

January 2023



Winter vacations to warm beaches with sunny skies, white sand and palm trees. Adventures to exotic destinations with lots of new places to see and explore. Cruise ships in the Caribbean, Mediterranean, and Alaskan seas. We all dream of living the good life and experiencing all the amazing things this world has to offer.

Some of us find it thrilling to watch the Vikings, Wolves, Twins, Wild, Gophers, our favorite alma maters, or even travel around the country touring stadiums. Others find it thrilling to explore the National Parks or even our own MN State Parks and hike along the rivers, and up the mountains, exploring trails and grand vistas. Some enjoy the thrill of the hunt or fishing expedition while others enjoy the rush of snowmobiling or skiing and snowboarding.

We all have dreams or favorite activities that we find thrilling in our lives. They bring us joy and happiness, a sense of adventure, and fulfillment. God has created an amazing and beautiful world and I think God takes pleasure in seeing us enjoy our lives and the world he created. But if we're not careful, we may become consumed with this kind of thrill-seeking and may miss out on the thrill of other more

important things in life.

Jesus said, "I have come so that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) The abundant life is found not only in all the amazing things and experiences this world has to offer. The abundant life is found in Christ! And it is thrilling!

Over the next couple of months we'll be exploring together the thrill of the abundant life in Christ. We'll discover how to courageously trust God with various aspects of our lives, how to pray and align our hearts with his, how serving and loving others brings greater joy and excitement to our lives, how giving generously of ourselves can be deeply fulfilling, and how sharing the gospel and leading others to life-changing faith in Jesus is the greatest thrill of all.

You're invited to join us as we explore the abundant life together every Sunday in January and February. It'll be a great way to start the new year and boldly proclaim, "This is living!"

- Pastor Jim

Congregational Care

We've heard the expression "Hind-sight is 20/20" meaning that we can look back at the past in our lives and be aware of how our choices have affected ourselves and others.

Every New Year is a time to reflect back and look to the future. We don't talk about the future very much anymore. We hear "as we move forward" or "moving forward". Both are good places to reflect from. Moving forward means that we are always in the *now*. *Now* is the time, the present, that we make our choices/decisions in. The *future* is what we look forward to... ten pounds lighter, two times stronger...all the decisions that will mean we are a better person, physically, emotionally, spiritually.

Scripture is where we begin to understand the wisdom the Lord has for our lives. There is a very delightful word we see in the gospels. It is frequently translated as "repent", which has all the baggage of feeling sorry about the choices we have made, especially the ones we know are not pleasing the Lord. The Greek word is *metanoia*. *Meta* means change and *Noia* means mind. So we are to change our mind! Think differently!!

So how do we do that?? We can try to do the changing on our own (we all know how that works out!!), or we ask our Lord to help us see and think as He does. The relationship that we have with the Lord of the Universe through Jesus gives us the gift as his children to ask for wisdom to live and love the way He intends us to.

FCC is a place where we choose to grow, by the Lord's grace, into people who live well, love broadly the way He does and honor Him and each other. We are people who care for each other, reach out to those we don't know and dare to push ourselves beyond our comfort zone for the sake of love, His love.

