

June 2026

The Guide

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



CHRIST
CHURCH UCC

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Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday
9 a.m.–4 p.m.
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Worship Schedule:

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

Christ Church Staff:

Rev. Diane Vego
Interim Pastor

Max Gise
Worship Coordinator

Talia Zoll
Worship Coordinator

Danny Manning
Choir Director

Barb Walkenhorst Derby
Bookkeeper

Michele Wright,
Communications Director

Jeff Searcy
Custodian



Photo by Michele Wright

Honoring Strength *What a Gift and a Blessing*

Greetings! I hope this note finds you *all* well with wonderful vacation plans on the horizon, mouthwatering barbecues to enjoy, and all kinds of summer fun.

When I lived in Illinois, I visited The Old Town School of Folk Music often. One fall night, my friend and I traveled into the city to experience the music of Fred Small. That concert was great. Fred was a singer and songwriter, and he shared some of his favorite tunes with us on a beautiful fall night in the 1990's. After the concert, he said he would be attending a seminary to become a minister. I was surprised. What created the change in him and around him, I wondered?

Fred sang a song that became one of my favorites. In his lullaby, "Everything Possible" he sang about the roles of women and men and that "Everything is Possible." I was sur-

prised and encouraged. Now, some might take issue with the song, but I do not. I found it refreshing as Fred spoke about strong girls and about boys who were quiet and kind. That day in the 1990's, he was "shaking things up," and I had listening ears and hands that acknowledged his talent and wisdom.

Father's Day is coming up and when I think of traditional masculine characteristics, I think of strength, safety, and security. I grew up in a traditional home where dad did most of the work outside our home and mom worked, primarily, inside. However, my mom did possess a lot of strength, and my father was often quiet and kind. It is funny how often we grow up with stereotypes that pigeonhole us and keep us in place so no one will feel uncomfortable or disturbed.

Continued on next page

This month, I want to focus my attention on those who have provided strength, safety, and security for us. When I think of these things, I often think of my father. He died in 2005 just as I was getting settled here in Kentucky. Memories of him loom largely in my mind and are too numerous to count; however, what I remember most are his hands. My father's hands were large and strong, and they suited him well for all the physical work he enjoyed doing. He had the natural ability to handle a screwdriver or hammer gracefully — putting these tools to work on project after project around our home. We were lucky because my father could handle just about anything from plumbing to electrical work to auto mechanics. He could do it all!

You may have similar memories, or you may have difficult memories of your father. Father's Day is a great day for many of us, but for some the holiday is a "mixed bag." Not all fathers use their gifts and talents to support their families. Some have a hard time controlling the power that comes naturally to them. Some are not comfortable in nurturing rolls and many have trouble with their emotional landscape. For some folks, their mothers have often been the strong ones, the stable ones, and those who provided safety and security for the family. I know I witnessed a lot of strength from my mother, and I still do!

If this holiday is "hard" on you, then trust that God knows and understands. Perhaps you can then lean into God and trust her guidance, her mercy, and her grace.

For me, this month reminds me to recall God's strength and to lean into that, especially in times

of doubt, difficulty or confusion. God's strength makes a **huge** difference to me. In my meditation and prayer, I consider our creator God who made our world from scratch. I turn to the words of Genesis often where I recall that God "spoke" and with those words creation was born. Out in nature, I marvel at the power and the force of strong winds; those winds remind me that God's strength is a great mystery for me — something I can hardly comprehend.

This month, I would encourage you to take a look at Psalm 46. It is a favorite of mine. In it, we are reminded that "God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in trouble." How reassuring!

"Let's face it, 2026 is not the 1950s and mostly, I am grateful for this fact. It is my hope and prayer that fear and judgment will not be the hallmark for us as Christians. No! We do our best as a Christian community when we judge less and love more!"

Have you ever been in a dangerous situation or in a storm that just did not let up? I have, and with the words of Psalm 46, things certainly changed for me. Knowing God is my refuge means no matter what happens in my life or on this earth, God is always present and always willing to provide shelter for me or to be that "strong hand" when I am feeling weak or discouraged.

We're living in difficult times. There is so much tension in our nation's capital. And right here in Kentucky, some of our friends, neighbors, brothers, and sisters are struggling. It is hard not to get discouraged.

