

# Foresight

Looking to the Future

**Christian Church of Villa Park**  
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Pastor: Dave Holston



**Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

## Pastor's Letter

Well, it's that time of year again. "New Year's Resolutions," putting the past behind us as we reflect on our accomplishments, shortcomings, and near misses. Most of us begin to put together our resolutions for the year hoping that somehow we will be different and better in the new year. Like most of you I spend my first few weeks of each year reflecting on the accomplishments of the past year, cleaning up the clutter, finishing tasks, and then leaving it alone as I begin to focus on the new year.

My message this week was about discerning what our gift to God is. What shall we give the newborn king? How can we demonstrate our gratitude, our love, and our devotion to our Savior? Improving myself and serving others is part of my chosen path to giving honor to God. It is my Gift to Jesus.

2023 was a unique year for me. One of my goals was to lose 30 lbs. and I accomplished that. Yay! Another was to discern God's will in my life. I spent five weeks in Arizona in late January and February last year and came home still not sure what God wanted. In April of 2023 God answered my prayer, but not in a way that I expected. God's ways are different than ours and his path is Holy. I am blessed to be here with you and humbled that God has placed me in this position. Together we minister to those around us and spread the gospel of love through Jesus! Isaiah 43 verses 18 and 19 refer to God telling us "forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!"

As I reflect on my goals for 2024, I am struck with the questions: Does the knowledge and experience I have gathered over 70 plus years have value, relevance, or significance? How do you leave a legacy of all of this unless you pass it on, either in written form or through those around you?

In my morning devotion today, I was reading from Kenneth Samuel, pastor at *Victory for the World Church in Decatur, Georgia*, who writes about legacy, saying, "A person's legacy can never be limited to the numbers and the relations of a lineage. Legacy is really all about the values we willfully inherit and personify in our daily lives. And legacy is all about the sacrifices we are willing to make to prove our devotion to those values." Ken then lists some questions we should ask:

1. Name three things you would like everyone to remember about you after you've passed away.
2. Ask yourself: In my covenant with God, am I keeping up my part of the deal?

In 2024, let's walk together, as we individually and collectively, answer these two important questions. In the meantime, I want to share where I am with my goals for 2024 so far. It is a work in process. I share it with you to keep it real. I covet your prayers. I will keep you accountable, do the same for me!

1. Continue to improve my physical health.
2. Improve my Prayer Life
3. Keep a Journal
4. Pass it on! (Start a Blog, write more letters, keep in better contact with those whose lives touch mine)

*(Keep reading on the next page...)*

**Psalm 139** Excerpts (but I encourage you to look it up and read it in its entirety)

- <sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.  
<sup>24</sup> See if there is any wicked way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

*“Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.”* from The Book of Common: Collects, Epistles, & Gospels

Pastor Dave

### Sunday Morning Schedule

Bible study meets at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday, September through May.  
All ages are invited to gather together for an opening activity and to hear the Bible story before we break into groups for conversation, crafts, and games.

Worship begins at 10:30 a.m. in person and on Facebook Live

### Looking Ahead...

- January 11-19 – Pastor Dave Holston is on vacation. Please contact Betty Prorak at 847-977-0797 or [BLProrak@yahoo.com](mailto:BLProrak@yahoo.com) with any concerns until Pastor Dave returns.
- Sunday, January 14, 10:30am – Pastor Elba Iris Nazario will be our guest preacher
- Wednesday, January 24, 7:00pm – Stewardship Council meeting via Zoom
- February 14, Ash Wednesday – Lent begins. You may receive ashes during Pantry hours (9:30-11:30am) or attend the evening worship service at 7:00pm.
- Sunday, March 10 – Daylight Saving Time begins. Set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday night, March 9.
- Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday.
- Thursday, March 28 – Maundy Thursday worship service at 7:00pm.
- Friday, March 29 – Good Friday prayer vigil, 6:30am-7:30pm. Online sign up will be posted in late February.
- Sunday, March 31 – Easter

## Pastor Dave's Contact Information

Street address: 5326 West Main Street, Monee, IL (to get to the porch, when it warms up)

Mailing address: PO Box 342, Monee, IL 60449

Email: [ccvppastor@yahoo.com](mailto:ccvppastor@yahoo.com)

Phone: 708-288-4936 (cell)

### Disciples Food Pantry

October Stats:  
192 Households served  
741 People served

November Stats:  
325 Households served  
1156 People served

December Stats:  
246 Households served  
843 People served

The Pantry is open every Wednesday 9:30-11:30am.  
Clients enter from Villa Avenue and receive food by the parking lot door.

