

December 17th, 2025



Dear Church,

Sunday was such a joy-filled day! The Children's Christmas Program, the delicious meal, and even the congregational meeting were all a reminder of how special a church community can be.



We were caught a bit off guard by how many guests we had join us. *That's a great problem to have!* As I said at the end of worship, we ran out of communion juice, and I found out later that we also ran out of bulletins and had some other mis-steps in our hospitality (compounded by the congregational meeting starting immediately after worship). Sunday was a good trial run for what we hope to see on Christmas Eve with lots of new faces who join us for this special service.

As I've mentioned, the Christmas Eve service is designed to be family-friendly. My goal is to keep it to around 45 minutes. We will have a little activity for kids to do quietly in the pews, and everything in the service will move along quickly. I won't do a full sermon, but a shorter reflection. We'll do communion by intinction (coming forward to dip the bread in the cup) and close the service with candlelight. In order to make the service meaningful and welcoming for all, **I have a few requests for you:**

1. We need greeters at both doors and even in the parking lot/outside to welcome people. If you can greet on Christmas Eve, please let me know and be at the church at 4:30.
2. We need four deacons to serve communion and two deacons to pass out candles. Deacons will stand up front with the elements while people come forward. We could also use one extra deacon with the elements on a tray who could go to anyone who isn't physically able to come forward.
3. Even if you're not a greeter, plan to come early (4:30) so that you can help welcome guests or step in to help if there is a need and you are able. John Merrit has said that he will provide a tray of cookies so that we can enjoy fellowship before we go in to worship.
4. If you are physically able, please consider parking somewhere other than our parking lot. We want to make sure that any guests can find easy parking in our lot, even if they arrive at 4:58.
5. If you are physically able, please consider sitting closer to the front of the room because guests prefer to sit in the back.

If you are bringing guests with you, feel free to ignore any of those requests so that you can be a gracious host.

I apologize if any of this seems unnecessary or uncomfortable. Since this is my first Christmas Eve with you, I don't know what to expect. But I think word is getting out that Smithville First Christian Church is worth checking out, and we want to be ready for anyone who is looking for a place to hear the Good News on Christmas Eve!



See you on Sunday when our Advent word is "love"!

Pastor Laura
laura.guy@smithvillefirstchristian.org,
Cell: 913.515.3720



announcements & EVENTS

First Christian Church
Smithville



*...the One who began a good work in you will continue to complete it...
-Philippians 1:6*



THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

2025 CHRISTMAS OFFERING
supporting the work of your Region and its ministries

Special Offering this Sunday

We will receive a special Christmas offering this Sunday that will go to support the work of our Greater Kansas City Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This includes Search and Call, ordination, and camp and conference, among other areas of support. You can donate by check in person or give online at any time using the donate button [at this link](#).



Experience the joy and wonder of Christmas in our family-friendly candlelight Christmas Eve service.

Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 5 pm

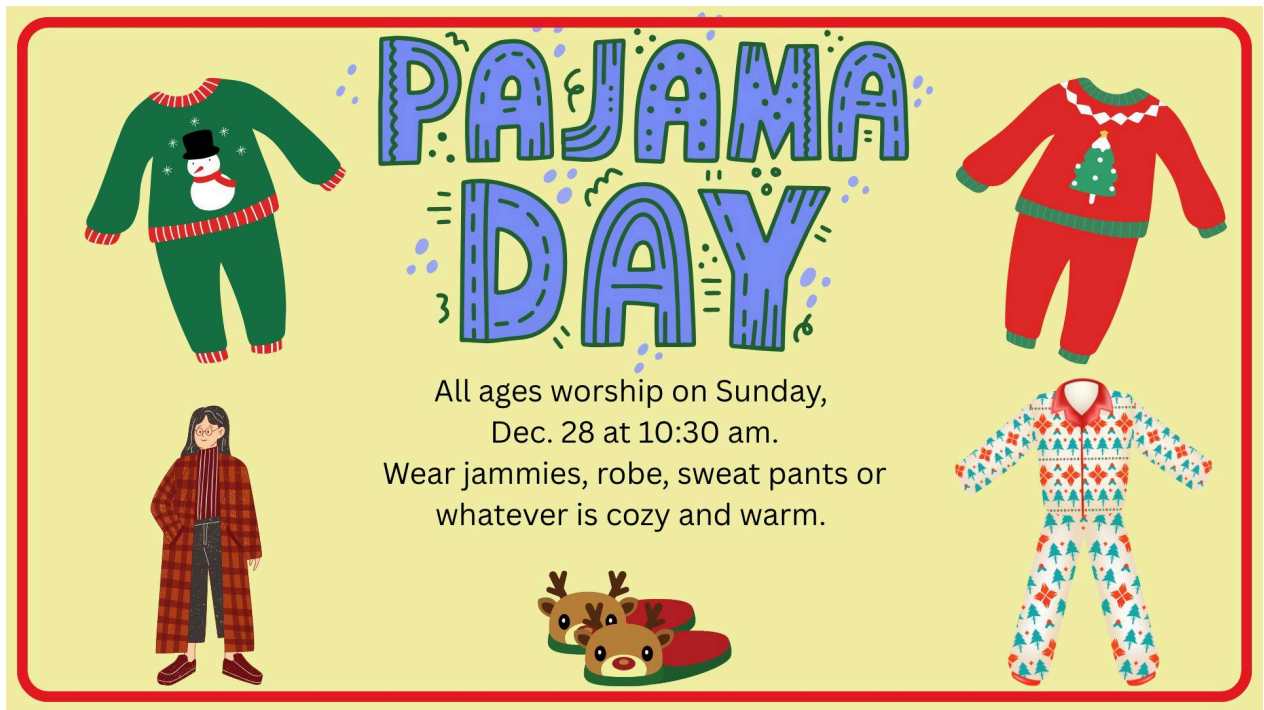


You're also welcome to worship with us
Sundays at 10:30 am

Everyone is welcome here!

Christmas Eve Service: Dec 24

Please make plans to attend and invite friends to our family-friendly Christmas Eve Worship at 5 pm on Dec. 24th. It will be a beautiful celebration of this most holy night. If possible, please arrive early to enjoy a cookie and fellowship and park somewhere other than our parking lot to leave spaces for guests. See Pastor Laura's note in the newsletter for volunteer needs.

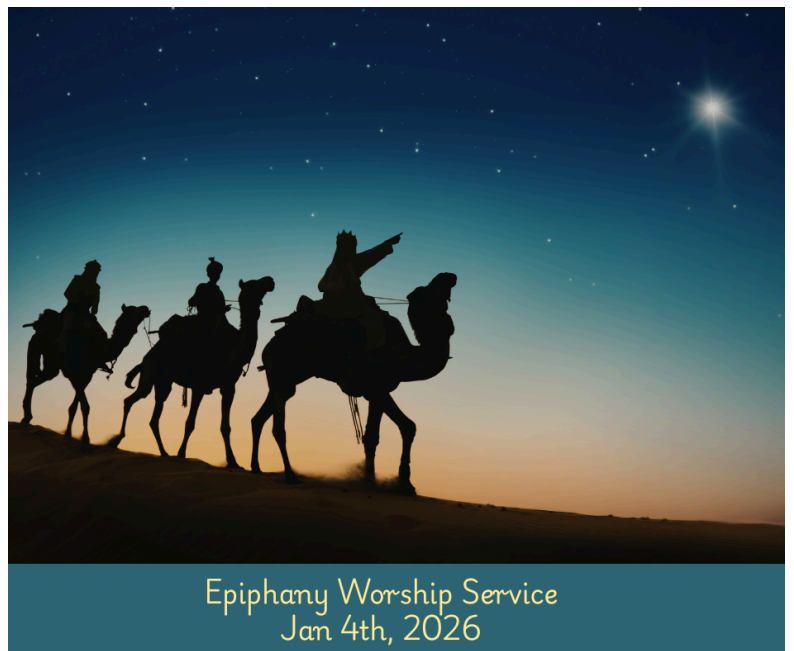


Dec. 28th Worship

We will have a special all-ages worship service and hear more about the Christmas story. PLUS, to make it extra fun, it will be a Pajama Day! Wear your favorite comfy pajamas (robes, sweat pants etc). The children will take another noisy offering, so save your loose change.

