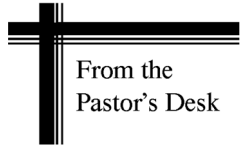


Pilgrim's Progress

April 2021

"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."



From the
Pastor's Desk

Easter is early this year, taking place on April 4 and coinciding with the end of Passover. As everyone knows, it is the anniversary of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and is at the heart of the Gospel. The Gospel, the essential message from God, is used in context with the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. It's a great passage to consider when anyone asks, "What is the Gospel?" Verse one says: "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand." The Apostle Paul goes on to write that the content of this essential message is that we are saved-from hell and for heaven-by our belief in this message. That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures. After His Resurrection, He was seen by people, including Peter, the Twelve Apostles, and by over 500 people at once (probably at His Ascension) and that some of those people are still alive. This, according to 1 Corinthians 15, is the Gospel and that any presentation of the Gospel should include these points. Paul goes on to write that the major implication of this is that, as Jesus rose from the dead, so also those who follow Jesus. Easter is about the Resurrection of Jesus, and it is about our resurrection as well. Pastor Dan

Sermons:



April 4	The Empty Tomb	John 20:1-18
April 11	Peace	John 20:19-31
April 18	Promise	Luke 24:36-48
April 25	The Good Shepherd	John 10:11-18



News from Diaconate Board

The Tenebrae service will be available on You Tube April 1st at 7 pm. The service signifies the suffering of Christ by the extinguishing of candles. After each reading the reader snuffs a candle and leaves-signifying the disciples leaving Christ. At the end of the service the lights are brightened signifying Christ is the Light of the world.

On Sunday April 3rd we will have Easter service with communion.



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**: Valois Brintnall #309, Sanny Thompson #205
- Glenwood Place**: Loretta Stubbe #150, Jan More #112, Mildred Lathrop #145, Bob Becker #175, Bonnie Pappas #177, Lenora Brown #147.



Troy & LaRae McGahuey	April 9, 1988	33 years
Dwayne & Maxie Shultz	April 12, 1967	54 years
Bill & Lynn Maas	April 13, 1996	25 years



April 4	Joy Kreykes	April 19	Linda McGregor
April 8	Sam Good	April 20	Don Mackaman, Sara Schwab
April 9	Vicki McKibbin	April 21	Katie Paustian, Shelly Speas
April 10	Leah Stanley	April 23	Thomas Stanley
April 16	Lisa Blabaum	April 25	Kirk Shirar
April 17	Sam Speas	April 27	Ron Estabrook
April 18	Liz Meyer	April 28	Adam Swope



Board of Christian Ed:

- *Pastor Dan continues to lead the Zoom Bible Study on Romans on Sundays at 4:00pm.
- *The Ignite Conference went well and was very beneficial to those who attended.
- *Grant Carter will be working on the flooring at the landing of the Loft soon.
- *Youth Group: There will be no meetings the first week of April. Meetings will continue until the end of May.
- *VBS will be offered in late July.
- *There will be a youth trip to Hickory Grove or Pine Lake this summer.
- *The NAPF annual meeting will be held locally and online with teaching on pre-recorded videos, June 22 to 27. Shelly has many things in the works including overnights, progressive dinner, other locations, a car scavenger hunt, campfire and worship. There will be a live zoom meeting in the evening of the 27th which will include communion. The cost will be around \$45. Each youth will receive a swag bag including masks, t-shirt and booklet. The youth will be involved in a local mission project to be determined.



News from Missions and Benevolence



Habitat for Humanity Sends Thank You to FCC!

Trucks bearing Habitat for Humanity (H4H) logos were again seen navigating the litter strewn streets of Marshalltown or parked with busy crews outside homes burdened by piles of debris following the August 2020 derecho. All the while, H4H crews were still working with qualified tornado victims from the 2018 catastrophe. In December 2020, the FCC Benevolence and Missions Committee felt the need to provide support for the enduring positive presence this disaster relief and community building organization has shown in our hometown. We donated \$1,500 to defray the costs of derecho clean up.

