

THE WITNESS

Circleville First Church

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2026 CFC Chili Cook-Off & Ruthann Tener Memorial Dessert Auction

The Annual Chili Cook-Off/ Ruthann Tener Memorial Dessert Auction will be held on **March 1** at 6 pm in the Ferguson/Clark Hall.



Crockpots of chili and desserts are needed.
There are 3 categories for the cook-off competition: traditional, spicy and specialty.

Crockpots of chili arrives at 5:30 pm and dinner at 6 pm. The cost of admission is \$5 per person.

If you want to compete in the cook-off or if you want to donate a dessert, the sign-up sheet is located at the Information Desk.

See Joy Atwood for more information.



"Sabbath"

"Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil." - Isaiah 56:2

Mikeal plays for the Lord

"I became part of the worship team because I felt called to do something for the church. I think we are supposed to use the talents that God gave us and a spot opened up on the worship team and I asked to be part of it," said **Mikeal Marshall**, who plays guitar. His girlfriend is **Timberlee Jenkins**. He said, "My children are **Liam Marshall** who is 11 years old and, in the 6th,

grade. My other son is **August Marshall**, 10 years old and in the 4th grade."

Mikeal is originally from Lancaster, Ohio but lives in Chillicothe for about 2 months. He said, "I work for TP Mechanical Contractors. We do large scale commercial work in which we specialize in HVAC, plumbing, fire protection systems and medical gas system installations. I started out as a plumbing apprentice in 2013 where I graduated from the program after 4 years and went on to get licensed as a plumber and medical gas systems installer. Now I am a project supervisor for the company working in our fabrication shop in Columbus Ohio."

"I have been attending CFC for around 2 years now. I started coming to CFC because it was close to my house and I had attended several AA meetings at the church," stated Mikeal.



Mikeal's favorite color is red, his favorite food is Mexican food, so he enjoys eating at is El Padregal. His favorite Bible verse is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me". Mikeal said, "my favorite Bible story is about how God stood in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach and

Abednego. I see in that story how God will allow us to be in the fire, but even in the fire we are untouchable because of him. It shows me that, in life, things will be hard. There will be fire, but just because we go through things, doesn't mean God isn't next to us covering us with his protection."

"My birthday is December 20," he says, "In my spare time I enjoy riding my motorcycle when the weather is nice. Playing music. Working in the garage. I enjoy fishing with my family and just spending quality time with them in general."

Mikeal testified, "I got saved in October 2022. I will try to sum this up as short as possible so that you don't have to read an entire novel. All though I do absolutely love sharing my story (continued on page 2)

Mikeal....(con't from page 1)

because it is such a testimony to God's love and grace and how he loves us entirely, no matter where we are at." (Editor's note: Testimony was not shortened).

"I'm a recovered alcoholic. In recovery circles, it's kind of frowned upon to say it that way, "recovered". Some people say that you're never fully recovered because the disease can come back at any time and show its ugly face. Which isn't a lie. I, however, can confidently say that I am recovered because I've been healed and made new by Jesus Christ."

He continues, "Towards the end of 2021, I got into some legal trouble. I had charges and convictions that were a result of my alcoholism. I was completely at rock bottom and at the time, for the last 10 or so years I was an atheist. I was court ordered to go to a treatment center in Circleville. I was to start February 15, 2022. If I didn't follow up and complete the treatment, then that meant a lot of jail time for me. That's something I definitely didn't want to do. So, I did what I was supposed to. Also, during this time, I wasn't seeing my children. So, I decided to seriously give it a go, and give it my best shot. I needed my boys, that was the biggest reason at that time. As time went on, I realized that I had to do it for myself. I ended up reading the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous and there was a reoccurring theme. All of these people had this great "spiritual awakening" and that's how they got sober. So, for the first time in a long time, I prayed. I said

