



CASCADIAN WEEKLY

November 12, 2021

Week 87

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

BASIC BELIEFS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Richard L. Spleth, Regional Minister, Christian Church in Indiana

How do you describe our church to others? As members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) we do not have the "brand name" recognition of some other denominations, and to some degree that is good. We never set out to be a denomination in the first place, but rather to be a movement to foster the unity of the church for the sake of Christ's mission. Nevertheless, we evolved into a distinct group within the universal church and as such have a particular identity and culture.

How do you explain this in your evangelistic outreach? Here is a list of ten attributes that identify and clarify the combination of things that are unique to the Disciples. Note that I said combination. There is no single thing true about our church that is not also true of other Christians, but the combination is a distinctive one, and a healthy one too, I believe. The things that together identify the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) include these:

The weekly observance of the Lord's Supper: Disciples' life is centered at the table. Through communion we are connected to one another and to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Believer's baptism by immersion: Following the earliest tradition of the church, we demonstrate our commitment to God by dramatic action, letting the waters of our baptism give witness to God's grace upon us.

Open membership: Recognizing that the traditions of the whole church are many and varied, we do not insist that our baptismal practice is the only one that is valid. We know that baptism is God's action far more than our own. An attitude of tolerance and a rejection of creeds as tests of faith. We celebrate diversity as strength rather than weakness, and do not expect everyone's interpretation of the Bible or the Christian life to be identical.

The importance of scripture: We believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and is best heard and understood within the community of faith with the diverse insight that context provides.

Congregational yet voluntarily connectional: We give the local congregation authority over their life and ministries, and yet share resources freely with a connected church, our denomination, knowing that the mission of the church is not just local.

The inclusion of the leadership of women: We believe that God provides spiritual gifts to all and do not restrict any office or role in the life of the church by gender.

An emphasis on lay leadership: Aside from performing weddings which is regulated by the state, lay persons in our church are permitted and encouraged to do all things, including presiding and offering the Eucharistic prayers at the Lord's Table, often restricted to ordained clergy in other denominations.

An educated clergy: We set educational and professional standards for ministers—licensed and ordained, and hold our clergy to ethical accountability through denominational oversight.

A priority on ecumenical life: Disciples earnestly pray and strive for the unity of the church and attempt to work in ways that bridge the separation of Christ's body. It would be difficult to find this combination of characteristics anywhere but within the Disciples.

I hope these ten attributes are valued by you, and that you, too, will use them as you attempt to describe our church to others, inviting them to join us in serving Christ.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Sunday</u> _(11/14).	Sunday School - 9:30 AM Crib Room - 9:30 AM Worship - 9:30, 11:00 AM Tailgate Party & Food Pantry Competition
<u>Monday</u> _(11/15).	Book Club Advocates - 11:30 AM (Coffee House) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Tuesday</u> _(11/16).	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) Women's Bible Study - 9:00 AM (Coffee House) Senior Citizen Thanksgiving Dinner Young Adult Small Group 7:00 PM
<u>Wednesday</u> _(11/17).	Overeaters Anonymous - 3:30 PM (Coffee House) Wednesday Night Classes 6:30 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Bible Study "The Chosen" • Wednesday Jubilee - Elementary School • Youth Group - Middle & High School Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Thursday</u> _(11/18).	Grief Share - 10:00AM (Coffee House) Be Bold - 5th-7th grade class 4:15 - 5:45 PM Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Friday</u> _(11/19).	Church Office Closed Open Talk Group - 7:30 AM (Coffee House)
<u>Saturday</u> _(11/20).	Diversity and Inclusion Group - 9:00 AM Coffee House Days For Girls - 1:00-4:00 PM (Centennial Hall)

Financial giving for
the week ending in
10/31/2021:
Budgeted: \$10,652
Given: \$18,377

SOUP AND SANDWICH SCHEDULE THROUGH SEPT.

- December 16, 2021 - Jacob Relph will lead us in Christmas songs and singing
- January 20, 2022 - Bobbi Meir will share her family connection to WWII History
- February 17, 2022 - Mark Langenbach will talk about rural life and ministry in Lakeview, South Dakota
- March 17, 2022 -Grammy Award winning singer/songwriter Christopher Sloan will share his talents
- April 21, 2022 - Ada Christian Middle School Band "You know em, you love em" - the tradition lives on!
- May 19, 2022 - Rachel Deng, from Sudan, tells her amazing story of faith and courage
- September 15, 2022 - Watch our Middle School Leader, Adam, outperform Joe DiMaggio's "Mr. Coffee"

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL - 9:30

Our Sunday School class has been learning about the Fruits of the Spirit. Children are encouraged to bring money for an offering each week. Near Christmastime, we will use the money we've collected to buy toys and books for kids at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Parents, please talk with your children about tithing and what it means to be generous.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT - NOV. 12TH

Parents' Night Out Returns! On Friday, November 12th, we are offering a night of free childcare from 6:00 to 8:00pm for children 3 months - 10 years of age. Dinner will be provided! Email Adam Carlson (acarlson@cascadechristian.com) or call the church office to sign up ASAP.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

Our Wednesday Night Youth Group for elementary kids is up and running again. We are doing our own unique lesson, playing some fun games, doing crafts, and having a great snack each week. Come learn more about God, and hang out with some of your friends from Elementary Camp!

