



THE BELL

A Monthly Newsletter
15th Avenue Christian Church

A message from Pastor Mike.....

Our Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) tradition offers a unique voice because it was actually “born” in the United States, grew up on the frontier, and has expanded and adapted right alongside of our country for over two centuries. Questions of authority were driving forces in the American Revolution, and for the founders of our tradition. Barton Stone, Thomas Campbell, and Alexander Campbell believed that authority should not be ‘top down’ as they had experienced it within the old-world traditions. The Disciples tradition still offers the ‘simple gospel’ message and a focus on the Communion Table as a centerpiece of Christian faith and practice. A general discontent within the Mainline denominations accounts for some of the membership loss, including among Disciples, over the past four or five decades. The term “Mainline” has traditionally included the following denominations, sometimes also referred to the Seven Sisters: The United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), American Baptists Churches USA, United Church of Christ, and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). To some extent, the decline in membership across the Mainline can be attributed to a rapid increase in the percentage of the population who describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious.” Across the board, there has been a steady decline in overall membership, partly due to an aging population within the United States. Those demographic trends have also contributed to a dramatic loss of membership within many other community institutions, like Elks, Eagles, American Legion, etc. Population migration patterns away from Disciples’ strongholds explains a portion of the Disciples’ overall decline in the United States. Some Disciples groups, at national and regional levels, have been exploring ways to plant new churches in areas with growing populations, such as the American Southwest.

I believe the Disciples' tradition is well-positioned for this season of change. Our tradition offers a unique voice in accepting people from all walks of life, and from various denominations. We do not have a requirement to subscribe to a definite set of creeds or beliefs associated with a particular denominational hierarchy. In studies about church decline, researchers discovered that many people who left churches said that they had done so because there was no challenge toward transformation. They said that there were few overtly Christian claims, nothing to distinguish the church from organizations that do good work in their communities, and nothing to help them deepen their faith. The original message of Thomas Campbell, to proclaim a simple gospel message still stands. The enduring message is that we are Christians in pursuit of unity as a church, and committed to following the example of Jesus as we live out our Christian faith.

“Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” - Acts 2:46-47 -

BRUNCH-OUT

On Sunday, July 12th we had 8 people enjoy lunch and conversation at Milan Hy-Vee Market Grill. Next for our Brunch-Out, we will go to Luli's Restaurant and Bar located 1213 10th Avenue West (Andalusia Road) in Milan, Illinois. A reservation has been made for Sunday, August 9, 2026 at 11:00 am, following our worship service. I hope you will mark your calendar and make plans to join us.

Sally Bartosh

Music Notes

With five Sundays in August to fill, we have some special guests coming to help us praise God! Aug. 2 brings us Alice Lind, a highly skilled singer who has performed with me at Opera Quad Cities. On Aug. 16, Rev. Dawn Swartz from Grace Presbyterian will play clarinet. Rounding out the month are Susan Runyon, Lillian Dawn, and Claire Reger, bringing us special selections from their repertoire. I'm looking forward to having MCC join us later in the month!

Yours in Christ,
Sheila Doak



A BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for the rest and relaxation we enjoyed over the summer.

Today, we pray for our children as they begin their new school year.

Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning. Watch over all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy.

Grant teachers wisdom, patience, and joy in serving their students.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

July Attendance

July 5	34
July 12	25
July 19	27
July 26	18

PROFIT & LOSS REPORT

Income	\$6570.00
Expenses	\$11262.27
Net Income	(\$4692.27)

Anniversaries

- 11 Dave & Jeanne O'MELIA
- 22 Jerry & Nancy HARRIS

Birthdays

- 11 Hector MATA
- 30 Juliana MATA
- 30 Marilyn MIX

Thank you Judie and Bill Holmer, Jackie Flemming and Marty Larson for all your hard work on the flower beds. They make the church look even more beautiful!

Elders Prayer Update Bell Edition

Please keep these family, friends and neighbors in your daily thoughts and prayers. Send a card, call on the phone or make a visit. Let them know they are not forgotten.

"And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart."
Luke 18:1

Please pray for Terri Hardy who has received a cancer diagnosis. (Marcia S.)

Please pray for Florendina, for a much needed improvement in her health. (Kathy W.)

