

In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, diversity. In all things, charity.

**First
Christian
Church**
(Disciples of Christ)
A Green Chalice Ministry



The Echo

Volume 21 Issue 1

January 2021

Epiphany at Home Together

CHALKING THE DOOR

January 6 is the twelfth night of Christmastide, the Feast of the Epiphany, sometimes called “Three Kings Day,” and starts the Season of Epiphany, continuing until Ash Wednesday. In some cultures, January 6 is a large and festive end to the Christmas season: a day of presents, parades, and celebration. Epiphany is an invitation to follow stars, listen to dreams, and step out of what we have always known.

In the gospel of Matthew (Matthew 2:1-12) we find the story of the magi who arrived in Bethlehem guided by a star, bringing gifts. They have a small part in Matthew’s gospel, and yet a robust tradition has grown around them overtime, including their number (three) and

Epiphany at Home p2

Message from the President

I WILL CONTINUE

Dear Friends,

After a low-key, at-home, first-time-in-ten-years-white Christmas...the New Year. On the heels of the celebrations as we welcome the Christ child, a time for resolutions as we welcome 2021.

In searching for personal inspiration, I came across this quote from the late Hal Borland, “Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us.”

Yes, putting up the new calendar and turning from 2020 to 2021 is welcoming a new year, but in the midst of our current situations, it doesn’t feel like moving on...yet. Instead, this year it truly feels, as Borland puts it, like a “going on.”

So I decided that my New Year’s resolution this year will be to continue.

Message p2



President Genny
Jenkins

New Ways To Be A Faith Community

*A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long
journey...*

—T. S. Eliot, The Journey of the Magi

When my son was growing up, his father was often away in January, leading study abroad classes through Europe. Ben and I were left in dreary Washington state, dreaming of traveling to far away places. To make our time more special, I planned outings and activities. We frequented Starbucks for tasty treats. We’d make a special day trip to Seattle, to visit museums, shop in our favorite bookstores, eat at beloved restaurants.

I found ways to extend the Christmas season, relying heavily on the idea there are twelve days of Christmas, not just one. We began to celebrate Epiphany in our house, leaving our tree up and lit until January 6 and the magi of our nativity set took a long and circuitous route to the manger.

Often we would bake a King’s cake for a special meal, and we took up the old tradition of Chalking the Door (see article on pp 1 & 2). I had read of the tradition of preparing the home for a visit by the Magi, leaving a bowl of water for their camels and shoes next to the door for a surprise gift of candies and treats in return. So every January 5th we’d tell the story of the Magi, put out a big bowl of water by the front door, carefully place our shoes nearby—and miraculously, the next morning all the water would be gone and a few of our favorite treats would be stuffed into our shoes!

In those small ways we were learning to practice our faith at home, weaving the stories into our lives just a little bit more during the long winter.

New Ways p2



Reverend Nancy
Gowler



King’s Cake

Epiphany at Home p1

their names (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar). Their sacred story invites us to reflect upon our own. Who or what is leading you to God? Which stars will you follow this year and what road will you take? What gifts will you offer?

On Epiphany, consider participating in an ancient tradition known as "Chalking the Door." This practice consists of marking a blessing in chalk in a specific pattern of letters and numbers, to invite God's blessing on a home, church, or other entryway, and on all who enter its doors during the year. All you need is chalk and a doorway. The markings are usually made above the front door or main entrance, in this pattern:

20 + C + M + B + 21

Here's a sample liturgy adapted from www.beliefnet.com. Each person may take a turn reading the part of the Leader.

Leader: Peace be to this house and all who enter here.

Leader: A reading from Proverbs: "By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."

Leader: Let us pray: Gracious God, as a shining star once guided the magi to the birthplace of the infant Jesus, so enable those who dwell here to be your light in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Using chalk, inscribe the frame above the door with the inscription shown below. The letters C M B come from the traditional (9th century) names for the "three kings"--Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Some also suggest "Christus Mansionem Benedicat," which means "May Christ bless this dwelling." The numbers stand for the year 2021. Each person receives a turn to make one or more of the marks: 20 + C + M + B + 21.

