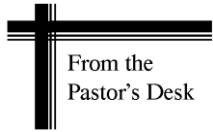


Pilgrim's Progress

April 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."



From the
Pastor's Desk

Main article-Passover

Passover begins at Sunset, Monday, April 22, 2024, and is based on the events found in the early chapters of Exodus, particularly Exodus 11 and 12. To set the stage, the people of Israel had lived as a class of slaves for over four centuries when Moses, a man in his eighties who had fled Egypt 40 years before has returned, claiming that the God of Israel, the only true God, commands that Israel be freed. God performed a miracle through Mose's brother Aaron, for his rod turned into a snake when he threw it town to the ground. The magicians of the court of Pharaoh were able to do the same, however, so Pharaoh's heart "grew hard."

God then afflicts the Nile River, turning the water into blood, then He covers the land with frogs, then lice, then flies, disease among livestock, boils, hail, locusts and darkness. Some of these are repeated on a greater scale in the Book of Revelation. Finally (Exodus 11:4 and following), Moses goes into the court of Pharaoh and warns him, that night around midnight God will visit Egypt and the firstborn of every family will die, from the family of Pharaoh to the family of the most humble servant and the firstborn of all the animals. It was his last warning, but Pharaoh would not permit Israel to leave.

God then instructed the people to select a lamb without fault around a year old, a male either from the sheep or the goats, one for each family. The lamb was kept with the family until twilight of the eve when God will visit and then all the families will kill their lambs at twilight. The blood of the lamb was then painted on the doorpost and lint of their homes, and the people were to stay inside until daylight. Verse 23 is telling: "For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you."

It is this act of judgment and deliverance that is remembered by Jewish people around the world every year, including this year, and is also the basis of our Sacrament of Holy Communion, recognizing that Jesus is the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." It also gives us some sobering points of reflection. The sins of the leaders of the nation can bring suffering to the people of the nation, and the sins of others and lead to the suffering of people, like children, who did not themselves commit a sin. It is the awful nature of sin that makes the cross and resurrection of Jesus all the more beautiful, and it reminds us that God is judge and is at all times to be taken seriously. May God bless your thoughts and your prayers this Passover season

Sermons for March:

April 7 Believing and Seeing John 20:24-31

April 14 An Open Understanding 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Luke 24:45-48

April 21 Christ Our Passover Exodus 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

April 28 Perfect Love 1 John 4:17-18; James 3:1-12



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



Troy & LaRae McGahuey

April 9, 1988

36 years

Dwayne & Maxie Shultz

April 12, 1967

57 years

Bill & Lynn Maas

April 13, 1996

28 years



April 4 Joy Kreykes

April 18 Liz Meyer

April 8 Sam Good

April 19 Linda McGregor

April 9 Vicki McKibbin

April 21 Katie Paustian, Shelly Speas

April 10 Leah Stanley

April 23 Thomas Stanley

April 14 Jasmine Gepford

April 25 Kirk Shirar

April 16 Lisa Blabaum

April 27 Ron Estabrook

April 17 Sam Speas

April 28 Adam Swope



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. We will now pick up and drop off the coolers and tubs for meal delivery at the hospital under the canopy by the entrance to the emergency room. The hospital has asked drivers not to park directly in front of the ER doors, and for no longer than 10 minutes. There should be enough room for two cars to fit under the canopy. This will be helpful during inclement weather, and it will allow the kitchen staff to keep an eye out for our arrival and return directly from their window. This change will be effective starting Wednesday March 13th.

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
September 28

June 22
October 26

July 27
November 23

August 24
December 28



Submitted by: Kim Schryver

I write to you during Holy Week when big flakes of snow shoot horizontally past our windows. The weather reinforces a somber sense of unease and sorrow that always precedes Our Lord’s day of crucifixion. Good Friday is coming, but we have the hope of Easter right behind. God’s sacrificial generosity and faithfulness is beyond my comprehension.

