



***The Christian Visitor***  
*A bi-monthly publication of First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) Rochester, Indiana*

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**Our Mission: Bring people to Christ, grow as disciples, and together serve God**

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## CWS Blankets in Action: Because of Your Love, People Found Warmth and Care



### Blankets That Arrive When They're Needed Most

(Posted January 29, 2026, CWSglobal.org)

When a powerful winter storm swept across large portions of the United States this weekend, freezing temperatures and dangerous conditions left many neighbors at risk.

Just in time, more than 1,000 CWS Blankets arrived in South Carolina on Friday—hours before the storm hit. Local agencies were able to quickly pick up and pre-position blankets so they could respond immediately as temperatures dropped—offering warmth, comfort and care to people facing the cold.

Moments like these are why CWS Blankets exist.

During winter storms, shelters, churches and community partners open their doors to neighbors seeking safety and warmth. A simple blanket becomes more than protection from the cold—it becomes a visible sign of love and care when it is needed most.

Our special offering the last Sunday of February supports CWS Blankets and Week of Compassion. Please give generously.

## Elder Reflection



### BREAD

Bread has been the principal staple food of mankind for thousands of years and thus earned the title *staff of life*. The milling of grain and the baking of bread changed little until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when high speed rolling mills were invented. Up until that time every community had a miller and there was a bakery on every corner, or each family unit had to do it all themselves. This was because once the protective outer layer was crushed and the rich oil from the heart of the wheat berry was released the flour soon became rancid and spoiled. This is reminiscent of the manna from heaven; when they tried to store it for later use it spoiled. But we soon learned how to overcome this inconvenience by removing the protective skin and the oily heart of the wheat to produce a white, fine, mild flavored flour that could be stored for very long times, and as a bonus the byproducts could be sold for extra profit. All was well until much of the population started getting sick. It was concluded that the illness was being caused by the fact the vitamins, minerals and other nutrients had been removed from their bread. By 1941 the millers were required to replace some of the primary nutrients with chemical substitutes. Fast forward to today. To make our bread more consumer friendly additional chemicals have been added to extend the shelf life, and to enhance its flavor, color and texture. However, it still lacks many of the nutrients and most of the fiber that God intended to be in our bread.

Bread is one of the most used words in the Bible being used more than 360 times. Some of my favorites are; “Give us this day our daily bread”, “I am the bread of life whoever comes to Me will never go hungry and whoever believes in Me will never go thirsty”, “Take and eat this is My body”, “They broke bread in their homes and ate with glad and sincere hearts.”

If it seems like I am rambling a bit let me try to say it more succinctly. I am wondering if we are doing the same thing with our Bread of Life (Jesus) that we have done with our physical bread; made it more convenient and appealing but less able to nourish our spirit just like our physical bread is more convenient and appealing but less able to nourish our bodies. God warned His people in the desert not to hoard the manna but to gather it daily, and Jesus taught us to pray “give us today our daily bread”.

Stan Musgrave

# MISSION MOMENT

## WHAT FAITH SAYS

In Otavalo, Ecuador, two extraordinary Indigenous women – Diana and Abigail – exemplify the way small seeds of support can grow into powerful movements of transformation.

A few years ago, Diana began making and selling ice cream. It was hard – she only had a few freezers and struggled to make ends meet. But with a small loan from FEDICE (the Ecumenical Foundation for Development, Integration, Training, and Education), a long-standing Week of Compassion partner in sustainable development work, Diana was able to expand – buying more freezers, hiring other women in her community, and growing her business with dignity and care.

FEDICE is a faith-based organization in Ecuador empowering indigenous rural communities, especially women, through microloans, agricultural training, and development projects to combat poverty and build self-sufficiency. The acronym stands for "faith says" ("fe dice" in Spanish) and focuses on justice, peace, and human dignity, partnering with churches across the globe for support.

Around the same time, Abigail received a loan from FEDICE to open a pharmacy. Today, it's thriving. She now provides medicine and essentials, offers financial services, and – yes – even sells ice cream. And where does she get that ice cream? From Diana.

What a beautiful circle of empowerment – women supporting women, businesses lifting communities, and a future being built from the ground up.



This is what sustainable development looks like: not charity, but partnership. Not handouts, but hope – with just the right seed planted at the right time.

Just four hours south of Quito, in the town of Jatun Juigua, six Indigenous communities of the Panzaleo people have been partnering with FEDICE Ecuador for more than 15 years. With shared vision and solidarity, they began raising cattle to generate income – and today, they are self-sustaining. Together, they've saved enough to not only support their own families, but also to care for their neighbors and strengthen the wider community.

This spirit of *minga* – a Quechua word meaning mutual aid, community work, and coming together for the common good – is alive and well here. It's what has made their success possible, and what continues to guide their future.

On a recent visit, Week of Compassion Executive Director Vy Nguyen was honored to sit with these leaders to hear their stories. Florinda, the eldest in the room at 73 years old, was asked to offer wisdom. She said, "Always have dreams and hope... and chase them." Sarai, the youngest in the room (just 10!) was asked what the community should pay attention to. She answered, "We should keep helping one another and build on what we've already done."

Two people, generations apart, reminding us of the same truth: when we work together, rooted in hope and guided by shared responsibility, we can build something lasting.

In the hills of Ecuador, elders and youth, communities and individuals, can see beyond the old ways of being and find A NEW WAY forward. Compassion transforms and inspires a community to move beyond dependence, beyond hardship, and into a future shaped by collective care. The work of compassion continues – here and everywhere.



### SPECIAL OFFERING 2026

#### FEBRUARY 15 - 22

As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, with a vision of a world where God's people transform suffering into hope.

This story is excerpted and edited from two reflections shared by Executive Director Vy Nguyen during his July 2025 partner visit with FEDICE.

