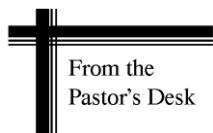


# Pilgrim's Progress

## January 2025

"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."



January 6 celebrates Epiphany

Epiphany means "manifestation of God" and celebrates the Gifts of the Wise Men, with the narrative found in Matthew 2:1-12. They came from points east of Israel to Jerusalem claiming that the King of Israel had been born and they had come to worship Him. They followed a star that led them directly to the stable. They gave gifts and worshipped, recognizing Christ for who He is, and then when they were warned by an angel in a dream, they left and we never hear from them again. This day we remember because it recognizes the Incarnation, that God actually joined the human race. Other belief systems believed that the gods might visit villages masquerading as ordinary people and reward or punish people depending on how they treated the gods. The Incarnation goes much farther than that. Jesus voluntarily, and temporarily, set aside the powers of divinity and actually joined the human race, not as someone masquerading as a human. He identifies and unites Himself with people in the most powerful way imaginable. Years later, when He arose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, he retained His humanity even though He is fully God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. These are things that I find very hard to understand, but suffice it to say that God takes humanity very seriously, we should do the same.

January 12 celebrates the Baptism of Jesus

Years after the visit from the Wise Men, Jesus, along with many others, visits John the Baptist out in the wilderness in order to be baptized. John tries to talk Him out of it, that Jesus should baptize John, not the other way around, but Jesus says that it is to fulfill all righteousness. What He means by that is a matter of debate, but I suspect He does this with the cross, metaphorically, in the background. Though sinless, Jesus is identifying with sinners as the cross and Resurrection will secure redemption for all who follow Him. Such is His love and mercy for us. These are just a couple of things to ponder as we enter into the New Year.

+Pastor Dan

### **Sermons:**

January 5 Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1-12 The Wise Still Seek Him

January 12 Isaiah 43:1-2; Luke 3:21-22 The Waters of Baptism

January 19 To Be Determined

January 26 To Be Determined





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

**Bickford:** Joanie Smith-Legg #108,

**Mill Pond Care Center:** Romaine Mackaman

**Veterans Home:** Marian Gerdes

**Southridge:** Betty Runner #212,

**Glenwood Place:** Mildred Lathrop #145, Anita Niehouse #116, Elenor Tjossem #160, Lenora Brown #161

**Creekside in Grundy Center:** Leta Lacina

**Cross Creek in Lee's Summit, MO:** Vicki Long



Todd & Leah Stanley

1/04/2003

22 years



January 1	Bing McHone, Quinton Norman,	January 19	Kristin Meyer
	Isabella Liew	January 22	Harriet Arklie
January 3	Janice Jordan	January 23	Brandon Goken
January 6	Aaron Dickey	January 25	Jonna Wager, John Olson
January 8	Rod Hassler	January 26	Deb Estabrook
		January 29	Blake Latham, Hunter Diggins

## News from The Diaconate

January 5<sup>th</sup> we will observe Epiphany Sunday as a church festival in commemoration of the coming of the [Magi](#) as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles or in the Eastern Church in commemoration of the baptism of Christ. This will be the end of the Christmas season.

Due to a funeral service at church on Saturday morning, January 11<sup>th</sup>, we will remove the Christmas decorations from the sanctuary at 2 P.M. that day. Please come to help us.

## Meals On Wheels



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. 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. Any questions please call me Kristi Hassler 641-753-3276 or Doris McCarty 641-752-7604.

### The following 2025 dates available are:

February 22  
September 27

May 24  
October 25

July 26  
December 27

August 23

# YOUTH GROUP NEWS

**D.O.G.'s** (Depend on God) - *January 7,14,21,28*

is a group for K-4th grade kids on Tuesday nights from 5-6:30pm with a meal.

**Jr. P.Y.** (Pilgrim Youth) - *January 8,15,22,29*

is a group for 5-8th grade youth on Wednesday nights from 5-6:30pm with a meal.

**P.Y.** (Pilgrim Youth) - *January 8,15,22,29*

is a group for 9-12th grade youth on Wednesday nights from 6:15-8pm with a meal.

**Power Hour** – January 5,12,19,26

is a group for K-12th grade youth on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:20am.



