



FEDERATED NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING events

- ♦ Children's Christmas Celebration, Dec. 3rd & 6th
 - ♦ **Blue Christmas**, Dec 10th & 13th
 - ♦ Lessons & Carols, Dec. 17th & 20th
 - ♦ **Blue Christmas Ecumenical** Vigil, Dec. 21st
- ♦ Christmas Eve, Dec 24th 5pm & 8pm services
 - ♦ Christmas Day, Dec 25th - *Office Closed*
- ♦ Annual Christmas Dinner, Dec. 25th - **CANCELLED**
- ♦ New Year's Eve - *Last 2020 deposit before Noon,
No Thursday evening service*
 - ♦ New Year's Day, *Office Closed*

Just a quick reminder: the end of 2020 is fast approaching!

The annual reports from the committees are going to be due sooner than you know!

Please email your reports to Chrissy by December 4th!

If you have articles, events or other information you would like included in the newsletter, you can email it to fcstaff@federatedcolumbus.org. The deadline for submitting information for Newsletters is the 20th of the prior month, e.g. January 2021 deadline will be December 20th, 2020.

December
2020
Volume 54
Issue 12

From the Pastor's Desk

It is hard to believe that it has been over eight months since the coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted our ministry. In one sense, it does not feel like that long ago when we initially canceled our in-person on March 15th. In another sense, it feels like this pandemic has been dragging on for too long – we all want this to be over with.

I have felt a similar ambivalence in relation to ministry for these pandemic months. On one hand, things don't seem that different from before. I have my regular meetings: whether it is weekly Bible studies, staff meeting, and worship services or monthly committee meetings. There are also events that happen on an irregular basis: for example, baptisms, weddings and funerals. These sacred moments happen with varying amounts of preparation. Weddings are prepared in months, baptisms in weeks and funerals in days. While it seems there have been too many deaths in recent months, it is hard to say there have been many more funerals than previous years (This is NOT to say that the pandemic is a hoax. There have been at least two deaths within our congregation related to COVID19, although they may not have been included in the current national count of over 250,000). The point I am trying to make is that ministry has continued during the past eight months.

Yet, ministry has not been the same. It is hard to say what is really different about ministry during this pandemic. Of course, the way we do certain things is noticeably different. For example, our in-person worship services have been modified for safety. We have added mask-wearing, hand-sanitizing and social distancing. As a precaution, we have removed service bulletins, pew Bibles, hymnals and friendship folders. We are still not singing during our worship service nor having coffee fellowship or potlucks after worship. These changes do not explain why ministry feels so different. It seems like they are related to the effects rather than the causes. What is at the root of why things feel so different in ministry?

Maybe it is the feeling of being disconnected from others? I recognized increasing levels of fatigue when we were only pre-recording our worship services. It was tiring to preach to an empty sanctuary. I was thankful when our Governing Council approved to re-open our in-person worship services (July 9th & 12th). It has been helpful to see faces (albeit partially covered) in our sanctuary. (continued on page 3)