Leader: A reading from Isaiah: "The effect of righteousness is peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and quiet places."

Leader: Let us pray: Sovereign God, we pray that you will bless this home and all who live here with your gracious presence, that your love may be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

Message—I Will Continue p1

I will continue to be patient, to limit my contacts, to trust the science, to wear a mask, to worship from home, and to put my support directly towards my church and my community. I will continue to smile and hope and give. I will continue.

I'm reminded of the wonderful spiritual and protest song, 'I Shall Not be Moved,' in which the singer compares themselves (with inspiration from Psalm 1) to a tree planted by the water. As I consider this song, I do not picture it as a song of stubbornness or a refusal to change but more as a declaration of being resolute.



So, maybe in challenging times such as these, the takeaway is that *being resolute* is more important than *making resolutions*?

So, my friends, I invite you to join me as we resolve to continue. May the light of the love of the Christ child illuminate the way forward as we go.

Most Sincerely, Genny Jenkins

New Ways p1

These past ten months while we have not been able to worship in one place together, we have been creating new ways to be a faith community together. We've found deep meaning and relationships in Thursday night Vespers. We've discovered new insights and ways of thinking about our faith as we've watched films and had weekly discussions on Zoom. We've made Advent wreaths at home, practiced prayer while coloring, and we've even sung along with others while our mics were muted! And as a congregation we have adapted our traditions so that we could continue to give generously to our neighbors, sharing gifts with families needing help this year.



It's not been easy. And as we have been worshipping in our homes, I pray that our spiritual lives have been enriched by the expanding nature of our gatherings and practices. In this new year may we continue to cultivate the practices which deepen our faith wherever we find ourselves: in our homes, at work and play, and in our sanctuary, again, as well.

Pastor Nancy

Choir & Bells



Genny Jenkins
Choir Director

A huge thank you to our Advent and Christmas musicians! Our wonderful bell choir, our amazing accompanist, Jiyeon McGillicuddy, Eric Brown, Andrew Preston, Kennealy Roberts, Jean Lamer and Roy Reynolds, and (of course) our AMAZING interns, Anna Grayson, Bailey Hobbs, and Caleb Fouts.

What a wonderful season of music and worship!

Genny Jenkins



Sarah Chaney
Bell Director

A Message from the Creation Care Team

Kentucky author and conservationist Wendell Berry wrote: "The primary motive for good care and good use (of creation) is always going to be affection, because affection involves us entirely...."

Each month the Creation Care Team will offer suggestions about involving us entirely in developing our affection for the Earth. This month we have two suggestions:

1. **Count the number of single-use plastic items you use this week.** Conduct a waste audit in your home and at work to determine which products are made from plastic. From there, identify what you might be able to swap for more durable, reusable alternatives. According to the Earth Policy Institute, each year, 17 million barrels of crude oil are extracted to manufacture the plastic water bottles used in the U.S. alone. In addition to fossil fuel consumption, creating plastic bottles can take twice as much water than just refilling a reusable bottle. (From REI Stewardship campaign)

Peace and Joy,
FCC Creation Care Team

2. Opportunities for Hikes & Promote Creation Care

Tuesday Trail Maintenance

Lucy Pryor frequently gets a group of volunteers to go out on Sheltoewe Trail on Tuesdays. These trail maintenance projects include weed-whacking, lopping, pulling weeds and brier, and trimming trees. The projects are in the Cave Run Lake area. Tools will be provided. The primary motive for good care and good use is always going to be affection, because affection involves us entirely....but bring a pair of work gloves if you can. If you are interested in joining Lucy on Tuesdays, please email her at laspryor@gmail.com.



