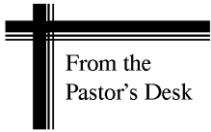


Pilgrim's Progress

January 2023

"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."



Spiritual Disciplines for 2023

Interest according to Renewal interviews

In reading the summaries of interviews during our Renewal Process, I noticed that spiritual disciplines were of interest, so I'm dedicating the Pastor's newsletter articles for 2023 to different ways we can be proactive in spiritual growth. By "spiritual growth" in mean development in our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in such fashion that it is reflected in our knowledge and in our character as exemplified by Galatians 5:22-23; "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."

A Helpful Resource

In preparing these notes for the coming year I will be turning to a helpful book, "Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life" by Donald Whitney (1991 NavPress, Colorado Springs, Colorado). There are many other valuable resources on the subject available at our local Christian bookstore.

Why bother?

We all live busy lives in a country with a very busy culture. Finding time for such things as prayer and reflection can be difficult to manage. Still, this is necessary for the Christian life, especially in a busy culture with busy schedules. First of all, God, in Scripture, commands that we do this, especially in light of the fact that there are people who choose evil instead of good and hate those who love what is good. Consider 2 Timothy 3:12-17. Second of all, life is much more interesting when you are growing and learning, and the Christian life is no exception. So listed below is the schedule for the articles for 2023. I hope they are helpful.

-Pastor Dan

February	Prayer
March	Bible
April	Worship
May	Evangelism
June	Service
July	Stewardship
August	Fasting
September	Silence & Solitude
October	Journaling
November	Learning
December	Persevering in the Disciplines

Sermons:



January 1	Light	Isaiah 52:7-9; John 1:1-14
January 8	Pastor Dan out of town, Rev. Bob Spilger filling in.	
January 15	Call to be Saints	1 Corinthians 1:1-9
January 22	In the Same Mind and Judgment	1 Corinthians 1:10-18
January 29	The Message of the Cross	1 Corinthians 1:18-31



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



Bickford: Joanie Smith-Legg #108,
Mill Pond Care Center: Romaine Mackaman
Southridge: Betty Runner #212, Carol Stanley
Grandview: Ken Kreykes
Grundy Co.: Leta Lacina #118

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	1/04/2003	20 years
Carlton & Carmalee Kothenbeutel	1/14/1960	56 years



January 1	Bing McHone, Quinton Norman	January 19	Kristin Meyer
January 3	Janice Jordan	January 22	Harriet Arklie
January 6	Aaron Dickey	January 23	Joan Carter, Brandon Goken
January 8	Rod Hassler	January 25	Jonna Wager, John Olson
January 13	Larry Koepnick	January 26	Deborah Estabrook
January 15	Carmalee Kothenbeutel, Midajah Propp	January 29	Blake Latham, Hunter Diggins



News from The Diaconate

Please join us Saturday, January 14th at 10 A.M. to help remove the sanctuary Christmas decorations.



Inclement Weather Information:
 When the weather is questionable, please refer to KCCI, KFJB, or Kix 101.1 for the latest weather updates about cancellations or postponements.



Open Chapel ~ Open Chapel is available from 1:00-2:00pm every Wednesday. It is a time for Meditation and Quiet Reflection and is open to all.



News from Missions and Benevolence



The mission's team is still committed to doing our part for Meals on Wheels in Marshalltown! Our part is; one Saturday a month (the fourth Saturday) and we do the east route. What's new and exciting is that we now go to the new hospital and pick up and our old blue route has become the east route. Please sign up in the narthex or call the church office (641-752-4239) to volunteer. You will be making a difference for someone that day and it feels good to help out. Any questions please call me Kristi Hassler 641-753-3276 or Doris McCarty 641-752-7604.

Open 2023 Dates

March 25
July 22
November 25

April 22
August 26
December 23

May 27
September 23

June 24
October 28



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Power Hour for Preschool-12th grade on Sunday mornings in the Loft at 9:15am.
January 8,15,22,29

DOG's (Depend on God) for Preschool-5th grade on Tuesday nights in the Fellowship Hall at 5-6:30pm with a meal.
January 10,17,24,31

Jr PY (Pilgrim Youth) for 6-8th grade on Wednesday nights in the Loft at 5-6:15pm with a meal in the Fellowship Hall 6:15-6:45pm.
January 11,18,25

PY (Pilgrim Youth) for 9-12th grade on Wednesday nights in the Loft at 6:45-8pm with a meal in the Fellowship Hall 6:15-6:45pm.
January 11,18,25



We want to celebrate the special youth God has placed in our church and so we are taking them out for birthday treats this year. Here are some of our youth with fall birthdays.



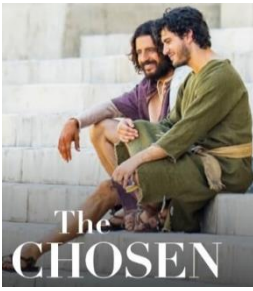
In December our youth groups went caroling to some of our church members homes and Accura. We were so happy to spread some Christmas love and joy!

We had a Christmas party with our DOG's group to end the 2022 year with our kids.



Sunday, December 18th was our children's Christmas program during the 10:30am worship service. The kids led the service and performed some songs of special music and a play "Christmas begins with Christ, Ebenezer Scrooge". We also had a special song played by Sam Speas, Christian Masas, Jeremy Metzger, and sang by James Lundberg. What a special Sunday it was!