FCC's contribution was appreciated. In her letter of thanks to our church, Kristen Holtan, Finance and Operations Manager for H4H of Iowa, provided some meaningful feedback regarding their work in 2020 to help clean up Central Iowa. The following paragraph is excerpted from her letter.

We were successful in helping over 20 Marshalltown, Iowa families with Derecho cleanup and continued efforts in repairing homes that were damaged by the 2018 tornado. Our team [Disaster Response Team based in Marshalltown] along with other Americorps teams were able to complete 60 projects in Cedar Rapids which included clearing 4,953 cubic yards of debris. And we are just getting started with our continued cleanup efforts for 2021!

Kudos to H4H! And thank you to them and their crews!



MEALS ON WHEELS is still “in motion” as volunteers continue to take care of delivering meals to those who need us. Our church volunteers are so willing to participate, and we thank you all!

April delivery volunteers are Wayne & Jonna Wagar. More dates for 2021 are open and waiting to put your name on the list. If you’d like to sign up for one of the following dates, just call the church office 641-752-4239 and we will get you on the list. Thank you. Kristi Hassler

2021 dates still open

May 22, June 26, July 24, August 28
September 25, October 23, November 27, December 25



FCC Renewal Task Force is at Work



CABINET APPOINTS RENEWAL COORDINATING TEAM

At the last regular meeting of FCC Cabinet, March 7, 2021, the Renewal Task Force reported the outcome of their work to recruit a team of active FCC congregants to serve as the Renewal Coordinating Team for the next several months. Using guidelines from our professional facilitators from NACCC and Center for Parish Development, the Task Force completed the following: drew up a list of characteristics and competencies that would best assure success of the Renewal Committee; identified potential active participants in FCC worship, study and service who showed the qualities and talents needed, and who were not already deeply involved in church governance; established an information sheet to share with recruits to help them understand what they were being asked to do and why they would be important to the process and then, recruited seven leading candidates. We are so grateful they all said “YES!” to our request to serve! The Cabinet unanimously approved this new team at their March 7, 2021 meeting.

FCC RENEWAL COORDINATING TEAM

Miriam Bryant, Aaron Dickey, Kristin Meyer
Kim Schryver, Jacob Shirar, Patrick Stewart, Pastor Dan Vellinga

Please, understand that these individuals will act as a team to help design a renewal process under the direction of our facilitators and the Cabinet. All of us will be responsible for renewal; our team will help to actively engage us in fun and meaningful ways to do so over the next several months.

To begin the process, the team will, hopefully, meet for the first time in April. Initial work will focus on orienting team members to our responsibilities, tools available to help us in our work and meet our facilitators on ZOOM. Throughout this initial activity, we will engage in some team building activities and organizing. Looking forward to broader engagement of the congregation in the months ahead!





News from Marshalltown Christian School

Students in 3rd and 4th grades studied the Tabernacle in the wilderness from the book of Exodus, and then crafted their very own Tabernacle replicas from clay, cardboard, paint, fabric, and gold pipe cleaners for the gold lampstand. They then presented and explained an element from their Tabernacles to the student body. Excited squeals and enjoyable laughter could be heard emerging from the commons area during a recent indoor recess. A giant parachute filled the room with vibrant colors and engulfed the students with memorable fun, games, and great amusement.



A session of Kindergarten Round-up was held recently for preschool students whose parents are choosing Marshalltown Christian School. The children attended school and experienced kindergarten in the classroom with kindergarten teacher, Miss Katy. If you are interested in Christian education for your child, please contact the MCS office for the next session to be held on Monday, April 19 from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

New next fall, MCS will be offering Begindergarten for students who are ready for more than preschool, yet not quite ready for kindergarten. Early enrollment will secure a student's place for the fall of 2021, and tuition assistance is available, plus generous need-based scholarships for children of pastors. Now more than ever... *choose Christian education!*

Financial Aid for MCS Available

Hello from Marshalltown Christian School! Thanks to many generous donors, MCS is able to make Christ-centered education accessible to more families each year.

