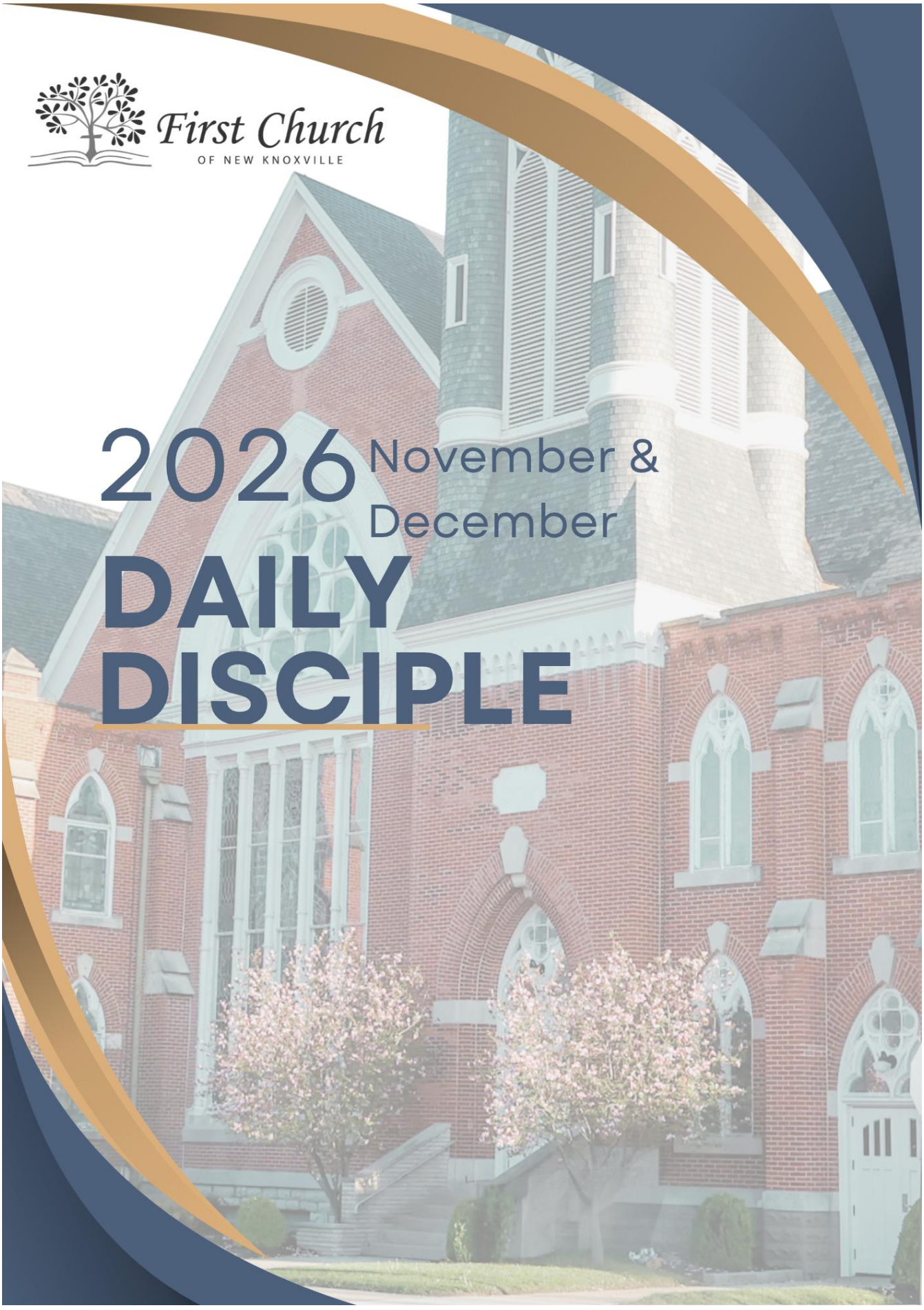
First Church
OF NEW KNOXVILLE



2026 November & December

DAILY DISCIPLE



A LETTER FROM

PASTOR JOEL BUCKLIN

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..."
Matthew 28:19

Dear First Church Family,

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever!"