## Game Day 2

You are invited to "The Winter/Hopefully Spring Games" session on Sunday, March 1. We will gather after Sunday School for a carry-in dinner and play games together. Games will include everything from Ping Pong and Corn Hole to Mahjong, Euchre, trivia and spoons. The Membership Team will provide drinks, plates, napkins, cups and flatware along with some games. You bring some food to share and a game you particularly enjoy. Fellowship is part of who we are as Church.



Volunteers needed for the Fulton County warming center program where a safe, welcoming refuge from the cold is provided for those in need. The Nazarene church will host this community wide ministry. Sign up is available at [www.fchope.org/volunteer](http://www.fchope.org/volunteer).

Contact Fulton County H.O.P.E. at 574-223-4357 for more information.



## Teaching Moment Tuesday

STUDYING the GOSPEL OF JOHN. Join Pastor Mike each Tuesday at noon on Facebook or watch the recording anytime.

To affirm both the importance of gathering for worship and the importance of being safe in dangerous weather, our weather cancelation policy is simple. If the City of Rochester or Fulton County closes the roads, church activities are canceled. If the roads are open, we are open. Your job is to make a smart decision whether you should stay home or come to worship. Please, be smart and make the best call for you. If the roads are open, worship will be on Facebook.





\*Key: Name, date added/updated, description, who submitted request

### Our Mission Co-Worker in Mozambique and Honduras

**Joyce Jefferies** 2/9 arthritis in her hips  
**Robbie Payne** 2/9 health issues; cousin of Gayle Rodriguez  
**Lance Musgrave** 2/6 doing better following a third eye surgery for detaching retina; oil placed in his eye and stitches. Son of Stan and Judy Musgrave  
**Doug Miller** 2/3 heart attack on 2/2; two stints put in on 2/3 expecting 100% recovery, home  
**Beverly Wagoner** 2/2 in home Hospice care  
**Kathy Anderson** 2/2 hernia surgery February 2  
**Wade Mikesell** 2/2 bladder cancer; brother of Denny Mikesell  
**Prayers for all** involved & affected by ICE missions in Minneapolis and other locations; by Eve Overmars  
**Sula Smith** 1/19 health battles  
**Barbara Tibbets** 1/11 lung cancer diagnosis and has metastasized  
**Karen Hooker** 1/11 open heart surgery January 9; mother of Brett Hooker  
**Carlene Musselman** 12/8 still in congestive heart failure; by Judy Evans

**Mary Jo Rogers** 12/1 Caston teacher in her third round of cancer; by Angie Miller  
**Joylynn Whitfield** 11/9 health issues; by Helen Whitfield  
**Cathie Lukens** 8/24 home with Hospice; by Judy Musgrave  
**Barbara Gainey** 8/18 struggling with heart and lung issues; by Eve Overmars

**Mike Hammel** 8/4 slowly improving from stroke; son of Lois Hammel

**Mike Messick** 6/8 diagnosed with Alzheimer's, also battling squamous cell skin cancer; father of Sara Story

**Fred Jones** 4/17 continues through his cancer journey; by Sandra Hoffarth

**Jim Riffle** 3/17 stage 4 liver cancer, receiving treatments; nephew of Barbara Tibbets

**Pray for Israel/Hamas/Gaza/Lebanon/Syria**

**Russia and Ukraine conflict**

JOY

**Sarah Perkins** had baby Sutton on February 6. She will spend some time in the NICU to monitor her breathing; Mom and daughter doing well; niece of Stacey Harsh

## FEBRUARY



2/5 Roxann Murphy  
2/7 Stacey Harsh  
2/11 Mary Kay Jance  
2/11 Treva Mulligan  
2/13 Sydney Gudeman  
2/19 David Ray Miller  
2/19 Sara Story  
2/20 Amanda Hooker



## Special Thanks to:

Judy Evans and her Membership Team for hosting a fun “Game Day” with food and games after worship and Sunday School. The day went so well, we are planning another one for March 1.

Deb Cannedy and the Worship Team for our 100 year anniversary in the sanctuary celebration. Thank you to those who brought in wedding pictures from the sanctuary and everyone who participated in the day and dinner. In the spirit of the chicken and noodles meal we shared after Sunday School, a \$246 spontaneous offering was collected to support the continued outreach ministry of our Women’s group. Thank you for making it a good day!

## January 2026

<u>January Financials</u>	<u>Year to Date Financials</u>	
Income	Income	\$16,027.00
Expenses	Expenses	\$21,870.80
<u>Worship Attendance</u>	<u>In-person</u>	<u>On-line</u>
January Average	61	27
Year to Date Average	61	27

## CHURCH CALENDAR

### **Tuesday, February 10**

Noon Teaching Tuesday  
7:00 p.m. Elders Meeting

### **Wednesday, February 11**

10:00 a.m. Outreach Team  
6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

### **Thursday, February 12**

6:00 p.m. Praise Team

### **Saturday, February 14**

Happy Valentine’s Day

### **Sunday, February 15**

9:30 a.m. Worship  
10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time  
10:45 a.m. Sunday School

### **Monday, February 16**

Noon Ladies Luncheon  
6:00 p.m. Little Lambs Board Meeting

## CHURCH CALENDAR

### **Tuesday, February 17**

Noon Teaching Tuesday

### **Wednesday, February 18**

Ash Wednesday – Lent begins  
6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

### **Thursday, February 19**

6:00 p.m. Praise Team

### **Sunday, February 22**

**Week of Compassion Special Offering**

9:30 a.m. Worship  
**First Sunday of Lent**  
10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time  
10:45 a.m. Sunday School

### **Tuesday, February 24**

Noon Teaching Tuesday