'Lord, if you're really up there, I need a miracle'. Over the next couple of weeks, I'm still in a treatment center at this time, God revealed to me so many miracles in my life that I had just completely overlooked, taken for

granted or just egotistically taken credit for. My children being the biggest one. I started listening to his voice. I started praying more. There was still a disconnect. The disconnect was me. I wasn't completely all in with Jesus just yet. I ended up paying for that. I got out of treatment and was staying in a sober living house and when I got weekend visits at home, I was hanging around with people who just kept me down. I soon began to slip into old habits and mindsets. Jesus didn't have my full attention. In October of 2022, I drank again. I got in trouble again. My life was right back to where it was a year before. A place I promised that I would never be again, yet there I was. Lost. Hopeless. Embarrassed and feeling like a complete failure. Jesus felt so far away. Not because he was, but because of the shame that I felt. By this time sobriety was something that I saw as achievable and I yearned for it. I wanted a new life and to be a better person. On October 20, 2022 as I sat in my bedroom, I could feel God pulling me back to him and he was telling me 'Do you see what happens when you try to live on your own will alone?' I felt that and He was right. At this point I'm crying like a 5-year-old who just dropped their ice cream cone on the ground and I prayed. I prayed so hard. I knew I hadn't fully surrendered and

that for the last 6 months I was trying to follow Jesus with one foot in and one foot out. That day I gave it all over to him completely. I fully surrendered because now I was fully aware that I couldn't do this without him. That day Jesus saved me. That day Jesus healed me and my life has truly and completely changed since then. I wish I could describe the peace that immediately fell on me. My hope was restored. I wasn't lost. I knew with him I couldn't fail. That's why my favorite Bible verse is " I can do all things through him who gives me strength". It's the truth. I'm living proof of that. The biggest reason that I like to share my story so much is because of that. I know He wants me to share it because wherever I'm at, someone might need to hear that."



Mikeal has been playing music since he was 14 and "it's something that I really love. Music is such a spiritual connection for me and I'm honored and blessed to be able to have the chance to be part of doing that for the Lord and for our church."

He also writes music since he was 17. He continued, "My inspiration really is just how I'm feeling. A lot of times it starts out with me messing around on my guitar and I'll come up with a pretty creative riff or chord progression and I'll get excited and just start writing. Sometimes it works out pretty well, sometimes not. I also sing as well." He stated that can also play the drums, bass guitar, electric guitar. He added, "I play a mean tambourine. I've even messed around on a banjo for about a year. (I borrowed my dad's and he wanted it back after I had it for a year)."



Mikeal concluded, "As I said before, music, playing and writing, has always been a very spiritual experience for me. There are times when I hear certain songs that I just feel so close and connected with the Lord or when I'm writing I also feel that way. To have the opportunity to be on the worship team and possibly be part of that experience for the congregation is truly an honor. God has blessed me in so many ways. As I said before, I could write a novel about it. I went from losing everything 6 years ago to having more than I've ever had or could imagine. I don't mean material things. After being away from my kids for two and half years, our relationship is strong and full of so much love. My mindset is different. I have peace that I didn't know existed. I don't deal with depression and anxiety anymore. It's gone. He has brought many people into my life to help me and guide me on this journey and many of those people attend CFC. Everyone has been extremely welcoming to me and my family and for that, I'm so thankful. I'm taken care of in so many ways and it's all because of Jesus. I'm forever grateful."



Operation Christmas Child

Items for February



colored pencils
crayons
coloring/activity books

Reminder: Shoeboxes are available all year round. Please contact or see Brittany Graul for a box(es) and details.

Calling all men...

Men's Prayer Meeting

Saturdays 8 am

Hey, you guys!!!



Men's Prayer Breakfast

February 21

8 am

FC Hall

speaker: Tom Byerly

Bible study

Wednesdays at 1 pm Ferguson/Clark Hall

Penny March – February 1

Verse of the month

"Don't worry about a single thing, but in everything, with prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving, make your needs known to God." Philippians 4:6
NKJV

submitted by John Adams



Community cupboard needs



cereal, cereal bars, powdered milk

a tote is located in the overflow for donations

Superbowl LX

February 8

Seattle Seahawks vs. New England Patriots

Thank you for serving our country...

Please pray for our country, our leaders and all of our military and their families as they serve but especially Sean Baldwin, Bob Byerly, Ryan Dean, Zachary Haddox, Oscar Knece, Brittany Mozingo, Tim Sauers, Andrew Williams and Tanner Wilson.



Summit

March 13, 14 & 15

speaker: Ryan VanArsdalen

Lunch provided by youth group

Youth Missions Trip

Dominican Republic

June 23-30



The work team is being formed. They will be building a house. Contact Seth George for more information.