The first time these words are recorded in Scripture is in 1 Chronicles 16:34. It was included in a hymn of praise when King David brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. The words are repeated throughout the Old Testament: in the historical books, in the psalms, and even in the prophets. It is a call to remember God's faithfulness and his loving kindness throughout all generations. He is good, and his love endures forever.

Every year, Americans gather around the table on the last Thursday in November to celebrate Thanksgiving. The holiday dates back to the first settlers who traveled to the New World. They celebrated God's provision and blessing during those first difficult years in what would later become the United States of America.

Today, the holiday is mostly associated with turkey, football, giant balloons guided down the streets of New York, and Black Friday deals. No matter how secular the holiday becomes, we should never forget how important it is to thank God for his generous, gracious provision. We have much to be thankful for. More than we even realize.

Let us be thankful for the miracle of life. I am not referring just to newborn babies – although we should certainly celebrate them! All of life is precious. Praise God that he gave you another day. Thank him for the air we breathe and the food we eat. There is so much that we take for granted in our instant gratification, over abundant world.

Let's thank him for good health. The quickest way to gain appreciation for something is to lose it. Many people in our church family and community are facing health challenges. Let's pray for them and ask God to continue to watch over them. Even in the midst of doctors appointments and treatments, let's not lose sight of his blessings. Modern medicine is itself a miracle. God often uses the wisdom and skill of trained professions to bring healing to his people.

Let's thank God for our struggles, setbacks, and disappointments. It is in those moments that we learn to trust him more. It is only when we come to the end of ourselves that we learn to rely more fully on him. As the Lord reminded Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, His grace is sufficient for us. His power is made perfect in our weaknesses. No one wants to face challenges in life. But they are inevitable. Be thankful that we serve a God who meets us in our weakness and provides the strength we need to face it.

The list can go on and on. We thank God for the food on our table. We thank him for family and friends to walk through life with us. We praise him for the beauty of his creation. We thank the Lord for a church family to worship with every week.

Most importantly, we thank God for the Gospel, for it is the power of God to save all who believe (see Romans 1:16-17). The best gifts are the ones that you could never get for yourself.This certainly applies to God's grace. It cannot be earned or bought. It can only be received. This is the greatest gift of all.

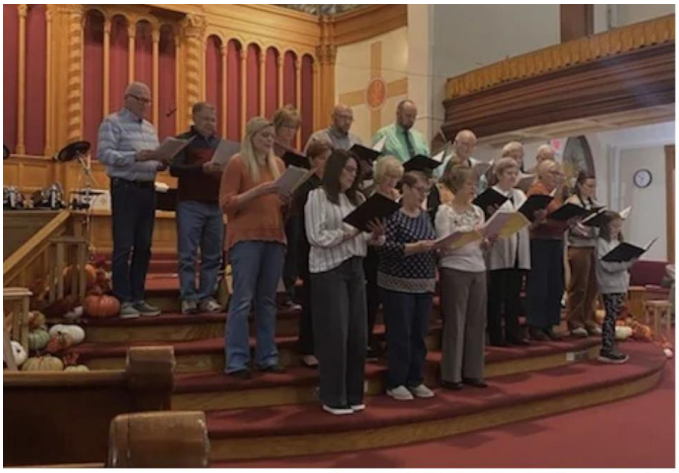
This Thanksgiving, I pray that you know and experience the grace of God revealed in the Gospel. May you know that Jesus loves you, that he died in order to save you from your sins, and that he rose again to grant eternal life to all who believe in him.
Spend time with your family. Eat some good food. Watch some good football. Do not forget, however, to thank God for his many blessings in Christ.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever."