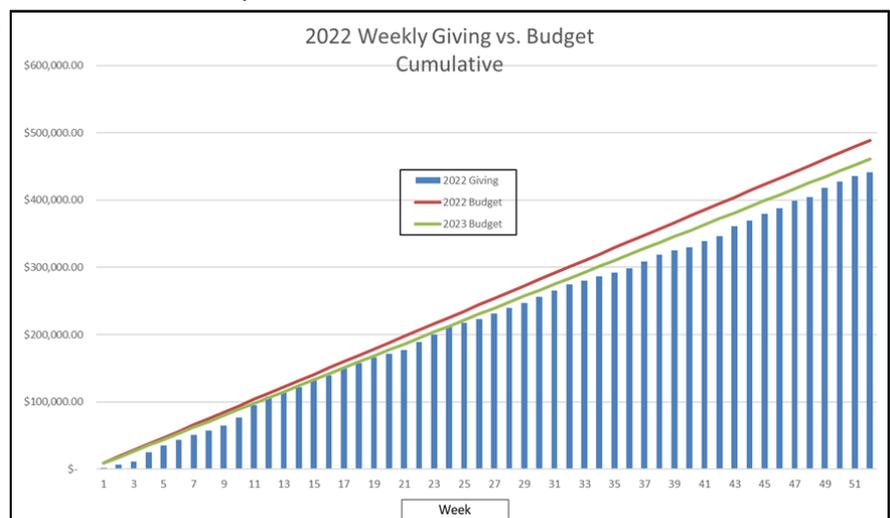
Char Hayes, Congregational Care

Financial Secretary

With a few days remaining to be calculated in 2022, giving in comparison to 2020 is up by 3.0% and compared to 2021, giving up by 7.0%. Overall, we are still sitting 9.8% below the 2022 Essential Budget. At the recent Congregational Budget Meeting, a budget of about \$461,000 was passed, which is a reduction from 2022 and should put our church in a better financial position going forward. We want to thank you for all your gifts again in 2022 and we look forward to exciting things happening in our church in 2023.

One of the exciting things happening financially for our congregation is that we look forward to paying off the building mortgage in 2023. So many of you have given generously to make this possible, which will put our church in a much better financial position and allow us to expand our ministries. However, we are not there yet and still have about \$48,000 yet to go as of now, with approximately \$25,000 remaining in pledges. Again, thank you for all the gifts so far and we ask you to prayerfully consider these needs in the coming months as we approach our goal.

Here is a snapshot of the 2022 giving in comparison to the 2022 budget. The green line was added to represent the 2023 budget, which shows where we would be sitting if giving stayed the same next year in comparison to the proposed budget that recently passed.



JANUARY | 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Holy Communion New Year's Day 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Contemporary Worship	2 3:00pm Upstairs Reserved	3 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 3:45pm Fusion 6:30pm Gym Reserved	4 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study	5 Sarah out of the office 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm FCC Book Club 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	6	7
8 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship	9 4:00pm Fireside Room Reserved 7:32pm Young Life	10 9:30am Women's Bible Study 3:45pm Fusion 6:30pm Gym Reserved	11 9:30am MOPS 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study 6:00pm Confirmation	12 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	13	14 10:00am Gym Reserved 10:00am Borhoeffer Society
15 Julie Maloy Preaching 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 7:30pm RWYL Steering Meeting	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Annual Report Submissions Due 7:32pm Young Life	17 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 3:45pm Fusion 6:30pm Gym Reserved	18 9:30am MOPS Leaders 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study	19 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	20	21 10:00am Fireside Room Reserved
22 Meet the Pastor Explore 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship 11:00am Meet the Pastor 5:00pm Explore	23 6:30pm Council Meeting 7:32pm Young Life	24 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 3:45pm Fusion 6:30pm Gym Reserved	25 9:30am MOPS 9:30am Women's Manuscript Study	26 9:30am Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Team Practice 7:00pm Men's Pick-up Basketball	27 Sarah out of the office	28
29 Annual Report Booklets Distributed 8:30am Blended Worship 10:00am Kids & MS Discovery 10:00am Contemporary Worship	30 7:32pm Young Life	31 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 3:45pm Fusion 6:30pm Gym Reserved				

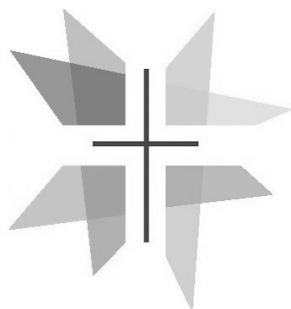
REMEMBERING OUR BIRTHDAY FRIENDS

1st	BJ Vette, Sarah Ball	17th	Branda Keehn
2nd	Wayne Bean	18th	Jane Shirk, Renee' Foster
3rd	Dorothy Crane, Jake Pfeifer	26th	Jerry Hebert
6th	Denise Doden, Kevin Jensen	29th	Jacob Kline
11th	Ginny Ulrich		
15th	George Gabrielson, Brian Back, Martha Johnson-Svedvik, Stefanie Vette		

Prayer is a vital part of the life of our church. In order to help us focus on praying for one another, please use our list of birthday friends in each month's Messenger to pray for them and their families. There will be enough names to pray for someone throughout the month.

Let's make praying for one another a means of encouragement to us all!

BLENDED SERVICE 8:30AM | CONTEMPORARY SERVICE 10:00AM



First Covenant Church
2302 Twin Bluff Road
Red Wing, MN 55066
651-388-2385
www.redwingfirstcov.org