

February 2025

The Guide

*We embrace all
as we journey
the way of Jesus*



CHRIST
CHURCH UCC

15 South Ft. Thomas Ave.
Ft. Thomas KY 41075
Phone: 859-441-2565
Fax: 859-441-3117

office@christchurchft.org
www.christchurchft.org
facebook.com/christchurchcft
Twitter@ChristChurch_FT

Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday
9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Closed on Fridays

Worship Schedule:

Check calendar on back for
worship, study groups, and
Youth & Children's Ministry

Christ Church Staff:

Rev. Dr. Edward Goode
Pastor

Madeline Queen
Director of Christian Education

Max Gise
Worship Coordinator

Talia Zoll
Worship Coordinator

Danny Manning
Choir Director

Jeff Searcy
Custodian

Barb Walkenhorst Derby
Bookkeeper

Michele Wright,
Communications Director



Photo by Edward Goode

Boldness and the Psalms *Back at It Again*

I'm back at it again. It happened for the first time in 2014. Then again in 2016. Again in 2018. Again in 2020. And now again in 2025. What is it? Well, it is actually tied in with what I have been sharing on in worship so far this year and also tied in with what stirred for me with the writing of my book, *Ordinary BenchMarks*. The repeating thing is a deep dive into the Psalms and how it is related to this exploration of boldness in the stories of people in the Bible.

The Psalms have popped up for me at significant moments where there was a lot going on, whether that was internally for me (2014 and 2018) or connected with things external (2016, 2020). Over the last half of 2024, I kept feeling a stirring around boldness in faith — reminders that the stories of Scripture do not call us to safety

and security but instead to step out with boldness and to act with courage, trusting in the one who has boldly called into our lives. I saw this in the books I was drawn to reading in the latter part of last year, notably *The Spirit of Justice* by Jemar Tisby, *See No Stranger* by Valarie Kaur, and *Life After Doom* by Brian McLaren. Each one of them speaks to a calling to boldness in the ways in which we live our lives. Tisby and McLaren speak into this coming out of the Christian tradition while Kaur speaks from another religious tradition.

And then in the midst of all of it, I encountered another book that has been surprising to me in how it has spoken to my life: *Opening to You: A Zen Inspired Translation of the Psalms* by Norman Fischer (who describes himself as a Jewish Buddhist).

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With my other “journeys” through the Psalms, I have had different guides and finding this one seemed to be a calling for me to return to them as 2025 began.

The Psalms are bold in what they share. In them, there’s no sense of holding back what the writers are feeling. There is the utmost joy and the deepest sorrows. The most burning anger and the fullest peace. All of them are there and everything in between. They are, in my opinion, the most human books of the Bible and they show the truth that it is ok to be bold before and with God.

So, all of this stirred together to bring together the sermon series we are scheduled to do through Easter as we look at people who boldly act on behalf of God in the ancient world. As we have spent the first few weeks thus far, I’ve been amazed at how the stories intersect with present day. It very much feels like the Spirit is speaking in these moments in the way it is all coming together. And feeding me through this are the Psalms once again using Fischer’s book as a guide. Fischer’s book, while not a true “translation” helps to take the Psalms, lift them up, and see them from another perspective, something those three books I shared about above have done for me.

While I know the stories of whom we are looking at in the weeks ahead, I don’t know how the Spirit is going to continue to lead in this time. But as we heard from the story of Abraham and Sarah early on, God’s call is not a call to timidity but to boldness. It is not about fearing what is ahead, but stepping into it with courage knowing that God goes with us. In the weeks ahead here’s whose

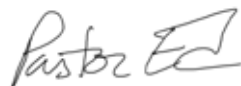
stories we’ll be exploring:

- February 2 – Rahab in Joshua 2
- February 9 – Abigail in 1 Samuel 25
- February 16 – Ruth in Ruth 1
- February 23 – Deborah in Judges 4
- March 2 – Jethro in Exodus 18
- March 9 – Elijah in 1 Kings 18
- March 16 – Nehemiah in a summary of the book of Nehemiah
- March 23 – Esther, also in a summary of her story
- March 30 – The unnamed woman in Mark 5
- April 6 – Peter and John before the Council in Acts 4
- April 13 – Paul’s boldness in witness in the book of Acts
- April 17 (Maundy Thursday) – Jesus’ bold act of service
- April 18 (Good Friday) – Jesus’ bold act of sacrifice
- April 20 (Easter) – Jesus’ Bold Miracle

If you want to follow along with the sermon series, obviously being in worship or viewing the sermons online will do that for you. I am also posting (mostly) daily about the Psalms on my personal site at imagoscriptura.com. Michele has included the first of my reflections on Psalms 1 in this issue for you to read if you would like.

