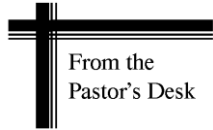


Pilgrim's Progress

April 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."



From the
Pastor's Desk

I wish you a happy and blessed Easter Sunday, the most important day in the Christian Calendar. The rest of the month will remain as busy as the weeks leading up to Easter itself. On April 12, the Sunday following Easter we will have a skit named "Go Tell It On the Mountain" An Easter Celebration, as part of the 10:30 a.m. worship service. This is a chance to use drama as part of our worship and take advantage of the abundant supply of costumes that we have. After that, I will be spending a few days in the Chicago area to be part of the Ministers' Convocation of our National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. On the afternoons of the 19th and the 26th we have Confirmation Class (a group of five) will meet in the Loft of our church at 4:00 p.m. On the 24th and 25th of the month we will host the Spring meeting of the Iowa Nebraska Association of Congregational Christian Churches, with an informal meeting one Friday night, and then Saturday with breakfast at 8:00, followed by a business meeting, Communion service and some time discussing Ezekiel 37 (the passage of the Dry Bones) with Pastor Bryan Kunz of the First Presbyterian Church here in town. Registration for the meeting is \$10.00. Enjoy and have a wonderful month.

Sermons for April

April 5	Easter Sunday	"Saved by His Life"	<i>Romans 5:6-11; John 14:14-19</i>
April 12	Skit:	"Go Tell It On the Mountain" "More Precious Than Gold"	An Easter Celebration <i>1 Peter 1:3-9; Psalm 16</i>
April 19		"The Road to Emmaus"	<i>Luke 24:13-35; Psalm 116:12-19</i>
April 26		"The Good Shepherd"	<i>John 10:1-10; Psalm 23</i>



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



Harlan & Deb Nuss	April 6, 1975	51 years
Troy & LaRae McGahuey	April 9, 1988	38 years
Dwayne & Maxie Shultz	April 12, 1967	59 years
Bill & Lynn Maas	April 13, 1996	30 years





April 4 Joy Kreykes
 April 8 Sam Good
 April 9 Vicki McKibbin
 April 10 Leah Stanley
 April 15 Jasmine Gepford
 April 16 Lisa Blabaum
 April 17 Sam Speas

April 18 Liz Meyer
 April 19 Linda McGregor
 April 21 Katie Paustian, Shelly Speas
 April 23 Thomas Stanley
 April 25 Kirk Shirar
 April 27 Ron Estabrook
 April 28 Adam Swope
 April 30 Harlan Nuss



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. 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 641-750-3946 or Doris McCarty 641-752-7604.

Available Dates for 2026: September 26

- Did you know that Meals on Wheels is a non-profit, is self-funded, it does not receive state or federal assistance, the meals are paid by the client, and insurance does not cover meal charges? The organization provides healthy meals 365 days a year. Clients can choose daily delivery or customize for certain days a week.
- Did you know drivers are the heart of the program and you can volunteer as an individual or a group? First Congregational Church provides a driver the 4th Saturday of every month. Check the clipboard in the Narthex for opportunities to deliver. There are still some months to cover in 2026!
- Did you know monetary tax-deductible donations are always accepted and appreciated? Donations may be used to offset meal charges for some clients in need. Donations can be mailed to Carrie Loney, Meals on Wheels of Marshalltown, 2615 Smith Ave, Marshalltown, IA, 50158.
- Did you know they have a website www.mealsonwheelsofmarshalltown.com?

Thank you to all of our volunteers and for any consideration you can give to this organization.
 -Doris McCarty & Kristi Hassler, BMC



Women's Ministry

Monday April 6 5:30 in the kitchen

We will be making casseroles to share as needed. Come join the fun!

May 4 at 5:30 has been designated as "spring cleanup of the church grounds" weather permitting. Thank you for joining us in this effort to keep our church grounds inviting.

Bible Study with Jane

We have finished our study of Ruth and will begin Hebrews on Monday, April 13, in the library at 5:30. Next meeting will be April 27. Everyone is welcome anytime.