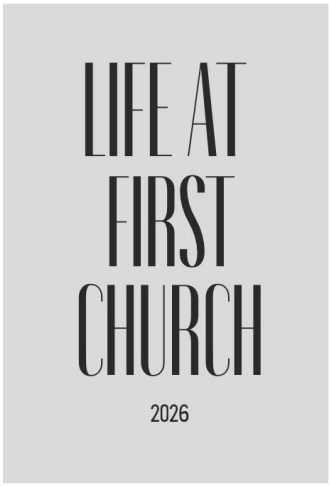
In Christ,

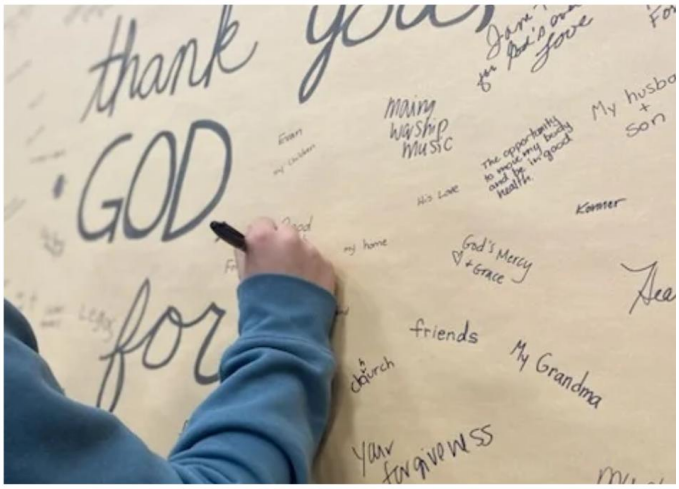
Pastor Joel Bucklin

Joint Thanksgiving Service













We want to thank the New Knoxville Methodist Church for joining us for a wonderful Community Thanksgiving service. Thank you to Pastor Sherwin for your message about finding and having gratitude in ever season of our lives. We were blessed to have both choirs join in song, led by Clinton Hirschfeld and accompanied by Sue Becher.

We are all blessed by God's faithfulness, and as the body of Christ we were able to outwardly express our thanks this year by writing down one or more things in our lives that bring a smile to our lives and joy in our hearts.

Our church families were then able to join in fellowship for a dessert banquet in the Ministry Center. Thank you to those who helped organize, set up, serve, and clean up. Your help was greatly appreciated!

2027 Men's Conference!

First Church will host the No Regret's Men's Conference on Saturday, February 6, 2027. The event is live streamed to churches all over the world. The theme for this year's conference is "Follow Me". For more information about the conference, you can visit their website noregretsconference.org. You can also find videos from previous conferences on their YouTube channel.

Interested in helping organize the event? Please contact Pastor Joel for more information.



LED BY YOUTH PASTOR TORY BREITIGAN

First Church Children & Youth Ministries

Dear First Church Family,

The holiday season is here! Things are getting busy in Sunday school as our teachers and kids prepare for our annual Sunday School Christmas Program. Our theme for the Christmas program is Happy Birthday Jesus! Come celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ with us on Sunday, December 13th during the 9am worship service.

Things are beginning to slow down in the youth ministry as we come to the end of 2026! We wrapped up our series on following the Lord. During that series, we studied stories like Abraham, Esther, and Jesus calling the first disciples to help us see what it takes to follow Jesus. We're taking a quick break for Thanksgiving and then we will be diving into our Christmas series on December 2nd.

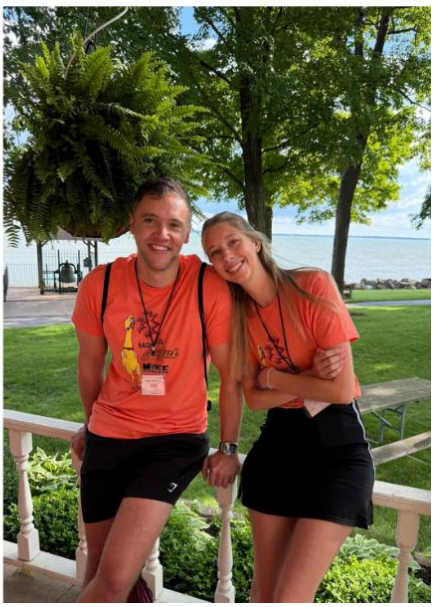
I will not be around much this Christmas season. Jake and I are anxiously waiting on our baby girl to arrive, hopefully sooner rather than later! We want to thank you all for the love, cards, support, and prayers you've given us over the last nine months. We truly have the best church family and cannot wait to introduce you to our Margaret. Thank you for loving us so well over the years but especially this year!

