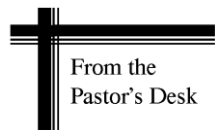


# Pilgrim's Progress

## August 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."



I used to think of the month of August as the quiet month, the planning month. Not so much anymore. We recently finished offering RAGBRAI riders chicken dinner for a free will offering and, as of this writing, are getting prepared for Vacation Bible School. Perhaps, after that, we will take some time to plan for Sunday School, Youth and children's groups and Confirmation in the Fall. Other than that, there is no special event in August's calendar, but in looking at my notes, my eyes fell upon a famous verse of the Bible

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

The context is interesting. Paul is not pretending to be some superhero, he is acknowledging contentment based on the presence of the Holy Spirit and not on circumstances. He admits to going through seasons of plenty and also season of want. He has learned to be content even when he does not know when he will get his next meal. He notes the power of a positive attitude (verse 8) and the power of the Holy Sprit working through churches (verses 14-19). It is a wonderful attitude and a good subject for prayer, that we would become the same, confident in God and not so much in this world and the circumstances thereof. We can do all things though the One who gives us strength.

### Sermons for July

|           |                           |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| August 2  | "Pure in Heart"           | Job 19:25-26; Matthew 5:8       |
| August 9  | "Treasures in Heaven"     | Proverbs 2:1-8; Matthew 6:19-21 |
| August 16 | Harlan Nuss leads worship |                                 |
| August 23 | Harlan Nuss leads worship |                                 |
| August 30 | "The Narrow Gate"         | Luke 13:22-30; Matthew 7:13-14  |



***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

**State Center Specialty Care:** Lenora Brown





|                             |                 |          |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Don & Kayla Bogenrief       | August 6, 1977  | 49 years |
| Rich & Kay Miller-Todd      | August 9, 1982  | 44 years |
| Max & Elizabeth Meyer       | August 10, 1971 | 55 years |
| Mike & Cherryl Woltjer      | August 11, 1984 | 42 years |
| Matthew & Kimberle Schryver | August 16, 1975 | 51 years |
| Sam & Shelly Speas          | August 19, 2006 | 20 years |
| Thomas & Jane Adams         | August 24, 1968 | 58 years |
| Paul & Julianne Packer      | August 29, 1975 | 51 years |



|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| August 2 Lydia Speas    | August 16 Tyler Randall    |
| August 3 Deb Nuss       | August 20 Lynn Maas        |
| August 8 Anna Wolvers   | August 22 Thomas Adams     |
| August 9 Jane Adams     | August 23 Romaine Mackaman |
| August 13 Daniel Propst | August 24 Jacob Shirar     |
| August 15 Judith Hays   | August 26 Julie Allison    |
| August 29 Carol Stanley |                            |



## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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

# Missions and Benevolence

## VENEZUELA EARTHQUAKE - SHOCKING AND HEARTBREAKING



On June 24, 2026, Venezuela was slammed twice. At the close of a workday, as family members commuted home or readied themselves for dinner, a 7.2 strike-slip earthquake occurred. Experts call it a foreshock. It is 6:04 pm. Thirty-nine seconds later the mainshock – 7.5 magnitude, hits. Between June 24–July 8 the total number of aftershocks were recorded as 1,115! One month later, the human loss is monumental: ~5,400 deaths, ~16,500 injured and some 30,000 are still missing. Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, with some 5 million inhabitants suffered tremendous losses, but many other communities have also been severely impacted. According to the Convoy of Hope website, “Satellite imagery suggests that approximately 590,000 buildings were damaged across the country overall.” Add to this the massive need for restoration of infrastructure like roads, sewers, potable water and electrical conduits and stations, plumbing, airports, on and on. Many hospitals, churches, schools, and communication centers crumbled to rubble. It will be a long time before a new normal is achieved. Monetary estimates for rebuilding from reputable sources range wildly from \$30 – 60 billion dollars.



