



In the Loop

Centennial Christian Church
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April 4, 2024
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Listening and Talking . . . by Rev. Tom Cici

Some time ago, when I was younger, playing as children with my sisters, we would build a snowman almost every winter. Part of the big deal, of course, is that we do it together, and get mom and dad involved in the fun. That's what it's all about. In love, you want to spend time together. Building the snowman came to a screeching halt when someone had to use the bathroom, and everybody took a turn. You could have built the snowman in a fraction of the time had you not been building it under those circumstances.

When Jesus speaks of God and his "Abba" (meaning daddy), it seems to me he's speaking of something like that. That is to say, God is trying to build something out of creation, and wants to do it in concert with all of us. God wants to do it with us. And God knows that that's a terribly inefficient way of doing it, given the fact that we take bathroom breaks and lots of other breaks all the time. It will take a lot longer.

As a matter of fact, it will take all of time, because the task is not to build a snowman. But the task is to share the all-encompassing and all-embracing love of God with others and all of creation as we live in God's very life. And it will take a long time, precisely because it will happen in part because of our participation and our contribution. So, God shows us tremendous patience. We have time, we have the Holy Spirit (Giver of life), and we have life on earth and eternal life with God. It doesn't happen in an instant.

The problem is that we humans become impatient with the process. We like immediate gratification. We would like to have it done right now, and on our terms. We lose faith. Patience is almost a synonym for faith. We need to faithfully choose God's love in all we do. Similarly, we need to be patient with one another as a way of faithfully choosing God's love.



Sarah, a six-year-old child, accompanied her parents and grandfather into the walk-in clinic. Her grandfather was showing symptoms of type-A influenza. When the medical doctor came into the examination room, Sarah holds up both hands to get the doctor's attention. "Yes, Sarah, you need to say something to me?" asked the doctor. Sarah said, "I know what you are going to do. You are going to do five things. You are going to check his eyes, his ears, his nose, his throat, and his heart." The doctor nodded affirmatively. "But if I were you," she continued, "I'd start with the heart!"

That's what Jesus did, isn't it? He started with the heart. He started with love, and that is precisely what Christ wants us to do. Christ wants us to lead with our hearts, and be servants of God in that way.

Blessings as we serve together in the Resurrection of Christ.



The Ripple Effect Is Back!

Again, this year, as our summer mission project, Centennial Christian Church (and our friends) is offering to help members of our congregation as well as residents of the local community do small outdoor jobs. Homeowners would need to pay for materials, but Centennial Christian Church will provide labor and small tools. We cannot do roofs, plumbing or anything that requires a license. Work will begin later this summer.

So far, we may have two locations in our Founders' Grove Neighborhood. If you need assistance in doing small jobs such as painting a fence, repairing or painting a wooden porch or garage, cleaning out gutters, pouring concrete, or removing brush from a fence line (to name a few), please contact Mark Rupe or Pastor Tom Cici as soon as possible.

After Pastor Tom and Mark access the job(s), we will place qualifiers on the calendar. Property owners will need to sign a Release of Liability.



We Are Celebrating Earth Sunday on April 21st

Besides Christianity, we will use Native American religions and other nature-based systems to focus on Earth Sunday: April 21, 2024. Various styles of prayers and the sermon during our 10:15 A.M. worship service will focus on the blessings and restoration of our planet Earth. Afterward – weather allowing – please join Pastor Tom as we cultivate a new plant near the water spicket on the southside of the building. Members of our worship committee are also growing wild flowers from seed for you to bring home. Please mark your calendars and plan to celebrate Earth Sunday at Centennial Christian Church on April 21st.

Thank You! Thank You! by Pastor Tom



I want to thank everyone who participated in our Holy Week services this year. I know there are many places you could be, but you choose to be at our worship services either in-person or online. Thank you for belonging to Centennial Christian Church.

- Your offering of time and talent was so impressive – too many to name them all, but quickly:
- ⇒ A pleasure to help plan the Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday services with our Worship Committee. Peg and Kip Hayden organized The Lord's Supper with First Christian Church of Bloomington for the Maundy Thursday service. Again, thank you!
 - ⇒ Music – so meaningful and well-done. Outstanding performances by Karen Lorack Mitchell during the Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday services. Beautiful music by Joe and Gwen Peebles and the Centennial Chancel Choir on Easter Sunday. Thank you!
 - ⇒ Our tech-support, Michael Schoeninger and Jack Keefe were on top of it all. We can't do this without you!
 - ⇒ Thank you to everyone who prepared and participated in our parade with palm leaves during our Palm Sunday service. The dramatic reading of the Passion according to the Gospel of Mark was excellent.
 - ⇒ A big "Thank you" to everyone who gives offerings of financial donations to our general fund, to the Disciples Mission Fund, to Week of Compassion, to the Easter Offering, and to our loose change offering which supports our outreach program for nonmembers. Your donations are very much needed, appreciated and helpful.
 - ⇒ Thank you to our Deacons and Elders who step in when someone is ill or away.
 - ⇒ I hope everyone had a powerful Holy Week and a truly joyful Easter!

Finally, I want to thank everyone who participated in our Small Group Visioning discussions during February and March. We had a very good representation from our church family with good discussions and valuable input. Thank you to our Elders who provided lunches on Sundays.

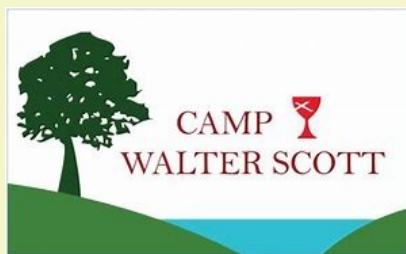


Baby Dedication

The August Matej Baby Dedication was held on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024.