First Saturday Trail Maintenance

The Cave Run Lake Chapter of Sheltoewe Trace works the first Saturday of each month on the Trace. Volunteers are welcome, regardless of experience. Tools are provided. All volunteers are required to sign a release before working and attend the on-site safety briefing. laspryor@gmail.com.

New Year's Day Hikes (3)

The Sheltoewe Trace Association and the local chapter are offering several options for New Year's Day hikes. You can see all the options and sign up at [this link](#). (link info below) All hikes are free of charge and will start at 9am. As noted in the descriptions, we will be observing COVID-19 precautions, including social distancing and mask-wearing when gathered in a group.

All starting from the same location, Rodburn Hollow Park in Morehead.

Option 1 - walk an easy 1-mile loop located entirely in the park, to enjoy the outdoors and the company of fellow hikers.

Option 2 - hike up the ridge from the park to the Sheltoewe Trace. We will turn around at a viewpoint on the Trace and hike back to the park. About 3.5-4 miles total.

Option 3 - hike up the ridge to the Sheltoewe and then take the Sheltoewe all the way back to Morehead State University at Eagle Lake and the Recreation and Wellness Center. About 6.5 miles. Hikers who take this option will need to arrange their own rides home or back to their cars at Rodburn Park.

Weather decisions (go or no go) will be made no later than 6 hours before a hike is to begin. Please lock your car, take your keys, leave nothing in the open. Carry some water, a snack. Perfect opportunity to get some practice with a full pack if you wish. **Link to sign up:** <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ehgxu24o401d90f2&oseq=&c=&ch=>



Dear Friends,
I am so very grateful for the multitude of kindnesses so many of you showed me this past month. A December birthday is often overlooked, but you all made my birthday so very special with cards, well wishes, yummy treats, and beautiful flowers.

My first Christmas back in Kentucky has been one filled with blessings. I am deeply touched by the many ways in which you have made me feel welcome. Thank you so very much for your generous gifts and for allowing me to share in your lives.

In gratitude,
Pastor Nancy

Dear First Christian, On behalf of the MSU-Health Clinic, I wanted to send a sincere Thank You to the congregation for the donations to the University students spending time in isolation or quarantine due to COVID19. The donations will go directly to the students who face the need for these essential items. The donations also provide much needed support to the staff of the COVID team who can use these items to help fill the needs of students. Your love and generosity has been such a boost. Thank you.

Goldie Williams

Dear Pastor Nancy, Thank you for the thoughtful donations that your church provided for MSU students impacted by COVID19. Many of our students who were directly impacted by this virus were unable to isolate or quarantine at home, so the addition of your donations went a long way in helping to provide them comfort and care. The strength and cooperation of our community is demonstrated by your organization's compassion.

Sincerely,
Max Ammons-Asst VP/Dean of Students

Address Change

Mary Claire, Ellie, and Don Williams have moved. Their new address is 55 Sugar Camp Lane, Morehead, KY 40351



Thank you to Pastor Nancy for designing the Christmas Outreach card which was inserted into each family's gifts and food.



Blast from the Past: Heritage Sunday 1982
Minister: Rev. Roy Roberson

New Year's Happiness is Our Wish for All.

January Birthdays

- 4- Jane Holbrook
- 11- Miles Paschall
- 14- Jean Battson
- 21- Dewayne Carter
- 23- Mark Etherton
- 24- Holly Pollock
- 25- Tommy Griffith
- 27- Ginny Etherton
- 27- Riley Pack



Public Parking at FCC

The Board of Directors has approved 4 parking spaces for public use.



Jan-July \$125
Aug-Dec \$125

For more information, please contact the office (606) 784-4836 or fccmky@gmail.com.

Note this will not affect anyone who holds a parking permit.

Opportunities for Connection

Women of the Bible Study
via Zoom

Tuesdays 7pm—7:30pm

Contact Sarah Chaney by email sarah.chaney78@yahoo.com or call (606) 207-2421 for an invitation.