**2026 MISSION & BENEVOLENCE
COMMITTEE COMMENCES WORK**
Submitted by: Kim Schryver, Chair



One of the first tasks of every year for this committee is to come to an agreement about some foundational values that will help us discern how we can sift and sort the MANY worthy projects and missions to which we could commit our church’s labor and giving. The following “Guidance on Giving” is NOT a policy, rule, regulation nor bylaw. It is as it is titled, *Guidance*. The committee does make exceptions to giving outside the guide when we as a group feel strongly that a need should be met, but no Christian organization is attempting to meet that need: e.g. last year’s gift to The Homeless Task Force to help support those who are w/o shelter in Marshall County, especially since there is no dedicated shelter for homeless victims in the county.

2026 BMC Guidance on Giving

On February 10, 2026, the Committee was unified in continuing these priority considerations when deciding how to disburse funds and allocate time among the many worthy recipients that request and need funds:

1. Mission work and benevolent giving to support non-profits should be targeted at all levels of need - local, national and international.
2. Priority is given to organizations and efforts that address the full spectrum of human needs - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. This means greater priority will be given to supporting benevolent organizations and projects that provide a way for those being served to know Christ as Lord as they benefit from other charitable gifts.
3. At least 15% of the annual Benevolence and Mission Committee budget will be reserved to support disaster relief efforts as they occur locally, nationally or internationally.

The committee has also begun brainstorming on an assignment given by the FCC Cabinet to ALL FCC boards and committees, namely, to identify a goal and actions steps to foster a greater sense of belonging/engagement to/with our wider community. The following mission focus will be printed at the top of every published agenda and minutes of meetings.

*Our mission focus as a church is to **nurture a growing sense of belonging** first to God so that we can authentically embrace and express our belonging to one another and **to our wider community**.*

The committee fully intends to identify and organize a project that will help our church to broaden our reach in our community; a project that actively extends Jesus’ commission to help the wider world know Him and his teachings. We hope to offer you all an opportunity to weigh in on our ideas with the hope you will also join in some way on a new project. We of course will want all who possibly can to participate in a plan to extend an open hand to Marshall County through a new benevolent and mission project.

Our first act of benevolent giving was unanimously agreed upon at our March 10, 2026, meeting. The Marshalltown Christian Church continues to be an inspirational and effective way to foster new generations of people equipped to model and share discipleship. The committee has once again authorized a \$5000 gift to the school.



Youth Group News

Power Hour/Sunday School - Sundays, 9:15-10:20 am in the Loft for Preschool-12th grade
April 12, 19, 26

DOG's (Depend on God) - Tuesdays, 5-6 pm in the Fellowship Hall for preschool-4th grade
April 7, 14, 21, 28

Jr. PY (Pilgrim Youth) - Wednesdays, 4:45-6 pm in the Loft for 5-8th grade
April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

PY (Pilgrim Youth) - Wednesdays, 7-8:15 pm in the Loft for 9-12th grade
April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29



We were privileged to present Bibles to Dallas and Thaison Martin in March during a 10:30am service. The boys were so excited to receive their gifts of God's Word!

We took some of our youth leaders and some youth to the Ignite Youth Leadership Conference in Oswego, Illinois in March. What a blessing this conference was! There were so many things we took away with us that challenged us and helped us grow stronger in our faith!



Palm Sunday was a wonderful Sunday with our kids praising Jesus, waving palms, and singing Hosanna!

GRADUATION TIME IS UPON US!

We would like to feature our graduates from our church, as well as any grandchildren of our members graduating, from any school...whomever you'd like to boast about! And this includes college graduates too! Send a photo of your graduate and a short write up about where they are graduating from as well as their future plans (college, job, trade school...) and accomplishments and we will include it in the May newsletter!

Please include this with the Ignite Youth Leadership Conference pictures and info:

We heard and learned so many great things from the speakers and worship leaders at Ignite. Here are some favorites from our youth leaders and students.