*For where two or three
are gathering in my
name, I am there
among them."*

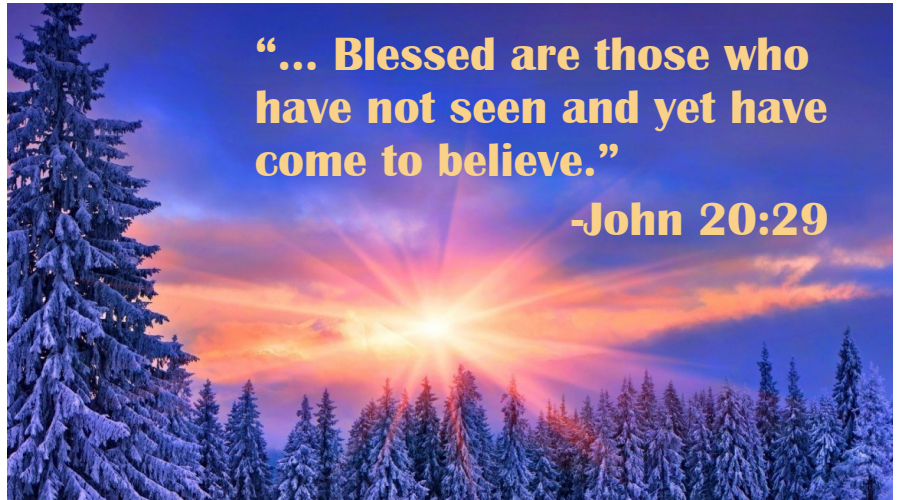
–Matthew 18:20



This has led me to wrongly think that we are connected by a building (that is, by being in the same space). I am reminded that our faith is in God who is invisible. Just as I cannot see the One behind all that is good, loving, beautiful and true in life, I cannot see all the saints I am connected with. It has been immaturity on my part to seek sight over faith. This awareness has helped me to better appreciate those who have participated in our worship services remotely due to concerns for safety of self and others. It is also preparing me for the real possibility of closing our in-person services again – if needed.

Maybe it is the feeling of not knowing? In some ways, it is not knowing what things will be like

in the upcoming weeks and months. This upcoming season of Advent will be different from years past, and I am not sure how well things will work out with our new plans. I also wonder if/when we will return to certain worship activities like singing and handshakes for passing the peace. Yet, uncertainty about the future is nothing new; it has been a constant in life.



Maybe it is the feeling of not knowing how you all are doing? For those who attend our in-person worship services, post comments on our Facebook live streaming, stop by the church office on occasion, or contact via phone/email, I appreciate getting to know even just slightly how you have been getting through this time. Yet, for many others, I am sorry that I do not know how you are doing. I will try to do a better job of reaching out. At the same time, I ask that you share and let us know how things have been going for you.

Hopefully, our church can make a difference during this time of safe-distancing. While we may feel separated (and maybe even isolated), we are united in Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit. Please let us know if there is any way we can help and, at the very least, as to how you are doing.

Grace and peace,
Edward

Oh, Come All Ye Faithful - Joyful and Triumphant

Merry Christmas! At the time of this writing, it is a beautiful sunny day, with temperatures in the 60's. I am listening to Christmas music to convince myself that it is actually the beginning of Advent. I can't help but wonder, what will Christmas 2020 look like? We long for the Christmas celebrations and traditions of the past, but are concerned about the increasing spread of the COVID-19 virus in our community. Like the song says, all the faithful are called to come to Christ – joyfully and triumphantly! While it may not be safe, at this time, to come together in large celebrations, we can always come to Bethlehem in our hearts. We can behold Him and adore Him, in our hearts. We can sing in exultation in our hearts, our car, or our home – just not in our church 😊 Things may look a little different this Advent – but we can choose to come to Christ – joyfully and triumphantly.

Children & Youth Activity Calendar



12/3 and 12/6 - Virtual Children Christmas Program
Shown in Worship

12/16 - Youth Club Christmas Party 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Bring a \$5 Grab Bag Gift (For 7th – 12th Grade)

12/27 - No Education Hour

1/3 - No Education Hour

Fun ways to celebrate Advent during a pandemic

- ◇ Family Christmas movie nights
- ◇ Ding-Dong-Ditch friends/neighbors by leaving treats on doorstep
- ◇ Go all out with Christmas lights and decorations
- ◇ Make cards for health care workers, people in nursing homes
- ◇ Light Advent candles at home
- ◇ Include the whole family in cooking holiday meals
- ◇ Learn about Christmas traditions from around the world
- ◇ Make your own salt ornaments
- ◇ String popcorn garlands
- ◇ Matching Christmas Pajamas



Brenda Sand, Christian Education Director

Center for Survivors

The Center's needs often change due to shortages or surpluses of certain items.

Please call ahead if you have questions regarding needs, 402-564-2155.



At this time, the Center is in need and accepting donations for the following NEW personal hygiene products: shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, deodorant, makeup removing wipes, facial tissues, toilet paper, paper towels and men's deodorant.

We are not able to accept used donations at this time.

Meals on Wheels



Dec. 7-11 - Cec Bartholomew will coordinate 402-564-0264 or 402-276-8193. The need for volunteers continues.

A day or two or more is much appreciated by the coordinator to help fill 7 routes each of 5 days.

Pray that Federated can continue this service to our community.

