

MARCH 2024

# THIS MONTH @ FCC

## A Note from the Pastor

I am writing this Tuesday afternoon and it is 70 degrees outside. When this populates your inbox Wednesday morning the expectation is that it will be 14 degrees! I say this not just to reflect on the crazy weather, but because this reminds me of how resilient and adaptable we are. And what important qualities for us as human beings and as people of faith.

Life can be hard. There are many things that are out of our control. And sometimes change comes because we learn new things and choose to do better.

I am grateful for this community of people who are able to ask new questions, to entertain new answers, to continue pursuing love and compassion and justice even when the work is difficult.

As we continue this Lent to ask questions about embodying our faith, I feel certain that resilience and adaptability are two gifts of being human that allow us to share God's love more fully.

With care,  
*Jill*

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*connect with us*



*Holy Week*  
at FCC

Palm Sunday, March 24, 10AM

Holy Week Worship, March 28, 7PM

Easter Sunday, March 31

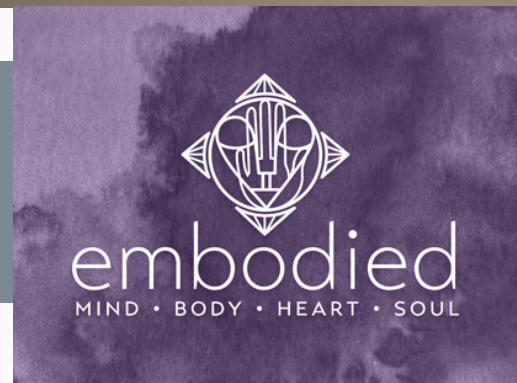
-Sunrise Service 6:50AM

-Breakfast & Activities 9AM

-Easter Worship 10AM



# Lent Creating



## Faith Formation for Adults & Youth

MARCH 3, 10, 17, & 24

*March 3* Join Corinne Stanley as we will be talk briefly about what **poetry** is, discuss forms and ways that poetry can be expressed, and maybe even write some of our own poetry. We will hear examples from local poets of color, and South American and Spanish poets, female mystics from India, and a couple beloved female poets from the United States. Pen/pencil and notebook/journal will be helpful - bring your own or we will have some available.

*March 10 & 17* Corinne Stanley will lead us as we explore **Faith-building With Collages**. In the first session we will examine two distinct collage creations, as well as discuss themes that mark our journey in words and images. Next, we will learn what types of elements and materials we might use to express ourselves. We can all brainstorm together! The second session will consist of the actual making of a collage. You will need to bring items you have gathered, but basic materials, such as canvases, glues, colored paper and some ornaments, such as plastic jewels, will be available to use. For the finishing technique, gesso and clear spray will be provided. If you can let Jill or Vern know you are coming, that would be great!

*March 24* Gather in the kitchen as we **bake bread** and talk about the connection between body and bread.

## Faith Formation for Children

FEBRUARY 18 - MARCH 24

During Lent, children in Kindergarten through 5th grade will hear and wonder about stories of Jesus through our Children Worship & Wonder Ministry.

## Participate in the practice of coloring the mandala

Mandala is Sanskrit for "circle." The mandala pattern is used across most religious traditions. It represents wholeness, holiness, and all things embodied by God. The mandala we started coloring in Faith Formation will be at the back of the church for you to color. Mandalas are considered to be impermanent and are dismantled once completed to signify the impermanence of our existence. At the end of Lent, we will cut apart the mandala so everyone has a piece of this symbol of God's embodiment.







# Sabbatical Q & A

You may have been hearing mention of Pastor Jill's upcoming sabbatical, but what's this all about? Read on for a Q & A about what you should know and what to expect.

*Click Here* →

## **What is a sabbatical?**

A sabbatical is a time of rest and renewal, a time when the regular rhythm is changed. The concept is deeply connected with Biblical sabbath, a concept nearly lost in modern life.

