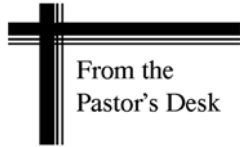


# Pilgrim's Progress

## December 2020

"The purpose of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ, for the object of sharing in the worship of God and in making His will dominant in the lives of men and women, especially as that will is set forth in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ."



### **The Greatness of God**

The focus of the sermons for this month is the greatness of God, who does not think, nor act like we expect. He told the Prophet Isaiah as much (Isaiah 55:9) and in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 2:9) He mentions that His great thoughts include the plans He has for the followers of Jesus. Upon reflection of the greatness of God demonstrated at Christmas and the birth of the Lord Jesus, two thoughts came to mind:

#### **The Incarnation**

The Incarnation is one of the unique features of Christianity, in that God created, and then joined the Creation. In His birth Jesus, the eternal Son of God, entered humanity and never divested Himself of that humanity. When He rose from the dead and ultimately ascended into heaven it was as a person fully divine and fully human at the same time. He is still the same today, seated at the right hand of God the Father

#### **The Value of Family and Everyday Life**

The teaching, preaching and miracles of Jesus, to our knowledge, all took place in the last three years of His life. All that came before was, as far as we can tell, spent with family and living everyday life. Only His encounter with the teachers in the Temple as a twelve year old boy is recorded in Scripture, but I think that it is safe to assume that he worked in the family business with His father, spent a lot of time with His brothers and sisters (the author of the book of James was one of them) and looked after His mother. It speaks volumes of the value God places on what we often take for granted. Have a Merry Christmas, and cherish your family even if you can't be near them this holiday season. Pastor Dan



### **Sermons**

December 6	1,000 Years Like a Day	2 Peter 3:8-15
December 13	Life as a Mission	John 20:19-23
December 20	An Established Life	Romans 16:25-27
December 24	Christmas Eve	
December 27	The Fullness of Time	Galatians 4:4-7

### **CHRISTMAS**

Christmas Eve worship will be a series of lessons and carols, to be videotaped and presented on Facebook and YouTube. We hope that everyone will have a peaceful and blessed Christmas. Next year, I suspect, will be different. Pastor Dan



Many thanks to everyone in the church for the kind gifts to Jeanne and me during Pastor's Appreciation Month. The gift certificates for "Opa" Restaurant and "Tannin" are wonderful and a real treat for us. The cards that people sent were so, so encouraging. Thank you for the honor of being the pastor of this church. You are greatly appreciated. Pastor Dan & Jeanne



Your support of our Church is always appreciated. As we end this giving year of 2020 it is important that you know that all donations for 2020 need to be in the office by Dec 27 to be counted towards your 2020 taxes. Thank you.

***Please keep our Members in Care Facilities in your thoughts & prayers:***

- Bickford** : Joanie Smith-Legg #108; Marilyn Rhodes # 123
- Grandview**: Pattye Morrison #107 **IVH**: JoAnne Ainley
- Suites of Ankeny**: Don & Romaine Mackaman
- Southridge**: Betty Runner #212
- The Willows**: Lee & Valois Brintnall #317, Sanny Thompson #205
- Glenwood Place**: Loretta Stubbe #150, Jan More #112, Mildred Lathrop #145, Bob Becker #175, Bonnie Pappas #177, Lenora Brown #147.



Alan & Sandy Packer	12/02/10	10 years
Breana & Luis Alvarado	12/4/15	5 years
Greg & Barbara Ellcey	12/12/60	60 years
John & Roberta Olson	12/22/84	36 years
Foster Hawkins & Nancy Urbanowski	12/29/89	31 years

\*\*\*\*\*



December 2	Sarah Paustian	December 21	Loretta Stubbe
December 3	Sharon Greer	December 23	Jeb Long
December 8	Don Bogenrief, Craig Ragland	December 25	Norma Dannen
December 12	Shauna Banks	December 27	Valois Brintnall, Nate Speas
December 19	Phyllis Wyatt	December 28	Sarah Nullmeyer
December 20	Anita Niehouse, Nay Liew	December 30	Todd Stanley
		December 31	Cindy Shirar



**NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ONLINE GIVING**

There is a new way to give Tithes and Offering to First Congregational Church – Marshalltown. The Trustees have partnered with the company VANCO to support online giving as another option to allow our church members to give their tithes and offerings to the church. With the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become a challenging time for our church and our church members. This partnership gives our members and those that are viewing our worship online from afar a way to support our church.