The youth and children's ministry will be in great hands while I am gone. The youth leadership team is taking over youth group and bible study for me for a few weeks. Our Sunday school team will be carrying out the Christmas program and our weekly Sunday school classes. I am so grateful for our youth leaders and our Sunday school teachers! Thank you, teams, for all your hard work and your willingness to lead while I'm on maternity leave. I am so thankful for you!

Tory Breitigan







CHILDREN & YOUTH MINITRIES









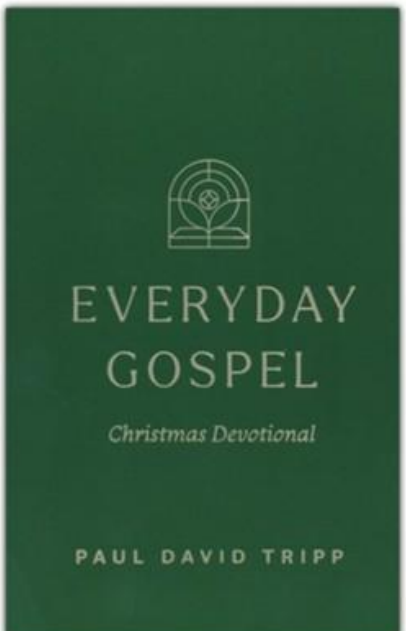




This fall our children's ministry has been very busy.

Awana celebrated Neon Day at the end of October, reminding ourselves that we should shine bright for Jesus. He called us to be the light of the world, and we want to share his light and his love with everyone we meet!

Our Jr & Sr High Youth Group collected over 900 pounds of food for Agape Food Pantry during our annual "Fall Haul" this year! Thank you to everyone that donated! We know this food will be a blessing to many families in our area.



Christmas Devotional

This year, we are giving away "Everyday Gospel: Christmas Devotional" by Paul David Tripp. This book offers 25 selected Christmas readings, adapted from his book *Everyday Gospel*, with study questions to help readers reflect on Scripture's entire redemption story during the month of December.

We ordered 200 copies to give away. You can pick one up at any church entrance or in the office starting November 22.

Financial Snapshot for October 2026

General Operating Fund Balance	$243,330.53
Benevolent Fund Balance	$43,740.01
VBS Fund Balance	$5,056.98
Radio Ministry Fund Balance	$27.997.08
Music Ministry Fund Balance	$17,147.37
Bequest & Endowment Fund Balance	$89,797.36
Camp Fund Balance	$10,693.25
Building Maintenance Fund Balance	$255,190.34
Held for Elevator: $102,595.57	
Held for Sanctuary Painting $50,574.78	
Jr. High Youth Fund Balance	$6,677.08
Sr. High Youth Fund Balance	$7,485.17
Global Missions Fund Balance	$7,454.01
Christian Women's Fund Balance	$7,859.95
Outreach & Evangelism Fund Balance	$6,153.32
Children's Ministry Fund Balance	$18,981.62
Building Technology & Improvements Bal.	$17,417.45
Temporary Undesignated Gifts Balance	$150,000.00
Those In Need Fund Balance	$17,363.45

Full detail is available by calling the treasurer, Connie Schroer
at the church office. 419-753-2446

Designated Offerings - Dec & Jan

December 6	General Operating Fund
December 13	Salvation Army
December 20	Elizabeth New Life Center
December 24	Tanners Romanian Mission, **Christmas Eve**
December 27	Agape Ministries
January 3	General Operating Fund
January 10	Radio Ministry Fund
January 17	Auglaize Co. Crisis Center / Aug. Co. Group Home
January 24	WBCL Radio Ministry
January 31	Open Sunday

Offering facts & figures

The offering totals shown here include both
Sunday morning gifts and online giving.

October 4
Attendance:160
General Operating Fund - $3,314.00

October 11
Attendance: 175
Gideons - $3,520.00

October 18
Attendance: 191
Radio Ministry Fund - $4,300.00

October 25
Attendance: 178
Carl Lanham, Nations of Coaches - $2,840.00

Misc. Gifts

None for October

Online Giving through Realm
You can give online via our website at www.firstchurchnk.org

You can also text "FIRSTCHURCHNK" TO 73256 and give via your mobile device.