VESPERS via Zoom

A time of song & prayer

Thursdays 7pm

Message the office for a Zoom invitation. Vespers includes music, prayer, and meditation on artwork revealing God's word. Communion is a part of the service, so have some bread or cookie, water or liquid, if you would like to partake.



New Committee Chairs
Invite Congregation

The Evangelism Committee works to maintain connections and an evangelistic spirit within the congregation, Contact Mary Claire Williams @ (606) 776-8430 or mc.williams@moreheadstate.edu.

Creation Care Committee strives to protect God's Creation. Contact Mark Etherton at 606-776-1745 or ginn1@windstream.net.

Mack Fund
(Techology)

In memory of

Delphia Lambert Osborne
(Rev. Vicki Ray's mother)

Marguerite Lambert,
(Rev. Vicki Ray's uncle's wife)

Tracey Williams

by

Fran Helphinstine & Rob Sloss



In memory of

Catherine Rogers

by

Barbara A. Poulson
Ann and Edward Scott



A

Donation

by

Anne Buckner



In memory of

Jack Landreth

Steve Etherton

by

Ann and Edward Scott



General Fund

In memory of

Margaret (Muff) Penix Scott

Robert B. Scott

Mrs. Ethyl Fisher Peratt &
Mrs. Charles O. Peratt

Frances Peratt Garrison

Warren M Garrison

Ann Rogers Garrison
Greenleaf

by

Warren M. Garrison Jr.

Donations

Thanksgiving Outreach

Carmen & Phillip Swim

Fran Helphinstine & Rob Sloss

Ginny & Mark Etherton

David Perkins

Molly & Leon Smothers

Mary Claire Williams



Dinner for MSU Womens' Basketball Team Wrapping Presents

Sarah & Rex Chaney



Christmas Outreach

Carmen & Phillip Swim

Marge & Dan Thomas

Ginny & Mark Etherton

David Perkins

Molly & Leon Smothers

Emma Lou & Jim Gross

Di & Ron Walke

Jane Holbrook

Sarah & Rex Chaney

Yvonne Baldwin

Fran Helphinstine & Rob Sloss

Brent Rogers

Gail & Charles Tingle

Alana Scott

Lisa Sergent & Timothy James

Lucy & Bob Pryor

Ann & Edward Scott

December Treasurer's Report

Income is \$\$6,446.80.

Expenses are \$8,526.54.

**As the body without
the spirt is dead, so faith
without deeds is dead.**

James 2:26

FCC OUTREACH MAKING A DIFFERENCE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Jeff and Ronetta Brown
Outreach Co-chairs

We are wrapping up the busiest time of the year for our Outreach Committee. With the help of our youth and your donations, we provided 10 Thanksgiving Baskets to families in our area. Paul Semisch and the folks at Gateway Homeless Coalition expressed their deepest gratitude for the baskets and were excited to get them delivered to families in need.

Our Christmas Project was a huge success, thanks to donations from our congregation and friends of FCC! We raised \$6,810 for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Through discounts from local businesses and holiday sales online, we were able to purchase coats/jackets, shoes, pajamas, pants, tops, socks, underwear, gloves, and hats for 40 Rowan County children, as well as hygiene and household supplies for the 11 families. All of these children received toys/gifts from individual members of our congregation, and we were able to provide them with a huge box of food, also purchased by individuals from our congregation and friends of FCC. We expected our expenses to be greater than in the past because we were shopping for 8 additional children this year; however, we were able to come in under \$5,000. The Outreach

Committee met digitally, and we determined that the surplus in donations would best be used to purchase Kroger gift cards for each of the 11 families. Food insecurity is a huge need at this time, as you may have heard in the news, and we discussed how difficult it may be for these families to provide food in the month after Christmas. Because our congregation and friends were so generous this year and needs are so great **this year**, we voted, overwhelmingly, to extend our help to these 11 families with gift cards to purchase food. Each of our 6 large families received a \$150.00 Kroger card, and the 5 smaller families each were given a \$100 Kroger card. This leaves us a balance of approximately \$472 to be applied to next year's Christmas or used in the coming months as needs arise in our community.

