

THE ECHO

a newsletter of the First Christian Church of Morehead, Kentucky

President's column

MARY CLAIRE WILLIAMS



Greetings, Church Family,

On the Sunday before Martin Luther King Jr. Day, I had the opportunity to take Ellie and Alana to a regional youth gathering in Lexington at Transylvania University. They were able to reconnect with church camp friends and enjoy some activities before a guest speaker. The guest speaker was Devine Carama who works with youth from neighborhoods in Lexington where there are violent crimes. He was dynamic and engaging, and I

enjoyed the talk as much as the girls. Mr. Carama has four lessons in leadership that he teaches to youth he works with. They include: 1) be yourself at all times 2) believe and live for something 3) be brave even when it's not popular and 4) find balance in your life. I think these are wonderful lessons to for adults to keep in mind, too!

The season of Lent is quickly approaching. I hope you can take time to reflect during Lent about how you can deepen your faith and trust in the Lord even more than you already do. I always find Lent to be challenging as I take time to pray about places in my life that I feel broken or fragile. Let's be sure to keep each other in our prayers as we are all on this journey together.

With love,

mcwilliams326 (at) gmail (dot) com
(606) 776-8430



Alana Sholar (left) & Ellie Williams



Regional Disciples Youth Conference, Transylvania University, January 15, 2023.

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First Christian Church
227 East Main Street
Morehead, KY 40351

www.fccmorehead.org
(606)784-4836



Outreach Update

RONETTA & JEFF BROWN



Yard Sale—April 1. The Outreach Committee is planning a yard sale to raise funds for the snack backpack program. The yard sale will be held on Saturday, April 1st, in conjunction with the Morehead Maker’s Market. More details to follow.

Gateway Housewarming Baskets. Gateway Homeless Shelter serves five counties and transitions 6-10 households per month. The staff does follow ups with these families and the success rate is 90%. In December 2022 the shelter was operating at full capacity. February through October we furnish a basket for folks transitioning from the Gateway Homeless Shelter to a home. These are sometimes singles, but many are families with children and jobs. The baskets contain new items such as sheets, towels, rugs, pots, dishes, microwave, etc. The average cost per basket is \$300.

Signups for items included in the Gateway Baskets are available at the Sign-up Genius link below. If you would like to help out with this or other projects, contact any of the Outreach Committee members. Together we can make a difference. Our next meeting on March 1 at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. [Sign-up Genius Link](#)

Focus on Week of Compassion

MISSION MOMENT: RISE UP ANEW IN CAMBODIA

“Living in poverty was already hopeless, but life got harder when I lost my leg in a landmine accident,” Ouk Oy says. The 64-year-old father of four adult children lives with his wife, Sreng Kong, in Cambodia. Oy and Kong rely on her income as a seasonal laborer to make ends meet, earning about \$5 a day at a nearby corn farm. Through several local programs conducted by Church World Service, Oy and Kong have created a new future. Oy said, “Before participating in a CWS program, my family didn’t have enough to eat. I borrowed rice or money to buy rice, and I worked as a wage laborer to repay the debt.” He had dreams for a more stable family income.



Oy and Kong in the bicycle shop. (CWS photo)

Oy and Kong live on the grounds of a Trauma Care Foundation property. The couple doesn’t own land, so the Foundation allowed him to build a small home there. Oy also took a class on repairing motors through the Foundation, but he could not afford business start-up costs. Working with the Khmer Community Development Association, CWS helps families by providing education and resources to meet basic needs. The program work ranges from building sanitary bathrooms to providing business start-up grants, job training, and more. Program coordinators met with Oy and Kong to talk about their priorities, listening carefully to their hopes, dreams, and needs, to discern the best way to support them. Oy talked about his motor repair skills and his desire to start a business repairing motorbikes. With a \$350 start-up grant, he could buy tools and spare parts to get his shop going.