Church Extension

Dates to remember:

March 1-21

Denomination Wide 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

May 17

Church Extension Offering

June 22

General Evangelism and Extension Rally at Mount of Praise

Church Extension Church of the month:

Freedom Church
Mansfield, Ohio

The Freedom Church in Mansfield, Ohio is a church that I refer to as the Miracle in Mansfield. This church had formerly been one of the strongest churches in our denomination. The Church was formerly known as the Mansfield Lincoln Heights Church and some of our strongest men served as pastors. The Church changed its name to Real Life Community Church when Rev. Bruce Morrison pastored there. The church grew so much that the church had to build an addition to effectively minister to the people who were coming. However, after Pastor Bruce left the church went through a series of difficult events that affected the church. These difficult events continued until the church had grown so weak that it was forced to close its doors. For two years the church building sat empty. However, last September the church was reopened under the name of Freedom Church as a joint venture of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union and the Church of the Nazarene. The building was cleaned up and remodeled. A pastor was selected and a core group established. On September 14, 2025 the Freedom Church opened its doors again and nearly 120 people gathered for its inaugural service. Pastor Fred Dible and his wife Jessica serve as the pastor of this new church. The church is growing again and the light of the gospel shines again in the city of Mansfield Ohio. Let us pray this month for this church and praise God for His help.

Prayer points:

- Pray for each of these projects that God will bless them and provide for them in each need.

- Pray for the Sharptown, New Jersey CCCU Church as they search for a new building.
- Pray for pastors and church planters who are called, gifted and skilled to revitalize or start a new church.
- Pray for the Elim Church as they continue to purchase a permanent home.
- Pray for churches to understand the need and blessing of sponsoring a new church.

submitted by **Cathy Marck**, Church Extension President

2026 CFC Chili Cook-Off & Ruthann Tener Memorial Dessert Auction

March 1



6 pm
Ferguson/Clark Hall



Cost: \$5 per person

NEEDED: Crockpots of chili & desserts



Sign-up sheet at the
Information Desk



Joy Atwood for more information

Ladies lunch



January's lunch was a great time at Pizza Cottage. There were 13 of us, we had wonderful food and our server did an outstanding job. **Joellen (Byerly)** brought a guest. I hope all of you would think of someone to invite, it is a good way to witness the love of Christian women to others. Because we were in the party room, we were able to pray for needs and have a silly poem.

Our next lunch will be back at the **OCU cafeteria on Tuesday, February 3**. Please come and enjoy the fun.

Need a ride or have a question? Call Diana 740.497.4042

Remember if school is closed, lunch moves to next Tuesday. For more information, contact Diana Moore 740.497.4042

submitted by **Diana Moore**

Kitchen delights

Got this recipe from my niece and it is delicious to make anytime. Might get us to eat more fruit.

Fruit Dip

1 8 oz. container Cool Whip
1 bar softened cream cheese
3/4 cup of sugar



Whip until smooth. Keep cool.
Great with strawberries, grapes, blackberries, apples, etc.
Enjoy!!

submitted by **Nancy Johnson**

Jokes of the month

What month of the year is the shortest?

May, it only has 3 letters.

How do chickens encourage their football teams?

They egg them on!



What's the hardest part about football?

The ground.

Why did the referee have trouble measuring the first down?

Someone was yanking his chain!

submitted by **Bobby Dollison**

ECL fundraising lunch

We made \$680. on the first 2 fundraisers. We need \$782.50 more to make our final payment. This will pay half for each of the 19 ladies attending the SCD March Ladies Retreat at Deercreek. I know we can make it.

ECL fundraising lunch dates:

Sunday, February 1---CANCELLED

Sunday, February 22 - chicken noodle soup, beans and cornbread cookies, drink. Cost is \$5.00 per person/ \$20.00 for family. **Donations are always appreciated.**



Sunday, March 22 - Pot Luck with dessert and drink. Cost is \$5.00 per person/ \$20.00

Stories from Elizabeth's Hope

God is Good... All the Time

Many of you know that our Circleville Center has been looking for a new location. We recently found that location which will be perfect...right across North Court Street from the Pickaway County Library! What a blessing and great location to be close to other community resources. We only needed a couple of walls built and a couple of windows put in. We ladies figured a few days, maybe a week and the walls would get put up and the windows would get put in and we would move from the old place and open in the new place. Easy peasy, right? Well, maybe not quite so easy or quite so fast. We were told we needed permits, paperwork, inspections and plans drawn up and signed. My husband and I built years ago in Pickaway County and I remember how all those parts and pieces that go into the final sign off to obtain the occupancy permit eat up so much time. I saw the look on **Lisa's** face and my heart dropped as the disappointment and realization set in. It could be months until we would be able to open the new center.

