donations may be placed in the church foyer throughout the month. Thank you for your support!

Thoughts & Prayers



Current

Jim & Nancy Simpson,
Patsy & Terry Lodge, Julie Snell,
Paula Underwood,
Caitlin Lesmeister, Gregory Baker,
Pauline Morrow, Brooke Shepherd,
Larry Hacker, Norio & Fran Ota,
Josh Yost, Koal Eastwood, Curtis
Vale II, Everett McBrayer, and
Coton Henderson & family.

Ongoing

Lona Grosshart, Shelby Duffield,
Marilyn Eneff,
Nancy Gardner Simons, Rory Kutz,
Ron & Debbie Dunlap,
Steve Thomas, Gwendolyn Dice,
Marge Fritts, Jason Bennett,
Rylee Morgan, John Snell,
Isabel Hannon, Rodney Brown,
June Ray, Jeff Brown,
Bob & Doris Mills, and Betty Lemon.

At Home

Julie Lewis, Linda Wix,
and Stella Plunkett.

Currently Serving in the Military

Rick Warren, Jordan Olson,
Jordan Lopez, Everett Chapman,
Carter Coffman,
and Randy Hubbard.

Our deepest sympathies

with the family, friends, and loved ones of Jim Anderson, Colt Brown, Carolyn Hellwig, Haley Henderson, Ronnie Johnson, Lori Koepsel, Larry Law, Duwayne Rapp, and Ernest York.

Installation Service for Shawn Quick



We are delighted to share that Shawn Quick will be installed as pastor of Disciples Christian Church in Nevada, Missouri, on Saturday, September 27, at 3:00 p.m. We invite anyone who would like to support Shawn and celebrate this special milestone in his ministry to attend the installation service. The service will be held at Disciples Christian Church, 125 North Prewitt St., Nevada, MO 64772. Please join us as we give thanks for Shawn's journey of faith and offer our prayers and encouragement as he begins this new chapter of service.

Birthdays

5	Matthew Silvers	18	Carol Hedrick
9	Nancy Simpson	21	Michael Wood
13	Frosti Tiona	25	Greg Bartimus
15	Owen Cunningham	28	Danielle Rolph

Anniversaries



- 1 Larry & Denise Burch
- 4 Steve & Carol Hedrick

Why We Build Beautiful Churches

For much of my life, I wondered why Christians spent so many resources building beautiful churches.

Several years ago, Judy and I visited St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. I sat quietly in the sanctuary before the service began, looking at the towering arches, stained-glass windows, marble columns, and gold-leaf details. The building was breathtaking. As I listened to the sermon, I found myself wrestling with a question I had asked for much of my life.

Why had Christians spent so much money building such a magnificent church? Why hadn't those resources been used to make life easier for the poor immigrants arriving in New York? Surely there were more practical ways to spend those dollars.

Then I learned something that completely changed my thinking.

St. Patrick's Cathedral was not built primarily by wealthy benefactors. Much of it was built through the pennies, nickels, and dimes of poor immigrants—people who had very little, yet willingly gave to build a beautiful house of worship.

At first, that puzzled me even more.

Why would people with so little choose to give toward beauty?

The answer did not come immediately. In fact, it took years before I began to understand.

Today, when I walk into our own sanctuary at First Christian Church, I see it differently.

I notice the soaring Gothic arches that naturally draw our eyes upward. I notice the warm woodwork and the quiet dignity of the sanctuary. I look at the stained-glass windows and the rare Tau crosses hidden within their design. Then I notice something that has always intrigued me. Small pieces of turquoise glass appear in different places in the two front windows, even though the rest of the windows are nearly identical. I don't know why. Perhaps no one remembers. But I rather enjoy the mystery. It reminds me that not every beautiful thing has to be fully explained to be appreciated.

As I look around our sanctuary, I realize that none of these things happened by accident.

Someone designed those arches.
Someone selected those windows.
Someone chose those symbols.
Someone paid for them.

Most of their names have been forgotten, but their gifts continue speaking every Sunday.

That is when I finally understood what those immigrants in New York understood all along.

They were not simply constructing a building.

They were creating a place where people could encounter God.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Moreover, it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2)

Stewardship is not measured by the size of a gift but by the faithfulness of the giver.

Those immigrants were faithful.

The generations who built and cared for First Christian Church were faithful. Now it is our turn.

We are not simply maintaining a building. We are preserving a sacred place where children will be baptized, couples will exchange wedding vows, families will gather to worship, and grieving hearts will find comfort. Long after we are gone, others will walk through these doors seeking hope, peace, and the presence of God.