Today, Oy and Kong have a more stable income along with a renewed confidence and sense of purpose. Oy says, “I am so happy and proud of myself; I never ever thought that I could afford to have my own business. I never expected this opportunity in my life, to run a service shop with a better and stable income,” Oy now makes \$250-300 per month through the shop. “I can’t thank you enough for the support, as I now have a certain job to support my family,” he said. “My wife doesn’t need to go out and sell her labor, we have enough to eat, and we can allocate some savings to expand my repair shop.”

Your gifts to Week of Compassion supports work with partners like Church World Service, and offers opportunities to people like Oy and Kong.

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>5</p> <p>10:45am Worship 12:00pm Blessing of the Prayer Slips</p>	6	7	8	9	10	11
<p>12</p> <p>10:45am Worship</p>	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>19</p> <p>10:45am Worship Week of Compassion Offering</p>	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>26</p> <p>10:45am 1st Sunday of Lent Worship Week of Compassion Offering Newsletter articles due.</p>	27	28				
	<p>President's Day Office closed.</p>	<p>7:00pm Women of the Bible (Zoom)</p>	<p>22 ASH WEDNESDAY 11:30-1:30pm Ashes-to-Go 7:00pm Traditional Service of Ashes</p>	<p>7:00pm Vespers (Zoom)</p>	<p>Office closed.</p>	<p>3:00pm First Baptist Church Spike Lee film <i>BlackKkLansman</i></p>
	<p>7:00pm Full Board (Zoom)</p>	<p>7:00pm Women of the Bible (Zoom)</p>	<p>5:00pm Bells 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>7:00pm Vespers (Zoom)</p>	<p>Office closed.</p>	
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Two Experiences for Ash Wednesday—February 22, 2023

ASHES-TO-GO AND TRADITIONAL SERVICE MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN SEASON

Ashes-to-Go at 11:30am—1:30pm

Last year we offered our first Ashes-to-Go event for Ash Wednesday. This short, informal time of reflection and ritual opens up the day to those who may not have the opportunity to attend a full in-door service.

Swing by the parking lot on Wednesday, February 22, any time between 11:30am—1:30pm for Ashes-to-Go. You'll be marked with ashes on your forehead and go away with a blessing for Lent.

Pick up our daily Lenten devotional booklet and prayer cards while you're there. And if you have time, consider walking the labyrinth as a meditative start to the Lenten season.



Ash Wednesday Service at 7pm

In this traditional meditative service, music, scripture, prayers, communion, ritual, and silence create a space to focus on questions at the start of Lent.

What are you seeking?

What is God seeking?

What actions or practices will you commit to?

Whether you drop by for Ashes to Go, or join others in the sanctuary in our traditional service, you'll discover the richness of this ancient ritual for your spiritual journey.



seeking:
*Is this the fast
that I choose?*

Lenten Faith & Film Series

FAITH & FILM DISCUSSION RETURNS IN MARCH

Our weekly Zoom discussion on faith and film begins on Sunday, March 5, at 7pm. We'll watch thought-provoking films in a variety of genres available on streaming platforms each week on our own. Sunday evenings discussions will explore questions of faith raised by the film. Films include *Lucky*, *The Social Dilemma*, and *I Am Pauli Murray*.

During the first weekend of Lent our friends at First Baptist Church are hosting a viewing and discussion of the Spike Lee film *BlacKkKlansman* on Saturday, February 25, as part of their Black History Month emphasis. The event is open to the public and begins at 3pm with pizza and discussion to follow the viewing. FCC Faith and Film participants are encouraged to attend FBC's public showing or watch *BlacKkKlansman* on their own time. The film is currently available with a cable subscription on FXNow or to stream on other providers.



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

Women's Bible Study

TUESDAYS 7:00PM—ZOOM

The Women's Bible Study group will be studying the Book of Psalms during February. Each Tuesday at 7pm ET, the thirty minute Zoom session will be examining and discussing Psalms of Love. Contact the office or message us for an invitation.