But then God.

I saw my sweet coworker **Angela**... in all her 4 feet 10 inches... stand in faith! She firmly told us that "God's got this and we should pray". We put faith in action. The three of us held hands and prayed right then and there in the new center. Nothing had changed, but everything had changed. Our prayer shifted the atmosphere.

It was just a couple of weeks later that we got word that our little project would be fast tracked. Permits were easily secured and things started happening. The plumber came and installed a second half bathroom. The contractor came by and walls went up and windows were put in. This speedy progress felt like divine favor and blessing.

Soon, our new center will be ready to welcome the community with open arms. We are grateful for the blessings, the support of our team, and the encouragement of our neighbors. Stay tuned for our grand opening date and join us in celebrating this new chapter!

And All the Time...God is Good!!

Kristie Steck BSN, RN

Mobile Nurse Manager
Elizabeth's Hope

Follow us on Instagram

Like us on Facebook

Coming soon...
Dinner with Friends



We will start this back up in March/April. (Sign up will be in the Welcome Center on a purple paper.) This is a way to meet others from our church and build relationships. If your home is too

small don't worry, we will have Host families with larger homes to meet at. Don't let that hold you back. Your group will pick the night or afternoon which is best for you all to meet – these dates are very, very flexible depending on schedules. The last 4 months we have had over 30 people involved with Dinner with Friends, and everyone has enjoyed it. Tom and I have done this for a while, I choose the meat and/or theme and everyone volunteers to bring something to share. It is a time to talk and laugh and eat. Questions? Joellen Byerly 513-680-6012

submitted by Joellen Byerly

Vallee Lynn was born to Isaac and Sierra Payne on December 27. She weighed 6 lbs. 10 oz. and was 20 inches long. Congratulations!



2 -1 Penny March
ECL Lunch—
CANCELED

2 -2 Groundhog Day



2 -3 Ladies Lunch at Ohio Christian University cafeteria at 11 am



2 -14 Valentine's Day

2 -16 Presidents' Day

2 -17 Ladies Night at 6:30 pm in the FC Hall, bring a friend & snack to share.

2 -21 Men's Prayer Breakfast 8 am FC Hall
speaker: Tom Byerly

2 -22 ECL Fundraising Lunch - chicken noodle soup, beans and cornbread cookies, drink.
Cost is \$5.00 per person/ \$20.00 for family.

3 -1 Chili Cook-Off/Dessert Auction



Mark your calendars

Sunday, February 1 - ECL Fundraising Lunch - CANCELED

Tuesday, February 3 – Ladies Lunch at Ohio Christian University cafeteria at 11 am

Tuesday, February 17 - Ladies Night at 6:30 pm in the FC Hall, bring a friend and snack to share.

Sunday, February 22 - ECL Fundraising Lunch - chicken noodle soup, beans and cornbread cookies, drink. Cost is \$5.00 per person/ \$20.00 for family. **Donations are always appreciated.**

March 20-21 – Ladies SCD – I Am - Conference held at Deer Creek – registration and cost involved. Information, brochure and forms found in Welcome Center. Let's get at least 30 ladies to attend this year, we had an awesome time last year.

Registrations and \$75. must be turned into Joellen Byerly before January 13, so I can get them sent in. Final payment - due March 3. Ladies ECL will pay for most of this one, depending on how much we raise during our fundraisers.

Sunday, March 22 - ECL Fundraising Lunch - Pot Luck with dessert & drink. Cost is \$5.00 per person/ \$20.00 for family.

Saturday, April 25 – Crossroads Ladies Conference – Joy of the Journey - registration needed - \$25. if early bird registration is met - T-shirts will be available.

submitted by Joellen Byerly and Diana Moore



Try a Growth Group class at 9:45 am,
stay where you fit in and feel comfortable