All of MCS's financial aid is need-based. We are a member of Heart of Iowa School Tuition Organization (STO), a State of Iowa tax credit program. Two-thirds of MCS students qualify for this grant program each year. We are currently raising \$36,844 to help families offset their annual tuition expenses during the 2021-22 school year. You can find more information about Heart of Iowa STO and its generous 65% Iowa Tax Credit [at heartofiwasto.org](http://heartofiwasto.org). Donors' direct gifts to MCS will allow us to give another \$14,000 in need-based scholarships this fall. Families will work directly with TADS Financial Aid Assessment to assess need, which MCS's Finance Committee will use to award scholarships to MCS families.

Finally, for pastors' families who qualify for financial aid, we offer a matching grant out of a second scholarship fund started by donors who wish to make MCS more accessible to pastors' families.

Let me know what questions you have and thank you for spreading the word to your pastors and congregations. I would be happy to present to your Missions or Personnel committee if you would like more information about these programs.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission to "glorify God through Christ-centered education." In Christ, - Bethany Wirin, Head of School, Marshalltown Christian School



WHY PASTORS PREPARE SERMONS...

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote: **"I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time, I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time. The preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".**

This started a real controversy in the 'Letters to the Editor' column. Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL!

B. I. B. L. E. simply means: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!



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

APRIL ACTIVIES & YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES

No Youth Group - April 6 or 7th – Easter Week.

Preschool-5th grade, D.O.G.'s (Depend on God) will meet at First Congregational Church on **TUESDAY** nights from 5:30-6:30pm in the fellowship hall. April 13, 20, 27

6-8th grade, Jr. P.Y. (Jr. Pilgrim Youth) and 9-12th grade, P.Y. (Pilgrim Youth) will meet in a combined group at First Congregational Church on **Wednesday** nights from 6:45-8:00pm in the fellowship hall. April 13, 20, 27.



ankle injury.

We are excited to announced that Power Hour will start back up for our youth and children Preschool-12th grade on Sunday mornings beginning at 9:30am. This will start the week after Easter on April 11th. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall as Shelly continues to recover from her



YOU KNOW KIDS ARE ALWAYS HUNGRY! And during youth group it's no different! Would you, our church members, be willing and able to provide snacks for our Tuesday night and Wednesday night youth programs for about 35 kids? Nothing fancy, just finger food to keep those bellies from growling! Please contact Shelly Speas if you are able to help...it's so appreciated! Thanks!

OUR KIDS IN PICTURES!

The Youth Group had an amazing time on their Winter Day Adventure to Seven Oaks for tubing, skiing, and snowboarding in Boone, IA! Take a look!



YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

A group of our students and adult youth leaders were blessed to be a part of the Ignite Youth Leadership Conference in Des Moines this year! It was an amazing conference where we were able to experience awesome worship, amazing speakers, and grow in our faith and leadership through fantastic breakout sessions! We learned some new information that we will be able to use in our youth ministry.






April 2021

FCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

*Sunday Worship Services: 8am & 10:30am in-person in Sanctuary
10:30am Service also on YouTube*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Monday-Friday 9am-Noon 641-752-4239					
color code: youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards				1 7pm Maundy Thursday Tenabrae Svc on YouTube	2	3
4 Easter Sunday Communion In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube	5	6 No Youth Activities	7 No Youth Activities	8	9	10
11 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube	12	13 8:30am MBC Youth Activities 5:30-6:30 DOGS Fellowship Hall	14 Youth Activities 6:45-8:00 Jr PY & YP Fellowship Hall	15 6:30pm Trustees	16	17
18 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube 11:45am BCE	19	20 6:30pm Deacons Youth Activities 5:30-6:30 DOGS Fellowship Hall	21 Youth Activities 6:45-8:00 Jr PY & YP Fellowship Hall	22	23	24 11am MOW Volunteers: Wagars
25 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube	26	27 Youth Activities 5:30-6:30 DOGS Fellowship Hall	28 Youth Activities 6:45-8:00 Jr PY & YP Fellowship Hall	29	30	
						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.fccmarshalltown.org

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

