



The Chalice

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
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Heart Shapes – August, 2016

A Spiral – God’s Community

The circle of time is complete. The school year is over and the summer time has started! Our school kids and their families, school faculty, staff members reached their end date on May 18 and summer ensued quickly. Last week we completed three nights of VBS faith development, friends, food and fun by sharing the gospel stories and our time, talents and treasures. A word of thanks to the many who helped in some way with VBS – 2016.

The last VBS night included a ‘Water Festival’ activity. Ms. Amy and her teen assistants set up a fun way to celebrate VBS that is now the talk of Watkinsville! When people outside the church “see” and “hear” people celebrating and enjoying time together, they want to be a part of the whole. They come closer and question ‘what is going on?’ and “how can I join in?” **If God is calling us to be a community who embraces God’s love, then who would not want to be included in that!?**

FCC-W has a long history of showing God’s love and welcome to others. Those that have come before us invested their time, talents and treasures in the congregational community and we still benefit from their vision and intentional work. Our own sharing of our time, talent and treasures will benefit not only us, but the future community

of faithful who will learn to be God’s followers by our example and our sharing. It is the way of the circle of life in God’s community.

Yet, when we think of the circle as the image of congregational community life, we might find ourselves stuck in believing that all are the same and all are included. By definition, a circle is a continuous curve line, the points of which are always the same distance from the center. There is comfort in thinking that the circle of community is continuous, and all who are part of the circle are the same. I think God has another idea about community and belonging.

I remember as a teen hearing a poem entitled “Outwitted” by Edwin Markham. One line from the poem made an impression on me: “He drew a circle that shut me out – Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout. But love and I had the wit to win: We drew a circle and took him in!”

Circles can be used to include, connect, and to create safety. But is the circle the best image to represent God’s community? **If God is calling us to be a community who embraces and receives God’s Love (yes, I am repeating that phrase!), then the community of faithful is always changing and becoming more than what we are now. Our circle is not broken with new people and opportunities to share, rather our circle becomes a spiral with a center point of beginning with no end to who joins in nor where each are on the journey of becoming.**

A definition of the word **spiral** is the following: a shape of a continuous, curving line, making curves, each one above or wider than the one before, beginning with and surrounding a center point.

God's community of faith is a spiral of curves that widens and deepens as we live out God's embracing love. We begin with the center point - God - and we move out from that center point of love, to widen our community with all who we meet along the curved continuum of hope, faith, love.



WWW Dinner Group – Just for fun and food!

The Watkinsville Wise and Wonderful – WWW – Group is scheduled for the following nights and places to eat. We leave from the church parking lot by 5:15 PM or meet at the designated place at 6:00 PM. This ‘Dutch-treat’ event welcomes you to a time of trying out a new place to eat and meet with friends new or never-met. All are welcome. Invite you family and friends. Please call the office or email Sheila if you are going. This is for the purpose of having enough chairs.

September 9, Friday – Yesterday’s Café, Greensboro. A special night for the beginning of fall where we have dinner, dessert is the famous buttermilk pie. And, James Hunter playing.

If you have some ideas for future places to gather, just let us know! Sponsored through the Evangelism/Membership Committee



Disciples Women's Retreat

Registration is open, contact Ann Smith if you are interested in attending. The retreat, scheduled for Sept. 23-25 in Toccoa, will be keynoted by the Rev. Khalia J. Williams, Assistant Dean of Worship and Music at Candler School of Theology. She will explore the timely theme of "Finding Wholeness in a Broken World."

FCCW Host Public Art by OCAF

The connection between church and community continues in strength. Oconee Cultural Arts foundation (OCAF) brought to our town and surrounding area the Artscape Oconee and Public Art Watkinsville. FCCW is one of the host sites with an art panel displayed on N. Main Street at our parking lot. The panel features the work of Art Rosenbaum entitled “Billy Button.” The art panel is one of a collection of 14 panels scattered throughout the city. Hosting this panel is another way our FCCW congregation connects with others in our community. So glad we are a place of welcome and hospitality.



Youth

We have a new term to share with everyone and that is “Disciples Kids”. This term will be used to refer to our Pre-K – 5th grade children. “FCCW Youth Group” will be our 6th-12th graders. Just wanted everyone to be aware of this change and we want to encourage you to add the following dates to your calendar. Hopefully all of our young people can find time to participate in FCCW Youth!

Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, August 24 – PLANNING DINNER
(5:30 – 7:00 PM)

Sunday, August 28 – “KICK OFF” Event “Church at the Lake” (All Day)

Friday, September 16 – Disciples Kids “MOVIE NIGHT”

Friday, September 30 – FCCW Youth Group
“LOCK-IN at FCCW”

Weekly Programs:

Wednesdays (August 31 – November 2, 2016 & January 11 – May 3, 2017)

6:15 – 7:00 PM Disciples Kids & FCCW Youth Group

Sundays (September 11 – November 6, 2016 & January 15 – May 7, 2017)

4:30 – 5:00 PM Children/Teen Choir Rehearsal – open to all ages

5:00 – 6:00 PM 3rd – 12th grade Handbell Choir Rehearsal

Words from the Garden.....

As the sun sets, dinner is over and dishes are washed, do you ever re-think your day? Was it productive? Is the 'to do' list longer than it was at the beginning of the day? Has endless frustration set in?

Well it is time to turn off the wheels of your mind and just listen. Grab a glass of iced tea or cup of coffee and find the garden bench, the porch swing or the front stoop. Sit and Listen. Listen to the rustle of the leaves, the chatter of the blue jays or the crickets sing their songs. The sounds of the garden are soothing to our frayed nerves and tired beings. While the First Christian Church garden, 'Grace Grows Here' whispers many sounds, it also nudges the essence of our feelings and more importantly our memories of those who have gone before us. It speaks to us in the universal language of 'gardenese' which is the language of beauty, joy, serenity and grace. Take a minute to come, sit, listen and refresh your spirit as tomorrow promises to bloom into another glorious day!