We will have The Chosen Bible study on Sunday, January 8th at 6:30pm in the Loft which will be the final episode of season 1. We will start season 2 on Sunday, January 22nd at 6:30pm in the Loft. This Bible study is open for all adults. If you missed season 1 with us that is no problem! You can watch season 1, which is 8 episodes, on The Chosen free app anytime. We would love to have others come join us for this wonderful time of Bible study, where the Old Testament and New Testament come to life before our eyes on the screen and we dive into the scripture looking at Jesus and his amazing ministry and his time with his chosen disciples.



Board of Christian Education Update

- **Adult Sunday School** continues the Co-Missioned study; the next study will be on the book of Revelation, probably starting March 1.
- **Confirmation Sunday:** tentatively planned to occur in February.
- **Power Hour:** Preparation for the Christmas pageant was the priority in December, with the performance occurring December 18. The study of the Beatitudes will continue in January.
- **Youth Groups:** DOGS went caroling as a service project; plus had a Christmas party. PY and Jr. PY watched a movie called “The Shepherd”. They went caroling on December 14 as well as had a Christmas Party.
- **The Chosen Video Series:** The group will finish Season One in January, meeting on every other Sunday night at 6:30pm.
- **Soup luncheon** followed the Christmas Pageant with the BCE committee in charge.
- **Winter Jam** is Friday, February 10.



Women's Ministry News for January:

January Women's Ministry Bible Study with Jane VerMulm is Monday, January 9th and January 23rd at 5:30 in the library.

The next full Women's Ministry gathering will be **February 6** at 5:30 in the Fellowship Room.

We look forward to having you join us.

Blessed New Year!

Prayers,
Julie Paustian



Renewal Coordinating Team News

In late 2021 and throughout 2022, our church engaged in a some 150-200 1:1 or couple:1 interviews to discern key elements of First Congregational Church's story. The summaries bubbling out of these conversations yielded some wonderful consistencies. Our next steps in renewal are to link some of these past, present, and future values together to give meaning to plans for the next few years. We don't need to accomplish all our aspirations at once. We do need to recognize the foundational characteristics of the past and esteemed experiences of our present that motivate decisions about our programs and investments in time, talent and treasure going forward. Leadership at FCC looks forward to helping to set the course of our renewal emphasis using our story as a guide.

These are characteristics of our past that we cherish.

Family - blood and filial affections made church feel like home, welcoming, knit together, comfortably familiar, where family commitment was valued

Intergenerational - programs and worship engaged people of all ages

Mutual Caring - positive interpersonal relationships cultivated by empathy and motivated by desire to serve and nurture one another in every way

Youth Ministry - fostered shared purpose, growth, a sense of belonging and was FUN!

Music - Foundational, inspiring, reoriented us to the holiness of worship and grounded us in the Holy Spirit, nurtured belonging, fellowship and personal growth

Fellowship - cultivated meaningful relationships that brought us joy

Service to Others - answered God's call together in love; shared the Gospel and our gifts while creating and administering projects and events

Spiritually Growing - through learning, praying and serving TOGETHER through the week

These are experiences in our present that we esteem.

Our RELATIONSHIPS:

WITH GOD - biblically based sermons, teachings, music and accommodation for diverse expressions of worship

WITH EACH OTHER - loving, warm, welcoming in all aspects of church activity

WITH COMMUNITY AND WORLD - missional hands-on work together and in collaboration with other churches and missions

Growth in our ability to communicate – we respect the advantages of face-to-face interaction, but recognize the value of digital communication when face-to-face interaction is hindered

Excitement about what God is doing at FCC – fueling the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in all we do; revealing His transformative power; strengthening our youth ministry in effect and numbers

We yearn to grow as disciples – learning and worshipping TOGETHER and supporting each other in our journey to become more like Christ

Congregational structure and decision-making

Encouraging signs of growing inter-generational connectedness and engagement

THIS IS WHAT WE DISCERNED GOD IS CALLING US TO BE....

A **PEOPLE OF BELONGING** – like family and where everyone feels accepted

VIBRANTLY ACTIVE IN MISSIONS AND BENEVOLENCE

ACTIVELY IN PURSUIT OF BIBLE LITERACY

SPIRITUALLY GROWING –individually and as community

A **DISCIPLING COMMUNITY**

ENGAGED WITH WIDER FAITH COMMUNITY

INSPIRED IN WORSHIP that honors God & reflects the diverse needs & gifts of the congregation

A **COMMUNITY OF VIBRANT INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTEDNESS**





FCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS!
Sunday Worship Services:
 8am & 10:30am in person
 10:30am Service is also on YouTube

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Monday-Friday 9am-Noon 641-752-4239				
1 Communion  In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Guest Rev. Bob Spilger In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 "The Chosen" Bible Study 6:30pm	9 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	10 BMC meets 8:45am D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	11 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee Open Chapel 1-2 pm JR PY 5:00-6:45 PY 6:15-8:00	12 Bell choir 5:30-6:30 pm in library 6:30 pm RCT meets	13	14
15 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 BCE meets 11:45am	16	17 Diaconate meets 6:30 pm D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	18 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee Open Chapel 1-2 pm JR PY 5:00-6:45 PY 6:15-8:00	19 Bell choir 5:30-6:30 pm in library 6:30 pm Trustees meet	20	21
22 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 "The Chosen" Bible Study 6:30pm	23 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	24 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	25 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee Open Chapel 1-2 pm JR PY 5:00-6:45 PY 6:15-8:00	26 Bell choir 5:30-6:30 pm in library	27	28 11am MOW Kim Schryver
29 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	30	31 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30				color code: youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards

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.fcmarshalltown.org

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