Please pray for my friend, Rexie , who has dementia and just moved to a nursing home in Winter Garden, FL. (Annie)

Please pray for Olivia, who has received a cancer diagnosis and is only in her twenties.
(Lynne Swanson)

Please continue to pray for Zoey, regarding a possible cancer diagnosis. (Lynne Swanson)

Kathy O. Stage 4 cancer (Helen) Alice (Sandy, Mable & family)

Lylah - heart transplant surgery, age 16, doing well. Thank you for your prayers. (Lisa)

Greg H. continues his cancer treatments. (Diane B.)

Diane... multiple family health concerns. (Kathy) Don Young (Sheri & family)

Chris receiving cancer treatments. (Kathy Weston) Mona (Alice and Mable)

Lili's treatments have been successful! She is now in an observation phase (family)

Pam DeSmet (family)

Emma (Jeanie) / Hunter (family)

Brenda O. (family)

Carla / Rosalie / Molly/ Mary/ Nickie (family)

Nancy G., cancer (family)

Kent Christensen (Kathy & family)

A background image of a watermelon with a green rind and red flesh, featuring several black seeds. The word "August" is written in a large, green, cursive font across the center of the watermelon. Bible Study Tools31-Day Scripture
Writing Challenge

August

God speaks to us through His Word, so take some time each day this month to write down the following Scripture. If you have time, you might want to also write a prayer that the Scripture leads you to pray, or your reflections as you write.

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|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| ☐ Aug. 1 | 1 Peter 2:24 | ☐ Aug. 17 | 1 Corinth. 13:12 |
| ☐ Aug. 2 | Luke 18:42-43 | ☐ Aug. 18 | James 1:27 |
| ☐ Aug. 3 | Genesis 4:7 | ☐ Aug. 19 | Romans 1:17 |
| ☐ Aug. 4 | Romans 5:8 | ☐ Aug. 20 | Revelation 3:21 |
| ☐ Aug. 5 | Ephesians 1:7 | ☐ Aug. 21 | John 8:12 |
| ☐ Aug. 6 | Mark 11:25 | ☐ Aug. 22 | James 2:17 |
| ☐ Aug. 7 | Psalms 103:12 | ☐ Aug. 23 | 2 Corinth. 12:9-10 |
| ☐ Aug. 8 | Romans 10:9-10 | ☐ Aug. 24 | 1 Chron. 16:10 |
| ☐ Aug. 9 | Proverbs 19:11 | ☐ Aug. 25 | Isaiah 6:3 |
| ☐ Aug. 10 | Lam. 3:31-32 | ☐ Aug. 26 | Habakkuk 3:3-4 |
| ☐ Aug. 11 | Psalms 119:28 | ☐ Aug. 27 | Zechariah 2:11 |
| ☐ Aug. 12 | Habakkuk 3:17-18 | ☐ Aug. 28 | Revelation 1:7 |
| ☐ Aug. 13 | Isaiah 33:2 | ☐ Aug. 29 | Psalms 19:1 |
| ☐ Aug. 14 | 2 Thess. 2:16-17 | ☐ Aug. 30 | Job 38:4-7 |
| ☐ Aug. 15 | Psalms 147:3 | ☐ Aug. 31 | Genesis 12:2-3 |
| ☐ Aug. 16 | James 1:2-4 | | |

Come back next month for a new Scripture writing challenge!

15th Avenue Christian Church

hello August 2026

Serving Elders	
2	Sally Bartosh
9	Diane Block
16	Kathy Weston
23	Lisa Hatlett
30	Judie Holmer
Visiting Elder	
Sally Bartosh and Alice Lyons	

Serving Deacons	
HD Sally Bartosh, Karen Hitchcock, Marcia Swanson and Ron Standley	
Preparing Deacon	
Kathy Weston	

Flowers	
2	Marty Larson
9	Kathy Weston
16	
23	Marilyn Mix
30	



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 8:30AM Elder Mtg 9:30AM Worship	3	4	5	6 10AM Bible Study	7	8
9 9:30AM Worship Food Pantry 11:00AM Brunch Out	10	11	12	13 10AM Bible Study	14	15
16 9:30AM Worship 10:30am Cabinet Meeting	17	18	19	20 10AM Bible Study	21	22
23 9:30AM Worship	24	25	26	27 10AM Bible Study	28	29
30 9:30AM Worship	31 Bell Article Deadline					