

# Ponca City Christian

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
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Seeking, Serving, Sharing  
April 16, 2023



## Devotional Christian

### John 20:19-31 ~Thomas~

Belief can be marred by such things as fear, close-mindedness, lack of trust, pride, laziness, and ingratitude. Belief like this is stuck. It can turn toxic. We don't have to look far to find toxic belief in today's world, some of it with a Christian label. Doubt can be marred as well. It also can be marred by such things as fear, close-mindedness, lack of trust, pride, laziness, and ingratitude. Doubt like this is stuck. It can become toxic. In today's world, among people who call themselves secular, or say they are spiritual and not religious, you don't have to look far to find dishonest doubt, some of it claiming the authority of reason. But there can be honest doubt as well. People with honest doubt may, perhaps, want to believe, but struggle at great length with hard questions, hard circumstances. They will not accept a belief unworthy of the troubles of the world. Sometimes the doubter has been hurt, perhaps severely, and honors the reality of the resultant pain. The honest doubter refuses answers that are too easy, that do not recognize the dignity of the questions. In many of us there may be at least some of this honest doubt, this hesitancy to believe, this unwillingness to commit too easily.

## FELLOWSHIP *Dinner*

Mark your calendars for the next Fellowship dinner. It will be April 23rd. The Inquirers class will be hosting this event. Lunch will be provided. Please come and spend time celebrating our church family being together. Hope to see you. The dinner will be immediately after late service. We would like to make a special invitation to the early service members to please come back to have lunch with us.

*Inquirer's Sunday School Class*

The Gospel According to Matthew  
Discussion Group has changed to  
Tuesdays at 11:00 AM

### Prayer

*Lord, I thank you for the grace of life and for the people all around me. I may not have seen you, but I have faith in you, and I feel your presence. Let your powers shine upon us all so that we may be enlightened. Amen.*

Thomas was an honest doubter. He is an ordinary person like each and every one of us. He is a believer of Christ, yet he still doubted the resurrection. Jesus graciously invites Thomas to satisfy his need for proof. From honest doubt he moves quickly to honest faith, a faith open enough to recognize that the man standing in front of him, this man he knows, this once-crucified, once-dead friend, is also his Lord and his God. Without faith, no evidence is sufficient; with faith, no evidence is necessary. Jesus himself knows that faith is both a blessing and a miracle. That's why he says in verse 29 that while it was one thing for Thomas to believe with Jesus standing right in front of him, it would one day be quite another thing to believe without such undeniable physical proof standing in the same room.



Thank you to everyone who helped make our Holy Week activities so special. We had a lot of workers who helped with our Maundy Thursday meal, especially the clean-up. The play after the meal had a great cast and crew. Easter Sunday had a lot of parts that many of you helped keep moving. It was good to see everyone enjoying the celebration.

Thanks again!  
Pastor Stephen

The 2023 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is being held this summer. It will be in Louisville, KY and will take place from July 29th to August 1st. There are a lot of opportunities for worship and learning at the assembly. If you would like to attend, FCC Ponca City will cover the registration fee for the event. Travel, lodging, and meals will be at your own expense. Contact Pastor Stephen if you would like to know more about attending.

Visit [disciples.org](http://disciples.org) for more information about the assembly.



If you have an old Bible you would like to give away, a ministry called Love Packages donates used Bibles to people in need. If you would like to donate your old Bible, there is a drop-box in the church lobby.

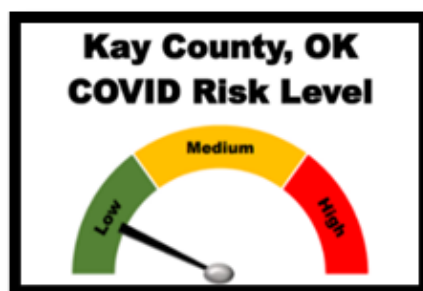
### Giving in Review

As of March 31, 2022

Income Received YTD  
\$94,609.77

Budgeted Expenses YTD  
\$82,125.00

Actual Expenses YTD  
\$78,892.15



Copies of the March Council Minutes are available in the wooden literature rack in the east lobby.

