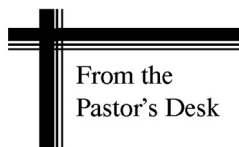


Pilgrim's Progress

January 2022

"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

Ecclesiastes 3:9-13 "What profit has the worker from that in which he labors? I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor-it is the gift of God."

As 2021 comes to a close and 2022 gets started, I wanted to ponder a passage from one of the stranger books of the Bible. Ecclesiastes is the rather pessimistic musings of the great King Solomon toward the end of his life after he served God, then fell away to idolatry, and then apparently lived to regret it. After a life of great accomplishment and renowned for his wisdom, Solomon maintains that it is simple matters that are really important, and this passage mentions them.

The God given task

Everyone on earth has a purpose and no one is irrelevant or of no validity. Some, even many, may not be allowed to meet their full potential but everyone has a task for their days on earth. For many, if not all, it is a matter of making the most of what we have and what we can do to benefit the people in our sphere of influence. "What is the next right thing for me to do?" is a good question to ask regularly.

Eternity in their hearts

Solomon then gives a beautiful turn of a phrase when he mentions that God has given us "eternity in our hearts." He asserts we can never fully grasp the mind, plan and activities of God and yet there is in the human heart as desire to know God, to get in touch with eternity. Missionaries have discovered this in one people group after another for centuries on end. When Augustine wrote that we have a "God-shaped hole in our hearts," he was right.

Do good and enjoy

It is the simply, everyday activities that really matter. Life-changing events, accomplishments and trips that come from our bucket lists are valuable, but the mortar of a life is found in the everyday. Can we enjoy doing simple things around the house and appreciate the people around us? They matter more than we know. May this year be one of great peace and contentment for you.

-Pastor Dan

Sermons

January 2 The House of God
January 9 Epiphany Sunday
Gifts for Jesus
January 16 Water Into Wine
January 23 Give the Sense
January 30 Humility Before the Lord

1 Chronicles 17:3-10; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Matthew 2:1-12; Ephesians 3:1-7
Isaiah 62:1-5; John 2:1-11

Nehemiah 8:8; 1 Corinthians 12:25-26
Jeremiah 1:4-5; Luke 4:21-28;



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



Bickford : Joanie Smith-Legg #108, Marilyn Rhodes # 123

Grandview: Patty Morrison #107 **IVH**: JoAnne Ainley

Suites of Ankeny: Romaine Mackaman

Southridge: Betty Runner #212, Carmalee Kothenbeutel

Glenwood Place: Loretta Stubbe #150, Jan More #112, Mildred Lathrop #145,
Bob Becker #175, Bonnie Pappas #177, Lenora Brown #147, Joan Carter #116, Iva
Howard #164



Todd & Leah Stanley

January 4, 2003

19 years

Carlton & Carmalee Kothenbeutel

January 14, 1967

55 years



January 1

Bing McHone, Quinton Norman

January 15

Carmalee Kothenbeutel

January 3

Janice Jordan

January 19

Kristin Meyer

January 6

Aaron Dickey

January 23

Joan Carter, Branden Goken

January 8

Rod Hassler

January 25

Jonna Wagar

January 9

Carolyn "Sue" Horn

January 26

Debi Estabrook

January 13

Larry Koepnick

January 29

Hunter Diggins

New From Diaconate Board

We will be observing Epiphany on Sunday, Jan 9th. Epiphany celebrates the 3 wisemen finding Jesus and signifies the end of the Christmas season.

Come help us take down the Christmas decorations in the sanctuary on Saturday, January 15th. Time will be announced later.



News From Christian Ed



SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2022 AT 6:00pm
HERE AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Unknown Tour is a one night, 2.5 hour women's event packed with comedy, worship and encouragement focused on navigating life's unknowns. 1 comedian, 2 sketch comedy artists, 1 worship leader, 1 keynote speaker!

If you have any questions, please contact Jeanne Vellinga at 419-308-1107. For tickets, go to: [www/theunknowntour.org/Marshalltown](http://www.theunknowntour.org/Marshalltown)



News from Missions and Benevolence



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!