## **Why should a pastor have sabbatical?**

Pastors don't only preach and plan, administrate and advocate, but by their nature spend much time caring for others. This work is rewarding and can be exhausting. Sabbatical is a special way that congregations can care for their pastors. Sabbatical claims that the well-being of pastors matters, and also recognizes that both the pastor and congregation can benefit from a time of reflection and a new rhythm.

## **How long will sabbatical be?**

We offer a three month sabbatical. Jill will be taking hers August - October 2024.

## **Who will be doing the work that Jill usually does during sabbatical?**

The Personnel Team is working on these details right now. They are anticipating Kara and Laura will take on some additional responsibilities, some lay people will take on additional responsibilities, and, as needed, people will be hired to cover other responsibilities.

## **What will Jill be doing on her sabbatical?**

She is working on making plans. The last four years (since COVID entered our lives) have brought a different kind of demand, so much of what she will be doing is recentering and renewing. She will begin her sabbatical with a silent retreat and work with a Spiritual Director throughout sabbatical. She will be traveling to Washington D.C. in September for a gathering of Disciples pastors focused on clergy well-being. She is planning to do some continued learning about digital ministry. She will also move her older child to college!

## **It sounds like there will be extra expenses for sabbatical - how will those be covered?**

The Finance Team has been planning for this for years. They have funds set aside to cover any additional staffing needs as well as to help support the travel and activities Jill does during her time away.

If you have questions, feel free to ask Moderator Sally Strah, Personnel Team Chair Beth Pelton, or Pastor Jill. We are all happy to answer your questions.



## Worship

SUNDAYS AT 10:00AM

All are invited and welcome to worship each Sunday at 10:00AM. Worship is available onsite in the sanctuary and online at [youtube/@icdisciples](https://youtube.com/icdisciples)

*Click Here -->*



## Faith Formation - All Ages

SUNDAYS AT 11:15AM

Throughout Lent, youth and adults will explore the theme "Embodied" through creative outlets.

Children age 5 through 5th grade, are welcomed into our Children Worship & Wonder room to hear Bible stories, wonder, and respond with art and play.

## Nursery

SUNDAYS 9:40AM - 12:00PM

Childcare is available each Sunday morning during Worship and Faith Formation. Infants through Kindergarten age children (and older children when needed) are invited to join our caregivers in the lower level east classroom for nurture and free play.

## Daylight Saving Time

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

Many of us don't think much about changing our clocks as so many of the clocks we use set themselves automatically. But, don't forget March 10 is the morning when we "spring forward." Move your clock one hour ahead so you aren't late for worship!

# Sunday Mornings



## Called to Serve

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Sunday morning worship brings together many hands and many voices. People (like you!) are needed to fill several roles each week as we continue our ministry of welcome. There is a role for everyone, and everyone can serve! Visit the links below for a description of the roles and to sign up where you feel called to serve.

[Greeter](#)

[Usher](#)

[Valet Parking Attendant](#)

[Scripture Reader](#)

[Acolyte: children K - 6th grade](#)

[Communion: Prep & Clean Up](#)

[Fellowship Time:  
treats to share or make coffee](#)





## Bible Study

WEDNESDAYS AT 12 NOON

Join us on Zoom each Wednesday.

PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR THE ZOOM LINK

### Upcoming Scriptures

March 6: Jeremiah 31:31-34

March 13: No Bible Study today

March 20: John 20:1-18

March 27: John 20:19-31

April 3: John 21:4-17



# Faith Together



## Strings & Singers

WORSHIP MUSIC

You are invited to be part of Disciples Strings & Singers, the music group that leads worship music at FCC. All instruments and abilities are welcome! Join us for rehearsals on: March 13 and 27 at 6PM in the sanctuary. Questions? Talk to Pastor Laura, [icdisciple.music@gmail.com](mailto:icdisciple.music@gmail.com)

## Youth Group - High School

MARCH 3 AND 24, 4:30-6PM

March brings spring break and Easter, so CYF Youth (grades 9-12) will meet twice during the month at the home of Pastor Jill. All high school youth are invited for food and activities.

## Youth Group - Middle School

MARCH 3 AND 17, 12-1PM

CHI RHO Youth (grades 6-8) will meet on Sundays, March 3 and 17 from 12-1PM at the church. Come on over for lunch and activities.