February 7

Psalms 35, 91, 103, 144

February 14

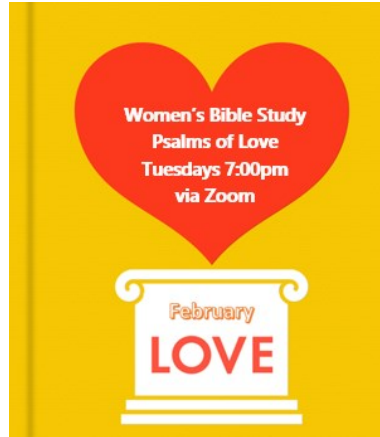
Psalms 18, 22, 86, 139

February 2

Psalms 5, 40, 100, 145

February 2

Psalms 63, 70, 97, 146



**a blessing for
the seekers**

Blessed are you who turn your face up to the sky,
who open your arms to feel the wind,
who notice all the things that we should notice.
Blessed are you who are fluent in wonder
and familiar with awe.
Blessed are you who, even now, dream dreams,
who have not lost hope,
who swear the glass is still half-full.
Blessed are you who plant trees
and sing the harmony,
who tell the children how this world can be magic.
Blessed are you who
walk and seek
and turn over every stone,
pointing out all the corners and colors
that God lives in.
Blessed are you.
Amen.

Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

TREASURER'S REPORT JANUARY

General gifts and income (first four Sundays)	\$12,399.04
Expenses:	\$ 9,199.72

Week of Compassion SPECIAL OFFERING FEBRUARY 19-26



Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

[Week of Compassion Year in Review 2022](#)

Ways of Giving OFFERING & TITHES

To contribute financially to the ministries of our congregation, gifts may be placed in the offering boxes at any entrance to the sanctuary. Other ways of giving are through PayPal, Facebook, website [Giving](#) tab, [direct debit](#) or bank check autopay, [Kroger Community Rewards Program](#). Contact Joe Barrett, Treasurer, for information or [email](#)/contact the church office (606) 784-4836.



Notes from Pastor Nancy

REV. NANCY GOWLER



*Some hae meat an canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.*

—Selkirk Grace

Dear Disciples,

I'm writing this on the eve of Burns Night, January 25, a more than 200 year old tradition of gatherings to celebrate Robert Burns, the unofficial bard of the Scottish people. Burns Night includes music, poetry, toasts, and a meal of traditional Scottish food featuring tatties (mashed potatoes), neeps (mashed turnips) and haggis (probably best left without description). The meal often begins with the Selkirk Grace quoted above, which is said in the old dialect of lowland Scotland. While the grace predates Burns, he recited the prayer at dinner with the Earl of Selkirk in 1794, and the words have long been connected to him.

During the celebrations, his poems are read, including the obligatory "Address to a Haggis." His zeal for commonfolk can be heard in "A Man's A Man for A' That," a poem in conversation with Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*. There is a moving tenderness in "To a Mouse" which was written after accidentally overturning a mice nest while ploughing a field. He begins it with these heartbreaking lines, "Wee, sleeket, cowran, tim'rous beastie, O, what a panic's in thy breastie!" Through his words you can imagine the terrified mouse! Of course the evening will conclude with a full-throated singing of the beloved, "Auld Lang Syne."

Robert Burns may seem an unlikely figure for a minister's reflection. His satiric take-downs of hypocritical clergy spare few blows, and he was scornful of the fear-based control wielded by the church. In his poem "The Holy Fair" Burns reveals his skepticism of the religious fervor of the revivals which were becoming popular. He lived during a period of great upheaval in the Scottish Presbyterian Church, with splits along theological and political lines. The church exercised strong and oppressive control over much of society and the push-back would grow over time. Burns himself was the subject of extreme church discipline when he was forced to take a seat on the church's "cutty-stool" in front of the pulpit while the minister publicly excoriated him for his misdeeds. We might all be grateful that our Disciples forebearers Thomas and Alexander Campbell did not bring the practice of a "cutty-stool" with them from Scotland to the United States!