We may never know whose life will be touched because we chose to care for this sanctuary.

Neither did those immigrants.
Neither did the members who built our church.

They simply gave faithfully.

Now God has entrusted that same opportunity to us.

Perhaps that is one of the most enduring forms of stewardship.

Perhaps that is why Christians have always been willing to build something beautiful for the glory of God.

John Daniel



Upcoming Sermons

September 6, 2026 (Proper 18)

Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27 (RCL: Proper 4, Year A)

Psalm: 127

Theme: A strong foundation

Title: "Ending at the Beginning"

September 13, 2026 (Proper 19)

Scripture: Genesis 9:8-17 (RCL: Lent 1, Year B)

Psalm: 25:1-10

Theme: The close of the Noah story

Title: "The fire next time?"

September 20, 2026 (Proper 20)

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-9 (RCL: 1-4a, Lent 2, Year A; 1-9, Proper 5, Year A)

Psalm: 105:1-6

Theme: God chooses Abraham

Title: "God's Chosen People"

September 27, 2026 (Proper 21)

Scripture: Genesis 37:1-18 (RCL: Proper 14, Year A)

Psalm: 40:1-5

Theme: Joseph and his brothers

Title: "Spoiled"

All are welcome

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH	660-679-3066
www.fccbutter.org	11 W Pine St., Butler, MO 64730

Board Minutes

August 16, 2026



BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT—Deacons: Steve Hedrick, Bob Thomas, Jennifer Schmehl, Carol Lewis, Judy Colburn, Everett McBrayer, Carol Hedrick, Judy Daniel. Elders: Chuck Lewis, Justin Quick, Diana Rich, John Daniel. Voting Member: Carol Roberts. Others present: Rev. Sharla Hulsey, Carol Ann Winburn, Don Malan, Peggy Thomas, Claudia Hulsey.

The meeting was called to order at 10:28 a.m. by Carol Roberts, chairperson. Opening prayer was given by Diana Rich. The agenda was reviewed and requests were made to add under New Business: Resignation of Shawn Quick, Timelines for remainder of 2026, and Procedure Handbook Review. The amended agenda was approved unanimously after a motion was made by Justin Quick and seconded by Carol Hedrick.

The minutes of the July 2026 meeting were reviewed. No additions or corrections were made, motion to accept the minutes was made by Chuck Lewis, seconded by Diana Rich. Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS—Carol Lewis reviewed the July Financial Reports.

- Budget vs. Actual—Total Revenue—\$7,795.33 (budget \$10,575.25)
Total Expenses—\$9,605.55 (budget \$10,575.25)
Net Income—\$ -1,810.22
- Budget vs Actual YTD—Total Revenue—\$80,040.69 (budget \$74,026.75)
Total Expenses—\$62,875.78 (budget \$63,451.50)
Net Revenue—\$7,7559.36
 - Carol Lewis stated that the Building Maintenance budget has essentially been spent for the year and any future expenses must be approved by the board.
- Balance Sheet—Total Assets—\$70,626.36
Total Restricted Funds—\$70,560.09
Total Liability and Equity—\$70,626.36
Total \$\$ in bank—\$68,124.92

(Full Financial Reports are available for review in the church office.)

Motion to accept the Financial Reports was made by Diana Rich, seconded by Justin Quick, passed unanimously.

MINISTER'S REPORT—Rev. Hulsey reported usual conversations with members in a variety of locations, including church office, hospital and home.

- She was a counselor at Faith Adventures camp on July 20-24.
- She attended the Pastoral Support committee meeting on July 29.
- She attended the Memorial Committee meeting on August 6.

Rev. Hulsey states that Shawn Quick's installation at Disciples Christian Church in Nevada will be September 27 at 3:00pm. She hopes several of us will be able to attend. If you would like to contribute to a gift for Shawn, please see Rev. Hulsey or Carol Roberts. Rev. Hulsey also states that she will serve as Shawn's mentor in the Commissioned Ministry Program.

Rev. Hulsey states she plans to take some time off in October and November. She also continues with Morning Prayer on Facebook Live Sunday through Friday mornings.

OLD BUSINESS—

- North wall (NW corner of the sanctuary)—Chuck Lewis stated that Mark Knoll came and checked the gutter but couldn't find a leak. He suggested that we may need to check the tuckpointing. Chuck said he then contacted the Church Extension services and sent all the information to them to see if they could help.
- Water in the basement—Carol Roberts stated that Phyllis McBrayer checked with Jarod McBrayer, but he doesn't remember doing any dirt work around the north basement windows. Chuck Lewis stated he would have the Church Extension service check that also.
- New rheostats for ceiling fans in sanctuary—No one seems to know if these have been ordered or who is to order them. Harley Page is the one who took the old one out when we were having problems. Steve Hedrick volunteered to call Harley and ask him about them. Rev. Hulsey stated that the rheostats need to be put on the lights in the sanctuary also. John Daniel made the motion to have Harley order the rheostats and install them, and to use money out of the restricted Building Fund. Justin Quick seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- Repair needed on concrete steps by the double glass door—Chuck Lewis stated he has some QuikCrete to repair them with but will wait until it is a little cooler to do it.

