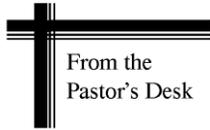


# Pilgrim's Progress

## February 2026

"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."



We've left behind Christmas and the New Year and now approach Ash Wednesday and Lent in the church liturgical calendar. Ash Wednesday is February 18 and a special worship service will begin on that day starting at 7:00 p.m. Lent began as an

intensive time of training for new Christians and a time of reflection for the rest of the church. Lent is when we pay special attention to the behavior of Jesus toward the end of His earthly ministry, knowing that the cross was on the horizon for Him. One of the passages associated with this time is Matthew 6:16-21:

*"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their face that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Do not lay for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal: but lay for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

I've wondered what would we need treasures in heaven? Why would we need anything else? The same thing with crowns. Christians get crowns in heaven, but why would we need them? But the Scriptures talk about us casting crowns as the feed of Jesus as a sign of our allegiance, perhaps that is the purpose of the crowns and treasures. These are things to consider for Lent.

As a congregation, we're going to have another all church Bible Study, formally announced at the Ash Wednesday service and going through the season of Lent. It is based on the book, He Chose the Nails by Max Lucado. We're going to organize small groups just like we did the last Bible Study so everyone will have a chance to participate. It is my pray that our vision of the cross and of heaven, will become greater and deeper as we go through Lent together.

-Pastor Dan

### Sermons for February

1<sup>st</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Jeremiah 9:2-24 "The Message of the Cross"

8<sup>th</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:1-12 ; Isaiah 64:1-4 "The Wisdom of God"

15<sup>th</sup> *Transfiguration Sunday* 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-5

18<sup>th</sup> *Ash Wednesday* Matthew 6:1-6

22<sup>nd</sup> The first sermon based on the Bible Study book for Lent, He Chose the Nails, by Max Lucado. This will continues through March 9, Palm Sunday



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



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

**Mill Pond Care Center:** Romaine Mackaman

**Glenwood Place:** Elenor Tjossem #160, Lenora Brown #161

**Westbrook Acres:** Norma Dannen #12



Robert & Barbara Hibbs

February 28, 1970

56 years



February 3 Angela Dickey

February 22 Jane Symons

February 5 Kathryn Peiffer

February 25 Stacy Moyer

February 10 Katie Vogeler

February 26 Jeanne Vellinga

February 16 Pat Anderson, Brian Mattingly

February 27 Jo Dysart

February 19 Deacon Lunsford

February 29 Terry Paustian,  
Katie Lundberg



## 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.

April 25  
October 24

May 23  
November 28

July 25

September 26



## Women's Ministry

Monday, February 2: Women's Ministry will be making treat bags to give to the needy at Triumph Center.

Feb. 9 & 23 - Bible study

Monday, March 2- come help us clean and organize the church kitchen!

Mar. 9 & 23 -Bible study



# Diaconate News

The Lenten Season will begin with an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 P. M. February 18th. Pastor Dan is working with the Board of Christian Education and we will be doing another all-church Bible Study during Lent, which he will introduce on Ash Wednesday. He is recommending the book, "He Chose the Nails," by Max Lucado.

The Stamp Club is looking for those who are interested in joining them to make greeting cards. They will train you on what to do and they provide what is needed. So all you have to do is glue. They meet the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from 10:00 A. M. to Noon. They suggest, if you are interested, to call the church office to check if they are meeting. Sometimes other appointments interfere with their schedule.



## News From Board of Christian Ed

Join a Lenten Bible Study Group

Thank you to all who joined in the "Fearless" Bible study groups in the Fall, and/or supported this venture with prayer. Prayer changes things!

Participants said they enjoyed the fellowship of meeting and discussing together. Suggestions for future studies included interest in a video component and the inclusion of more scripture.

The Board of Christian Education is ready to launch a second all church Bible study! The focus this time is the season of Lent. Pastor Dan has selected "He Chose the Nails" by Max Lucado for our study. He said this set of materials matches our study purposes. He likes the format and pertinent topics included as they relate to Lent. This study has a streaming video component for each lesson and includes 40 daily scripture searches with personal applications. Thank you, Pastor Dan!