As the disciples prayed in Acts 4 (paraphrasing a bit)... *grant to your servants to speak your word and live your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.*

Grace, Peace, Love, and Joy,



Pastor Ed

Thank You from AA

To Our Valued Host,

Thank you for graciously allowing the Happy, Joyous and Free Group of Alcoholics Anonymous to meet every Wednesday night in your welcoming and loving space.

We appreciate your kindness!

From Brighton Center

This December, Brighton Center assisted 908 families, encompassing 2,968 individuals, by providing food and gifts for the 2024 holiday season.

This assistance is crucial for the success of our families in achieving self-sufficiency and fulfilling their hopes and dreams. Our Holiday Drive addresses basic needs, helping families maintain stability and enjoy the best quality of life possible. Given the rising cost of living and utility bills, we connected with many families who needed more assistance beyond the Holiday Drive. In addition to the holiday support, CRC staff had the opportunity to address other needs, such as completing SNAP and Section 8 applications, as well as providing rental assistance.

Throughout December, CRC staff made referrals to Financial Coaching, Talent Development Services, and our newer program, Building Community Well-Being. This preventative family coaching program is designed for families living in Boone, Kenton, and Campbell counties with children aged 0-18 who are at risk of involvement with child welfare services. Thank you for being part of our Community of Support!

Christian Education Update

From Madeline Queen

We have had an awesome start to our new year in Christ Churches children's ministry! We are so excited for this year and our activities coming up!

February 23, 5:30 p.m.: Movie Night, bring your friends and family for pizza, popcorn, and fellowship!

March 10, 5:30 p.m.: Nourished In Christ, families join us for our Lent-en program, where we will gather together for dinner and proceed to break off into small group Bible studies and activities, we will have groups for children, youth, and parents. We will also have childcare for our younger children!

Sunday Mornings, 10:30 a.m.: Children, ages birth-Twelfth grade, join us for our children's Sunday School! We offer a fun and engaging schoolhouse experience for children to learn about God's love, making new friends, and grow in faith! We can't wait to see your little ones there!



Mission Team Update

From Christ Church Mission Team

A new year has begun with the Mission Team so we are looking ahead to what's before us in 2025! First, a brief look back at our 2024...we spent every dime that we had! Which means, every dime that was to go to our outreach ministries did exactly that! Yay!

So for 2025, we are looking at having mission opportunities every month through the year. Here's the preliminary schedule:

- **February:** packing hygiene kits for Church World Service
- **March:** An exciting new possibility that is still being finalized but just pencil March 30 for the date.
- **April 8:** Making and serving a meal for Washington UCC's outreach program
- **May:** Ronald McDonald House (date TBD)
- **June:** Hosea House (date TBD)
- **July:** Packing school kits for

Church World Service

- **August:** Hosea House (date TBD)
- **September:** Ronald McDonald House (date TBD)
- **October:** Hosea House (date TBD)
- **November:** Prepare Affair (leaf and outdoor work)
- **December:** Ronald McDonald House (date TBD)

If you have served in some of these ministries before, that's wonderful! For ones like Ronald McDonald House, can I encourage you to let others who may not have served have the first "crack" at signing up? We want to be sure we have as many people who can participate through the year as possible!

For Brighton Center collections, we'll be collecting Peanut Butter through the end of February. For March and April, we'll be collecting Knorr (or similar) meal packets

for easy meal prep for people.

At our January meeting, the team also approved a donation of \$1,000 to our siblings in faith at Altadena Community UCC whose facility burned down in the Los Angeles fires.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to serving others with the love and hope of Jesus!

