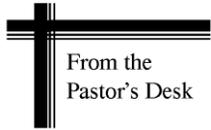


Pilgrim's Progress

March 2024

"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."



Main Article-The Passover Meal

According to my calendar, Passover begins at Sunset, Monday, April 22 and ends at Sunset, Tuesday, April 23. Because of the different ways of figuring the dates, Passover does not always coincide with Easter, which is much earlier this year. But the first Communion service was a Passover Seder meal held by the Lord Jesus and His disciples and is filled with meaning. Several church members have experienced some version of the Passover meal and the story it tells of deliverance from slavery. I had hoped to hold a version of the Passover meal this year but it turns out that it is more involved and time consuming than I originally realized as it can take days to prepare and two or three hours to experience. A full traditional Passover meal can last six hours and I'm not sure how many people want to participate at this time. I would like to not something about the Passover meal that is very meaningful to me and that I've mentioned to the church on more than one occasion.

During the course of the meal and the story of deliverance from slavery in Egypt, everything served symbolizes parts of the story. Included are four cups of wine, each with its own name and meaning. They are the Cup of Sanctification, the Cup of Judgment, the Cup of Redemption and the Cup of Praise. The Cup of Sanctification speaks of God bringing the children of Israel out of the burden of their lives as slaves, the Cup of Judgment speaks of forcing Egypt to relinquish Israel, the Cup of Redemption speaks of paying all costs incurred by Israel, the Cup of Praise speaks of the destiny of all God's people. The Cup of Redemption is also know as the Cup of Blessing, and the Apostle Paul wrote that it is the Cup of Blessing that we take when we drink of the fruit of the vine during Holy Communion (1 Corinthians 10:16). It was the Cup of Blessing that Jesus held up in Matthew 26:26-29:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' The He took the cup, and gave thanks, and give it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.'"

Jesus finished the Passover meal with the Cup of Redemption-Blessing, the third of the four cups of the Passover meal. That means that He is waiting to finish the Last Supper with us in His Father's kingdom, and when we partake of Holy Communion, we are saying that we want to be there in His Father's Kingdom when He does so. Communion took on a deeper and more profound meaning when I learned that and it made me appreciate the Jewish roots of Holy Communion found in the Passover meal, which is still celebrated around the world to this day.

Sermons for March:

- March 3 "Out of the House of Bondage" Exodus 20:1; Hebrews 2:15
 March 10 "A Matter of Focus Numbers" 21:4-9; John 3:14
 March 17 "Jesus Our High Priest" Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33
 March 24 Palm Sunday
 "A Humble Purpose Often is God's Purpose" Isaiah 42:1-4; John 12:1-11
 March 31 Resurrection Sunday
 "The New Covenant" Mark 16:1-8; Jeremiah 31:31-34



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



- Bickford:** Joanie Smith-Legg #108,
Mill Pond Care Center: Romaine Mackaman
Traditions Care Center: Marian Gerdes
Southridge: Betty Runner #212,
Glenwood Place: Mildred Lathrop #145, Lenora Brown #161, Bonnie Pappas #112,
 Anita Niehouse #116, Elenor Tjossem #160

Willows of Marshalltown: Evelyn Thompson



Jeremy & Julie Lavender	March 4, 2010	14 years
Bing & Dorothy McHone	March 28, 1998	26 years



March 2	Kayla Bogenrief	March 14	Dorothy McHone
March 3	Leta Lacina	March 15	Julie Paustian
March 4	Barbara Ellcey, Erin Stanley	March 17	Jenny Sauer
March 7	Barb Hibbs, Erin Jensen	March 21	Dave Dysart
March 8	Caroline Lavender	March 22	Raymond Kersbergen
March 9	Bob Bauer	March 24	Lenora Brown
March 10	Greg Meyer, Reed Swartz	March 31	Nick Carson



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.

The following Dates for 2024 are available! Thank You!

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

Hello from the Benevolence and Missions Committee!

Food insecurity is a very real problem in our community. We are asking you to help and support our mini mission by providing items to the mini pantries. With the weather warming up, jars and canned items can be safely put into the pantries. When you are out shopping, please keep our shopping cart, located in the Narthex, in your thoughts. Peanut butter, cereal, dried fruits, pastas, and sauce are all some examples of what can be out into these mini pantries.

Thanks again for your attention to this need in the community. Kristi Hassler



Chancel Choir

Practices on Friday March 1 and March 8 at 5:30pm.

Sing on Sundays March 3 and March 10.

We have a chair and music for you! Sing Hallelujah!



Women's Ministry

March 4: Sing Along at Glenwood Memory Care

Bible Study with Jane: March 11 and 25 in the library at 5:30pm.

We are finishing our Ephesians study. Our new topic is "Spiritual Gifts."

Please join us! Jane has an extra book for you.

You are welcome any time.



News from The Diaconate

We will be having the Easter Memorial Garden this year. Donations will be \$20 towards the purchase of an Easter lily. There will be inserts in the bulletins for you to sign up. After the service, if you have donated, you may take a lily home.

On Palm Sunday the children will process with palms.