- Put your identity in God and not the things you do, because earthly things go away, but God is forever.
- I think it's hard to forgive, but I need to remember how much God has forgiven me. When we don't forgive we hold back part of ourselves from God. We forgive because God forgave us and this forgiveness sets us free.
- You are not defined by what you do but by who you are as a child of God.
- You should let God define who you are.
- You need to let God help you let things go and learn to forgive others.
- It's a gift from God that He can help us heal from things that other people hurt us with.
- Our identity is in Christ. We are a child of God if we choose to follow Christ.
- My identity is not in my work, my worst moments, or my past wounds. It is in what God says about me.
- I learned how to forgive people no matter what, and to pray for my enemy.
- We forgive others because God forgives us.
- Greatness is only honored when you know who you are talking to. We should become aware of how great God is.
- It should not be “You are enough” instead it is “Jesus is enough”. It should not be “Live your truth” instead it should be “Live THE truth” Jesus said He is the truth. It's not “Authenticity is everything” it should be that “Holiness is everything”.
- I was surprised to realize that the speakers at my breakouts had similar experiences and God used them even though they had been broken and battered. He helped and changed them.
- I took away from the conference is that is ok not to always be ok. You need to find your Christian support system and rely on them and God in your time of need.
- I got a better understanding of the term Deconstruction and the types of Deconstruction. Good Deconstruction vs. Bad Deconstruction of Faith. One tries to put holes in Faith while the other seeks answers which strengthens Faith.



Diaconate News

Palm Sunday, March 29th was the beginning of Holy Week this year.

On Thursday, April 2nd at 7:00 PM there will be a Tenebrae Service with the reading of scriptures concerning events leading up to the death of Jesus. There will be music between each reading and the lights will be dimmed.

On Sunday, April 5th, it being the first Sunday of the month, Easter will be observed with Pastor Dan's sermon, music and communion. We would like to thank all who added to our Memorial Garden

with a lily dedicated to a loved one or just donated. With your help the traditional Memorial Garden continues.

April 12th, the second Sunday in April, please join us for the presentation of "Go Tell It On The Mountain" An Easter Celebration written by Deborah H. Nuss and performed by many members of our church. It is the continuation of the Easter story by telling what happened after the resurrection. Please invite friends and neighbors to come!

Judy Gaynor & the Members of the Diaconate!



Pillars of Faith @ F. C. C.

For those of you who read "Pillars of Faith" in March, the person was Vicki McKibbin. 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, Vicki, 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 April.

In the 1950s my grandparents started attending and became members of the First Congregational Church in Marshalltown, Iowa. Maybe it was a sense of belonging first, to the Triune God, (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) which caused them to seek to belong to a like minded community. My parents also were members of FCC and I am now a third generation member. "I have been going to FCC Marshalltown my entire life." I was baptized as a baby and went through Confirmation Class to become a member in 1984 or '85. That means I have been a member 42 or 43 years.

In my younger years I went to Sunday School and attended Youth Group activities. As an adult I am involved with getting the spoken word and music into people's ears. What I enjoy most about what I do is, helping those who are no longer able to come to church, still be connected to their church family.

When asked, "Do you have any advice for the future of our church?" The answer was, "We need to continue to find ways to bring people into the church. Maybe through parents of the kids in Youth Group or through music."

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





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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		Monday-Friday 9 am-Noon 641-752-4239				
color code: youth events Church mtgs Special events Comm. Events Color copy on bulletin boards			1 Men's church coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM PY: 7-8:15 PM	2 Tenebrae service @ 7PM	3 Good Friday Office Closed	4
05 EASTER Communion In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows	6 Women's Ministry @ 5:30 PM Trustees meet @ 6 PM	7 DOGS: 5-6 PM	8 Men's church coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM PY: 7-8:15 PM	9 Bell choir 5:30 PM	10	11
12 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 PM	14 DOGS: 5-6 PM BMC meets @ 8:45 AM	15 Men's church coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM PY: 7-8:15 PM	16 Bell choir 5:30 PM	17	18
19 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows BCE meets 11:45 AM Power Hour 9:15	20	21 DOGS: 5-6 PM Diaconate meets @ 6:30 PM	22 Men's church coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM PY: 7-8:15 PM	23 Bell choir 5:30 PM	24	25 11 AM MOW Wayne & Jonna Wagar
26 In-Person Worship 8am and 10:30 svcs In Sanctuary 10:30 Svc/YouTube Fellowship follows	27 Women's Bible Study @ 5:30 PM	28 DOGS: 5-6 PM	29 Men's church coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee Jr PY: 4:45-6 PM PY: 7-8:15 PM	30 Bell choir 5:30 PM		



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