## We Find Joy and Give Thanks...



- that Michele Grayson came forward on October 22 to make CCVP her church home.
- with Ruth and John Martin who are looking forward to welcoming a second grandson in May.
- with Joan Fuller and her extended family who hosted a surprise birthday party for Joan's sister Gloria on November 18. Joan said that Gloria was "flabbergasted!"
- with Jayne Hochstetler who emailed: I want to thank all who have been praying for me and ask for their continued support. I really appreciate it and the prayers are definitely working. Today (November 21) my doctor told that I am in remission! I have to continue my treatments, but am glad to do so since they are working! I feel so blessed. God is good!!!
- for the wonderful Celebration of Covenant that CCVP, Dave Holston, family and friends shared on the afternoon of December 10.
- that Raja Philip traveled to India and back safely and enjoyed his time there in December.
- that those present at the congregational meeting on December 17 were all in consensus with accepting the proposed 2024 budget and approving the additions of Betty Prorak and Tina Amodeo to the Stewardship Council.
- with Tina Amodeo who briefly visited the hospital on December 17, but did not need to stay.
- that the Pantry received a collection of toys that were distributed on Wednesday, December 20. Santa and Mrs. Claus (Dave and Christi Holston) were there to hand out the toys.
- with Sue and Ray Severino who will be grandparents sometime in 2024 as Taylor is pregnant.
- for Melanchthon Philip who baked the bread that Pastor Dave used at the communion table during the Christmas Eve worship service. (He also provided the bread for David's Celebration of Covenant of Call on December 10.)
- for those who have recovered from recent bouts of COVID.
- that Randy Reid has continued to bring Jane (his mother) to worship at least once a month so she can participate in person instead of via Facebook. Doug joined his brother and mom in worship on the morning of his birthday, December 24.
- for Carl Kagebein's uneventful angiogram on January 3. No blockage was found, so no further procedure needed.
- for Jane Reid's great granddaughter who turned 16 on January 7; she is a very gifted young lady.

## Please Pray for...



- John Martin
- Ruth Martin
- the health of Teresa Shoff (John Martin's sister). She recently fell and broke bones in her leg.
- Carl Kagebein's breathing problems
- Jerry and Carol Robbins who are both in long-term care at the Springs of Monarch Landing.
- Joan Fuller's sister Gloria's health.
- Joan and Clover Fuller who mourn the passing of Alana from cancer.
- Pam, Dan and Doris Carter's cousin, whose husband died November 19.
- for Pantry client Eric and the family of Jenny. Jenny, Eric's girlfriend of several years, was struck by a car last week and died in late November.
- Ken Newton, who is in hospice at Covenant Living Holmstad, in the medical building. (700 W. Fabyan Parkway, Batavia). Recent visitors found him in a wheelchair - not in bed - and quite alert, in good spirits.
- Minni Philip, who sends her thanks to all who have been praying for her. Her recovery from foot surgery is going well. She will be seeing a doctor soon to determine what comes next.
- Joe (pantry client)
- Catherine (pantry client)
- friends and family of Tina Amodeo.
- Kathy Quint and her daughter Diane Quint Evans. Kathy had a stroke in June, and is now in nursing care. Diane is waiting to find out if Kathy will be well enough to come home. (Diane is Joan Fuller's good friend.)
- Sofi Felix's social studies teacher passed away from cancer on January 1. Please pray for the family and friends of Liz Fornek.
- Heidi Gomez who has been diagnosed with chronic sinusitis.
- the family of Jil (Brown) Benthin who passed away on December 28, 2023.
- Michele Grayson
- Clyda Robinette
- our church and Pastor Dave as we move forward together in ministry.

## Foresight News Deadline

The next quarterly issue of this newsletter will come out on April 9, 2024 with a news deadline of 11am on April 8. Send anything you would like included to Betty Prorak at [BLProrak@yahoo.com](mailto:BLProrak@yahoo.com) or mail it to the church.

## December 31, 2023 Financial Summary

	October	November	December	Year-to-date
Income for budget items:	\$6,621.91	\$4,096.59	\$8,125.44	\$77,413.45
Budgeted expenses:	\$5,518.56	\$6,182.59	\$6,552.92	\$83,217.74

Thank you for your faithful giving!

Our expenses increased on June 1 with a monthly space-sharing payment to New Life Bible Chapel of \$1,763 instead of the \$363 we paid for the first two years of our space-sharing agreement.

For the fourth quarter of this year, we made those payments from our capital fund to avoid having to withdraw money from our Christian Church Foundation account.

## Fund-raising with Gift Cards



The next order for Jewel gift cards will be placed on February 4 to be delivered on February 11. Please let Betty Prorak know what card(s) you would like. The church receives 5% of the cost of any cards we order as a group. Another order will be placed in early April.