Platte County Food Pantry

The Platte County Food Pantry, located at 3020 18th Street in Suite 13 (Old Hospital).

If you are in need of assistance, you can call at 402-563-4544.

Some easy suggestions are: Canned and boxed foods such as soup, macaroni and cheese, ramen noodles, pasta and pasta sauce, veggies and fruits; Staple food items: peanut butter, jelly, pancake syrup, crackers.

This is not an all inclusive list, any non-perishable food items are needed.



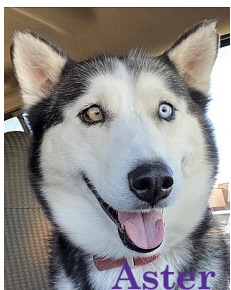
Paws & Claws Adoption Center



Paws & Claws Adoption Center (The Platte Valley Humane Society) is located at 2124 13th Street. The hours are Monday through Friday, Noon to 4:30pm, and Saturdays Noon to 3:30pm.

You can call 402-562-5683 to meet your future pet! Regular needs include: Clumping cat litter, Clorox, Pine Sol, Copy Paper, Dog & Cat Toys, Collars & Leashes, Paper Towel, Old Towels/Washcloths/Blankets, Gently Used Pet Supplies, Gift Cards from Grocery, Hardware and Farm Stores.

They have a number of animals available, including Aster, Snorlax, Bailey and Jolyne.



Finance at a Glance

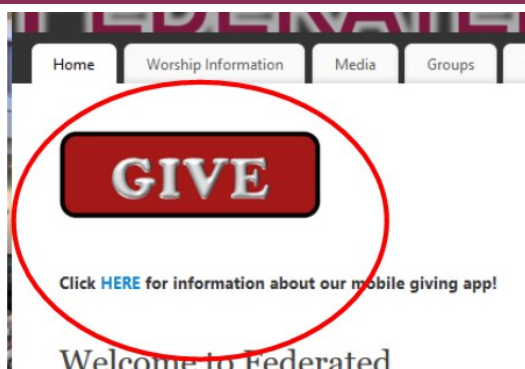
Income - October 2020		Expenses - October 2020	
Contributions, Etc.	\$28,876.09	Annual Budget Expenses:	\$23,804.72
Contributions	\$28,426.09	Utilities	\$1,458.43
Rent	\$450.00	Other Budgeted Expenses	\$22,346.29
Memorials	\$875.00	Designated Funds (Savings):	\$456.41
Unrestricted	\$850.00	Helping Hands - Members	\$296.49
Landscaping	\$25.00	Helping Hands-Non-Members	\$159.92
Designated Funds (Savings):	\$46,808.24	Memorial Fund:	\$89.90
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$1.34	Undesignated Memorials - Live Stream Upgrade	\$89.90
Habitat for Humanity	\$10.00		
Building Maintenance	\$46,346.90		
Operation Education Nairobi	\$450.00		
Interest Income:	\$5.94		
Memorial	\$0.00		
Checking	\$0.00		
Savings	\$5.94		

Stewardship 2021 Campaign Update

Our 2021 Stewardship Drive wraps up December 1. We are at 82 percent of our goal, so we are in need of a strong finish. If you have not done so already, please send your pledge/contribution card to the Church Office as soon as possible.

Thank you for everything you do for Federated Church.
Stewardship Committee

Easy Online Giving Options Available



Give online for a quick and easy way to contribute without leaving the sanctity of your home!

Three options are currently available:

- 1) Online Giving - press the "GIVE" button on the website
- 2) Mobile app - click the 'here' link underneath the "GIVE" button for instructions
- 3) ACH transfer - call Chrissy at the church office for information.