Epiphany Worship, Jan 4th

We will close out the Christmas season with our Epiphany worship service on Jan 4th as we welcome the Magi who came to see the newborn king. For this first Sunday of the new year, we will also receive our own star words that can guide us in the coming year. After worship, volunteers are needed to take down the Christmas decorations.



Epiphany Worship Service
Jan 4th, 2026

Christmas Choir: Rehearsal Dec 17th

Sing with us! Steven Cornwell, our music coordinator, is directing a special choir for the Christmas season. Rehearsal will be Wednesdays: Dec 17th at 6 pm in the Sanctuary. The choir will sing during our Sunday Service on Dec 21st.

Letter from our Property Chair: Capital Campaign Tuck Pointing Brick Mortar Repairs

Dear Congregation,

This is Phil French, Property Chair. I'd like you to know more details about a Capital Fund for mortar repair on the outside of our historic building. Our building is 98 years old, and we are starting a Capital Fund Campaign to repair the mortar. We will need between \$65,000 and \$80,000, and have established a line item in our accounting of #2180 – Tuck Pointing to hold these capital funds until they are needed to pay the contractor. As of Nov. 30, we have \$7,750 in Line Item #2180. So that could be 10% of what we will need.

If you would like to contribute to this Capital Fund, write #2180 on the memo line of your check and on your envelope. Please make contributions to #2180 as “over and above” offerings and not instead of your regular offerings. [Read the Proposal Here](#). THANK YOU!

Phil French

Sunday School: Advent til Dec 21st

The final class in Pastor Laura's Advent study will be this Sunday at 9:15 in the sanctuary. Everyone is welcome!



Church Office Holiday Hours and New 2026 Hours

The church office will be closed Christmas day and the Friday afterwards. In 2026, Church office hours will change to Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

*Our inclement Weather Policy is that the Church and Food Pantry will be closed when Smithville School District is closed due to weather. You may always call to confirm if we're open.

Coffee & Donut Fellowship Every Sunday at 10 AM

Hungry for some time chatting with old and new friends? Join us each Sunday at 10 AM (prior to Worship Service) for coffee, donuts, and fellowship! We are thankful for these sweet treats each week, and even more, the sweet time together. Come hang out with us on Sunday before service.



From Jonica Merritt: Worship Committee

Thank you, Steven, and the Special Music choir volunteers, for the Christmas music all month. It's been a delightful addition! I want to say thank you Angie Viebrock for finding volunteers to do the Advent wreath each Sunday, and thanks to all of you who said yes! It was very special to see the smiling faces. Thank you to Angie Viebrock, Mary Gordan, Meagan Jacoby and Rachel Terrill for helping make the December 14th Children's program a heart-warming success!

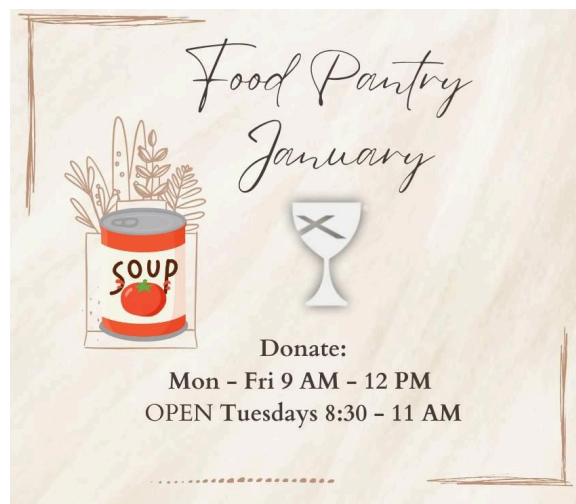


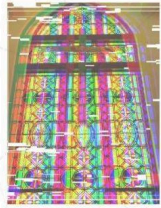
Thanks to those who decorated the church for Christmas. It's been so beautiful to have the season at the church with all the beautiful poinsettias, trees, and more. We will take down the Christmas decorations on January 4th 2026 right after church and pizza will be provided for lunch!