Happy Birthday to the following members who are celebrating special birthdays.

Mary Schroer on November 8
11230 ST RT 364 #307
St. Marys, OH

Mark Schneider on December 31
924 Daisy Drive
Wapakoneta, OH

Happy Anniversary to the following couples who are celebrating 50+ years of marriage.

John & Penny Pfenning

52 years on December 27

Donald & Carolyn Henschen

62 years on January 3

GIVE THANKS

Dear First Church, We wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving. Thank you all again for your continued prayers and financial support. Your very generous gift of $2,840.00 will go a long way in helping me continue to Serve, Connect, and Equip the Coastal Carolina University men's basketball players and coaches, play and coach at a higher level, to an audience of ONE as an act of worship to God. May God continue to bless you all exceedingly and abundantly. See you all soon*! Carl Lanham, Nations of Coaches.*

Dear First Church, I would like to thank Pastor Joel, the Tuesday Prayer group, and all those who prayed for Joann's struggle with cancer. She passed on the 27th of October and is no longer in pain. *The family of Joann Kuck*

Dear First Church, thank you very much for the donation you recently gave to Do Good Restaurant & Ministry. I am truly grateful to those who support us and help us to carry out the mission entrusted to us by the Holy Spirit. May all we do be in accord with God's most holy will, for His glory, and for the salvation of souls! *Yours in Christ, Karen Homan*

Dear First Church, thank you Pastor Joel for the visits you gave me when I was in the hospital and the prayers that you shared with me. Thank you to my First Church family for all the prayers and cards wishing me a speedy recover. It was always uplifting to hear the encouragement from the words of my friends. I am blessed by God to get through this ordeal and given more life to live. Thank you for being there and keeping me in your prayers. *Kirk Stienecker*

Dear First Church, It is with heartfelt gratitude that I pen a note to you all. I would prefer to be with you to offer my thanks, but that is simply not possible at this time. So instead I pass it along to you through family of mine – Tom & Diane Fledderjohann. One of the greatest blessings for me is knowing that the faith in the Lord Jesus that I have today is, in part, thanks to the ministry of FCNK. My grandmother Luetta Fledderjohann Koepke was raised in this church and the message of the Gospel was then shared with my mother, my aunt, me, my siblings and now the next two generations. God's love continues to be shared with our community of retired missionaries at the Homes of Ethnos360. Your continued financial support and faithful prayers for us as we serve the Lord and not just changing lives today; it is building something that will last forever! Thank you! *Jim & Carol Sheffield*

Heidelberg Catechism Reading Plan

The Bible Recap was a huge success! Whether you read through the Bible on your own or joined a small group, I'm glad you participated. I pray that your journey through scripture was challenging and encouraging. The podcast, devotional, and reading plans will still be available in 2027 if you did not finish it yet – or if you want to start over!

We are planning to do something a little different for our church wide reading plan in 2027. We have encouraged reading through the Bible several times over the past few years. Next year, we want to do something a little different. We are going to read through the Heidelberg Catechism. There are questions and answers for every week. More importantly, there are several scripture passages that go along with each response.

There are two advantages to this plan. First, it is less volume. Instead of reading several chapters each day, you will only read a few verses. This will allow you more time to study and mediate on each passage rather than rushing through the reading. Second, the verses will all be centered around similar themes and ideas guided by the questions and answers in the Heidelberg. Rather than a haphazard collection of verses, each question and answer will provide several scripture passages that reinforce the big idea.

Pastor Joel Bucklin

Advent Sermon Series

Jesus: Our Prophet, Priest, and King

Advent is a season of preparation as we anticipate the birth of Jesus at Christmas. This year, we will do that by looking at who Jesus is and why he came. Through his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfills the Old Testament offices of prophet, priest, and king. Like Moses and the prophets, Jesus speaks on behalf of the Father. Like Aaron and Melchizadek, Jesus is a faithful priest and mediator between God and his people. Like David, Jesus is the rightful king and Lord of our lives. We owe him our total allegiance.

The first Sunday of Advent is November 29. Join us for Sunday Worship at 9 am, watch us on YouTube, or listen on T102. We hope to see you there!