Shown from left to right are:

Harrison, Benjamin, Kathleen, August and Aaron Matej



It is time to start thinking about summer church camp at Walter Scott Camp and Learning Center. Our camp is located in Dietrich, IL, which is just south of Effingham. This is a wonderful experience for our children and youth to experience the love of God and make new friendships in a beautiful setting.

Centennial will pay half of the early bird fee. If you register late, the additional cost is the camper's responsibility. When registering online, under the Payment Options choose the "Church (Full payment)". Submit a copy of your registration confirmation and your half of the payment to the Centennial church office by the date listed below and the church will submit one payment to the region.

Here is the link to where you register and for additional information about camp:
[CCIW Camp – Walter Scott Camp and Learning Center \(campwalterscott.org\)](http://campwalterscott.org)

There are also volunteer opportunities for adults who would like to experience camp. Talk to Joe or Gwen if you are interested.

If you have any questions about camp contact Joe or Gwen Peebles.

Joe - 309-531-2273; JPeebles67@aol.com)

Gwen - 309-531-2274; GwenPeebles68@gmail.com

CYF (High School): June 9-15

\$375 before May1. \$400 after May1.

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by April 28th.

Registration closes May 26.

You & Me (K-5th w/ adult sponsor; formerly Grandparents & Me): June 16-19

\$160

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by May 26th.

Registration closes June 2.

Beginners Camp (K-3): June 20-22

\$140

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by June 2nd.

Registration closes June 6.

JYF (3-5): June 23-June 29

\$375 before May1. \$400 after May1.

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by April 28th.

Registration closes June 9.

Chi Rho (Junior High): June 30-July 6

\$375 before May1. \$400 after May1.

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by April 28th.

Registration closes June 16.

Young Adult (formerly Post High) July 26-28

\$175

Payment and registration confirmation due in the church office by July 7.

Registration closes July 12.

April 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 April	2	3 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-FH Bridge 12P-GH Choir 6:30P	4 Outreach. 11A-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	5	6
7 Adult Bible Study 9A-FH Worship *10:15A	8 Trustees 11A-GH	9 CWF 9:30A-FH	10 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-FH Bridge 12P-GH Choir 6:30P	11 TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	12	13
14 Second Sunday Food Pantry Adult Bible Study 9A-FH Worship *10:15A	15 PRC 12P-Isaiah	16	17 Adult Bible Study 10:30A-FH Bridge 12P-GH Choir 6:30P	18 Worship Comm. 9:30A TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Book Club 6:30P	19 Elder Retreat Camp Walter Scott	20 Elder Retreat Camp Walter Scott
21 Adult Bible Study 9A-FH Worship *10:15A	22	23 Elders 6:30P	24 L/M Cluster 10:30A-FH Bridge 12P-GH Choir 6:30P	25 Ladies Luncheon 11:30A- Cracker Barrel TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Men's Dinner 6P-Hacienda Leon	26	27
28 Pastor Tom vacation <u>begins</u> Loose change offering Worship *10:15A	29	30	May 1 Bridge 12P-GH Choir 6:30P	2 Outreach. 11A-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	3	4 Pastor Tom vacation <u>ends</u>

*Online worship <https://www.facebook.com/pg/centennialcc.org>

FH-Fellowship Hall GH-Great Hall



Prayer Request

Barb Short has been having breathing health issues since Monday. She needs prayers that her breathing improves and she has little discomfort.

Daughters of Sue Miller: **Angie** (oldest daughter) has a hereditary heart condition; **Tammy** (middle daughter) had corporal tunnel surgery on April 2nd and in pain; **Amy** (youngest daughter) whose daughter Taylor has thoracic outlet syndrome (TOS) and will have surgery on April 18. Please pray for Sue and her family.

Continuing Prayers

Celia Middleton, Charlie Middleton, Karen Middleton, James, Neil, Barb Leach, Cameron Cook, Angie Simpson, Jackie Steinhilber, Megan Brown, Mannie Martinez, Gery Conlin, Leonard Bates, Ann Burmaster, Caitlyn, Cole, Ron Geske, Pam, Dick Tarter, Scott Griffith, Janet Keefe, Jessica, Marsha, Pete Rasmussen, Robin, Fern Scaggs, Tammy, Marian Wrinkle

At Home/Assisted Living

Myerling Home-Ruth Roley; At home-Doris Miller, Frieda Foland; The Pointe (Pontiac) Rae Ann Geske

Nursing Home

The Arc-Tom (Billy) Robey, Rev. Barbara Short, Don Short; Westminster-Anita Poling; Earl McIntyre; Evergreen Village-Pat Iliff; Hopedale Nursing Home-Dick Tarter; Accolade (Pontiac)-Ron Geske; Bickford House - Pryscilla (Pryl) Stam

Military

Mark Brienen, Keyla Folsom, Troy Guyran, Benjamin Horn, Michael Iverson, John Thomas, Darrell Walton, Glen Whitecotton, Christopher Wilson-Poston

Prayers for CCIW congregations and ministries: Disciples Women's Ministry

April Birthdays and Anniversaries

Charlotte Leach	04/03
Chloe Todd	04/12
Janet Keefe	04/18
Kay and Larry Carius	04/26
Aaron Todd	04/26
JoAnne Pritchard	04/28

**Our challenge for the week –
Pray this prayer every day –**

Loving and merciful God, thank you for the resurrection that transforms death into life, and shows that love is the strongest. Help us to bear the scars we carry with resilience and hope. Help us to show the Risen Christ by our love and compassion. [Listen and receive.]