

The CHRISTIAN

 FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH *(Disciples of Christ)* *Visitor*

This Week in Tanzania:

Your Week of Compassion Donation Rescues Burundians

Many of the nearly 240,000 Burundian men, women and children fleeing violence in their home country during the past year have found temporary security in Tanzanian refugee camps. They share the space with displaced Congolese. There the Week of Compassion (WOC) is currently working with Church World Service to house 200 new arrivals each day in rows of plastic-roofed shelters. Provision of water, sanitation, housing, and counseling restores dignity to those who were forced out of their country by political conflict and election-related violence.

With Syrian Refugees in 2015 and 2016: Your Week of Compassion gifts meet them in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States.

Since November 15, Week of Compassion projects have helped a significant number of Syrian refugees on their traumatic travel through Serbia and Hungary into central and northern Europe – and, of course, a lesser number resettling here in the USA. Continuing work in camps for the displaced within Syria is not enough. The exodus continues through Lebanon and Egypt and dangerous waters off Greece.

Cooperation with ACT Alliance in Europe and Church World Service worldwide grounds aid work in the communities of need. It also keeps administrative costs for WOC at a commendable 6-8%.

Within the United States last year, the WOC responded quickly to tornado, fire, flood and storm damage, and with water for Flint, Michigan.

Each year First Christian Church members share in the range of \$2,000 in gifts for this relief, refugee and development mission of our church.

Please give to the Week of Compassion Special Offering, February 21-28

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PASTOR'S PEN

When my doctor told me that my bones were continuing to deteriorate at a relatively rapid rate, I knew that if I didn't begin to take immediate action, my risk of fracture in 10 years would be such that I wouldn't be able to do the things I was looking forward to, like pick up my future grandchildren! So, I began working with a personal trainer—twice a week—who designs a sustainable exercise programs for me. The fact that I pay good money to work with this trainer gives me added incentive to get up a bit earlier twice a week for my 7 am appointments! I am logging my progress, finding satisfaction in seeing incremental improvements to my health.

What if someone told you that your spiritual life is continuing to deteriorate due to lack of discipline and action? What would you do? The season of Lent—which calls us to “return to God”—is a good time to take inventory of your own spiritual life and make some sustainable changes that will have long range and positive effects in your life *and in the world!* In addition to participating in the act of worship on Sunday morning, I recommend that you add one or two intentional 10 minute prayer sessions each week, using your alarm to remind you. Another option would be to join one of our small groups. Connie Myers

will help you find just the right one for you, or you can peruse our brand new descriptive brochure, found in the pews and also posted at www.fccbloomington.org, at the “Learn” page, which falls under the main drop-down menu titled “Engage.” A third option would be to serve. I recommend that you speak with Mark Knowles about this option. He will listen deeply and help you find a way to serve that is both sustainable and life giving. A fourth option would be to make an appointment with me. I am more than happy to help you find a way to deepen and strengthen your spiritual life for this season of Lent, as well as for the rest of your life.

Two more things: First, this Sunday, we begin our new Lenten Worship series, titled *The Way* (details on the next page). Second, so far, almost 50 people have registered for our all-church retreat/symposium that will take place Feb 20 -21. If you have not yet registered for this important event, please call the church office no later than Tuesday, February 16. We don't want to leave anyone out! Finally, remember that on Feb 21, we will have one service of worship at 10:00 am, when the Rev. Sue Shadburne Call will preach.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Helen



Many of the lectionary readings for this season of Lent have references to “making a way.” Inspired by scripture passages that talk about the journeys, roads, pilgrimages, and pathways of life, we will make our “way” together through this poignant season.