We will hold our traditional Tenebrae service this year on Thursday, March 28th at 7 P.M. Tenebrae means darkness in Latin. There will be a gradual dimming of the lights during the service.

On Easter Sunday we will have our regular 8 A.M and 10:30 services. There will be no Fellowship Time on Easter.



YOUTH GROUP NEWS



Power Hour Sundays at 9:15am for preschool-12th grade.
March 3,17,24,31 (Not 10th, Spring break)

DOG's (Depend on God) Tuesdays, 5-6:30pm with a meal for
preschool-4th grade.
March 5,19, 26 (Not 12th, Spring break)





Jr PY (Pilgrim Youth) Wednesdays, 4:45-6:15pm with a meal for 5-8th grade.
 March 6, 20, 27 (Not 13th, Spring break)

PY (Pilgrim Youth) Wednesdays, 6:30-8pm with a meal for 9-12th grade.
 March 6, 20, 27 (Not 13th, Spring break)



We were so excited to attend the WinterJam concert with some of our youth group in Des Moines in February! It's an awesome experience to get to hear the testimonies of many Christian music artists and worship God together with so many other believers!

Our Women's Ministry blessed our DOG's group with Valentines gift bags. The kids were so happy and felt so loved by our church!



Youth Fundraiser Announcement:
 Want a meal for your date night or a pre-cooked meal to take home to your family? Let us cook for you! We are going to have a drive through dinner at FCC on Saturday, March 23rd. Menu includes: homemade lasagna, breadsticks, green beans, and a dessert for \$10 a meal. Drive through pick up under the portico at First Congregational Church driving in from 4th St. and going out onto Main Street. Pick up any time between 5:30-6:30pm. Please pre-order your meals by calling 641-751-9868 to order. We need your orders in by Wednesday, March 20th. This is a fundraiser for our summer youth mission conference NAPF/HOPE.



Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.

For those of you who read “Pillars of Faith” in February, the person was Norma Dannen. If you haven’t read this article in the church’s newsletter and you have a computer, you can find it at this web site: <https://www.fccmarshalltown.org/newsletter> Thanks Norma for all you have done, do and will do!

One of the definitions of a pillar is: a person or thing regarded as reliably providing essential support for something. In the New King James Version of the Bible, Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” This gift of God is the reason the receivers of this gift want to be the hands and feet of Jesus on earth. So, with these two things in mind, we would like to present the “Pillar of Faith” for March.

This Pillar of Faith grew up in Grundy County Iowa and went to the Christian Reform Church. This church had a good Bible base but being very strict there were a lot of nos, like no cards, no dancing, no movies, etc. The next church this person attended was a Lutheran Church, which was much like going to the Catholic Church.

Fisher Controls was his first job one year before he was drafted. Instead of letting that happen he enlisted in the Air Force and was stationed in Massachusetts. He met his wife thru an Air Force buddy’s neighbor who was a sister of that neighbor’s wife. He went to the Congregational Church with his wife and that was how he got connected with this denomination. When his time in the service was over he came back to Marshalltown and his job at Fisher Controls. He retired from there after 31 years of service to the company.

He and his wife checked out several churches in Marshalltown and found that the First Congregational Church was more to their liking. It was friendly and they were used to the order of the worship service. An activity they got involved in there was “Family Circle” which as the name implies was for the whole family including children. This group met once a month and there was a covered dish meal and games. Ann and Wally Junker and family attended and there was usually 25 or 30 people attending. Other areas he was involved in was the Diaconate for a couple of terms. It was in the 1970s and ‘80s when there were no women on this board. He got stuck with doing all the duties of being a deacon every month because no one else on the board wanted to do them. Later he was on the Board of Trustees for 17 years, which he chaired for 14 of those years. This board took care of the Building and Grounds with a Do-it-yourself committee. He liked F. C. C. so well he has belonged for 55 years. By the way he also does many behind the scenes things that keep the church safe and secure that no ones knows anything about.

When asked what was your favorite activity the reply was, “Trustees Board because of the building and grounds part. I also enjoyed the Do-it-Yourself things we did around the church.”

What advice do you have for the church? “Get in a habit of going to Church every Sunday no matter what!”

Now if you are wondering why this person’s name was not mentioned, it wasn’t a mistake. Can you guess who this person is? If not be sure and read your April news letter. The answer will be there under the title “Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.”





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				
color code: youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards					1 Chancel Choir 5:30pm	2
3 Communion In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	4 Women's Ministry @ 5:30 in Library	5 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	6 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	7 Bell choir 5:30	8 Chancel Choir 5:30pm	9
10 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Daylight Savings Time	11 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	12 BMC meets 8:45am	13 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee	14 Bell choir 5:30	15	16
17 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 BCE meets 11:45am St. Patrick's Day	18	19 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30 Diaconate meets 6:30 pm	20 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	21 Bell choir 5:30	22	23 11am MOW Lisa Blabaum
24 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 Palm Sunday	25 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	26 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	27 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	28 Bell choir 5:30 Tenebrae Service@ 7pm	29 Good Friday Office Closed	30
31 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 Easter Sunday						



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