We know some mothers are strong and some fathers are quiet and kind. Some women work in factories and some men are chefs. Let's face it, 2026 is not the 1950s and mostly, I am grateful for this fact. It is my hope and prayer that fear and anger and judgment will not be the hallmark for us as Christians. No! We do our best as a Christian community when we judge less and love more!

This month, let us contemplate our God who is the creator of heaven and earth and who has provided this wonderful community for **all** of us to enjoy! God is with us through it all, a shield that helps us navigate difficult moments both as individuals and as a community. This I know to be true!

Friends, will you join me this month as I praise God's name — grateful for his strong hands and the mighty refuge he provides? Let's praise God's name together no matter what season we are in — no matter what circumstances befall us!

And let us love our neighbors as ourselves no matter who they are!

Do not lose heart, my friends. God is with us. God is our strength, our fortress, and our refuge! Alleluia! Alleluia, indeed!

Enjoy your summertime fun, Father's Day, and the many adventures you have planned.

With Grace and Gratitude,

Pastor Diane

"I will guide you in the way of wisdom and I will lead you in upright paths."
— Proverbs 4:11-12



Christian Education Update

We've been doing a lot of organizing downstairs for our new children's Christian Education program, Kids for Christ! We are excited about this new program and are looking for volunteers. If you are interested in supporting our team, please see Carolyn Honchell, Debbie

Paillette, or Ellen Turner.

Right now, we are in a time of transition, but our new team, with support from Pastor Diane, is hopeful with a few more volunteers, we will be able to build a program that may attract new children and new families

Mission Update

Thanks to everyone who came out on May 4 to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House for Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Volunteers always remark on how much it means to them when they interact with the children and their families.

Information about another opportunity will be coming out soon!

If you are interested in being part of the Mission Team, please contact **Melissa Cox**.

Donations to Bring in for Brighton Center for 2026

June— Canned hearty soups and chili
July— Canned pastas with meat or cheese (such as cheese ravioli)
Aug.— Complete pancake mix (just add water)
Sept.— Toothbrushes, toothpaste

Oct.— Macaroni and cheese
Nov.— Canned yams and potatoes
Dec.— Canned beans (pork and beans, refried beans, Lima beans etc)



Congratulations

Stephanie Laake (wife of Brian and mother of Russ) graduated from University of Cincinnati cum laude with an associates degree in Veterinary Science. She is excited to begin working at Med Vet while continuing to work standby in cardiac step-down at Children's Hospital. She also has a BSN and MSN from NKU.



Prayer Requests

Covenant Cluster Prayer Partner:
 Washington UCC, Cincinnati, OH

David Hosea, Makayla, Kelly Greenwalt, Karma Klingenberg, Katie Leftin, Jim Rechtin Jr., Maggie, Sallie Schmidt, Jeff McCall, Marcia Storm, Chris P., Mike Bizzarro, Mark Helminiak, Tim Kennedy, the family of Marcia Hosea, the family of Joyce Fehler, Laura, Jeff, Jack Emmerich, Melissa Brockman, Joe, Jed, Kelsey Morgan, Rich, Carolyn Honchell, the family of Barb Stinnett, Donna Hoffman, the family of Elsie Sent, Ellen C., Jim Jones, Jeff Krohmer, Barb Walkenhorst Derby, Jeff Krohmer, Joe Hall

(Underlining indicates anonymity)



Schedules for June

Liturgists

June 7	Jane Petracco
June 14	Barry Petracco
June 21	Nancy Barre
June 28	Marcia Storm

Deacons

June 7	Marie Cunningham
June 14	Greg Vogel
June 21	Jean Braun
June 28	Marie Cunningham

Ushers

June 7	Marie Cunningham Audrey Bernhard Mike Evans Marcia Storm
June 14	Greg Vogel Debbie Paillette Thierry Paillette Andy Borah
June 21	Jean Braun Ellen Turner Scott Turner Jay Wainscott
June 28	Marie Cunningham Patti Miller Nancy Pinguely Jeff Pinguely

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

Needed for *The Guide*

- 1) **Take photos!** Anytime you are at an event associated with the church or a special service, please consider taking photos and emailing them to Michele. Always appreciated!
- 2) **If you have become a member in the last two years or so,** please contact Michele so she can write a short introductory paragraph about you to put in *The Guide*.
- 3) **Is there a special recognition or event in your life?** Please let Michele know so she can put it in our newsletter.
- 4) **Send a summer photo!** In the July, August, and September edition of *The Guide*, we would like to put a photo in from your vacation or a highlight from your summer for everyone to enjoy. Thank you!