At the end of November we had a Thanksgiving Feast and fun night with our Youth Groups.



The youth and leaders had a great time helping to decorate the Christmas tree in the sanctuary.





The youth groups loved getting to deliver poinsettias to some wonderful church members and sing Christmas carols spreading God's love and joy.



The children's Christmas program (The Nightshift Before Christmas) was such a blessing. It was a Sunday filled with amazing music and a special Christmas message.



The youth bake sale was a big success. We are so thankful and blessed to have such an amazing church family!!



The youth had an awesome Christmas party in Power Hour at the end of December!!



## Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.

For those of you who read "Pillars of Faith" in December, the person was Julianne Packer. 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, Julianne, 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. The Biblical definition of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1 which says, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Revised Standard Version. Also 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 January.

It all began in a town on the Missouri River, where our Pillar of Faith for January grew up. Since the family enjoyed many generations of Congregationalists this young person was raised in the congregational tradition. This meant attending Sunday School, youth group and later playing the piano for Sunday School and choir.

After graduating from college, Fisher Controls recruited this person to Marshalltown in 1978 from Omaha, Nebraska. Life in Marshalltown was not complete without a place to go to church and the search began for a Congregational Church. That was when First Congregational Church of Marshalltown came into the picture and our Pillar of Faith and a daughter began to attend this church. It was in the early '80s, Tom Richard was the minister and Rich Miller Todd was the one who invited her to join the church.

Real involvement with the church began with a term on the Board of Christian Education. This resulted in several more terms and for some of these terms she was the chair person. She taught third grade Sunday School and produced several children's Christmas musicals. She served on the Board of Trustees and was the chair person for this board at least a couple of terms. When the sanctuary was refurbished she was the chair person of the Trustees that raised funds for this project by having people pledge and pay back in three years the \$160,000-180,000 for the project. Amazingly it was paid back in one year! She helped to buy the church's first membership data base program, served as organist, served on the Diaconate and was chair person for several years. She is a member of the "Stamp Club". She belonged to Women's Fellowship and Amity. She also was on the Funeral Luncheon Committee.

When asked what activity she enjoyed most, the reply was, "It is a toss up between Deacons and Trustees. The Diaconate is about reaching out to the members by making them feel welcome and important. During Covid, "Live Streaming" the worship service was started. It continues even now so that those who are unable to attend in person are able to be involved. Visitation is another effort of the Deacons which lets members know they are not forgotten."

When asked what advice do you have for the future of our church? The reply was "Actively participate in the life of the church. Become a member of a board or committee and be actively involved in the work of this board or committee."

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 February 2025 newsletter. The answer will be there under the title "Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C."





## Women's Ministry

### General Meeting

Monday January 6 Sharon Swope will join our meeting to tell us about the Triumph Center. We will meet in the library at 5:30. Please join us for this special program with Sharon!

### Bible Study with Jane

Mondays January 13 and January 27 at 5:30 in the library

Please join us!

Praying for you each time we meet,  
First Congregational Women's Ministry



*Wishing you a  
fabulous New Year  
with the hope that  
you will have many  
blessings in the year  
to come!*





**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
 <div>Monday-Friday 9am-Noon 641-752-4239</div>						
<b>color code:</b> youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards			1  Office Closed	2	3	4
5 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	6 Women's Ministry @ 5:30 in Library	7 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	8 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee  JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	9 Bell choir 5:30  Open Trustee meeting 6:30pm	10	11 Remove Christmas decorations 2PM
12 <b>Communion</b> In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	13 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	14 BMC meets @ 8:45AM  D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	15 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee  JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	16 Bell choir 5:30	17	18
19 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15 BCE meets 11:45am	20	21 Diaconate meets 6:30 pm  D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	22 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee  JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	23 Bell choir 5:30	24	25 11am MOW Rod & Kristi Hassler
26 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows Power Hour 9:15	27 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 in Library	28 D.O.G.S 5:00 - 6:30	29 Men's church coffee 8am @ Hy-Vee  JR PY 4:45-6:15 PY 6:30-8:00	30 Bell choir 5:30	31	



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](http://www.fccmarshalltown.org)

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