People search for survivors while others try to salvage belongings in a collapsed building following an earthquake in Catia La Mar, La Guaira state, some 30km north-west of Caracas.  
*Federico Parra/AFP via Getty Images*



We can help. Our national association has vetted and endorsed the internationally esteemed organization Convoy of Hope, and FCC Benevolence and Missions Committee does too. At our July 2026 regular meeting the committee unanimously authorized a \$5,000 donation from our committee budget to support Convoy of Hope. \$3000 was earmarked for the Venezuelan Earthquake initiative and \$2,000 was designated for use in other disasters where Convoy of Hope is and will be making a difference. Five months remain in 2026; summer storms and hurricane season have yet to come. We urge our fellow congregationalist to check out the Convoy of Hope website: <https://convoyofhope.org/> or check into the NACCC One Great Hour of Sharing postings for updates on how to help.



## Women's Ministry

Only Bible Study with Jane in August. We will meet on August 10 and 24 at 5:30 in the library. There is always room for you. We would enjoy having you join us. Currently we are studying Hebrews.

Prayers always from your Women's Ministry



## Diaconate News

Although the Diaconate Board doesn't meet in June and July the head Deacons have done a nice job of taking care of the worship service each Sunday and Fellowship.

Typically, there is no fellowship on Sundays that are holidays. On Sundays that are before a holiday or follow a holiday there is no fellowship. This is to encourage families to spend this time together.

Our Board will be meeting again on August 18th, and we look forward to planning the Fall and Christmas seasons.



## Youth Group News

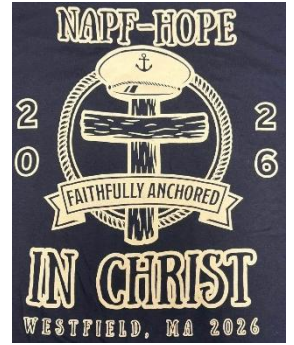
Our youth and leaders were happy to put up American Flags in our community for the 4th of July! We are so blessed to do this as a youth group fundraiser.



The youth are enjoying their time watching The Chosen together this summer!

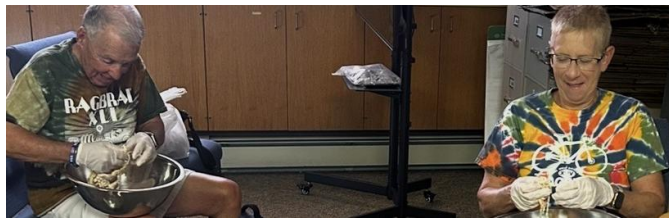


NAPF/HOPE 2026 was an amazing youth mission conference where we served the Lord in Westfield, Massachusetts and learned more about putting our identity in Jesus Christ. Our group is excited to share more about our trip in August.



Our church came together and served a meal that was said to be one of the best hot meals the people participating in Ragbrai had eaten yet! What a blessing to be part of the fun that day and host such a fantastic church fundraiser! It brought our church closer together and involved us in our community. We are so grateful to the committee who made all the wonderful plans and organized such a great event!







## Ragbrai Update

Though the downtown was transformed into the main festival hub with live music and entertainment. First Congregational Church provided a quiet, welcoming, respite where riders and others could rest their legs, escape the heat, and enjoy a hearty chicken and homemade noodle dinner served over mashed potatoes, with green beans and a cookie.

Participants came from several different states and a few other countries. It was a joy to meet them and hear of their experiences along the route. We heard “best meal so far!” and that the signs every half mile promoting the meal from LaMoille became their destination!

The final stats are not compiled at this time, but the estimate of those served is around 275 people.

Most of all, the committee members would like to thank everyone that gave their time to make this fundraiser a success. It took a small army of volunteers and prayers to pull this off, but FCC did it superbly.

The Ragbrai committee initially proposed that any funds raised would be used for youth programming (where needed), capital improvement projects, and community outreach.

We weren’t sure what to expect overall, but sweat equity trumped our monetary investment to leave the committee with a nice profit going forward. We are offering up our remaining food stock at cost to the congregation on Sunday, August 1st and we will then have a final tally of money earned.