NEW BUSINESS—

- Resignation of Shawn Quick—Carol Roberts stated that Shawn's resignation letter was sent to all board members last week. Shawn is resigning from his positions of Elder, Chairperson of Evangelism and Chairperson of Pastor Support committee effective August 2, 2026. He has been called to minister the congregation of the Nevada Disciples of Christ. Carol Roberts said that all of Shawn's positions will be covered as follows:
 - Board Vice Chair: according to FCC by-laws, the Chair of the Elders will fill in on board for the Vice Chair if needed.
 - Elder: the Elders have all agreed to fill in for the remaining 3 Sundays of Shawn's service.

Cont...

Board Minutes Cont.

August 16, 2026

- *Evangelism Chair*: we will leave this position open unless someone wants to volunteer.
- *Chair of Pastoral Support Committee*: at the most recent meeting on 7/29/26, Judy Taylor was elected to fill the position of Chair.
- *Youth Group Volunteer leader*: Diana Rich has been co-leading this group with Shawn and will continue but will require a second volunteer to assist her on Sunday evenings. Carol encouraged board members to consider this.
 - Diana Rich made the motion to accept the resignation of Shawn Quick, Judy Daniel seconded. Motion approved unanimously.
- Nominating Committee—Carol Roberts presented the list of members for the 2027 Nominating Committee.

<u>Non-board members</u>	<u>Board members</u>
Judy Taylor, Chair	Lyssa Lile
Mary Coffman	Diana Rich
Kathy Wood	Carol Hedrick
Don Malan	Justin Quick
- Memorial/Gift Committee—Judy Daniel, chair, stated that the committee has met 3 times to discuss items that have been suggested by members of the congregation. The top 3 suggestions are as follows:
 - Replace the Lexan that covers the stained-glass windows on the front of the church for approximately \$6,719.00.
 - Purchase 100 stackable chairs to replace the folding chairs in the Fellowship Hall for approximately \$3,000.00.
 - Purchase a new coffee pot for the Fellowship Hall/Kitchen that will be “plumbed in” for water and uses stainless steel carafes to hold and serve the coffee. Approximately \$500.00.
 - John Daniel remarked that the total for all 3 would be slightly less than \$11,000.00. John made a motion to purchase all 3, limit \$11,000.00, Justin Quick seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.
- Timelines for the remainder of 2026—Carol Roberts reminded the board of the following:
 - September—All departments and committees should meet and have a “Plan” for next year activities and make budget recommendations to the Stewardship Committee Chair (Diana Rich) by the end of September.
 - October—The Nominating Committee will present the slate of nominees, and the Stewardship Department will present the proposed 2027 budget. Both items will be presented for board approval. (Oct Board meeting)
 - November—Congregational meeting for budget and board roster approval
- Procedure Book Review—Carol Roberts stated that the Procedure Book needs to be reviewed and updated and asked for volunteers to help.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS

- 2nd quarter CCF Endowment Fund Statements—John Daniel, chair, reviewed the 2nd quarter Summary from the Christian Church Foundation. We have 2 funds and both are doing well. He encouraged us all to consider contributing to the funds or arranging a contribution in our wills. He also stated that he will begin reporting twice a year instead of quarterly. The first six months will be reported in August, and the full year will be reported in February.
 - John also said that this money is meant for the future, should the financial situation of the church change drastically.
 - Carol Roberts stated that there is a possibility of a fundraiser in the future for projects if needed. Sharla noted that one idea is to do a “Capital Campaign” in conjunction with the 100 yr. Anniversary of the current church building in 2028. Justin Quick suggested that any planning for that be delayed until January 2027.

ADJOURNMENT—no further business. Justin Quick moved that the meeting adjourn, seconded by John Daniel. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

CLOSING PRAYER—Closing prayer by Rev. Hulse.

Respectfully submitted.

Jennifer Schmehl
Board Secretary





FIRST
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CHURCH
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

REV. SHARLA HULSEY

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*"For this reason I remind you
to fan into flame the gift of God,
which is in you through the
laying on of my hands."*

2 Timothy 1:6 (ESV)