It's Still Here!

Sitting quietly against the Audubon side of the church, just a few feet from the sidewalk, is a metal container with a slot at the top resembling a huge mailbox.

For almost two years, Reboot has been collecting old electronics at Christ Church. Each month they send out an email to the four areas in Northern Kentucky that have a Reboot bin on their property which lists how many pounds of electronics they retrieved from their bins. And every month, Christ Church is dead last.

We need to step up our game! I know there are people that have some old electronics they want to get rid of. Just toss them in on your way in to church in the morning. Tell your family and neighbors about this great way to get rid of unused electronics while also being good stewards of this incredible earth God gave us.

Reboot takes: computers, monitors, printers, phones, computer accessories, small electronics, power cords, unused ink, unused toner, and lots of other electronics



as long as it fits in the slot.

If items can be reused, that is their first priority. If not, they connect with other places for repair and refurbishment.

For more information on Reboot and what they take, visit: Rebootrecyclers.com.





Church Council Meeting Notes

5/18/2026

In Attendance:

Greg Vogel, Beckie Borah,
Gordon Braun, Linda Gracey,
Karen Robinson, Ellen Turner,
Josh Woodward

• **Gathering/Centering Prayer**

The Lord's Prayer

• **Approval of Minutes**

Linda made a motion to approve the minutes from April 29, 2026, Ellen seconded, **Minutes approved.**

• **Financial Report**

- \$10,000 from Ann Kear's Estate was put in the Ann Kear Benevolent account
- Giving is on track for the year.
- Josh made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Karen seconded. **Report approved.**

• **Letter from the Pastor**

- Greg read a letter from Diane in her absence.
- She thanked the council for her time off,
 - Requested help for her minister neighbor who is taking mission work in Canada—Greg will refer to Melissa Cox, head of the Mission Team
 - Tom Daria and Don Gibson will be serving the pulpit in her absence

• **Building and Grounds**

Linda reported that the two work days were successful with lots accomplished (specifics listed in this issue of *The Guide*)

• **Search Committee**

- Peter Borah, Jean Braun, Mike Evans, Mary Hertzman, Donna Stinson, Snezana Tenhunfeld, Josh Woodward
- Josh reported on the first meeting. They have received a packet from Cleveland Community Congregational Church which included forms we will be using. Josh went over the forms. One thing Executive Council will need to do is audit the church membership.
 - Greg emphasized the importance of transparency

• **Meeting ended with a prayer that Josh read**

The next Executive Council Meeting is Monday, June 22, at 6 p.m.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

— 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Electronic Sign

The Gracey Family is getting close to the final decision on the sign in memory of husband and father, Jim. Hopefully it will be installed sometime this summer.

The Sanctuary

Bids were taken for repairing and painting the areas around the stained glass windows plus the walls below. A painting crew was hired, and they did a wonderful job of scraping away the chipped paint and repainting the area. They also painted the walls below the windows and cleaned and varnished the two doors leading into the back hallways. Be sure and check out our beautiful sanctuary! This was a wonderful gift from the generous donation from Nancy Barre and her brother Tom Jones. Thank you Nancy and Tom!

Thanks to Our Church Family

Dear Christ Church and Friends, I would like to thank everyone for your prayers during my surgery. There were times when I was struggling that I could feel your arms around me. Christ Church has such a special group of people. I am so glad I could join you. The cards always brighten my day. The prayer blanket is meaningful and lovely. It has been put to good use. According to the doctors, I am doing great. Hope to see everyone soon. Love, Suzanne Jones

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love."

— 1 John 4:7-8 NRSV

There is No Lunch and Learn in June

*“I lift up my eyes to the mountains — where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”*

— Psalm 121:1-2



*“That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit
in season and whose leaf does not wither — whatever they do prospers.”*

— Psalm 1:3



Photos by Michele Wright

Two Successful Work Days

Our spring work days to spruce up the inside of the church were very successful. Thank you to all those who brought their muscle power and smiles. Also lots of appreciation to those who contributed financially to help with these projects.

