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Remarks from Pastor Steve

It's Christmas time. How's your shopping going? The average consumer spent \$360 each on Black Friday with a combined total of billions on Cyber Monday. Gift giving is fun, but paying for them, not so much fun.

Here are eight gifts that you can give that will not cost you a cent...

1. The Gift of Listening, but you must really listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response...just listening.
2. The Gift of Affection. Be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.
3. The Gift of Laughter. Clip cartoons or share funny stories. Your gift will say, "I love to laugh with you."
4. The Gift of a Written Note, it can be simple. A "Thanks for your help" note or a letter. A brief, handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime and may even change a life.
5. The Gift of a Compliment, simple and sincere. "You look good in red," "You did a super good job" or "That was a wonderful meal" can make someone's day.
6. The Gift of a Favor. Every day, go out of your way to do something kind.
7. The Gift of Solitude. There are times when we want nothing better than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.
8. The Gift of a Cheerful Disposition. The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone, really it's not that hard to say, "Hello" or "Thank you."

Pastor Steve

Singles @ First

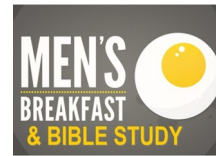
The Singles @ First group has planned to make cookies for the Cookie Walk and play cards on Friday, December 4th. The event will be held at Charlotte Castle's home (12 Meadowview Estates) at 6 pm and please call her at 258-6054 if you need directions.



SINGLES AT FIRST

Singles at First is for all singles who are interested in making FRIENDS, having FUN and wanting to experience FELLOWSHIP with others. They plan to have a regular monthly event the first Friday of each month. A second event, Fast Food Sunday, will take place the last Sunday of each month — eating out at a fast food place after the second service.

Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfast Fellowship Group will meet on Saturday, December 5th at 7 am in Campbell Hall. Come

down for a cinnamon roll, juice, coffee, milk and a great lesson titled, *Better Together* by Rick Warren and facilitated by Pastor Steve. We will also work on covering a few windows in the classrooms upstairs to help with the utility costs.

Cookie Walk

The FCC 2015 Cookie Walk will be held Saturday, December 5th from 8 am to Noon.



All are invited to come and purchase some cookies, candy or crafts for the Christmas season. The new church cookbooks will be for sale at the Cookie Walk for \$15 each.

Christmas Caroling



The Discovery Class will be going Christmas Caroling on December 12th and have invited all to attend. Everyone wanting to go needs to meet at the church at 12:30 pm to go sing carols to some folks who are unable to get out. The group will return around 6 pm or so for a potluck and time to relax.



We will collect a Christmas Special Offering on Sunday, December 13th and 20th. Please use the Christmas envelope from your offering box or clearly mark on your check "Christmas Offering." The money will be used to help people from our church with needs that arise.

News from Paul

Hey FCC,

It is a busy time of the year for all of us and I hope this finds you doing well through all of the hectic schedules which comes along with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. As I type this, the sun is starting to come through this fine Monday morning. I have to make a trip to Champaign today, so I think I will ride the bike. On the way back I may look for a place to stop and enjoy a cup of "Joe" along with reading a little of my homework assignment for Lincoln Christian University. Evelyn is visiting with her mom, running errands, and taking care of some details with IOOF for her mom's recent admission there.

I have some very great news to share. There will be 15 people affected in some way or the other by each box that was sent for Operation Christmas Child! With 134 boxes there will be over 2,010 people touched! Each box touches families in ways which we will never know. Thank you for your generosity, prayers and support. We look forward to next year!

I am winding down this semester at LCU and looking forward to the break. It has been a great semester, and I have found myself pressing through some challenges I never would have in years past. One thing I have really learned this semester is the importance of discipleship in the church and how it has sort of fallen off the radar. This has been an epidemic overall and not simply in one area of the country or church. I recently read something I knew, but had not really thought about in this context; Jesus came not only to die for our sins, but He also came to make disciples and teach disciples how to make disciples, who can teach, and so on. What He started then has not stopped. It is up to each generation of disciples to raise the next generation of disciples (see Matt. 4:19). We have some great classes at FCC which can help us to be better disciples and I would like to challenge each of you to take advantage of the Bible 101, Discipleship 201, UIC, HIS, Ladies and Discovery classes. Each class has something offered which can help you become plugged in with others and become "Fishers of men (or women)." I look forward to seeing you Sunday.

In His Service,
Paul Weber

Poinsettias

The church would be happy to have a poinsettia in the sanctuary on December 20th in memory of your loved one. Call the church office by noon on Tuesday, December 15th with the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin. Please have your plant at the church by the time church starts on the 20th.



Thank You Note

Thank you to the following people for volunteering at the Mattoon Food Center during 2015: Steve Ballinger, Dennis and Jan Booker, Mike Brand, Russ Camfield, Mike Craig, Don and BJ Dennis, Tom and Sally Dickerson, Richard and Joy Eident, Carroll Gibbons, John Greathouse, Ron Hatfield, Jacqueline Hortenstine, Steve and Nancy Huckaba, Linda Janes, Steve and Raelyne Lane, Jack Little, Maggie Merriman, Cinda Moran, Mary Roberts, Candy Tate, Doris Webb, Paul and Evelyn Weber, Julie Wurtsbaugh, Pastor Steve, Rod and Linda Fleming, Roger Rives, Jack and Sandy Herren, Belinda Hendrix, Amber Eident, and Dave and Glenda Wright.