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

We are getting ready for the Christmas program here at Church. If you have a child that would like to participate in the program, please contact Adam Carlson before Thanksgiving. We look forward to seeing what they put together!



MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

BE BOLD

We are holding a class for 5th-7th graders on Thursday afternoons from 4:15 - 5:45. Each week we'll be wrestling with questions about the faith. If your child needs a ride from school, please contact the church office.

ROLLAWAY SKATING/BOWLING

Sunday, November 21st -- we will be meeting at Cascade at 12noon to go to Rollaway Skating/Bowling. Again, feel free to come to Sunday School at 11 and then be picked up back at Cascade around 3 pm.

JUBAL BRASS BRUNCH

On December 5th the Middle School and High School Youth Groups will be hosting the Jubal Brass Brunch to help raise money for our Winter and Summer activities! Please let Michael Dirksen know if you are able to help volunteer for a time to help work the brunch.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

Our Wednesday Night Youth Group is up and running again. We are following the lessons in Sunday School and learning more about what we learned that week in Sunday School. We hope to see you here each week!

EVENT SIGN UP -- IMPORTANT!!

We are so excited to get youth group underway. We will be going to Spring Hill for a winter retreat, Mackinac Island, on a mission trip, and doing some fundraisers to help pay for these events as well. If you'd like to help out or you know that your child would like to participate, please fill out the form. Let Michael know if you have any questions.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

This year we are working our way through the whole Bible. Come right up to the youth room at 11:00 AM (we will not be dismissing from Church). We hope to see you there!

MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS

Middle School Madness is returning on November 19th from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM. (high schoolers are welcome to help!) Join us for games, food, and a fun Friday evening!

GENERAL NEWS

FALL CLEAN UP DAY

All are invited for our annual Fall Clean Up Day for the church grounds Saturday, November 13 at 9:00 Bring a rake and gloves.

GROUP TRIP TO IKEA

Get your unique Christmas Presents early. We are going to Ikea in Canton, MI. We got so excited, we said the trip was November 18th but it is Friday, November 19th. You must call the office for reservations, limited seating. The Church Bus will leave at 8:00AM

We will eat lunch at Ikea restaurant (great place). If we leave and have enough time we may stop at Tanger in Howell and hope to be home by 6:30

Have fun and join us.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GROUP MEETING

The Diversity and Inclusion group will be meeting Saturday November 20 at 9:00 AM in the Coffee House.

VETERANS DAY SUNDAY

On Sunday, November 14 the church will recognize our veterans in both the 9:30 and 11:00 worship services. We hope that all of the veterans of the congregation will be present to stand and receive our gratitude at a time of thanks during the service. We continue to update our list of veterans, and apologize when people have been left off. Thank you to all who served God and country!

CONGREGATIONAL CARE - THANKSGIVING DINNER

- TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Many thanks to the Congregational Care Committee under the direction of Susan Strobel and John Duchon for the work on the annual Thanksgiving Dinner for Senior Citizens. Due to precautions issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the church will be hosting a drive through- take out dinner again this year. We simply do not have enough space to safely distance and host this as a sit-down dinner. Last year many chose to eat their dinners together with friends off campus, and we encourage all who are comfortable to do the same this year. If you would like to serve on the committee who will prepare for this dinner, please call the church office.

DAYS FOR GIRLS WORKSHOP

Assembling, ironing, cutting, and stitching sustainable menstrual kits for young women, in Centennial Hall.

November 20, 1-4

All skill levels, sewers and non-sewers alike. Contact Diane Phelps (email dianephelps2010@gmail.com), or call the church office.

EMPLOYMENT MINISTRY - ST. ROBERT CHURCH

In-person support group meetings have resumed at St. Robert on every other Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m. They are entering the 14th year of this ministry and are pleased to announce that most of their members successfully find employment in their chosen field at a commensurate salary. Meetings are held on November 17, and December 1, 15, and 29.

This ministry is a part of the Employment and Resource Network, a ministry that has been hosted for the past 20 years by churches in West Michigan. There is also a Zoom group session on alternate Wednesdays hosted by our founder Ken Soper.

11.7.2021 SERMON: COME TO THE TABLE

Good Morning,

Welcome to Cascade Christian Church, and if you are online watching welcome and know that all are welcome at the Lord's Table.