The RaiseRight (formerly ShopWithScrip) gift card order will be due on March 3. There are many different gift cards available, each giving the church a portion of your purchase price. If this will be your first order from <https://www.raiseright.com/>, contact Betty Prorak (BLProrak@yahoo.com) for the church's enrollment code.

## February, March, April Celebrations

February 5 Ariana Mendoza  
6 Heidi Gomez  
8 Ruth Martin  
16 Jayne Hochstetler

March 4 Freya Verson



March 5 Amy Slinkman  
12 Sharon Philip  
22 Minni Philip

April 5 Diana Robbins  
20 Dan Carter




April 14 Betty & Steve Prorak  
29 Amy & Ed Slinkman

## Special Offerings

# GIFTS TO LIVE ON

SPECIAL OFFERING | February 18-25, 2024

Week of Compassion  FOR 80 YEARS

When visiting our partners and seeing their work, I am constantly reminded of the tremendous impact of your gifts to Week of Compassion, and the ways you give new life in many corners of the world. On a recent visit with partners in Afghanistan, we met a young widow in Bamyan. Her husband was killed in a bombing, leaving her to care for their three daughters alone, challenged by existing poverty and a disability that makes it almost impossible to work. As a woman in her 20s, and with only daughters and no sons, she is unable to take care of herself and her family, as women are forbidden to be outside the house without male accompaniment. Usually resorting to begging for meager subsistence, this widow and her children have connected to Week of Compassion's local partner, ensuring they have enough to live on.

In her gratitude and generosity, she welcomed us into her tiny mud hut home and invited us to hear her story – a story that now includes the simple gifts of food and clean water, shelter and healing, and education for her three growing girls. The mission of Week of Compassion continues to be vital in providing relief and hope to communities all over the world. The work of bringing wholeness in a fragmented world requires many of us, across the whole church, and many partners. We each play an important role, and together, we not only provide relief to others, but also lift each other up in this holy work.

This truth is made plain in the story of the generous widow, found in Luke 21. Week of Compassion follows her lead, when as Disciples we bring an all-that-we-are offering, receive unexpected gifts from unlikely places, and take seriously the gathering and sharing of resources for the sake of those in need. In the gifts we bring, others find what they need. In the act of giving, the impact carries beyond the giver. Blessed by God's mercy and multiplied by God's grace, these are truly GIFTS TO LIVE ON.



This year, we mark the 80th anniversary of the very first Week of Compassion offering. Recent months have seen increasingly severe and frequent natural disasters in the United States, even as the world witnesses ongoing war in Ukraine and the Middle East, earthquakes in Morocco, drought in the Horn of Africa, and flooding in Libya, impacting those regions for years to come. Communities are gaining traction in long-term recovery after devastating tornadoes in Kentucky, repeated hurricanes in Florida, and catastrophic wildfires in Hawaii. Such natural, political, and climate crises continue to increase the numbers of displaced persons worldwide. Over the past 80 years through Week of Compassion, Disciples have responded to needs around the world, constantly evolving to meet new challenges. As Rev. Dawn Weaks, who wrote this year's sermon starter and scripture commentary, has said, "We honor the courage of those who came before by being courageous now!"

When we step forward in faithfulness, as the generous widow did, our gifts combine and the abundance of God's compassion overflows, even in the face of challenge, fatigue, and uncertainty. It is about so much more than dollars and cents. Week of Compassion is where Disciples respond to the challenges and the blessings we see and experience in the world. Week of Compassion is a full-body-of-Christ response. Our General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens has often said, "When Week of Compassion is there, the whole church is there".

Over the last 80 years, in communities recovering from disasters; among those creating new lives after fleeing their homes; and when creating hopeful futures in the face of extraordinary challenges, you have been there, because you are Week of Compassion. You continue to share GIFTS TO LIVE ON, with compassionate generosity. Thank you for your constant support and partnership, throughout the year, throughout the world.

In gratitude,  
Rev. Vy Nguyen  
Executive Director, Week of Compassion

## **Easter Offering**

Several times a year, congregations receive a special offering to support the ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These gifts are given above and beyond the regular core support of Disciples Mission Fund.

The Easter Offering, received by most congregations on March 24 & 31, 2024, supports several of the general ministries of the Christian Church. Your gift supports college students in leadership development programs, global mission partners, health and social service ministries, the formation of new congregations, support for pastors and chaplains, and so much more.

Use the materials here to help your congregation promote and receive the Easter Offering on April 2 or April 9. If you would like to receive offering envelopes at no charge, please email [supplies@disciples.org](mailto:supplies@disciples.org) (include your mailing address and the number of envelopes you need).

Your gift has the power to change lives around the world. [Give online now](#) or through your congregation. Thank you.