Feb. 14 The Wandering Way

Scripture: Dramatic interpretation of *Luke 4:1-2*

Music: *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me* (African-American Spiritual)

Feb. 21 The Way Around

ONE SERVICE AT 10:00 AM, with guest preacher Sue Shadburne Call

Scripture: *Luke 13:31-34*

Music: From *Elijah* by Felix Mendelssohn

Feb. 28 The High Way

Scripture: *Isaiah 55:1-9*

Music: *Teach me thy Way, O Lord* by Aaron J. Kernis

Mar. 6 The Way Home

Scripture: Dramatic interpretation of *Luke 15:11b-32*

Music: *The Road Home*, Appalachian hymn tune adapted by Stephen Paulus
Children’s *Make a Joyful Noise* presentation

Mar. 13 The Free Way

Scripture: *Isaiah 43:16-19, Philippians 3:13-14*

Music: Gospel Selections: *Walk Together Children*, African American Spiritual arr. Raymond Wise, led by choral scholar Marquese Carter, & *Were You There*, arr. Harry T. Burleigh

Mar. 20 The Other Way

Scripture: *Luke 19:28-40*

Music: *King of Heaven, Be Thou Welcome*, Cantata no. 182 by J.S. Bach

Mar. 24 The Way of the Cross

Maundy Thursday *Tenebrae Service*

Music: “Via Crucis” (The Way of the Cross) by Franz Liszt

Mar. 25 The Way of Suffering

Good Friday *Community Good Friday Services will be at First United Methodist Church. Pastor Helen will preach.*

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF SERVICE, TAKE 5

By Mark Errett Knowles, Director of Outreach & Service Ministries

Santos was murdered Friday night. His murder was a shock, certainly, but no surprise. Not in a country that has the highest (non-warring) murder rate in the world—the highest murder rate of any country in the past twenty years, in fact. Not in light of the fact that Santos was never one to back down from anyone, even when he maybe should have. Not in a place where organized crime runs things, where the only thing gang members view as more insignificant than human life is human death.

He was the leader of the community development organization in the small Salvadoran community of Canoas where I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer, and my working counterpart while there. Santos spent his life struggling—*luchando*—to make Canoas a better community. He could have just as easily been killed by the paramilitary forces he was denouncing and working against over a quarter century ago during the war as by gang members he was denouncing and working against in a nearby town in 2016. And though you're not supposed to say anything bad about someone who has just died, he openly admitted he had his fair share of enemies for more personal reasons, too, as well as for organizational

and political reasons. In El Salvador any of these things can get you killed.

But while he could be a challenging and morally ambivalent figure, I don't know that I've met a person who worked more tirelessly to make his community and world a better place. Sometimes he succeeded in that, sometimes he got in his own way, and sometimes the poverty and violence of his place seemed to triumph. It certainly seemed to on Friday night, just as it has during the past year and larger history of El Salvador.

Mainly I think of his family, who offered me some of the greatest hospitality and friendship I've ever known. They may be his real legacy. But his death, his murder, is also a legacy. He is a modern-day martyr. (And I'm sure he would have appreciated that. In spite of his name, Santos was no saint—a pun which he appreciated, and a fact which he owned—but he did have a very real faith, in his own way. He would have wanted his death to count for something, much as he wanted his life to.) He is, sadly, one more martyr in a violent world, one person of many caught in the violence that we somewhat understandably try to insulate ourselves from. But that doesn't stop the violence.

I obviously do not know how to address that violence, whether in terms of practical action or emotional reconciling. You would think that a faith that started in martyrdom, that has had millennia of martyrs continuing to this day, would be able to make sense of these things for us. But honestly I can't find clarity of meaning in Santos' death as much as I can in his life. He lived in service: not perfectly, but fully; not entirely selflessly, but entirely committedly. For this column I originally had written something pointing towards asset based community development as a

way to do Christian service. But something about Santos' story seemed to trump that. Or maybe not trump it, but embody it. What greater asset does someone have than their life? And who do I know that worked more fearlessly in community development than Santos? Christendom is full of people who lived life in service, some of whom died in that service. What better way is there to honor those lives of service than to continue in it? What better way to give significance to life that others treat as insignificant? What better way to live?

PREACHING FROM THE CHOIR: *HEARING GREAT MUSIC DURING LENT*

by Jan Harrington, Director of Music

We in Bloomington are fortunate to live in a city where hearing great music live is available to us nearly every week. As we enter Lent, there are some wonderful opportunities to experience some incredible sacred masterworks in performance that can enhance our spiritual lives during this season.