John Curry, Malynn Knoepfle-Slivoski, Brenda Sand	12/2	Randy Kaspar	12/13
Joan Specht	12/3	Nancy Hegi	12/14
Julie Graham	12/4	Stuart Gausman	12/16
Melanie Knoepfle	12/5	Cindy Hoadley	12/19
Ryland Prokopec, Lacey Ternus	12/6	Marv Zoucha, Kathy Leischner	12/20
Chris Warren	12/7	Rosie Heinisch	12/23
Charlotte Lambert	12/11	Elizabeth Miller, Barb Olson	12/29
Kay Castner	12/12		

Operation Education - Donuts for Dandora

Once again this year, we are making homemade BAKED donuts to help educate those children in poverty who would not otherwise be able to go to school. The donuts will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, December 6th. We will gladly accept a free will offering, or if you wish, just help yourself to a box as a thank you for your generous donations for the sack lunch we made in October. If you would like donuts but do not feel safe coming to church, just email Julie or Katie and we will happily deliver them to you.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

join us!

God is
with us.

— MATTHEW 1:23

THE PERFECT GIFT.



Social Concerns and Missions Committee

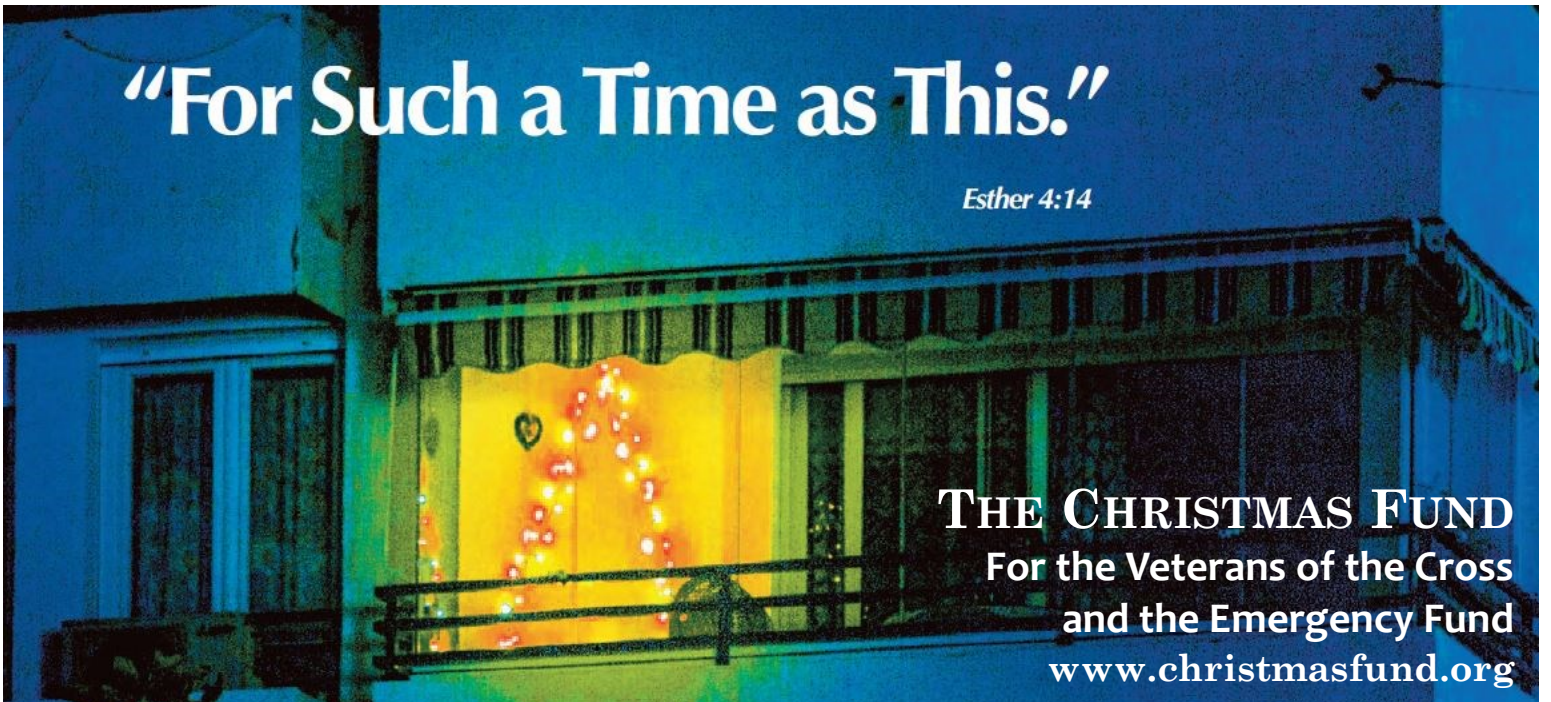
Social Concerns and Missions Committee will be holding an adult coat drive over the next several weeks. They are requesting gently used, recently cleaned adult coats which will be distributed by the Rescue Mission.