Despite the misdeeds of much of the organized church of his day, I think Burns retains a spiritual dimension to his writings. After all, his critiques of church hypocrisy reveal an understanding that there is something virtuous and valuable within the Christian tradition, which is being undermined by the sanctimonious behavior of religious adherents. Plagued with ill health, Burns in his poem, "A Prayer in the Prospect of Death," offers a glimmer of his own understanding of the human condition and of God. The poem concludes,

*Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do Thou, All-Good -for such Thou art-
In shades of darkness hide.*

*Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.*

Whether you celebrate Burns Night or not, I invite you to carry with you Burns' image of a God who delights in forgiving. It is a fitting understanding of divine nature to take with us into the season of Lent.



Sheep on the Isle of Iona, Scotland. 2007
(Photo by Nancy Gowler)

History Corner

ANNE BUCKNER

History of First Christian Church of Morehead

Handbells Presented in Memory of Jeff Calvert (adapted from *The Morehead News*, 1966)

Twenty-five handbells were presented to First Christian Church of Morehead as a memorial to Jeff Calvert, who lost his life in a hunting accident in 1964. The bells are to be used in the music department of the church.

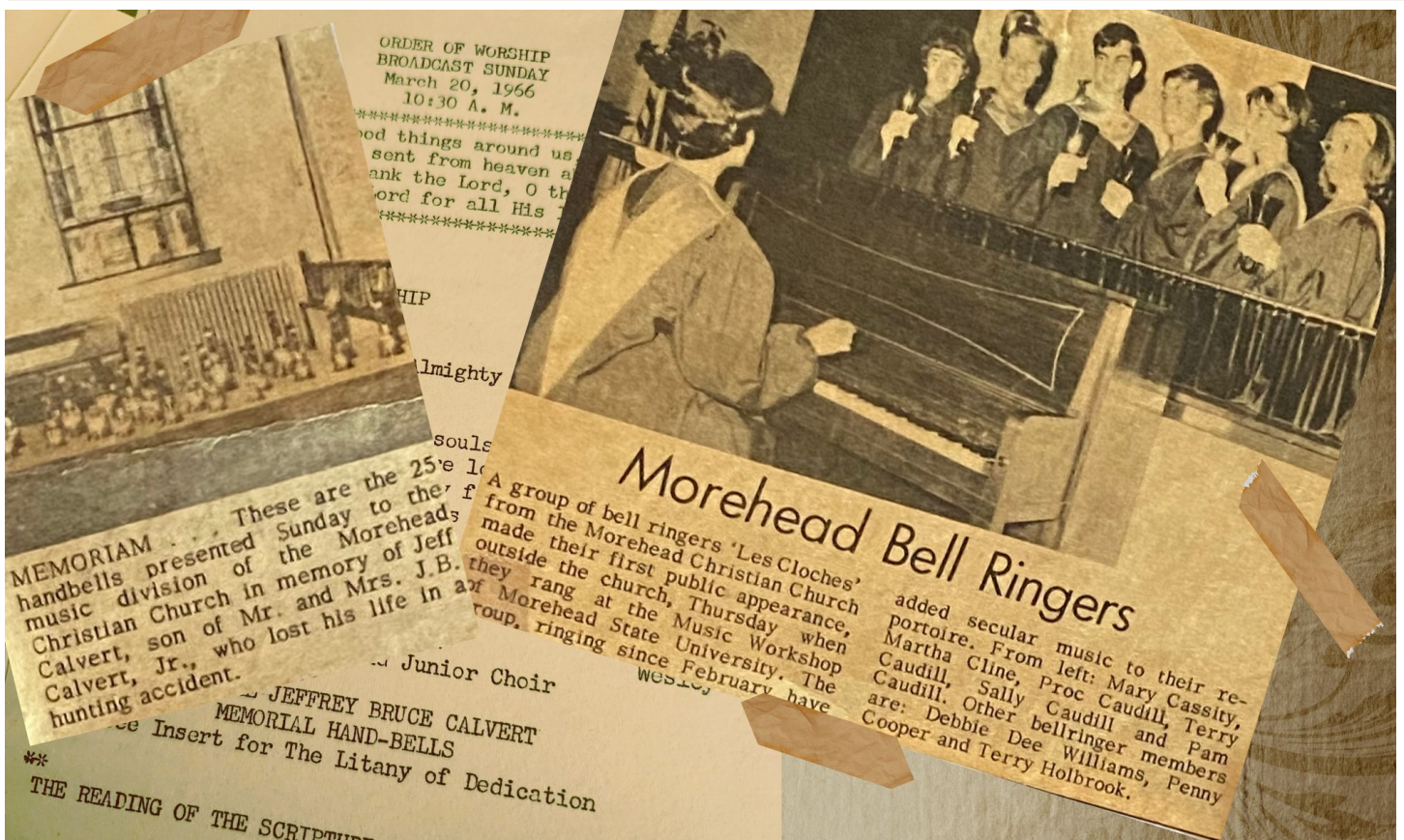
The Schulmerich, American made bells are in the chromatic scale of G and are equipped with two large felt-lined carrying cases for storage and transportation. All hand bell ringers wear cotton gloves to prevent corrosion of the metal. The bells and cases were purchased with an investment of \$895.