We communicated directly with each family on behalf of the church, and each one expressed overwhelming gratitude. I would like to share with you just a few of their sentiments:

- ~One mother said, "If it hadn't been for all of your help, I don't know what we would have done this Christmas!"*
- ~A grandmother, who is raising three grandchildren, and has been waiting on a check since April, asked me to pass on her blessings and gratitude to everyone who donated. "God bless you ALL," she said.*
- ~A mother of a very large family said she did not expect so much, and was truly thankful for all our help.*
- ~One gentleman, who is raising his two grandchildren, was nearly moved to tears as he told us that he had never accepted help before, and he wasn't used to this, but he was "SO thankful for it" this year.*
- ~Another parent/grandparent said, "Everything you all did saved us this Christmas!"*

We believe your help and donations through our church's Outreach *truly* made a difference in the lives of these 11 families this Christmas! Thank you so much, once again, to everyone who donated, purchased items, wrapped gifts, delivered gifts, and helped in any way. This was definitely a "whole group" effort, and your generosity of time and resources made it a huge success!

In addition to the 11 Rowan County families we helped, we also provided food baskets, household items, hygiene items, blankets and gloves to 10 elderly couples in our area. Many of these elderly folks are struggling with food insecurity, and do not have anyone who can help them get what they need. Our friends who deliver these items for us shared that last year, one of the elderly gentlemen said to his wife, upon receiving our donations, "Now we have something to eat." The needs are great in our area and in our community, and your continued support of FCC Outreach makes it possible for us to assist those who need it most.







We will resume our basket donations to the Gateway Homeless Coalition beginning in February. These baskets provide items for families who are transitioning from homelessness to living in their own place. These "starter" baskets include such items as dishes, silverware, cookware, bedding, linens, etc. We provide one basket each month from February through October. If you are interested in signing up to assist with this project, a Sign-up Genius will be set up early in January, and we will send out a link for that in the weekly eBlast/Staying in Touch emails.

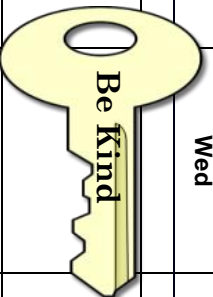
Again, thank you for your continued support of FCC Outreach! May God richly bless you and your family in the coming year!

Sincerely, Ronetta and Jeff Brown—Outreach Committee Co-chairs

First Christian January 2021

Outreach pictures frame our calendar this month. Thanks to all who contributed, shopped, wrapped, delivered!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30-1pm	Worship Services are live streamed on Facebook.					
December 27 Rev. Nancy Gowler 10:45 Worship Service via Facebook/YouTube		29 Women of the Bible via Zoom 7m Email sarah.chaney78@ yahoo.com to join.	30 <i>Give. Giving time, energy, ideas...for someone, is something good.</i>	31 New Year's Eve No Vespers Service	January 1 New Year's Day Office closed.	2
3 Epiphany Rev. Nancy Gowler 10:45 Worship Service 7pm Film Festival via Zoom	4	5 Women of the Bible via Zoom 7pm. Email sarah. chaney78@yahoo. com to join.	6 <i>Forgive and forget. Forgiving yourself and then the others, allows you to live more freely.</i>	7 Vespers Service via Zoom 7pm. Email fcomky@gmail.com	8 Office closed.	
10 Rev. Nancy Gowler 10:45 Worship Service via Facebook/YouTube		12 Women of the Bible via Zoom 7pm Email sarah.chaney 78@yahoo.com.	13 <i>Gratitude. Know how to thank and express thanks.</i>	14 Vespers Service via Zoom 7pm. Email fcomky@gmail.com	15 Office closed.	16
17 Rev. Nancy Gowler 10:45 Worship Service via Facebook/YouTube	18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Office closed.	19 Women of the Bible via Zoom 7pm. Email sarah.chaney78@ yahoo.com to join.	20 <i>Taking care of yourself, get- ting out and eat- ing well. Your body and mind are connected.</i>	21 Vespers Service via Zoom 7pm. Email fcomky@gmail. com	22 Office closed.	23 
24 Rev. Nancy Gowler 10:45 Worship Service Newsletter articles due.		26 Women of the Bible via Zoom 7pm. Email sarah. chaney78@yahoo.com	27 <i>Be a believer in your dreams. Have a purpose in life.</i>	28 Vespers Ser- vice via Zoom 7pm. Email fcomky@gmail.com	29 Office closed.	30 
31 Rev. Nancy 10:45 Service / 5th Sunday Offering for Christian Care						