Materials include the book and its study guide partner with access to the streaming video resource. BCE will purchase and have a limited number of books/study guides available for a suggested donation of \$20. If you do not have the funds, we want you to have the materials anyway. If you prefer to obtain the materials on your own, more information about these titles can be obtained from Kristin Meyer.

Lent begins February 18. Our group gatherings will begin that week, or the week following. Hosts are currently being recruited, and groups are still being formed. If you didn't participate in the last study, you are encouraged and welcome to join a group or create a new one. See Kristin Meyer or posters in the Fellowship Hall for more details about group locations, days, and times.

We look forward to coming together in the Name of the Lord to study His Holy Word together. Thank you, Lord, for giving us this opportunity!

Kristin Meyer

[Kristin.meyer@drake.edu](mailto:Kristin.meyer@drake.edu)

641-485-8577



# Youth Group News

Sundays we have Power Hour/Sunday School 9:15-10:20am for Preschool-12th grade in the Loft. Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup> we will have a special Valentine's breakfast.

Tuesdays we have DOG's (Depend on God) 5-6pm for preschool-4th grade in the fellowship hall.

Wednesdays we have Jr. PY (Pilgrim Youth) 4:45-6pm for 5-8th grade in the Loft.

Wednesdays we have PY (Pilgrim Youth) 7-8:15pm for 9-12th grade in the Loft.

Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> is Family Appreciation Night. Families are invited to come with their kids for a special night which will include a meal. This night DOG's will be from 5-6:30pm.

Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> is Family Appreciation Night. Families are invited to come with their kids for a special night which will include a meal. This night Jr. PY and PY will be combined from 6-7:30pm.

There will be a Youth Winter Retreat on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>-  
Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> for 5-12<sup>th</sup> graders. We will begin on Saturday at 11am and we will be going to Seven Oaks in Boone, IA where we will go tubing. We will spend the night at church and Sunday morning we will go to church together. Please contact Shelly Speas if your youth would like to go.



Some of our middle school and high school youth helped take down the Christmas tree decorations in the sanctuary.



# Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.

For those of you who read “Pillars of Faith” in December, the person was Cherryl Woltjer. 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, Cherryl, for all you have done, do, and will do! You recall that Pillars of Faith was on hiatus for the month of January 2026. So there was no Pillar of Faith for that month.

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 February.

Before I introduce this month’s Pillar of faith, this author finds it interesting that the last few Pillars of Faith have originally come from different parts of Iowa and the surrounding area. Maybe it was a job that brought them to Marshalltown but what brought them to First Congregational Church? I believe it is a sense of belonging first to the Triune God, (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) which causes one to seek to belong to a like minded community. Our Pillar of Faith for February 2026 is no exception.

This month’s Pillar of Faith was born in Marshalltown but grew up on a farm near Baxter, Iowa. I went with my parents to a Congregational Church in Baxter and as I grew attended Sunday school and participated in other activities. In 1970 I graduated from Iowa State University. My philosophy has always been to not let my job dictate where I live. My spouse, whom I met in Baxter, and I always wanted to live in Marshalltown and In 1979 it was our choice to move to Marshalltown. Our search for a church to attend involved several churches but our choice was First Congregational Church where we have been members for 40 years.

In the ‘80s and ‘90 I attended adult Sunday School class while my spouse taught children’s Sunday School. I enjoyed studying “Why Bad Thing Happen to Good People” in this group. I served on the Trustee Board also in the ‘80s and ‘90s. I have served on the Endowment Committee since the ‘90s. I enjoy being on the Endowment committee helping to keep the church viable. My thought is “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” Endowment was formed as a source of income for the life of the church during tough times. Rachel Mason, Richard Kemler and Clayton Cooper, who wanted to remain in the background, are some of the people involved in the formation of this committee. I have also been on the Financial Review Committee several years and several different times.

