

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

33 N. Arlington Ave., Niles, OH 44446

News and Events Around
Your Church



Mission Statement:

We celebrate the Good News of Jesus Christ by witnessing, loving, growing, and serving from our doorsteps "to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

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December 27, 2017

WE WISH EVERYONE A BLESSED AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Hopefully, this newsletter will reach you with your New Year's Resolution still intact. It seems that few things have such a high failure rate as New Year's Resolutions. In fact, one of the few resolutions that I have ever kept is from the year that I resolved to quit making New Year's Resolutions. I am still going strong on that one. So why, oh why, are we so bad at keeping these resolutions throughout the New Year? Perhaps it is because we set ourselves up for failure. First, our resolutions always seem to be a bit vague. "I will lose weight," or "I will quit smoking" are examples of resolutions with a set goal but no process or method that will lead toward the end goal. Second, our resolutions are usually overreaching with no recognition of the state of affairs that have led to the resolution being set in the first place. "I will spend a lot more time with my family," or "I will always enjoy my life this year," are examples that aim at perfection and yet deny the life circumstances that have led to the resolution. Perhaps the commitment toward spending time with family should dig deep into the reasons that time had not been spent with family in the past. Third, we always seem to fight the battles of keeping our resolutions in a very private manner. We go it alone when we don't need to. Perhaps this is because we are afraid of telling others our desires when we *just know* that we will fail or perhaps it is something deeper, I don't know.

What I do know, is that I see a lot of parallels between our failed New Year's resolutions and our lives as Christians. I think that it is a safe assumption that many of the resolutions made by Christian communities are very easily discarded. After all, we are committed to love, hope, joy and peace in all things and yet there are numerous examples of our discarded Christian Covenants that line the paths of history. For a people committed to love and peace, we sure do have a lot of hate and violence under our belts.

It seems that the exact same reasons that our New Year's resolutions so easily fail are the same reasons that our Christian commitments are unsuccessful. We wish for peace on earth and good will toward all and then we do nothing to plan out the steps that would make this a reality. We pray for the coming of the Realm of God and then we sit and wait for it. Likewise, we make commitments toward selflessness and charity and forget that humans are selfish creatures. We pray for equality while we gather more for ourselves. And just like those who fail in their resolutions because they attempt to struggle alone, we keep doing our Christian duties as individuals rather than uniting in voice and in mind to work toward God's will. Perhaps this year, whether we are working on shedding holiday pounds or working toward world peace, we will be more successful if we are willing to work toward our goal in conscious steps, in recognition of our shortcomings and in Christian unity. I might even break my old New Year's resolution and actually resolve to make one this year. I think I'll commit to seeking out the Realm of God right here in Niles, Ohio.

Pastor Chris

INSTALLATION SERVICE SUNDAY, JANUARY 7 - Our installation of Elders, Serving Deacons, Preparing Deacons, Trustees, and Official Board Officers will take place **SUNDAY, JANUARY 7** during our 10:45 a.m. worship service. We install our board members annually for one year at a time, and those who will continue to serve in these capacities, as well as the newly elected officers, are asked to be present.

ATTENTION DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS - Please check your mailboxes for the 2017 Annual Report Forms. **Annual Reports are due in to the church office by January 7th** It's preferable and more efficient that the information be emailed to the church office at secretaryfccniles@gmail.com, but get the reports in any way you can.

OFFICIAL BOARD MEETING will be held Sunday, **JANUARY 21** following worship in the board room. All church boards, departments, circles and youth groups must have a financial report for July through December 2017 ready to present to the board.



THANK YOU to Shelly Pressell for coordinating the Sunday School Christmas Program "12 Symbols of Christmas" enjoyed by all on December 17.

THE 2-3 YEAR OLD SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS would like to thank you for your generous contribution to our Christmas service project. We were able to purchase 2 goats, a sheep, 2 rabbits, and 3 ducks. In addition, we bought 6 fruit trees and a bag of fast growing seeds. We purchased a little farm through World Vision. Thanks again!

