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PATHWAYS

JANUARY 2020

*You show me the path of life. In
your presence there is fullness of joy.*
Psalm 16:11

Find us on Social
Media @FCCStow!



Financial Peace University

Begins Sunday, January 12
Following late service

Our Annual Winter Soup Cookoff

Sunday, January 26, following Second Service

Superbowl Sub Sunday

February 2, after Both Services
Sponsored by our Youth

Boy Scout Sunday

February 9
Meet and Greet our Scouts at the 10:45 Service

FROM THE PASTOR



It's a New Year, and a new decade. I keep repeating this to myself because just about a month ago I heard an NPR story talk about it being the end of a decade. I mean, I knew 2020 was coming, but I

had somehow failed to realize one decade was ending and another was beginning. This new year just wasn't for me like it was when the 80's turned to the 90's, nor like Y2K. It seemed, until this story, like it was just another regular old New Year. It really threw me for a loop.

And now here we are... in the 2020's. A new decade. What all will it hold? What will happen? Where will I and my family, and the church, be by the end of it? And where the heck is my jet pack!? Wasn't 2020 supposed to be when the future would look like the Jetson's? No matter. It all gives me pause. Hopeful pause. And, well, a concerned filled pause too.

As the New Year and new decade begins, it seems to be beginning in much the same way as the old. We are living in a divisive and dangerous and terrifying time. Just this morning the news is full of reports of the aftermath of the military action our country took in Iraq. A stampede of people prior to the funeral of an Iraqi General left several dead and the funeral postponed. Then came the reports of threats of retaliation and revenge that are coming in response to our country's actions.

Add in, it seems all of Australia is on fire where a headline I just saw estimates millions and millions of animals have been killed, along with immense loss of human life. The reports of Global Climate change grow more ominous, predictions supported by more extreme storms and fires. An impeachment trial is set to begin in the Senate. And with primaries getting set to happen, the presidential election campaign rhetoric is ramping up to unbearable proportions—not to mention the rhetoric coming from supporters of both sides of the isle.

Anger. Division. Intolerance. Hate. It is all so exceedingly prevalent today. It all makes one wonder...Happy New Year? Yeah, right.

But maybe the New Year, in one particular form, could give us some semblance that better days are surely coming. It's time like these that I turn back to one of my favorite passages of scripture. In his letter to the Romans the Apostle

Paul tells us, *“What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?... For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

The word of God always speaks to us, calling to us with words of hope and love in times of struggle and chaos and worry, calling to us good news to the poor, the lost, the forsaken—the worried, the concerned, and those who have found world situations giving us pause. It is our call to read God's word, receive it, reflect upon it, share it, and most especially live it. And we are to do this because the love of God that we cannot be separated from is for all people, all of God's children. No exceptions.

This will not be easy because it will require us to be courageous, it will require us to be uncomfortable, to listen more than we speak. And it will require us to face opposition. It will be in these moments, in this New Year and the decade to come, when we must remember that Jesus has been through times like this too. Jesus has been through struggle and pain and disunity. Jesus endured and overcame anger, division, intolerance. And he did it with a love that would not end, and was not exclusive.

With that reminder, and with that way of life, we all, with God's help, and the ways of Jesus, can make it a Happy New Year, and the best of decades.

Your Pastor and Friend,
Jonathan

Youth Group Super Bowl Subs

On sale February 2nd after both services!

Once again the Youth Group will be selling Super Bowl Subs on Super Bowl Sunday! These hearty sandwiches will be available for purchase after both services on February 2nd just in time for the big game. Make plans to buy some for lunch, as well as some to have on hand as you DON'T watch the Patriots play some other team. (Let us just hope and pray it's not that team from Maryland!!)

All proceeds will go toward Christian Education and Youth Ministry projects.

Youth Group

Put Your Weight On It!

The Youth Group has, or had meetings in January on Sundays, January 5th and 19th. On the 5th we scarfed down a delicious lunch, then helped to take down and store away the church Christmas decorations! Then coming up on Sunday, January 19th we will have our annual winter time outing to Lock 3 for an afternoon of ice skating. Cost for this outing will be just \$4.

We will have a brief task to compete for the Membership Team— numbering the cups for the Super Soup Cook-Off!

All Youth are encouraged to be on hand Sunday, January 27th, to help out with the Super Soup Cook-Off. Hope to see you at Youth Group!



Pastor's Class

Begins Sunday, March 1st , 9:30 a.m.

Attention all youth in fifth grade or older who have not been baptized or want to make a reaffirmation of their baptism, and their parents: You are invited to be part of this year's Pastor's Class that will begin on Sunday, March 1st, and will run through Baptism Sunday on April 19th.

The class will meet in the church library during the Sunday School hour. If you are interested in being part of the class, please contact the church office, or if you have questions please contact Jonathan.