First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Rev. Nancy Gowler, Minister

Genny Jenkins, Choir

Jiyeon McGillicuddy,

Keyboardist

Sarah Chaney, Bells

Makayla Reynolds, Nursery

Open, Youth

Barbara Marsh, Secretary

227 East Main Street

Morehead, KY 40351

606-784-4836

Monday-Thursday 8:30-1pm

Email: fccmky@gmail.com

Website: www.fccmorehead.org



www.facebook.com/fccmorehead

Join us for livestream
Sunday Worship Service @
10:45am



www.flickr.com/photos/139711677@N02/



www.instagram.com/fccmorehead/

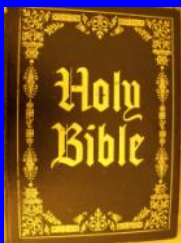
www.youtube.com/user/TheInterper



www.twitter.com/fccmorehead



Bible Lectionary Readings for the Month



Jan 3—John 1 (1-9), 10-18

Jan 10—Mark 1:4-11

Jan 17—John 1:43-51

Jan 24—Mark 1:14-20

Jan 31—Mark 1:21-28

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-First Phase Visual & Audio Upgrade

Star Words for Epiphany

RETHINKING A TRADITION

It is a prayer practice in churches all over the world to give people a star word on this Epiphany Sunday. There are many reasons behind this tradition.

First, we know that the Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus. Secondly, we trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us.

Star words are one such lens that might provide us with a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight. Finally, we know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. However, this prayer practice invites a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful new way to connect with God.

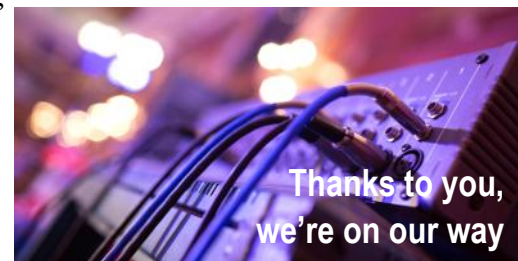
If we were gathering in person, we would have the opportunity to pick out a star word for ourselves. This year we have numbered our star words from 1 to 150. If you would like a star word this year, choose a number between 1 and 150 and contact the church office or message us on Facebook with your chosen number. We'll give you the word you've chosen. Printed star words will be available for pick up or mailing after January 3.

Holy One,
Like the Magi, we are seeking you.
Like the Magi, we are looking up.
Like the Magi, we just need a sign.
Guide our feet. Show up in the
mundane and the extraordinary.
Be in the stars in the sky and in our
everyday lives.

We are hopeful, O God. We are
hopeful.

Amen.

*Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are |
A Sanctified Art LLC
sanctifiedart.org.*



First Phase of Upgrade Begins

VIDEO & AUDIO FOR A NEW GENERATION

Thank you for your support! The House of Worship Technologies, Lexington, will begin installation of the new system and train a team to operate the equipment. We are so excited to be able to begin phase one and appreciate each of you who have supported the new upgrade.