January delivery volunteers are Rod & Kristi Hassler. Our slate for 2022 is 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. Have a blessed holiday season. Kristi Hassler

2022 dates

February 26
March 26
April 23

May 28
June 25
July 23

August 27
September 24
October 22

November 26
December 24

Ephesians 5:20 Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear Congregation,

On behalf of the Missions and Benevolence Committee I want to convey my sincere gratitude for your enthusiastic support of the Adopt a Family Program sponsored by the House of Compassion.



Through your donations of money and gifts we were able to help 20 people (children and adults) have a brighter Christmas. Each family received a Wal-Mart gift card, a new bible, and the gifts you generously provided from the tags on the Giving Tree. One mother thanked me and said "I'm so grateful I can put presents under the Christmas tree. Thank you!" All who received gifts were most thankful and very humbled.

I am extremely grateful for your love, kindness and support that has revealed the heart of our church.

Yours in Christ

Jonna Wagar

My
Kinsmen
Ministries



Dear First Congregational Church,

Peace be with you all in the name of Jesus. I am happy to write these many words to you all with all willingness!

When I woke up this morning, it was the grace of God and to be able to write you brethren is the glory of God. There is one sun that shines! I see this sun shines and I am convinced you see the same sun created by God! Indeed we are not far apart as God's creation connects us as families of the same God.

May God bless every family in the First Congregational Church. I am blessed with a peaceful family. My lovely wife is Sallymaki Umu Anumana-Restore Felicity Iyemia Anumana is my pretty lovely daughter who is now 4 years and have just started school, class one. Redemption Roy Brito Unjamathi Anumana is my second child, a graceful boy approaching his fifth month. Glory to God!

I am the coordinator of widows and orphans. Every kid is my child and I am blessed by God to be able to embrace every kid, teach every kid about the good news, help every kid with school work, sing our songs, act drama, perform poetry and play games and go on outreaches. I am just grateful to God. Perhaps I am the kinsfather!

God is working through you brethren. You have stood in the gap for us to maintain progress in the Lord. You gave us food when we were hungry, you clothed us when we stood naked and you are still relentless! Thank you all and merry Christmas!

Rainny Richard Anumana



YOUTH GROUP NEWS & SCHEDULES

Sunday morning Power Hour for Preschool-12th grade starting at 9:15am in the Loft.
January—9,16,23,30

Tuesday night DOG's (Depend on God) for preschool-5th grade, 6:15-7:15pm in the fellowship hall.
January—11,18,25

Wednesday night Jr. P.Y. (Jr. Pilgrim Youth) for 6-8th grade, 5:15-6:30pm in the Loft.
January—12,19,26

Wednesday night P.Y. (Pilgrim Youth) for 9-12th grade, 6:45-8pm in the Loft.
January—12,19,26



WinterJam 2022!! Christian Music Concert at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines, IA on Saturday, January 22nd. A group will be meeting at FCC by 3pm to carpool to Des Moines. Need \$5 for a ticket and \$ for dinner at the arena. Let Shelly know if any 6-12th grade students would like to come.



What a wonderful Children's Christmas Program we had at FCC on Sunday, Dec. 19th where the youth got to share the true Christmas story through the Christmas carols. Jesus is our most precious gift given by God at Christmas.



Our youth had an amazing time spreading some Christmas cheer while caroling at Glenwood nursing home and for our Pastor Dan and his family.



Had a blast at the Jordan Feliz Christian Concert with some of our youth and leaders at Journey Church in Marshalltown on Saturday, Dec. 4th.



December fun with our youth groups!



The Story of Who We Were

Cycle I Survey Highlights and Summary as of December 25, 2021

The FCC Renewal Listening Team thanks all of you for being involved in this process of developing a narration of us, First Congregational Church. This is a living document – one open for improvement. One we've adapted using feedback from many of you about earlier drafts was gained. As new themes became evident we've tried to strengthen the authenticity and breadth of this account of what has historically attracted us and bound us to one another in God's sight and for God's purpose. With this version of "Who We Were..." we will lay Part One of our story as a church aside for a while, so that we can focus our attention on the next phase – "Who We Are Now...." Even so, we remain open to improvements in this summary and intend to renew our look at who we were on a recurrent basis in the future. For now, this story of who we were will serve as a great launching point for next steps in renewal. Again, huge thanks for sharing!

What We Heard You Say About Who We Were...