New Year = New Calendar Updates

With the beginning of each new year it is time to update the Church Office of meeting dates and times. Even if your repeating meeting times have not changed the office needs to check the calendar on the computer to be sure it is updated and correct. Please turn in a schedule request form or talk to Kathy.

Financial Peace University

Class Begins Sunday, January 12

Have you wanted to get your finances in order? Thinking about the New Year as the time when you'll aim to make it happen? It's a great New Year's resolution after all! Well here's your chance for success— through Financial Peace University. Over 5 million people have learned to pay off debt, save and invest for their future with Financial Peace University.

What is Financial Peace University? FPU is world renowned financial advisor and author Dave Ramsey and his teaching team walking you through the basics of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for the future, and much more. Financial Peace University includes nine video lessons featuring Dave Ramsey, Rachel Cruze, and Chris Hogan teaching and equipping you to take control of your money and your future.

Our church will host this nine week course each Sunday from 12:15 to 1:30 in the Fellowship Hall. (Lunch options are being considered, but you won't go hungry.) Classes include watching a video, followed by workbook exercises, and open discussion and will be led by Dan Reiman. The purchase of a FPU class kit necessary, and is filled with resources and tools that will contribute to your success.

Look for more information in the coming weeks, or indicate your interest on a Connection Card or speak with Jonathan. You don't have to feel overwhelmed and powerless about your money. Try the class and see how it can change everything.

A Reminder

The Dorcas/Rebekah Guild does NOT meet in January or February. Monthly meetings will resume on the second Thursday in March at noon.



News from the Music Department

Happy New Year everyone!! I hope the blessings God has bestowed on us continue to sustain and support us as we continue to serve Him through our ministries at FCC-Stow.

It's that time of year when all I can think of to write is to thank everyone who had a hand in the beautiful music here at First Christian. It was a very busy year and this past month was no exception. My heartfelt appreciation to everyone in the bell choirs, the choral groups, the children's choirs, the Way, Silent Praise, Resurrection Brass, and Andrea. The music was glorifying and encouraging.

I want to express how proud we all are of our children and the wonderful musical offering on Sunday, December 15. The Crusader and Acorn Choirs and the Crusader Bells led the worship service in the morning that day and we were inspired by their message and performance. Thank you, Molly, Andrea, Cora and the parents who helped get the children ready!

I also want to thank Scott Haywood for his solos on trumpet throughout the year. What a blessing to hear him play.

Cheryl and Ralph Lorenz had a hand in our worship on the 29th when they filled in for Andrea. Cheryl accompanied the hymn singing and musicians that morning, and she and Ralph played a beautiful piano duet. May the Lord bless you as much as you blessed us with your presence that morning.

All in all, it was a very busy time for Andrea, Molly, Barb, Cora, the singers, ringers, brass, guitarists, drummers, and me (did I leave anybody out, I hope not). I can't thank each of you **enough** for the time, energy and talents all of you gave to help celebrate the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. You are all a marvelous group of people with whom to work, and I thank God every day for the opportunity He has given me to serve Him here at First Christian Church-Stow.

Again, may the New Year bring all of you joy and peace as we serve Him. Amen.

Chuck

Laity Sunday, February 23rd

Both Services

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 23rd for our church's annual Laity Sunday. This is the Sunday in the life of our church when lay persons are invited to take part in leading each element of the worship service.

Members of the Worship Team will begin reaching out and inviting folks to participate.

Electronic Giving Options

It's a New Year and now is a great time to keep yourself on target to fulfill the pledge you made to God and the church for 2020. And one of the easiest ways to do so is through electronic giving. Our church supports the following options for electronic giving:

- Electronic File Transfer using your bank account, or Credit Card payments.
 - This can be set up by you through a secure link on our website (FirstChristianStow.org – find the Electronic Giving option on the home screen.
 - Or you can fill out an authorization form to allow Lisa Roseman (Financial Secretary) to set it up for you.
- Bill Pay, via your own bank's website.
 - Similar to setting up for making any other payments, setting this up will result in your bank sending a computer generated check to the church based on the amount and schedule you define.

Any of these can be used for a one-time donation, or scheduled for recurring donations.

More details are available outside the church office, or from Lisa Roseman (330.338.1327, LisaRoseman@hotmail.com)

So check off this resolution and set up electronic giving.

Another Amazing Christmas Ingathering



We have successfully completed our annual Christmas Ingathering program. The program, which has existed for many years provides a box of nonperishable food, \$50 voucher for perishable groceries, gifts for children and an adult gift for every adult in the household. In addition, the program provides winter coats, hats and gloves, socks and underwear, fleece blankets, stocking stuffers, school supplies, a plate of homemade cookies and much miscellaneous for participants. Recipients are referred from the Stow Munroe Falls School system and Family Promise of Summit County. This year, 50 families were served which included 42 families with children, totaling 97 children served!