Please click the link below if you choose to give to the church through online giving.

[My Tithes and Offering Online Link](#)

Thank you for your continued support of First Congregational Church!



**NEWS FROM THE DIACONATE BOARD**



**UPDATE:** In our November newsletter we had announced our plans for two in-person worship services on Christmas Eve. With the ever-increasing numbers of people being infected by COVID, the Diaconate Board has decided that suspension of Christmas Eve in-person services is necessary for the health and well being of our church members.

The Christmas Eve Service will be taped and streamed on You Tube. You will see several of your fellow church members participating with Pastor Dan to present this special Service. Since this will be taped, you will have the luxury of watching it at your convenience and as often as you would like.

Should any member have questions concerning our Christmas Services or Sunday services, need spiritual guidance or just a call to visit, please let us know by contacting the church office and a diaconate member or Pastor Dan will contact you. We fully understand that this COVID epidemic has made it a lonely time for many. We are always here for you. The church number is 641-752-4239.

# News from Missions and Benevolence

## **Salvation Army Christmas Toy Shop**

The Missions and Benevolence committee has agreed to support the Salvation Army's Christmas "Toy Shop" and even though circumstances look a bit different this year, the Christmas spirit is still strong, and we are ready to help.

Last year there was a glaring shortage of gift items available for boys 13-16. So, our focus for FCC this year is to make sure parents of this age group have a good selection of gifts to choose from. Gifts ideas for teen boys: gift cards from Wal-Mart, Theisen's, Menards, dart board, remote control car, wallets, cologne set, baseball glove, football, electronics, volleyball, games, fishing gear, dop kit, sweatshirts.

Another option is to write a check to FCC for your desired amount and the FCC Mission and Benevolence team will be your personal shoppers. We ask that you please make sure you earmark your check "Toy Town" for Jody's records. Your donations will be accepted at the church office during the week and must be at the church no later than Sunday December 13<sup>th</sup>. All gifts must be unwrapped

### **Salvation Army guidelines:**

Any family is eligible to sign up for the program but must meet the income guidelines.

### **Other ways you can actively be involved:**

Volunteers are needed in other capacities such as:

- Setting up the Toy Shop on December 16 & 17 from 9am to 4pm
- Personal Shoppers for Distribution Day on Dec 16 & 17 from 9am to 4pm

To sign up, please call the Salvation Army  
Captain Pam Kasten at 107 W State Street. 641-753-5236

**Remember, Sunday December 13 will be the last day you can bring your gifts to the church. Please. Do not wrap your gifts.**



MEALS ON WHEELS is still "in motion" as volunteers continue to take care of feeding those who need us. Our church volunteers are so willing to help deliver these meals, and we thank you all!

December delivery volunteers is Shelly Speas....with that FCC volunteers complete another successful year of MOW deliveries.

The 2021 sign up sheet is ready for names...so if you'd like to sign up for a Saturday, just call the church office 641-752-4239 and we will get you on the list. Have a blessed holiday season. Kristi Hassler



Youth Director: Shelly Speas  
Contact # 641-751-9868

## **DECEMBER ACTIVIES & YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES**

**No Youth Activities scheduled for December at this printing.  
Youth Director, Shelly will communicate all future plans via FaceBook.**

# TRUNK OR TREAT!!!

Saturday, October 31st we had a wonderful turn out for Trunk or Treat at FCC! We had a great group of people handing out candy to our community and many people who came through thanked our church for providing a safe place for their kids to come and trick or treat.