## Youth Group - Grades 3, 4, & 5

MARCH 10 AND 24, 12-1PM

JYF Youth (grades 3-5) will meet on Sundays, March **10** and **24** from 12-1PM at the church for lunch and activities.





## FCC Connect

THURS, MARCH 14 AT 6:30PM

[CONTACT OFFICE FOR ZOOM LINK](#)

Enjoy visiting with others? Want to make some new friends? FCC Connect is an online opportunity to do just that. Sign on and join the conversation.

## Hannah Circle

MON, MARCH 18 AT 1:00PM

[CONTACT OFFICE FOR ZOOM LINK](#)

On March 18, Hannah Circle will meet at 1PM at the church and on Zoom. All ladies of the church are invited to attend.

## Ladies Lunch Out

THURS, MARCH 21 AT 11:30AM

Ladies of the church are invited to the join in a lunch out for good food and good conversation. In March, join us at Copper Boar (575 Cameron Way Unit C, North Liberty).

## Book Club

THURS, MARCH 21 AT 7:00PM

[CONTACT OFFICE FOR ZOOM LINK](#)

The FCC Book Club is reading *Thirteen Reasons Why*. This book follows the story of high school freshman, Hannah Baker, and the tapes she left behind detailing why she died by suicide. Join the conversation onsite at the church or online via Zoom.

## FCC's Online Directory

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS DIRECTORY](#)

# Keeping Connected



Above: FCC youth spend time connecting at the Regional Youth Retreats in Newton.





# In the Community

## Mission Projects @ FCC



Above: FCC folks serve at the Free Lunch Program on February 24.



This month we are partnering with Table to Table in Iowa City. Service organizations like Table to Table have operations and administrative costs, too. For this project, we are collecting items to help offset those expenses. The requested items are listed on the right. Items may be brought to the Church March 3 - 31. Questions? Contact Vern Duba, [vernduba@gmail.com](mailto:vernduba@gmail.com)

- Cash donations (make out checks to First Christian)
- Dish soap
- Gift cards (Kwik Star, Casey's, Menards, Lowe's, Staples)
- Heavy duty large contractor trash bags
- New pencils
- Post-it Notes
- Printer paper
- Sharpies

*Since 1996, Table to Table has been working to bridge the gap between abundance and hunger*

Table to Table works to increase food equity and reduce environmental harm by collecting surplus food and redistributing it to partners and people who can use it.

MARCH



The Easter Offering supports several of the general ministries of the Christian Church including college students in leadership development, global mission partners, health and social service ministries, new congregations, support for pastors and chaplains, and more. We will collect this offerings onsite on March 24 & 31. Offerings will also be received via mail and online anytime before April 1. Be sure to designate gifts for "Easter Special Offering."



In April, our focus will shift to Houses into Homes, an organization that provides gently-used beds, furniture, and household items for families and individuals in Johnson County who are exiting homelessness, domestic violence, and other crisis situations.

Next month we will be collecting most needed items for Houses into Homes. Look for that list in the April Newsletter.

We also have an opportunity to volunteer with Houses into Homes for a delivery day on **Sunday, April 7** from 9am-1pm. If you are interested, you must **sign up by MARCH 17**.

Sign up

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**

APRIL



## Scholarship Applications at FCC Now Being Accepted

THROUGH MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2024

First Christian Church has two scholarship opportunities available and applications are now being accepted. Students pursuing secondary education or training after high school and who are connected with the church or have relatives connected to the church are encouraged to apply. Read more about the scholarships through the links below.

[FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP](#)

[SUNIER SCHOLARSHIP](#)

## Goodies & Giving

Mileva Gojkovic, a foreign exchange student living with the King family, is doing a Global Youth Service Day project to raise funds for Children International, an organization focused on ending generational poverty. One Sunday in March she will bring cookies from her native Montenegro. You are invited to enjoy them during fellowship time and donate to her project. Date will be set later.