This huge outreach program would not be possible without the generosity of our community sponsors and congregation members. This year, a special acrylic recognition award was presented to 4 of our long-time community sponsors. The award recognized each sponsor for "Making a Difference" by their "Exceptional, Continuous Dedication to the Children of This Community at Christmas." Awards were presented to Carla Herbert of Harvest Home Realty for 20 years of support for this program – Every year they have been in business!!! Awards were also presented to Michelle Primm, Cascade Auto Group; Ron Marhofer, Marhofer Chevrolet; and to Lisa Van Buskirk, Director, Hudson United Methodist Nursery School for their support of this program for 24 years!!! Special thanks also to Redmon Funeral Home that has also supported the program for many years, and to Mike's Place for their donation.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all who shopped, donated, wrapped, delivered, sorted, boxed, baked, called, counted, typed, wrote, organized, loaded, unloaded, directed or contributed in any way to this ministry. It truly takes the dedication and commitment of the entire congregation to make this outreach a success. I am very blessed to be a part of this program. Ann Halpin, Outreach

Scout Sunday, February 9th

Our church will once again host our annual Scout Sunday to highlight the Boy Scout Troop, Cub Scout Pack and Girl Scout Troop that all meet at our church throughout the year. This is a great opportunity to greet the scouts and leaders alike and remind them how grateful we are to have them as part of the First Christian Church family.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH of STOW
Our Annual SOUP COOKOFF
January 26, 2020
following the 10:45 am service

To enter your award-winning soup, please see Bill or Cora Dowey, the church office or indicate on the back of your connection card.



SUPER SOUP COOKERS:

- **Bring soups to Fellowship Hall in crock pots, hot and ready to serve**
- **Write type of soup and mark appropriate check boxes on placemats provided**
- **Help serve soup to the congregation during the event**

EATERS:

- **Come hungry and ready to vote on the best soup!**

We know we have Souper Cooks!
Enter to win! You may be our next
Souperhero Soup Maker!!!



Help Much Appreciated!!!

Thank you!

A very special thank you to all who volunteered to help put up or take down the Christmas decorations. It takes many hands to decorate our church with 2 places of worship (Chapel and Sanctuary), 2 entrances plus 2 outside doors, 2 floors with various tables, corridors, walls and windows; 7 Christmas trees, balcony garland, the library, stairwells, Fellowship Hall and restrooms! It is also tremendously helpful to have folks available to remove the previous season's decorations and haul them back up to the decoration room or to climb up into the storage area and assist with storing them for the next season. Thank You all!!! Ann Halpin

Officers 2020

These are our 2020 Church Officers. Please keep them in your prayers that they are guided by God's Holy Spirit in leading our church.

Governing Board

Chair	John Fauvie
Vice Chair	John McCreight
Secretary	Barb Bell

ELDERS

Jacob Aukeman	Lynn Fauvie	Joni Fitch
Dianne Haywood	Sue Hobson	Rick Lloyd
Judy Mahaffey	Andrew Robinson	Jim Hindel
Tom Safford	Bob Vanik	Diane Waite

TRUSTEES

Troy Onesti	Gary Eppley	Steve Largent
Mike Deiwert	Tom Stanley	Randy Waite
Rick Lloyd *	Jim Hindel *	*Elder Reps / Chair

DIACONATE

CJ Ball	Angela Onesti	Sydney Vargo
Lane Ball	Jane Taylor	Steve Gross
Edith Briers	Andy Thomas	Mary Ellen Neitz
Ann Copeland	Cindy Umbarger	Pat Mahaffey
Cora Dowey	Tammy Lott	
Mike Drews	Faye Haws	
Barb Eppley	Tom Myers	
Michelle Gross	Janice McCreight	
Ann Halpin	Cate Fioritto	
Scott Haywood	TJ Fioritto	
Rae Howard	Tony Falcione	
Debbie Kostensky		
Aimee Largent		

Bulldog Bags

We are honored to support the Stow Bulldog Bags Program. The first Bulldog Bags were sent to homes on January 29, 2016 and the program has continued to grow. They are supporting over 500 students in Pre-K through grade 10. They have expanded beyond the original weekend bag, with breakfast, lunch and snack items, to include Bulldog Cupboards at the middle and high school levels and the family-sized monthly Bulldog Boxes for continued support in the summer.

We are collecting fruit snacks for the Bulldog Bags. Please place in bin marked Bulldog Bags by January 18. We will be collecting Hot Chocolate for February and Band-aids for March. Goldfish bags and Macaroni and Cheese will finish out the school year. *Thank you for your continued support.*