If we haven't met, I'm Andy Elliott. I am a member here at Cascade Christian Church and also a seminarian at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, OK. I am honored that Pastor Jill asked me to fill in today in her absence while she is away having some self care.

Today may look a little different as we have changed the sequence up a little bit. I wanted to do this because of the message today and felt that it was fitting for us to partake in the Lord's supper after the message.

As we come to worship today, we lift up those who are on our prayer list here at Cascade, and those who are struggling to make it through this chaotic time. When it seems as though we have done all that we can do in different situations we remind ourselves that sometimes the most important and needed thing to do is to turn to our God in prayer. In these times we are able to communicate with our God and just spend time devoted to God. Are there any additional prayer of concern or joys to be lifted up?

Will you pray with me?

Oh Gracious God,

We give you thanks for the beautiful fall day. Lord we are reminded all too often of the chaos and the hurt that so many are suffering and dealing with in our world. When it seems as though we have nothing left, I pray that we can continue to turn to you oh God and know that you are with us and walking alongside us. It is truly a blessing that we have the ability to go to you whenever and wherever we may be in our lives. Oh God, I pray that you continue to bless this congregation as you have done for so many years. God as we go into what seems like the most chaotic time of the year, let us not forget that we celebrate the coming of your son during this time and I pray that we can truly enjoy the season of advent. We pray for those who are hurting and struggling in life right now.

God we continue to pray for our Pastor Jill and her husband and they are traveling across country and praying for their safe return. Lord I pray for Pastor Jill and Cascade Christian church as we go into this season of Advent and let our hearts be filled with Joy.

Gracious God, we give you the upmost thanks and pray this all by praying that very special prayer that you taught us to pray. Our Father,

Scripture:

One of my favorite things about being a member of the Disciples of Christ denomination is the fact that whenever we gather in worship we feel as though it is important to celebrate the Lord's supper. To me this is important because it reminds me that Christ sacrificed himself for each of us.

Will you pray with me?

O Gracious God, I give you thanks for this day. We are truly blessed to be able to come together and worship you. God, I pray that we can quiet our hearts, clear our minds, and be drawn closer to you. Lord let these words spoken from my mouth be words spoken from your mouth and honor you. Amen.

This morning's Scripture comes from the book of Luke. Now I originally communicated that Luke 22 vs. 17-23 but after reading the scripture again, I felt that it was important to read the 3 verses before.

Luke 22:14-23 reads: When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them. I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

11.7.2021 SERMON: COME TO THE TABLE

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The son of man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

Sermon:

It is the first Sunday of November, and It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of the year 2021 already. The last 2 years have just been a chaotic mess that we all have had to navigate in different ways than we were used to.

But, when the first of November hits Amber and I always start talking about when we are going to start decorating for Christmas and normally we don't do it until the weekend after Thanksgiving. We will see if we can wait that long again this year.

As we approach Thanksgiving, I get excited about the holidays because of all of the fun and great times that are spent around the table or in the kitchen of my house. I thoroughly enjoy being in the kitchen and cooking or baking enjoying a nice glass of wine while talking with those who are in there with me. But what excites me the most about Thanksgiving is the fact that after thanksgiving comes the season of advent. I am excited to celebrate advent and so we can get our minds, hearts, and souls ready for the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus.

Now thanksgiving and Christmas time are generally most individuals favorite times of the year because for most folks are getting together with friends and family and celebrating life around a table and share about different stories from the year and years past. Sure, they can be chaotic at times and sometimes we can be on overload with all the extra things and duties we have this time of year. This year like last year may be a little different than any other year for most of us, but one thing for sure is that it doesn't change our ability to love and care for each other.

Generally speaking when we hear this mornings scripture we think about Jesus breaking bread and the wine that was shared with his disciples and what we are to do with each. But, today I want us to focus on the table. When you think about your table at home or the table around your parents or grandparents or someone in your family, what are some different memories that come to your mind?

****PAUSE** 5 SECONDS**

I don't know about you but sitting at a table with others is one of my favorite places to build relationships. Gathering around tables is where I have been welcomed by so many different people from all walks of life and around the world. It has been around the table that I have talked with others about my faith. A table is where I have helped pack different meals for those who were suffering from hunger in Haiti. Even this past weekend when our family was visiting Amber's family in Northern Wisconsin we were gathered in the kitchen and around the dining room table after all of excitement was done. We were celebrating just being together.

I also think about my favorite table at home which is a small yellow table that is over 100 years old that we are using as a desk right now. This table came from my great-grandparents and oh how I wish I could hear and know all the stories that this table could tell. There were numerous times that a bible has been read at this table, and then I couldn't tell you the number of noodles that had been laid out on this table to dry or the number of jars that had been canned that were set on this table over the years. Or most recently the different paint colors that our children have accidentally gotten on it when they were toddlers because of doing arts and crafts on it. This table is helping me throughout my studies at seminary.