CLEVELAND CHRISTIAN HOME UPDATE - \$185 was collected and sent to Cleveland Christian Home when speaker Katharine Johnson Vinciquerra presented her program about the work and ministry of their organization on December 3rd. Missions also sent 12 pairs of shoes to the home.

ANYONE WISHING to have pledges and/or contributions credited to their 2017 giving statement must have it to the church office no later than **this Sun., Dec. 31, 2017**. Thank you.

BIBLE STUDY resumes Tuesday, January 9th at 7 p.m. in the church parlor. Everyone is welcome to join us!

WE EXTEND OUR SYMPATHY TO:

Alice Cosgrove, in the death of her son, Karl Wilner, who passed away on November 23.

Lynne Judy, in death of her son, Greg Judy, on December 6.

DISCIPLE WOMEN'S JAIL MINISTRY TEAM will be conducting worship services on the Mondays of January 8 and January 22 at 6:45 p.m. at the Trumbull County Jail.

FCC VOLUNTEERS will serve a dinner **Tuesday, January 30** from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Rescue Mission of the Mahoning Valley, 962 Martin Luther King Blvd. in Youngstown, coordinated by Becky Carpenter. Desserts need to be to the church **by 11 a.m.** using buzzer and door closest to the library parking lot.

CHI RHO YOUTH GROUP will meet Sunday, January 14 following worship in fellowship hall. Chi Rho is for youth in grades 6 to 8.

CYF WILL ENJOY a New Year's Eve Slumber Party here at church New Year's Eve beginning at 7 p.m.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jan. 1 Becky Brothers | Jan. 6 Monica Lott | Jan. 13 Brittney Bevilacqua | Jan. 20 Don Lott |
| Jan. 1 Gary Pressell | Jan. 7 Wendy Wagner | Jan. 14 Billie Neuman | Jan. 26 T. J. Bevilacqua |
| Jan. 1 Ricky Bassett III | Jan. 10 Lois Swindler | Jan. 15 Jo May Yoder | Jan. 29 Jacob Turk |
| Jan. 3 Joey Paris | Jan. 11 Jane Porter | Jan. 18 James Sprague | Jan. 31 William Sethman |

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Disciples Men Group will host a **free-will breakfast** at noon in fellowship hall on Sunday, January 28.


COMMUNITY MEALS will be served by First Christian Church during February. Meals will be served on the Thursdays of February 1, 8, 15 and 22. Monetary donations are being accepted for these meals. If you wish to contribute, please make checks payable to First Christian Church labeled 'meals.'

PASTOR CHRIS STARK CONTACT INFO: cell phone 330.442.2558; email address pastorchrisstark@gmail.com.

PLEASE REMEMBER to keep your email addresses current with the church office so that we can communicate most effectively. Thank you.

CARD MINISTRY REQUEST FORMS are available in the pew racks and narthex. If you know someone who needs a greeting card from our church, please fill out a Card Ministry request form and leave it in the offering tray or drop your request in the gold box on the narthex table.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER ITEMS is Mon., January 29 by 11:30 a.m.

 JANUARY NEWSNOTES Christmas DMF Special Offering total received was \$737.00 Christmas Eve Offering total received was \$602.17 Elders will meet Sun., January 7 following worship in the library Disciples Men will meet Sun., January 7 at 8 a.m. at Perkins Stewardship and Finance will meet Sunday, January 14 at 9 a.m. Missions will meet on Wed., January 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the church parlor Lydia Circle ladies will meet at 7 p.m. on Wed., January 10 in the parlor TMH Psych Unit Worship Services will be held this Sunday, December 31 and Sunday, January 14 at 2 p.m. Ohio Women's Ministry (OWM) is collecting canned soup for Niles Community Services during the month of January. Donations may be placed in the cabinet in the main hallway

NEWS & EVENTS
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