Among the words highlighted in one lovely devotional I’m using this Lent is “Giving.” The members of this committee embrace this tangible extension of love in our private lives and in actions on behalf of this church. In an effort to invite you to be more a part of how your church expresses its faith in action we are proposing something new. We’ve sent a request to the Board of Deacons to allow our committee to share **Mission Moments** with you monthly from the pulpit – GIVING YOU REGULAR FEEDBACK. Always with a promise of 5-min or less, we want you to hear (as well as read in the newsletter) about significant gifts the committee has given or undertakings this committee is leading and how you can be a part. Occasionally, we will have a guest from a sponsored organization share with you an update of their work. We’re hoping to have a sanction from Board of Deacons before the end of April 2024 so that we can introduce you to Mission Moments in time for our first churchwide initiative for the year.

The **Annual House of Compassion Supply Closet Drive** is slated for **May 2024**. Our committee is excited to find ways to make this initiative relevant to you and really meaningful to those we can help through this endeavor. We are GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO BE GENEROUS AS A CHURCH BODY and make a difference. Please, make a mental note to expect a supply closet drive in May. We will begin sharing promotion of this campaign in April.

Members of the Missions and Benevolence Committee are each GIVING OF OUR TIME, TALENT AND RESOURCES to support our youth ministry by preparing and serving meals on these Tuesday and Wednesday nights:

- Tuesday 4/9 Jonna Wagar
- Wednesday 4/10 Kristi and Rod Hassler
- Tuesday 4/23 Kim Schryver
- Wednesday 4/24 Whole Benevolence and Missions Committee.

Shelly Speas and our faithful youth ministry helpers could probably use help on some other nights in April or May 2024. We urge you to give of yourself or as a group by committing to providing a meal. Contact Shelly at 641-751-9868 or shellzncheese2004@yahoo.com to find out when and how to help with meals.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Easter Sunday and after in April!



January Thru February, 2024	Actual	Budget	Net
GIVING	24,748	27,416	-9.73%
EXPENSES	42,360	46,090	-8.09%



Chancel Choir

Practices on Friday April 5 and April 12 at 5:30pm.

Sing on Sundays April 7 and April 14.

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

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Power Hour Sundays at 9:15am for preschool-12th grade.

April 7,14,21,28

DOG's (Depend on God) Tuesdays, 5-6:30pm with a meal for preschool-4th grade.

April 2,9,16,23,30

Jr PY (Pilgrim Youth) Wednesdays, 4:45-6:15pm with a meal for 5-8th grade.

April 3,10,17,24

PY (Pilgrim Youth) Wednesdays, 6:30-8pm with a meal for 9-12th grade.

April 3,10,17,24



Was a wonderful Palm Sunday celebration!



What an awesome drive through dinner fundraiser! It was a huge success and the NAPF/HOPE group is so grateful that people took time to come and bless them financially as they prepare to go to the National youth mission conference in Spokane Washington this summer.

We had an amazing experience at the Ignite Youth Leadership Conference in Des Moines!! So many amazing speakers and what a blessing it was to get to praise Jesus with so many believers! There were lots of take aways from our sessions that will help us grow as Christian leaders and helpful tips to incorporate in our youth ministry. We were all encouraged and challenged to live for Christ and stand firm in our faith!





We are so very excited for all of the 2024 graduates! Our church will be having a celebration for our graduates on Sunday, May 19th during the 10:30am service with a reception following the service. If you have any high school seniors or college seniors, we would love to include them! If they will be here for May 19th, please contact Shelly Speas to let her know so she can gather more information and plan for them on that Sunday. We would also love to include a picture of your graduates and a little information of them in the May newsletter. Please email the office with a senior or just a current picture of your high school or college graduate and let us know what school they are graduating from, what their future plans are, and if a college student, what their degree is in. Please reach out to Shelly Speas with any questions. We are so excited to see God’s plans unfold for the 2024 graduates as they step into their new adventure.