PS: Here's a thank you from Brighton Center for all the help with their Holiday Drive:

We received nearly 3,000 pounds of food to support our families during the Holiday Drive from our Fort Thomas Ministerial Partners! The progress we achieve for and with our clients would not be possible without the generosity and support of so many caring individuals in our community. Thank you for being part of our Community of Support!

Psalm 1 – Place

When I first engaged the Psalms deeply, it was this tree that I saw as I read the ancient song. I returned to this space last Friday morning as I was feeling this Psalm stirring.

But this time, what spoke to me was something a lot closer to home. The workout space in our basement, a “dead” treadmill, and returning to a public gym. These three photos show me (with three different hues from our lights downstairs) just after finishing up a yoga flow on Sunday morning before heading to worship

We have a lot of extra space there now because of the “death” of our treadmill (which is now folded up against the wall waiting for us to decide what to do about it). We flipped over the mats underneath and returned to having the multi-colored sides face up rather than the black/grey they’ve been for the last four years. What I noted Sunday morning was how the light downstairs would change the dynamics of the colors but the yoga mat would stay as the constant in the middle. There is a “place” there for me in the midst of all the surrounding dynamics.

This was on my heart because of how Fischer shares part of Psalm 1.



In the NRSV (traditional) translation, verse four says this about “the wicked” after talking about the flourishing of those who are rooted in the ways of God:

The wicked are not so but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, (Psalm 1:4-5 NRSV)

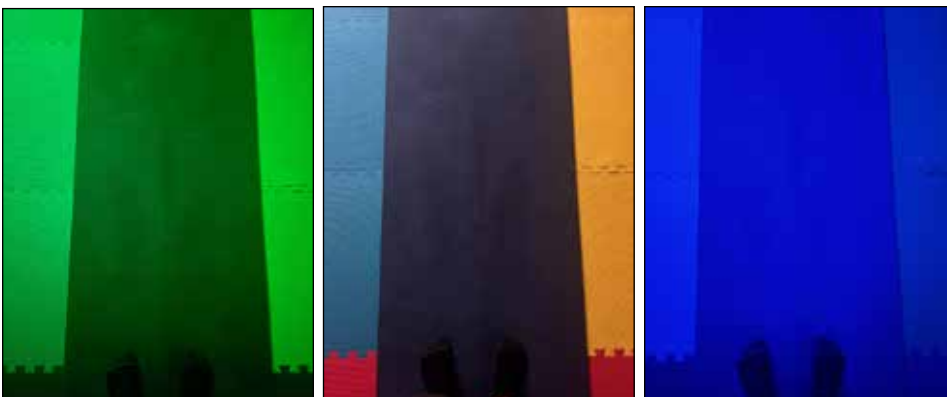
But Fischer puts it this way: *They are like chaff scattered by the wind. Endlessly driven, they cannot occupy their place. And so can never be seen or embraced. And they can never be joined*

I love how he writes of occupying

a place here. The “heedless” as he calls them (instead of “the wicked”) are blown about, unable to find a place to be rooted. But that also doesn’t allow them to be in community with others since they are blown about.

But this place in my basement isn’t the only part. The other part of the treadmill issue is that, I have had to return to going to a gym for aspects of my working out. In 2020, I stopped going to a gym at the beginning of Covid and never returned to it. In the two weeks that I’ve been back, I’ve actually been grateful because I am in space with many others whom I would not otherwise be with on a day-by-day basis. While we’re not having deep conversations or anything like that, I am with and not alone.

So these three photos speak to a rootedness for me — a rootedness in my yoga practice of connecting to my body but also how this new space is tied to the fact that I am reconnecting with others beyond this space.





New Choir Director

Danny Manning has worked as a professional musician, music director and arranger in the Cincinnati area since 1999 after residing in Greensboro, NC where he was Associate Music Minister for Starmount Presbyterian Church. He holds a BA in Music Education from Alderson Broaddus University in Philippi, WV and a Master of Music from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro in Choral Conducting. He is the former director of 16 years for the Xavier University Singers and former Assistant Band Director and musical conductor at Walnut Hills High School. He has also

provided musical direction for productions at The Carnegie, CCM Prep and The Aronoff Center. He is a professional arranger including projects for many live shows as well as Grand Night for Singing at Miami University. These days he primarily sings, plays saxophone and keyboard locally, nationally and internationally with Philip Myers Cooperate Entertainment, Just Strange Brothers, The Sunburners, and Noah Wotherspoon but is excited to get back to his roots in choral music at Christ Church. He is a proud Cincinnati West-sider presently residing in Cheviot and is a previous resident of Clifton.