Mozart's Immortal Requiem, K. 626

When: Saturday, February 20, 7:30 pm

Where: The Buskirk-Chumley Theater
The Bloomington Chamber Singers and
Orchestra

On February 20, The Bloomington
Chamber Singers, conducted by Gerald

Sousa, will perform the last, and possibly greatest choral work by the immortal Mozart. Famously, Mozart died before completing the work; his pen stops poignantly, sadly, after the first few measures of the *Lacrimosa*, and then there is only silence. It fell to one of Mozart's students, Franz Süssmayr, to fill out the rest of the work from the master's sketches. And yet it stands today as one of the most significant and moving testaments of faith in Western culture. Attending this performance would be a perfect way to end the day after our first Symposium Session: *Strength for Today; Hope for Tomorrow*, which

Continued next page...

ends at 5:30! For more information about the piece and tickets, you can go on the Bloomington Chamber Singers website: www.chambersingers.info.

**Handel's Iconic Oratorio:
Messiah (complete)**

When: Sunday, March 6, 3:00 pm

Where: IU Musical Arts Center

Admission: FREE

The Handel Project IU Choir and Orchestra, Betsy Burleigh, conductor

Even those who don't know much about classical music have undoubtedly heard the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah*. We all think of Handel's beloved *Messiah* as THE "Christmas Piece" because we can hear Part 1 of it sung in many places every Christmas. But, in fact, it is not a Christmas piece at all. Rather than telling a dramatic story about Jesus in the manner of an opera, *Messiah* is an intensely spiritual musical essay on the revelation of the Messiah to humankind. Librettist Charles Jennens, who was a close friend and collaborator with Handel, used the biblical accounts and prophecies surrounding Jesus for *Messiah's* texts. Jennens described his work as "a meditation of our Lord as Messiah in Christian thought and belief." But only the first third of the work (the part we hear at Christmas) was about the birth of Jesus. The second and third parts cover the ministry of Jesus, his death, and

resurrection. As such, the work was originally conceived as a work for Easter and was premiered in the spring during the Lenten season in 1742 in Dublin. I hope you will take the opportunity to hear *Messiah* in its entirety as part of your Lenten spiritual journey.

**THE GREAT J.S. BACH'S ONLY
CANTATA FOR PALM SUNDAY**

When: Palm Sunday, Mar. 20

8:30 & 11:00 am

Where: First Christian Church

The FCC Sanctuary Choir with Baroque Orchestra

When Bach was very young, he composed his only cantata to be sung for Palm Sunday – *Himmelskönig sei willkommen, (King of Heaven, be thou welcome) BWV 182*. This lovely and charming cantata will be the centerpiece of our Palm Sunday service at FCC this year. It depicts with humble simplicity the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem and then guides our meditation with the invocation to allow Jesus to enter as *Messiah* into our hearts and admonishes us to follow Him through times of joy and sorrow, grateful for the sacrifice he made to bring us salvation.

I hope that we will all take the opportunity to avail ourselves of the rare opportunity to experience the spiritually uplifting experience of hearing these masterworks performed this Lenten season.

Early Morning Yoga Sessions with Habitat for Humanity Staff

Are you an early riser, and would you enjoy starting your day with a gentle yoga session? The staff of Habitat for Humanity will have a yoga session once per month in our Chapel/Gathering Space, led by a yoga instructor who is also one of their very active volunteers. They have graciously extended to our congregation an invitation to participate. The next sessions are **Friday, February 22 and Friday, March 19**. Both sessions are **7:45 to 8:15 am**. If you plan to participate, bring your own mat, and please be punctual.

Homebound Hugs this Sunday

Many thanks to Sue Cull, who has been continuing to create beautiful greeting cards while she is away in Florida. She has mailed us a large collection, and they will be available on Sunday in the Chapel/Gathering Space for you to write a note to one of our homebound members, or to those needing prayers and encouragement. Address labels and envelopes will be provided. Our members *love* receiving these cards, so please take a moment to write one this Sunday.