January Food Pantry

We are so thankful to you for supporting this ministry. Thank you for your generosity this year!

The food pantry is open to anyone in the Smithville community on **Tuesdays from 8:30 - 11 AM**. Contact Cheryl Parks Hill with questions or to volunteer. Thanks to your support we delivered 85 food bags for Christmas dinner to those in our community.

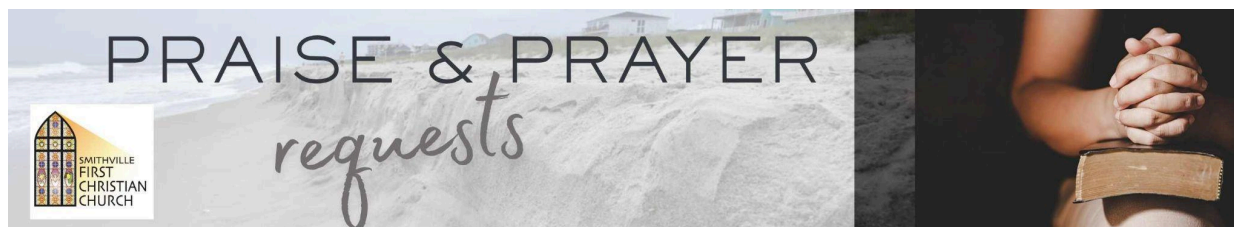




WATCH LAST SUNDAY'S SERVICE

Watch Last Sunday's Service: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1H2jxm7Wn7/>

Click here for website-->[ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



We've reopened the in person handwritten prayer box, however you can also share prayers or praises through the Prayer Request Form online. If you'd like a public prayer to be in a Sunday bulletin, make sure to send by Wednesday before. Handwritten prayers put in the prayer box at the back sanctuary by the office will be checked weekly. Let's all pray for each other and for the needs in our community! To submit a Prayer Request:

<https://bit.ly/3WIOXyf>

Worship Service Schedule for December 21, 2025 WORSHIP

Pulpit: Rev. Laura Guy
Elder: John Merritt
Lay Leader: Susie Clower
Greeters: Barbara & Bob Arnold
Prep & Serve: Diane & Earl Soetaert

Serve & Clean-up: Cheryl & Argel Merideth
Cash Counter: Greg Atkins
Acolyte(s): Beckett & Briinley Milne
Nursery: Janice Roberts

Worship Service Schedule for December 28, 2025 WORSHIP

Pulpit: Rev. Laura Guy
Elder: Jennifer Schoonover
Lay Leader: Cheryl Merideth
Greeters: Ruth Ann & Charles Porter

Prep & Serve: Barbara Millard & Scott Schoonover
Serve & Clean-up: Dandra & John Matthews
Cash Counter: Susie Clower
Acolyte(s): Need Volunteers
Nursery: Joyce French

**If you are unable to serve, please find a replacement and update the office by Wednesday at noon. The Volunteer List can be viewed online by scanning this QR code or going to <https://bit.ly/4ktjhGm>.*

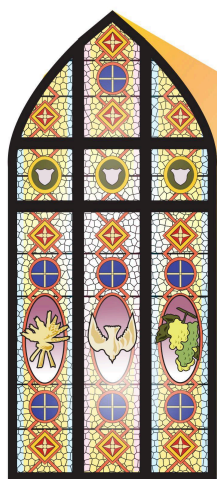
CONNECT WITH US:

**First Christian Church of Smithville, MO
201 N. Bridge Street
Smithville, MO 64089**

OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Friday: 9 am - Noon
Saturday/Sunday: Office is Closed
Phone: (816) 532-0773

office@smithvillefirstchristian.org



**SMITHVILLE
FIRST
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH**

www.smithvillefirstchristian.org