Northern KY Youth

Youth Gathering

Sunday, Feb. 2, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Lakeside Carriage House

A regular (but always awesome) meeting. We'll gather for dinner, games, a special lesson, and fellowship. Join us! [RSVP here!](#)

Winter Retreat Overnight

Friday, Feb. 7-8, 3 p.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church

Join us and youth from around the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area for a special weekend retreat. We'll have games, great food, worship, and discuss ways we can foster safety in our communities by being faithful advocates for gun safety.

[RSVP here!](#)

President's Day Weekend:

No Meeting

Game Night

Sunday, Feb. 23, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Lakeside Carriage House

It's time for a little fun! Join us for an evening of food, games, and more. Bring a board game to share! [RSVP here!](#)

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Linda Griffith

Ben Petracco

Timothy Borah

Carolyn Tyler

Isaac Lyman

Ellie Jager

Audrey Jager

Brynn Draper

James Long

Nancy Barre

Steve Kappesser

Donna Stinson

Laura Petracco

Daniel Tenhunfeld

Ruth Rowe

Austin Huelsman

Barbara Walkenhorst-Derby

Ellen Turner

Jane Petracco

Stanley & Joyce Grau

Jan. Attendance

	In Person	Online
1/5/25	58	11
1/12/25	81	15
1/19/25	94	10
1/26/25	81	15



Memorials

Memorials for Maxine Noble
Linda Gracey



Prayer Requests

Covenant Cluster Prayer Partner:
Washington UCC, Cincinnati, OH
Jeff McDonald, Nancy Castleman, Fred Nippert, Susan Gabbard, The family of Maxine Noble, Makayla, Jamie & Kelly Greenwalt, Mike Bizzarro, Dave Jager, Chris P., Bènè and Janis, Rev. Andrew Bierkan, Mike & Laura Randall, Don Seifert, Shane, Dave, Tim, Karen, Jerry Baynum, Betty Stein, Jan Kennedy, Allen, Tammy Weidinger

(Names underlined indicate request for anonymity)

We have started a new prayer list. If you would like to add anyone on, please contact the office: (859) 441-2565

Hearing Assist Devices

We have replaced all the touch-screen hearing assist devices with FM-based units. They are in the Narthex and an usher can help you with working it. If you prefer to use your own headphones, you are welcome to do that as well.

Open and Affirming Process

If you have any questions about our Open and Affirming Process, please contact **Beckie Borah**



Interested in Joining Christ Church?

If you are interested in joining Christ Church as a covenant member, we are working on setting up our next time to do just that! Please contact **Pastor Ed** if you are interested!

Congregation Letter

*From Bert Bathiany,
Chairman Finance Board*

Hello 2025, goodbye 2024!! AS the Chair of the Finance Board, I am pleased to give a report on Christ Church's finances for 2024. It sounds like a broken record sometimes, but I once again am amazed at the generosity of our congregation. If you remember, I presented a budget last year that had a negative income compared to expenses. The Board monitored the budget and made requests for giving throughout the year. And, as always, you all have responded.

Our giving exceeded the budgeted giving and, as usual, our staff kept expenses in check. We ended up with just an \$81 dollar deficit! That is fantastic! Thank you to everyone who stepped up and made this happen

Pledged Giving	\$233,000
Actual giving	\$267,209
Giving surplus	\$34,209
Budgeted Income	\$339,001
Actual Income	\$342,090
Budget Expenses	\$364,274

Actual Expenses	\$342,171
Deficit	< \$ 81 >

We are in the process of creating the budget for 2025. Most members have turned in their pledge cards. Thank you. For those of you who have not yet turned your pledge card in, please prayerfully consider letting us know ASAP so that we have accurate information for 2025. We have been Blessed with a donation from Tom Jones to help with the new roof over the Education Building and possibly the steps that lead to Hoffman Hall. We also received a generous donation from Dave and Marcia Hosea for all of the wonderful Special Music during the Holidays. There are other projects that will require our attention in 2025. We had a significant leak in the conference room due to the snow storm. We are evaluating that now. I will keep everyone informed.