We believe it would be safe to say the amount will be over \$3000.00.

Before Ragbrai the committee worked on some church improvement projects. You’ll notice in front of the church we have new mulch laid down, railing painted, and cleanup with weed pulling and other projects to put our church forward in the best looking manner. Just an example of small things that we (and everybody) can do.

Our youth are the future of the church, and anything FCC can do along with our committee to further that mission is extremely important. We hope to be able to enhance our youth programming with monetary donations where needed.

Community outreach. Yes, it all starts at home. We were able to serve many locals who came for a meal while also serving many from around the US and the world. We proved that we were able to do it on a large scale, and believe with everything learned from the mistakes made, that we can do this in a smaller, community-based endeavor. The committee would like to be a part of any future meal gatherings (monetary and volunteering) to those looking for a welcoming church and congregation to build our membership at FCC.

Got any ideas? We’d love to hear them.

The committee also spearheaded the FCC T-shirt that volunteers wore with pride (and was also used by a Ragbrai team to return a lost phone to one of their members when they gave John the phone and told their team mate to look for this guy wearing the Established 1868 shirt near our big chicken....found him easily).

These shirts are still available to order. Contact Lisa Blabaum at [lblabaum@gmail.com](mailto:lblabaum@gmail.com) or 641-485-4633 to order by August 16th.

Thanks to all who helped to pull this off, and thanks to God for helping when at times it seemed insurmountable.

We did it - as a church!

FCC Ragbrai Committee

Wayne and Jonna Wagar, John and Lisa Blabaum, Georgia Thomas, Debi Estabrook







# VBS

[illegible]



**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                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>  <div> <b>Monday-Friday</b><br/>           9am-Noon<br/>           641-752-4239         </div> </div> |                                                                   |                                   |                                                        |              |              |                                                       |
| <b>color code:</b><br>youth events<br>Church mtgs<br>Special events<br>Comm. Events<br>Color copy on<br>bulletin boards                                                                      |                                                                   |                                   |                                                        |              |              | 1                                                     |
| <b>2 Communion</b><br><br>In-Person Worship<br>8am and 10:30 svcs<br>In Sanctuary<br>10:30 Svc/YouTube<br>Fellowship follows                                                                 | 3<br><br>VBS                                                      | 4<br><br>VBS                      | 5<br><br>Men's church<br>coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee<br><br>VBS | 6<br><br>VBS | 7<br><br>VBS | 8                                                     |
| <b>9</b><br>In-Person Worship<br>8am and 10:30 svcs<br>In Sanctuary<br>10:30 Svc/YouTube<br>Fellowship follows<br><br>BCE meeting @<br>11:45                                                 | <b>10</b><br>Trustees @ 5:30<br><br>Women's Bible<br>Study @ 5:30 | <b>11</b><br><br>BMC @ 9          | <b>12</b><br><br>Men's church<br>coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee    | <b>13</b>    | <b>14</b>    | <b>15</b>                                             |
| <b>16</b><br>In-Person Worship<br>8am and 10:30 svcs<br>In Sanctuary<br>10:30 Svc/YouTube<br>Fellowship follows                                                                              | <b>17</b>                                                         | <b>18</b><br><br>Diaconate @ 6:30 | <b>19</b><br><br>Men's church<br>coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee    | <b>20</b>    | <b>21</b>    | <b>22</b><br><br>11 AM MOW<br>Rod & Kristi<br>Hassler |
| <b>23</b><br>In-Person Worship<br>8am and 10:30 svcs<br>In Sanctuary<br>10:30 Svc/YouTube<br>Fellowship follows                                                                              | <b>24</b><br><br>Women's Bible<br>Study @ 5:30                    | <b>25</b>                         | <b>26</b><br><br>Men's church<br>coffee 8 AM Hy-Vee    | <b>27</b>    | <b>28</b>    | <b>29</b>                                             |
| <b>30</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>31</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.fccmarshalltown.org](http://www.fccmarshalltown.org)

A member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