Thank you to those who packed a shoebox or prayed for the ministry of Operation Christmas Child! How exciting to know 134 children will be blessed by our shoeboxes and will hear the good news that Jesus loves them! Keep praying for the children who will receive shoeboxes, that their hearts will be open to receiving Jesus and their lives will be changed by these simple gifts.

World Missions Team

Thanks to all who helped me celebrate my 90th Birthday and to all who made it possible.

John Greathouse

I would like to thank my church family for your prayers for my niece, Linda Hamilton. She is recovering from her surgery. Unfortunately, she will have to take a series of chemo treatments and then radiation. Please remember her in your prayers.

Thanks To All of You,
Shirley and Ed Davis

2016 Deaconess Sign-Up

Deaconesses who have not already signed-up for the 2016 Communion Preparation there is a list in the narthex for you to sign-up for your 2 Sundays. If you don't sign up dates will be assigned to you by the Deaconess Chairwoman.

Church Life

Friday, December 4

6 pm Singles @ First at Charlotte Castle's home

Saturday, December 5

7 am Men's Breakfast

8-Noon Cookie Walk

8:30 am Elders' Meeting

Sunday, December 6

8:30 am Traditional Worship Service

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Contemporary Worship Service

5-7 pm FROG and 6-8 pm ROCK Meetings

Monday, December 7

10 am Staff Meeting

5 pm Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 8

7 am Prayer Time in the UIC room

5 pm Praise Team Party at Monicals with Practice to follow

Wednesday, December 9

9 am "Crafts Are Us" Group

5:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

6 pm Chancel Choir Practice

6 pm Mid-Week Outlet Program

Saturday, December 12

12:30 pm Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 13

8:30 am Traditional Worship Service

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Contemporary Worship Service

5-7 pm FROG and 6-8 pm ROCK Meetings

Monday, December 14

10 am Staff Meeting

6 pm Trustees Meeting

7 pm Church Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 15

7 am Prayer Time in the UIC room

Wednesday, December 16

9 am "Crafts Are Us" Group

5:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

6 pm Chancel Choir Practice

6 pm Mid-Week Outlet Program

Thursday, December 17

6 pm Worship Team Practice



Wassail

Everyone is invited to the Wassail on Sunday, December 20th at 9:30 am in Campbell Hall. Christmas refreshments will be served.



Baby Back Ribs

The Philippine Mission Team is selling racks of ribs for a fundraiser. Proceeds will help fund the team member's travel expenses. Ribs will be available for pick up on January 12th and 14th. The tickets are \$18 and can be purchased from the church office, any team member or by calling Paul Weber at 273-6565.

Mid-Week Outlet



The Mid-Week Outlet program meets each Wednesday from 6-7:30 pm for K-5 and JHH Students with supper being provided. They will meet on December 9th and the 16th, break for Christmas and resume on January 6th, 2016.

FROG/ROCK News

The FROG (6-8 graders) and ROCK (9-12 graders) are meeting each week for meetings and/or activities.



Sunday, December 6 — FROG 5-7, ROCK 6-8 pm
Sunday, December 13 — FROG 5-7, ROCK 6-8 pm

Coats, Hats and Gloves

Just a reminder it's never too early to purchase coats, hats and gloves for kids for next winter. Watch for Christmas sales and please store the items at your home.



Christmas Concert



Continuing their tradition of “giving” to the community, the Coles County Barbershop Singers will present their 39th Annual Christmas Benefit Concerts on Sunday, December 6th. Wesley Methodist Church (2206 4th Street, Charleston) will host the 3 pm concert while the First Presbyterian Church (10 Charleston Ave in Mattoon) will be the site of the 7 pm performance. Both churches have plenty of parking and are wheel chair accessible. The 25 man chorus and four quartets will present a FREE one hour concert that focuses on the true meaning of Christmas. A free will offering will be taken and disbursed to area needy Food and Homeless Shelter Programs. Thousands of dollars are raised each year at these concerts.

Christmas Decorations

The Worship Committee will be taking down the Christmas Decorations on Monday, December 28th at 5 pm. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Please sign-up in the narthex if you can help.



The Building Fund has a balance of: \$222,005.30

Amazonsmile Program

Just a reminder that when you order items from Amazon log into the smile.amazon.com website and choose to support *First Christian Church Marilyn Purcell* and .5% of your qualifying transaction will help support the missions at the church. It's that simple...shop and support missions!

Serving Communion

Sunday, December 6

8:30 am — John Armstrong, Steve Ballinger, John Greathouse, Jim Long, Don Inman, Steve Lane, Bud Miller
10:30 am — Donica Brand (captain), Randy Albin, Chanon Fine, Dennis Goings, John Holmes, Neil Wofford

Sunday, December 13

8:30 am — John Armstrong, Steve Ballinger, John Greathouse, Jim Long, Denny Booker, Jack Browning, Tim Buford, Tim Cyr
10:30 am — Dave Whitley (captain), Amy Maninfior, Nick Maninfior, Bob Morgan, Dolo Wishard, Neil Wofford

Church Attendance

Nov. 22nd: Traditional: 120, Contemporary: 57 = 177
Nov. 29th: Traditional: 114, Contemporary: 91 = 205