

I give thanks that you are attending worship at First Christian Church, and I want to inform you about this time in the life of our congregation. Some of you may have participated in churches who have annual stewardship campaigns. If you have, you may not be surprised to get this letter. If you haven't, I'd like to take the time to explain what you find here. As followers of Christ, we take seriously Jesus' call to serve and commit ourselves to His ministry. We do this in many ways including participating in worship, attending faith formation groups, serving those in need, offering our gifts and by giving our money to support the work of God in our congregation and other places. Our giving is an act of thanksgiving. We give in response to the many blessings of God. Each week in worship we invite the congregation to give an offering of money and commit time and energy to grow in faith.

Each fall, we send out a letter similar to this one and we spend time in worship discussing how our commitment to follow Christ intersects with our material resources. Jesus spends a great deal of time in the Gospels discussing money. In fact, the only topic Jesus spends more time discussing is the Kingdom of God. Jesus reminds us that money can be a resource for living well and serving others or it can be a roadblock to living faithfully. In Mathew 6:21 Jesus says, 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

While I understand that each person's giving is a deeply spiritual act between you and God, we ask you to turn in an estimate of giving card. Our leadership will then be able to create a realistic budget and ministry plan based on what this community tells us it plans to give. As commitments increase, we are able to engage in more vital ministry.

At the bottom of this Mailchimp is a link to an electronic estimate of giving card. I invite you to fill it out or take some time of preparation so that you can fill out a hard copy on Sunday (October 24). If you would like us to mail the card and letter via USPS, please let me know at [**fccafinance@gmail.com**](mailto:fccafinance@gmail.com).

On a personal and spiritual level, the prayer and process necessary to make the commitment to consistent giving helps each of us prioritize God and grow in our Faith life. An estimate of giving card is not a contract, it is a spiritual commitment which can be modified should your life situation change. If your situation changes, please let me know. If you have pastoral need, Pastor Tim is available for counseling and prayer.

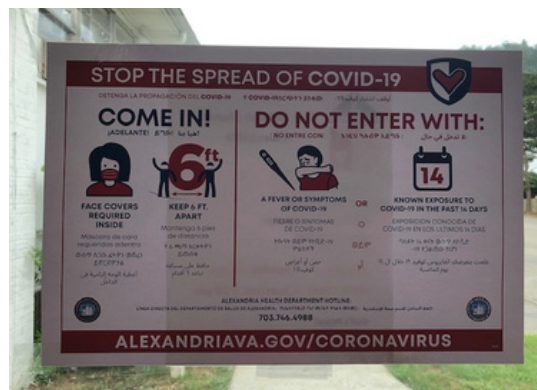
In Thanks for our many Blessings,
Janet Coldsmith, Treasurer

Ministry Highlights

YEAR:2021

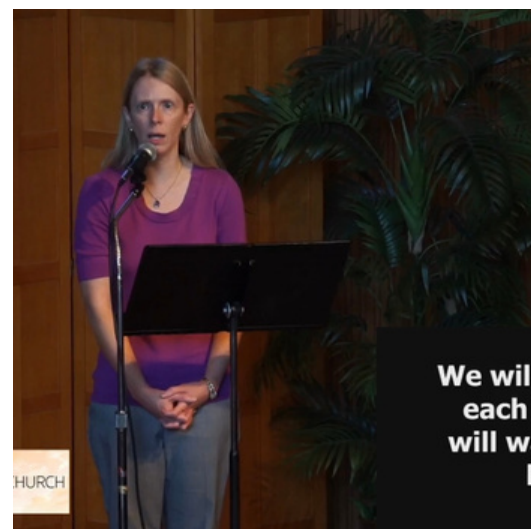


2021 has been a challenging year. COVID has caused us to modify our ministry in various ways. At the start of the year, most of our ministry activities were fully virtual. Worship, Bible Study, Book Studies, and meetings were all on Zoom. The building was a quiet place as almost all the groups who use the building found different ways to meet. In spite of the challenges, we have been reminded again and again that God's grace and life break into our lives, our community, and our world in amazing ways.