In Our Prayers

Please keep **Rachel Rosolina** in your prayers as she recovers from an emergency appendectomy. Cards and notes of encouragement can be sent to her at 2004 Grovesnor Pl., Bloomington, 407401.

Maxine Dillard had gall bladder surgery and would greatly appreciate your prayers and notes. Her address is 3211 E. Moores Pike, #226, Bloomington, 47401.

Our prayer ministry team is praying daily for these, as well as others who have been uplifted through requests made on our Sunday prayer request cards.

STRENGTH
for today
Hope
for tomorrow

ALL-CHURCH
SYMPOSIUM

February 20 (All-day)
February 21 (Half-Day)

Call 812-332-4459 to register by
no later than February 16.

An Invitation to the Habitat for Humanity Women Build

Dear First Christian women,

Are you ready to help local families build their future? If you see God in service and outreach, consider joining other local women in the annual Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County Women Build. The fifteenth annual Women's Build will take place April 30 to May 14; two families will receive new homes.

Please note:

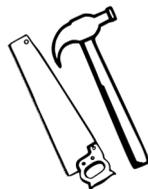
- No building experience is necessary. Experienced builders will be on-site to assist, and Habitat will host a series of home-building classes in the weeks leading up to the build.
- Builders must commit to fundraising \$250 each and volunteering for a one-day, eight-hour shift.
- You will work alongside the future homeowners and other community members.
- The funds raised during Women Build sponsor the land, infrastructure, and materials needed for the homes, as well as the homeowner-education training each family is required to complete before moving in.

If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Ashante Thomas (ashantethomas@ymail.com) or Danielle Murry-Knowles (danielle.murry@gmail.com) by Friday, February 26 with the dates you're interested in building.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."
-1 Peter 4:10

Peace,

Ashante Thomas and Danielle Murry-Knowles



For the latest newsletter, upcoming church events, or to give a financial gift online, visit our website: www.fccbloomington.org



UPCOMING EVENTS...

Feb. 14, 5:30 to 7:30 pm

Family Game Night

Feb. 15, 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Emerging Church Class

Feb. 17, 7:00 pm

Men's Book Group

Feb. 18, 12:00 to 1:00 pm

Pray, Paint, Ponder

Feb. 18, 4:00 pm

Book Bunch

Feb. 18, 5:00 to 6:00 pm

*Make a Joyful Noise children's
music session*

Feb. 18, 5:30 to 6:15 pm

Handbell Rehearsal

Feb. 18, 6:15 to 7:45 pm

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Feb. 19, 7:45 to 8:15 am

Yoga with Habitat staff

Feb. 19, 5:30 to 6:30 pm

Listening to God

Feb. 20, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

*Hope Partnership Retreat,
Bedford First Christian Church*

Feb. 20, 11:30 to 4:30 pm

*Hope Partnership Retreat,
Bloomington First Christian
Church*

A Note of Thanks

I would like to thank all of you who sent cards and prayers for my surgery. I wound up with 18 stitches and 10 staples. Now I have something in common with Peyton Manning. It looks as if it will be a journey for the recovery.

-Dan Goins

Men's Book Group Meets

February 17

The Men's Book Group will meet on Wednesday, February 17, at 7 p.m. in the Fireside Study to discuss this month's selection— *Blue Highways* by William Least Heat-Moon.



**MCUM
Challenge**

Most recent trip: 80 pounds

Year-to-date: 236 lbs

**February Items Wanted:
Canned & Dried Fruit**

*Thank you for showing how
much you care.*

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(Disciples of Christ)
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The Christian Visitor

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Coffee Fellowship Treat Schedule



*Don't Forget to Bring
Goodies!*

**Feb. 14: Emmaus Interpreters
Class**

Feb. 21: Listening to God

Feb. 28: Choir & Handbells

**Scripture Readings
for Sunday Worship**

February 14

Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Romans 10:8b-13
Luke 4:1-13

February 21

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17-4:1
Luke 13:31-35

February 28

Isaiah 55:1-9
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9