Nicole Wimberly



Hunter Diggins



Jody Brintnall



Patrick Stewart



Shelly Speas



Patrick Martin



Shelly Speas & Nancy Carmer



Liz Schrum (Friend of Nancy's)



A great time was had by all!!!!

Every week during youth activities we collect the names of the kids who are there and put them in a box. Then every couple of months we draw two names in each group to be our attendance winners. Here are the first group of winners for our October drawing. Avayah Speas, Elias Carter, Jasmine Gepford, Waylon Sauer, Kasie Brandt, Hailey Hovey, Ian Fikes, Lydia Speas, Melanie Brandt, and Jenny Sauer.



*Congratulations to our attendance winners!*

On Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> the youth group and leaders had the wonderful opportunity to put up American flags for the Morning Optimist Club in honor of Veteran's Day. We are so thankful for our Veteran's and the sacrifices they have made and continue to make for our country!



Thanks to all who helped put up flags! Grand Carter, Kasie & Melanie Brandt, Waylon Sauer, Reagan Rieng, Shelly Speas, Ian Meyer, & Patrick Stewart!



On a Sunday, November 22nd a team of youth leaders cooked and distributed about 60 meals for our youth and families. We may not have been able to have our traditional Thanksgiving Feast together at youth group, but we were so Thankful to still share a meal “together”.



It is still Fall, but when we drive around town, we can see that it is beginning to look a lot like Christmas! The hope that Christmas brings hope and is very much alive and needing to be shared! Christmas is one of the most special times of the year because of a very special person who was born for a very special purpose. This year the Christmas story will be told through our children in a very special way through a broadcast online. Shelly Speas will be contacting our youth and their families to put together a special Christmas video that will be shared through our church Facebook page and Youtube. Jesus is our hope and our future is bright when we have Him!



**2021 NACCC ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE AND  
2021 NAPF – HOPE CONFERENCE  
CANCEL IN-PERSON MEETING**

**November 17, 2020**

Since last winter, our lives and our plans have been affected by the pandemic and its spread. As we look into the immediate future, that continues to be true.

On November 9, 2020, the Board of Directors of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches voted unanimously not to hold its 2021 Annual Meeting & Conference scheduled for Spokane, WA in person, but, instead, to hold a virtual only meeting. At this point, specific details for the meeting are being formulated and will be communicated as they are finalized. The vote by the Board of Directors also cancelled the in-person NAPF and HOPE gatherings.

This decision was made in order to safeguard the health and well-being of our delegates, our young people, and their families.

**For additional information or questions contact:**




Rev. Dr. Michael Chittum, Executive Director  
National Association of Congregational Christian Churches  
mchittum@naccc.org phone:414-856-1611



# December 2020

## FCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Sunday Worship Services: 8am & 10:30am

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Monday-Friday 9am-Noon 641-752-4239					
		1	2	3 6:30 Trustees & Endowment Zoom meeting	4	5
6 10:30 Svc/YouTube 2pm Communion Svc on Facebook	7	8 8:30am Zoom MBC meeting	9	10	11	12
13 10:30 Svc/YouTube	14	15 6:30pm Deacons meeting	16	17 6:30 Trustees meet	18	19
20 10:30 Svc/YouTube 11:45am BCE meets  Children's Cmas program online. Time TBA	21	22	23	24 Church Office closed.  5pm Cmas Svc You Tube	25 No Services today. Church Office closed 	26 11am MOW Volunteers: Shelly Speas
27 10:30 Svc/YouTube	28	29	30	31 Church Office closed Happy 2021! 		<b>color code:</b> youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards
						Page 7



First Congregational Church  
312 W. Main St.  
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Office hours 9 a.m. - noon Mon - Fri 641-752-4239  
Worship Services: 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m. All ages in the LOFT  
web page: [www.fcmarshaltown.org](http://www.fcmarshaltown.org)

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