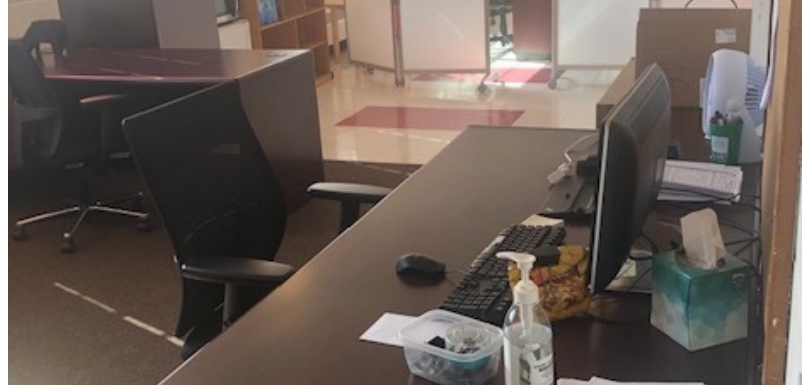
Thank you for continuing to offer your gifts, your time, your finances, your encouragement, your faith, and your love. As many congregations struggle, the generosity leadership, and hope of the First Christian Church of Alexandria has allowed us to continue to engage in vibrant ministry. **WORSHIP** has moved from fully virtually to hybrid. We continue to improve our technology so that people can participate in worship from many spaces. Our staff (Bevin, Britney, Sarah, and Pastor Tim) worked with congregational leaders to find new ways to celebrate the love of God through Jesus Christ. From Home Advent kits to outdoor Easter celebrations, we have been reminded again and again of God's wondrous presence and abiding hope. While Sarah's presence is missed, we are excited about new music possibilities.

We give thanks that Barb, Deanne, and Fred have served as song leaders and for the gifts of many in special music. It was a joy to gather recently with First Samoan for breakfast and worship.



Throughout the pandemic, we have continued to **SERVE** in love.

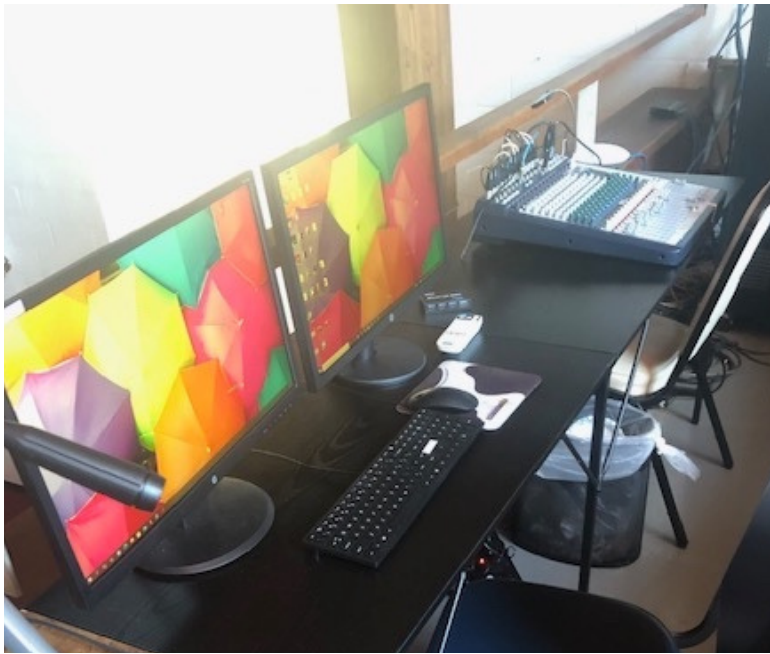
We have collected food, diapers, and school supplies. We have cleaned up the neighborhood and local streams. We have visited and kept in contact with those who have been isolated. We have continued to serve at Truck to Trunk events and through the West End Food Pantry which did not shut down as the numbers served skyrocketed. We continue to offer food at Safe Haven, and we have even returned recently to serve with Meals on Wheels. We have raised our voices for justice and equality. We re-settled an Afghan family of six and are supporting their efforts to navigate life in the U.S. While the Child Development Center is no longer functioning, one of the classrooms hosts the Alexandria Eviction Prevention Program. We continue to build partnerships. We have financially supported programs near and far and have continued to support ministry beyond our walls by giving 10% of the offering to Disciple Mission Fund.



Many of the groups who have used the building in the past, including AA Groups and Venture Scouts have returned. Mt Sinai and First Samoan continue to worship in the building. We have added a Theater Group for mentally challenged adults. These **RELATIONSHIPS** continue to offer ministry opportunities. Bible Study on Zoom has been a place of great conversation and insight. We continued our tradition of a Lent Book Study. We also had a group study the book Caste, a Disciple's Women Study, and we plan to offer an Advent study. We hope we can re-engage our children's ministry and nursery when safety allows.



The upkeep of the building consumes both time and money, but we have made some improvements during the pandemic. We have new wifi, a new door entry system, computer and camera enhancements, exhaust fans, and an in-duct ultraviolet light filter system to clean the air. We are receiving bids on more accessible bathrooms.



Even in this time, we have many reasons to give thanks. Come, thankful people!
Let us give thanks for God's blessing as we imagine how God's limitless love moves us forward.