11.7.2021 SERMON: COME TO THE TABLE

There are several different scriptures throughout the Bible referring to a table, you see tables have been gathering places for thousands of years. They are the heart and soul of a family and what our faith in Christ is centered around. We see throughout scriptures different instances of times around a table and if we look at today's scripture we see and hear that Christ's last time spent with his disciples was around a table.

All throughout the New Testament Jesus gathers around the table, but we can look at the first testament and see that there were references to the table as well. Take Psalms 23 for an example,

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presences of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Now, David wrote this psalm about his Shepherd as if he, David was the sheep. But guess what, in verse 5 he shifts the image of God as a shepherd to God as a generous host or God as a king throwing a banquet celebration. In ancient Hebrew banquet tradition, a king or wealthy host would invite the important and favored people to his table. Often the grand feast would be held outside so all the people could see who was at the party and who was not. I guess we could say that the table was a place of blessing, favor, and community event even in the ancient Hebrew times.

In ancient Hebrew culture, a servant would have prepared the meal and the table, not the host. What does that fact say about the character of our God and our value to our God? You see it is absolutely crazy that God prepares the table for us. God the Host serves the guests. God the shepherd serves the sheep. God the parent serves the children. God the king serves his subjects. It should be exactly the opposite right? We probably should be the ones preparing a table for God, not the other way around that David wrote in verse 5. We are loved by such a humble God. Then when we look at the scripture from this morning, we read that Jesus broke bread and gave it to his disciples and if we read scriptures too about this special night we would read that before they gathered at the table, Jesus washed their feet.

And if we look at Philippians 2: 6-8. We read: who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

This is an example of how Jesus humbled himself into a servant to serve us.

Okay lets put this scripture in a different context, if we were to choose to risk our reputation for someone, if we gave up our right to be served and chose to serve instead, if we identified with the lowest of the low, if we humbled ourself on behalf of someone else and that humility meant ultimate sacrifice, what would our behavior and choices be communicating?

Well in today's society, we would think that this person was a little koo koo for coco puffs, right? It would be obvious that our actions are incredibly valuable to us. But, but Jesus did that, and does that, for you and for me.

In this mornings scripture Luke talks about the one who will betray Jesus and this confused the disciples because they all felt there was no way for any of them to betray their teacher. We as humans are the disciples sitting around the table and wondering if it is us who Jesus was talking about. We know what Jesus has taught us and we do our best to be faithful, but unfortunately we fall short at times. But yet, Christ welcomes us all to his table. It doesn't matter what you look like or what your identify as, Christ welcomes us all.

11.7.2021 SERMON: COME TO THE TABLE

It doesn't matter which table we are talking about, if that is the table that David is talking about in Psalms 23, or if it is the table that Jesus invites us to in order to receive his gifts; we are so blessed to be able to come to the table and know that we are loved. We are so blessed to come to a table and experience God's grace and kindness. We know that our God and God's son invites all of us to come to the table and be fed.

All throughout Jesus's ministry and his time here on this earth Jesus spent time with those that were outcasted by society or they were the least of these. Jesus wasn't afraid to welcome someone to his table that was different than him. We can look at his disciples and see that they were all from different walks of life. We can see that they each had challenges that they had to work through in order to understand and have faith in their teacher. We also can see that we can probably relate to one of them if not more than one of them.

As we come to the table this morning I encourage you to think and reflect on what the table means to you. The table that we celebrate each week with our Lord Jesus, but also the table in which we celebrate and build relationships around in our own homes. Thanksgiving and Christmas may continue to look and feel a little different because of the pandemic, but it is also a time where we can use the table as a way to build, rekindle, or strengthen different relationships just as Christ did so many years ago. He welcomed his disciples to the table even knowing that one of his disciples would betray him. Let us not be afraid to welcome others to our tables. Let us boldly step up and stand out to be more like Jesus and welcome the least of these and others who need the love and grace shown to them just as Christ has shown for us.

I encourage you to pray boldly for ways that you are able to show Jesus's love and grace to others around a table in one form or another. The table is a beautiful tool that we have and are able to use to help spread the word of our Lord and Savior. The Lord's table isn't ours to invite people to, but it is our Lord Jesus Christ who invites us to the table and Jesus welcomes all of us to the table.

Will you pray with me?

Oh Gracious God, we give you great thanks for sending your son to this earth and teaching the good word. We know that the table your son set for each of us is open to all and open to the sinners just like us. Thank you for your love and blessings that we are all so blessed by. Oh God we know that we fall short and we are thankful that Jesus died on the cross to make us whole.

Amen and Amen.