Also, SC&M has decided that our Alternative Christmas giving this year should be helping local charities, so the Alternative giving funds will go to the Columbus Food Pantry.

“For Such a Time as This.”

Esther 4:14

THE CHRISTMAS FUND
For the Veterans of the Cross
and the Emergency Fund
www.christmasfund.org



Mission Study Summary

The Mission Study Committee which was made up of Julie Graham, Steve Heinisch, John McClure, Dave Melick, Lisa Perrin, Ashli Porter, Doug Williams and Marv Zoucha met during the months of February through October. The Mission Study was completed in October and was accepted by both the Governing Council and the Presbyterian Homestead Presbytery Committee on Ministry. This Mission Study is needed in order to move forward in the process for a permanent pastoral staffing plan for our church.

The Mission Study team conducted a survey of the congregation to get members' feed back on what their needs, desires and expectations are for Federated Church. From the survey responses we were able to divide the responses up according to five common themes that the members desired and expected from Federated Church.

Those themes were:

- Spiritual Growth by providing Bible-based sermons, Bible Study groups and educational programs for all ages.
- Fellowship by providing fellowship groups/activities within the church and in the community, as well as building relationships and providing a safe, non-judgemental church family.
- Missions involvement for all ages in our church, community and the world, and encouraging community use of the church facilities.
- Community of Faith and Compassion can be provided by Federated Church by being welcoming, safe, inclusive, non-judgemental, and providing prayer, emotional support and a process of reconciliation.
- Worship which includes both traditional and contemporary music, provides opportunities for increased family involvement, is meaningful, and provides sermons which are applicable to our daily lives.

If you have any questions on the process used for the Mission Study or the results of the study, feel free to contact any of the committee members. If you would like to see the entire Mission Study document, please contact the church office and a copy of the Mission Study can be sent to you.

What's Next?

With the Mission Study Committee completing their work, the next phase (which has already started) is the Staff Planning Committee. The members of this committee, who include Doug Williams (Chair), Bob Arp, Deb Curry, Marcia Grant, Cola Hahn, Kathy Leischner, Tim Warren, Linda Wheatley and Marv Zoucha, agree their work should be finalized quickly. Once the staffing plan is done, the PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee) will be elected at the February 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting. If you are interested in serving on the PNC, please contact Marcia Grant or Tim Warren.

Bailey Sucher

Coloring Contest

Draw a picture of something you see in church. Give your finished project to Brenda or leave on your clipboard. Your art will be displayed in the Narthex for all to see.



Kriste Wolfe

welcom





Advent and Christmas POINSETTIAS

Please **order poinsettias** by December 8th.

Poinsettias are given to God's glory, and may also be designated as a memorial and/or given in honor of special persons.

	Quantity (\$9.00 ea.)	Total
No Color Preference		\$
Red		\$
White		\$
Pink		\$
Grand Total - due to church office by Dec. 8th		\$

Your Name(s) _____

To God's glory and in memory of _____

To God's glory and in honor of _____



***Please return this form and payment to church office
or in the white mailbox by the church office door by December 8.***

Thank you!

Make checks payable to Federated Church.

Please note '**Poinsettia**' on the memo line.

Plants purchased elsewhere are welcome. Please label it with your name if you wish to collect it after the service.

FEDERATED CHURCH
2704 15th STREET
PO Box 564
COLUMBUS, NE, 68602-0564

December 2020 Newsletter

December Communion Pick-Up and Curb-Side Delivery!

Communion elements will be available Wednesday, December 2nd through Friday, December 4th from the Narthex refrigerator by the church office.

We will be doing a 'curb-side delivery' each of those days if you prefer.

Call the church office when you are ready for your elements and we will bring them to you in the Northwest parking lot.

Communion will be available for the in-person services on December 3rd and 6th.

November Newsletter
Crossword Solution