The service of dedication on Sunday, March 20, 1966 included a litany led by the Reverend Brooks, pastor of the church and two musical numbers by the Adult Handbell choir; one with the Junior Choir adding their voices to the three-part harmony of organ, bells, and choir.

Adult ringers in Sunday's service included: Mrs. Andre Bowne, Mrs. Hubert Allen, Mrs. Charles Brooks, Mrs. Harold Holbrook and Mrs. James Williams. Other members of this group were Mrs. Dee Fannin, Mrs. J. B. Calvert, and Mrs. Beemis Sluss. Youth participants were Terry Holbrook, Carla Fannin, Sandra Williams, Rhonda Hill, Leslie Williams, Sherri Hill, Louise Venettozzi, Leslie Rae Smith, Tim Clayton, and Ginny Beth Landreth.



Handbells were presented to FCC in 1965 by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Calvert in memory of Jeff Calvert.



Season of Lent begins February 22



In the season of Lent we hear many stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking: a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith. These encounters may turn expectations upside down, push back on assumptions, or reveal a new perspective.

Our 2023 Lenten journey will revolve around questions we find in these stories, such as, “Can these bones live?”

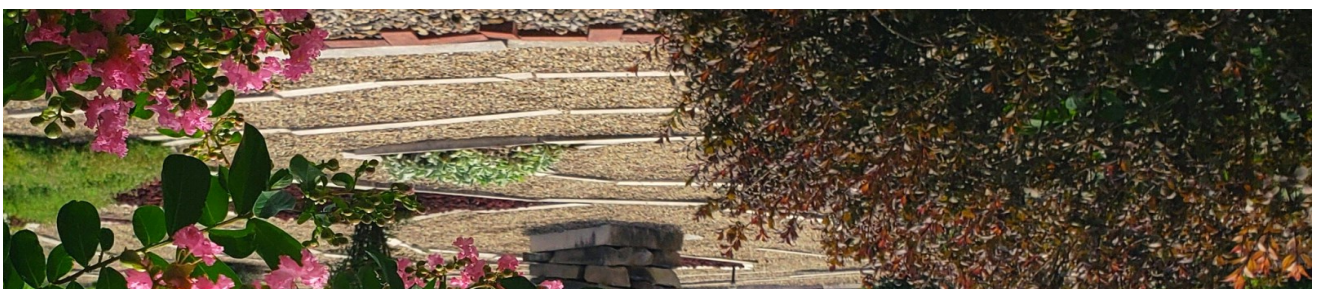
Who will you listen to?

How do we begin again?

As we explore these questions and others, and their relationship to our lives, we will join generations of individuals who have come to Jesus as seekers. We’ll engage in the spiritual practices of seeking—staying curious, open, and generous in our approach to our questions.

Look for our Lenten Devotional booklet, devotional cards, and more activities to aid us in our Lenten journey together.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
227 East Main Street
Morehead, KY 40351



Place
Stamp
Here