For now, let me say that Christ Church is financially stable because of it's dedicated congregation. Thank you all.



Church Council Meeting Notes

1/20/2025

In Attendance:

Pastor Ed Goode, Snezana Tenhundfeld, Bert Bathiany, Beckie Borah, Jen Korpik, Debbie Paillette, Jane Petracco, Sallie Schmidt, Marcia Storm, and Greg Vogel,

• **Gathering/Centering**

Ed shared passages from his book.

• **Approval of Minutes from Nov.**

Debbie made a motion to approve the minutes from November. Marcia seconded.

Minutes approved.

• **Electronic Sign for Front of Church**

No changes since November, the City of Fort Thomas did not reconsider. Moving forward with appeal

• **Financial Report**

- o Bert reported that we are in a good place with the budget, and we are waiting for more pledge for 2025.
- o Bert (and the Council) are very thankful for the hard work and dedication of the Financial Committee.
- o Jen made a motion to accept the financial report. Marcia seconded. **Report accepted.**

• **Personnel**

- o Danny Manning started as choir director
- o Max Gise and Talia Zoll will continue as Co-Music Directors
- o Still looking for an accompanist/organist.

• **Buildings and Grounds**

- o Greg reported there were 3 new leaks that occurred after the snowstorm and that it looks like an ice dam may be the cause of a couple. A claim will be filed with our insurance..
- o It was shared that a donor has given \$40,000 towards building needs. This will be used towards the roof (and maybe other issues.) We will be collecting bids for the project. .

• **Hearing devices**

Three new FM transmitters have been purchased and are available for use on Sunday along with the other two FM transmitters. Please see an usher if you are in need a hearing device.

• **Open and Affirming Update**

The Council had a lengthy conversation about the status of the Open & Affirming Process/ Covenant Conversation Team. There will be an update from the ONA team at the next meeting.

• **Meeting concluded with Prayer.**



Schedules for February

Liturgists

February 2	Barry Petracco
February 9	Marcia Storm
February 16	Carolyn Tyler
February 23	Scott Turner

Deacons

February 2	Jack Hurtt
February 9	Jean Braun
February 16	Greg Vogel
February 23	Marie Cunningham

Ushers

Feb. 2	Jack Hurtt Debbie Paillette Thierry Paillette Jay Wainscott
Feb. 9	Jean Braun Gordon Braun Carol Himes Andy Borah
Feb. 16	Greg Vogel Patti Miller Mike Evans Audrey Bernhard
Feb. 23	Ellen Turner Scott Turner Shelley Kappesser Steve Kappesser

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

— Isaiah 6:8 NIV



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<p>2</p> <p>9 am–Adult Discipleship 10:00 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children’s Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship 11:30 am–Choir</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10 am – Bloom Homeschool</p>	<p>4</p> <p>1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous</p>	<p>5</p> <p>10 am – Music Together 12 pm – Green Team 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group</p>	<p>6</p> <p>12 pm – Study Group</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <p>9 am–Adult Discipleship 10:00 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children’s Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship 11:30 am–Choir</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10 am – Bloom Homeschool 7 pm – Survivors of Suicide 7 pm – Finance Meeting</p>	<p>11</p> <p>1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10 am – Music Together 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group</p>	<p>13</p> <p>12 pm – Study Group 7 pm– Doll Group</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p>9 am–Adult Discipleship 10:00 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children’s Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship 11:30 am–Choir 11:30 am–Mission Team</p>	<p>17</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED President’s Day 6 pm – Church Council</p>	<p>18</p> <p>1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10 am – Music Together 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group</p>	<p>20</p> <p>12 pm – Study Group</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> <p>9 am–Adult Discipleship 10:00 am–Fellowship 10:30 am–Children’s Christian Education 10:30 am–Worship 11:30 am–Choir</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10 am – Bloom Homeschool</p>	<p>25</p> <p>11:30 am – Lunch and Learn 1:30 pm– Art Group 7 pm– Overeaters Anonymous</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:30 am – Mom’s Club 10 am – Music Together 3 pm–Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm– AA Group</p>	<p>27</p> <p>12 pm – Study Group</p>	<p>28</p>	