We accomplished:

- Prints of Bev Erschell and photos of Michele Wright matted and framed
- 3 ceilings with holes repaired
- Several walls painted throughout
- Banisters, doors, baseboards, frames sanded and painted
- Wood doors on both floors of education building cleaned
- Communion closet cleaned out
- Cabinets in Parlor cleaned
- Both credenzas cleaned
- Small room, across from chapel, cleaned out
- Old broken furniture pitched
- Narthex organized
- Balcony checked and cleaned
- Steps and hall from the Narthex to Hoffman Hall cleaned
- New carpet laid on ramp in Hoffman Hall

- Kitchen stove cleaned
- New railing installed at the top of the steps from Hoffman Hall
- Organized and cleaned Children's Education rooms

Projects Still to be Completed:

It has been amazing how much has been accomplished during two work days in the fall and two spring work days plus what Barry and many of our guys have done on their own! We still have plumbing to repair, painting to complete, concrete work on porch area outside upper steps, caulking outside base of stained glass windows, sound system to add to Hoffman Hall (for renting purposes), color to be added to the walls in Hoffman Hall and possibly decisions on curtains. Please let Nancy Hunter, Greg Vogel, or Linda Gracey know any improvements you recommend. Financial aid is still being collected for the "Capital Improvement" Fund. This is in addition to what you give for your weekly pledge. Thank you for the many ways you help our church!

May Attendance

	In Person	Online
5/3/26	68	N/A
5/10/26	79	N/A
5/17/26	67	N/A
5/24/26	69	N/A
5/31/26	67	N/A

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Lauren Thomas** who graduated from Highlands High School. Lauren is the daughter of Shannon and Hunter Thomas, and the granddaughter of Patti Miller.

Congratulations to **Drew Hack** who graduated from Hanover College. Drew is the son of Krista and Joe Hack and the grandson of Linda Gracey.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

— Jeremiah 29:11

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Marilyn Chapman
Bert Bathiany V
Kelsey Thomas
Barry Petracco
David Huelsman
Jeri McMath
Jeff Pinguely
Michael Luken
Adam Tenhunfeld
Sallie Schmidt
Susan McDonald
Megan Abner
Betsy Beimesche
Russell Laake

Ken & Carolyn Honchell
Larry & Donna Stinson
Michele & Randall Wright
Gary & Rebecca Plummer
Joshua & Erin Vogel
Kevin & Sharon Siple
Snezana & Adam Tenhunfeld
Bernie & Nancy Barre
Terri & David Jager
Jack & Sandra Hurtt
Greg & Ramel Vogel

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 1:30 pm – Art Group 7 pm – Overeaters Anonymous	3 3 pm – Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm – AA Group	4 12 pm – Study Group	5	6
7 8:30 am – Fellowship 10:30 am – Children's Christian Education 10:30 am – Worship	8 7 pm – Finance Meeting 7 pm – Survivors of Suicide	9 1:30 pm – Art Group 7 pm – Overeaters Anonymous	10 3 pm – Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm – AA Group	11 12 pm – Study Group 7 pm – Doll Group	12	13
14 8:30 am – Fellowship 10:30 am – Children's Christian Education 10:30 am – Worship	15	16 1:30 pm – Art Group 7 pm – Overeaters Anonymous	17 3 pm – Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm – AA Group	18 12 pm – Study Group	19 JUNETEENTH	20
21 FATHERS DAY 8:30 am – Fellowship 10:30 am – Children's Christian Education 10:30 am – Worship 11:30 am – Mission Team	22 10 am – Bloom Work Day 6 pm – Church Council	23 NO LUNCH AND LEARN 1:30 pm – Art Group 7 pm – Overeaters Anonymous	24 3 pm – Small Group Zoom Link is: bit.ly/ccwednesday 7 pm – AA Group	25 12 pm – Study Group	26	27
28 8:30 am – Fellowship 10:30 am – Children's Christian Education 10:30 am – Worship	29	30 1:30 pm – Art Group 7 pm – Overeaters Anonymous				