We heard you say that when you initially came to First Congregational Church, it felt like **home**; it felt familiar. The people were sincerely **welcoming**. There is a special community within this church. We heard you say that you feel you are **valued** for what is in your heart.

You highlighted the importance of **intergenerational involvement** and a sense of being **"knit together" like a family**. Generations of biological relations attending FCC together provided stability and deep roots on which families thrived. For some of you, virtual families in Christ were created and bolstered relationships with our God and within our congregation that reinforced values you hold deeply.

You gave us accounts of **seasons of powerful spiritual growth** at FCC from bible studies, impactful sermons, prayer gatherings, mission work preparation and participation. Similarly, you told us the holy spirit's presence and movement were deeply felt in prayers to, for, and with one another individually, in small groups, and as a congregation.

We heard that you value FCC for the **care, empathy, and nurture of our spirits and of our minds**. You have valued many in our church community because of the good and spiritual ways they have influenced you and helped you be people of healthy and holy influence. Having members who have modeled and meaningfully taught discipleship were important spiritual inspirations for you.

We heard you say that through the generations our **youth programs** have been and remain critical to providing a shared purpose, continually provided social and spiritual growth, a sense of belonging, fun and even delight.

We heard frequently and clearly: **Music** drew you into worship here. It was and is esteemed as one of the best qualities at FCC. You said it inspires, is foundational in celebrations and important church traditions, reorients and grounds us in prayerful attitudes. And for those who share their musical talents it provides purpose, a sense of belonging, fellowship, and personal growth - both spiritually and musically.

We heard you say that our church is at its best when we have **unity in purpose in service** to others. As we work on projects and events together, sharing the Gospel and our gifts, we gain a sense of identity as a community of faith working together in love, actively answering God's call.

This is what we heard you say: having **programs for all members of all ages** is important. These programs have included Bible Studies, Fellowship Groups, Youth Group, Sunday School, Choirs, Interpretive Dance, Boy Scouts, Summer Camp, and Vacation Bible School.

You repeated many times that **fellowship** at FCC cultivates joy and meaning in your lives, and what we do together at and through church builds relationships that enrich us beyond our church doors.

We again wish to thank you in advance for your prayers as we continue in this process of discovering of what God has in store for us all as we move forward from this day.



Filling

When we consider our Lord's incarnation,
We praise Him for it, barely comprehending How it could happen. As for our salvation,
Our hearts are filled with thanks Jesus' sending. .

A Christian writer many years ago
Said Jesus filled His blessed mother's womb .

As honeycombs are filled by honey's flow.

Believer, you are saved. And saved by Whom?

By this sweet Savior Whose own holy savor Did just as Hildegard of Bingen said. .

He fills us still with His delicious flavor

To nourish us, for by Him we are fed.

Lord, help us live our lives as people filled

With Your sweet love, that we be not self-willed..

-Bob Hellam





2022

FCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS!
Sunday Worship Services:
8:00am & 10:30am

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Monday-Friday 9am-Noon 641-752-4239					
	<div> color code: youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards </div>					
2 Communion In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows 10:30am Svc Bible w /Dan 4pm	3	4	5 Men's Church coffee 8am @ Hyvee	6	7	1 
9 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows 10:30am Svc Bible w /Dan 4pm Power Hour 9:15am	10	11 DOGS 6:15pm 8:45am BMC	12 Jr PY 5:15-6:30 PY 6:45-8pm Men's Church coffee 8am @ Hyvee	13 Open Trustee's Meeting	14	15
16 11:45 BCE In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows 10:30am Svc Bible w /Dan 4pm Power Hour 9:15am	17 MLK Day	18 DOGS 6:15pm 6:30pm Deacons	19 Jr PY 5:15-6:30 PY 6:45-8pm Men's Church coffee 8am @ Hyvee	20 6:30 Trustees	21	22 MOW Volunteers: Hassler's
23 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows 10:30am Svc Bible w /Dan 4pm Power Hour 9:15am	24	25 DOGS 6:15pm	26 Jr PY 5:15-6:30 PY 6:45-8pm Men's Church coffee 8am @ Hyvee	27	28	29
30 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows 10:30am Svc Bible w /Dan 4pm Power Hour 9:15am	31					

January

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