After our children were grown we have always enjoyed the 8:00 service. Maybe it is because this intimate service remind us of growing up in the church in Baxter.

When asked, “Do you have any advice for the future of our church?” The reply was, “I want members to remember how much enjoyment they have gotten from the church and how the endowment can maintain the viability of the church in the long term.”

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 March 2026 newsletter. The answer will be there under the title "Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C."



**My Kinsman Ministry  
Mission Workers  
Teaching New  
Vocational Skills to  
Women in Sierra Leone**

MKM send big thank yous to M-town FCC for our donations of old or out-sized jeans, scissors and thread; materials will be used to sew backpacks. They ask for prayers for their mission team who leave for Sierra Leone on Feb. 2, 2026.



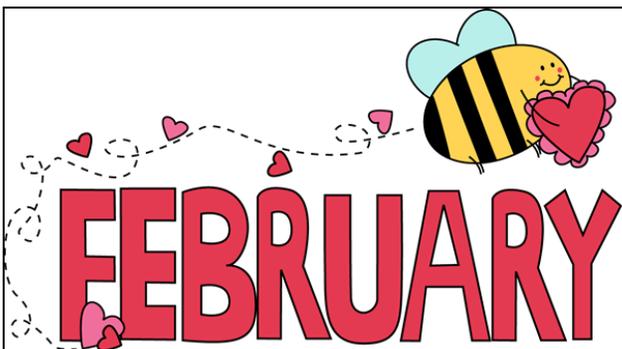
The prayer request sent to us from My Kinsman Ministries on January 25, 2026:

~~MyKinsmenMinistries~~ <mykinsmenministries@gmail.com>

Good Evening Everyone,

Please be praying for Karen, Jen, and Juliana's upcoming trip! You can specifically pray for them to have safe travels, peace in their hearts, and a successful trip teaching women how to sew backpacks and sharing the hope of Jesus!

All the best,  
Karen, Mark, and Ellyn



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
		<b>Monday-Friday</b> 9 am-Noon 641-752-4239				
<b>color code:</b> youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards						
<b>1 Communion</b> In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows <b>Power Hour 9:15            -10:20 AM</b> <b>Annual Meeting            11:45 AM</b>	<b>2 Women's Ministry            @ 5:30 PM</b>	<b>3 DOGS: 5-6 PM</b>	<b>4 Men's church            coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee</b>  <b>Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM            PY: 7-8:15 PM</b>	<b>5 Bell choir 5:30            PM</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows  <b>Power Hour 9:15            -10:20 AM</b>	<b>9 Stamp Club            meets 10:00 AM</b>  <b>Women's Bible            Study @ 5:30 PM</b>	<b>10 DOGS Family            appreciation            night: 5-6:30 PM</b>  <b>BMC meets @            8:45 AM</b>	<b>11 Men's church            coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee</b>  <b>Family            appreciation            night Jr PY &amp; PY:            6-7:30 PM</b>	<b>12 Bell choir 5:30            PM</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows <b>BCE meets 11:45            AM</b> <b>Power Hour 9:15            -10:20 AM</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17 DOGS: 5-6 PM</b>  <b>Diaconate meets            @ 6:30 PM</b>	<b>18 Men's church            coffee 8am Hy-Vee</b>  <b>Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM            PY: 7-8:15 PM</b>  <b>Ash Wednesday            7:00 PM</b>	<b>19 Bell choir 5:30            PM</b>  <b>Trustees meet @            6:30 PM</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21            11 AM MOW            John &amp; Lisa            Blabaum</b>
<b>22</b> In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows  <b>Power Hour 9:15            -10:20 AM</b>	<b>23 Stamp Club            meets 10:00 AM</b>  <b>Women's Bible            Study @ 5:30 PM</b>	<b>24 DOGS: 5-6 PM</b>	<b>25 Men's church            coffee 8am Hy-Vee</b>  <b>Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM            PY: 7-8:15 PM</b>	<b>26 Bell choir 5:30            PM</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>



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

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