Moderator News

I John 3: 16-18

Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

As we reflect on the recent Lenten Season and Easter Celebration, may we remember to thank Pastor Dan and Harlan Nuss for their messages of hope, illumination, and inspiration; our musicians for the beautiful music at every service; the Diaconate for the plans and preparations; our Secretary, Katie V. and the AV crew for their talents and patience with all of us all the time.

With our Renewal Vision in mind, we begin:

Cabinet Meeting – Sunday, April 7, 11:45, Church Library. Contact the Moderator or appropriate Board with comments/questions. The Leadership Blue Book will be reviewed and approved as well as the nominee for the existing Member-At-Large vacancy. (Blue Books will be available to members before the end of April) Vision Renewal plans will be discussed, each Board/Committee reporting its suggestions. New Business that is on the agenda will be considered.

Iowa/Nebraska Spring Meeting – April 12 & 13, Elkader, IA. Shelly Speas will serve on a panel discussing “how we can serve the needs of children and youth”. Patrick S. and Miriam B. will also attend.

NACCC Annual Meeting – June 22-26, Spokane, WA. Pastor Dan & Miriam B. are Delegates. They will also attend the Quiet Day Retreat following the meeting . Look for more information in the May & June issues of Pilgrim’s Progress.

Please keep the leadership of our church in your prayers as they provide talent, time, and experience in service to our church.

Your Moderator

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On a personal note, I want to thank each of you for the prayers and support given to my son and wife during his recent spine surgery and recovery. He has now been back at work half time for 2 weeks after 10 months under care. He is feeling the best he has in 5 years so Thank you, God, and each of you.

MB



Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.

For those of you who read "Pillars of Faith" in March, the person was Max Meyer. 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.fcmarshalltown.org/newsletter> Thanks, Max, 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 April.

This person belonged to a Methodist Church in the country and was looking for a church in town. A friend invited this person to the First Congregational Church in Marshalltown. At first the attendance was monthly but soon it became weekly. Barry Holmes, the pastor, and his wife, Cheryl, were serving the church at the time. Barry noticed the regular attendance of this person and asked if she would like to join the church. She said, "I think I would!" This was in the summer of 2004, which means this summer she will have been a member for twenty years.

She got involved right away when someone was resigning from the Board of Deacons. She was asked to finish the resigning persons term and she agreed. When this term was over she was eager to serve a full three year term. The next position she held was on the Christian Education Board and discovered it was a lot of work. However she enjoyed working with the children who attend DOGs (Depend On God) every week during the school year. She was also a member of Woman's Fellowship which met once a a month.

When asked which activity she enjoyed the most she replied, "I enjoy working with the children the most. Some of the children call me Grandma because i remind them of their own Grandma and that is okay with me. I go on the NAPF trips as a chaperone and that is fun too."

When asked what advice she had for the future of our church she said, "BE INVOLVED! That is really how to belong to a church. We are a church family and you wouldn't want to see your family for only an hour a week!"

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 newsletter. The answer will be there under the title "Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C."



Women's Ministry

General meeting Monday April 1 at 5:30.

Bible Study with Jane

5:30 in the library

April 8 and April 22

Our new study is Spritual Gifts. Join us!



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 Women's Ministry @ 5:30 in Library	2 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	3 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	4 Bell choir 5:30	5 Chancel Choir 5:30pm	6
7 Communion Cabinet Meeting 11:45am In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	8 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	9 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30 BMC meets 8:45am	10 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	11 Bell choir 5:30	12 Chancel Choir 5:30pm	13
14 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	15	16 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30 Diaconate meets 6:30 pm	17 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00 Trustees meet 7 pm	18 Bell choir 5:30	19	20
21 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 BCE meets 11:45am	22 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	23 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	24 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	25 Bell choir 5:30	26	27 11am MOW Lisa Blabaum
28 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	29	30 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30				



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

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