*More Ways to Engage*

**SHELTER HOUSE**

**BOOK SALE**

Saturday, March 23 and Sunday, March 24  
10:30 am - 4:00 pm  
860 Quarry Road, Coralville

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

Shelter House is hosting their annual BOOK SALE in March. This fundraiser supports the critical work Shelter House does to provide safe shelter and helped people improve the quality of their lives as they move beyond homelessness.

To support this fundraiser, there are many ways for the community to engage, through donations of books, cds, vinyl records and puzzles, to volunteering to sort donations and organize the space, and of course shoppers are needed to! Click the link to learn more about Shelter Houses' book sale and how you can get involved!

## Thank You Notes

Thank you to all those leaders who are completing terms. These include: Jon Feaver (Asst. Moderator), Terry Dahms (Treasurer), Pat Boelens (Secretary), Diane Hertel and Emily Steeples (Elders), Tricia Coobs (Trustee), and Martha Hedberg (At-Large Board Member).

Thank you also to the following who have completed terms, but said yes to serving in the same role for another term: Sally Strah (Moderator), Malinda Thomas (Financial Secretary), Pam Ries (Asst. Financial Secretary), David Klein (Elder).

And thank you to all those who were elected on Sunday and will begin new terms of service in these important roles at FCC.





# Congregational Meeting Recap

Thank you to everyone who joined our Congregational Meeting on Sunday after worship. For those who weren't able to be with us, we wanted to provide a recap of the actions and information.

*[Click Here](#) →*

We elected leaders for the coming year. Thanks to each one who said yes to serving. Those elected include: Sally Strah (Moderator), Carla Melby-Oetken (Assistant Moderator), Mary Anne Schwartz (Secretary), Karen Dawson (Treasurer), Tom Glau (Assistant Treasurer), Malinda Thomas (Financial Secretary), Pam Ries (Assistant Financial Secretary), Traci Massman (At-Large Board Member), David Klein (Elder), Julie Fitzpatrick (Elder), Maggie Keyser (Elder), Jay Thomas (Trustee).

We also received a number of updates:

- We are anticipating seeing several capital campaign projects get completed in the coming months. New sanctuary seating should arrive mid-late summer. An electrician will be in soon and that work will help complete the new keycard system and automatic door openers on the lower level. Our audio-visual equipment for the sanctuary and fellowship hall has been ordered and we anticipate that project being completed this spring.
- Finances are looking good at First Christian. Thanks to you all, we ended 2023 with a net income of \$26,000. Our pledge fulfillment rate was just under 98% which is great. For 2024 we have more pledging units and a higher amount pledged than in 2023. And our capital campaign funding is coming along nicely with over half of the pledged amount being fulfilled.
- The Personnel Team has been hard at work. They worked with the Finance Team to expand Kara's role to fulltime in the fall. They hired Cameron Michel to replace Damian Dorta as our Technology Assistant. They are working on plans to staff Jill's sabbatical which will take place August - October of this year (read more about Sabbatical on page 3 of this newsletter).

There was a discussion about the Facilities Team. Jim Michel has served as the Facilities Team Chair since shortly after the Michels arrived. We are grateful for his commitment, but also know it is time to give him a break. We are looking for people who would 1) be willing to serve as a member of the Facilities Team, 2) be willing to have a conversation about chairing the Facilities Team, and 3) have skills they would be willing to share on an as-needed basis (everything from cleaning to gardening, painting to handyman projects, meeting with contractors to overseeing work done by contractors). If you are willing to serve in any of these ways, please communicate that willingness with Sally Strah ([sallystrah@gmail.com](mailto:sallystrah@gmail.com)) or Pastor Jill ([icdisciple.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:icdisciple.pastor@gmail.com)).



# March

WISHING HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY AND HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY TO  
THOSE CELEBRATING  
IN MARCH



## First Christian Church Staff

Rev. Jill Cameron Michel  
*Senior Pastor*  
Home: 319-665-2276

Rev. Kara Seaton  
*Associate Pastor*

Rev. Laura Kittrell  
*Minister of Music &  
Worship*

Carol Mertens  
*Office Manager*

Michael Hull  
*Custodian*

Lori Smith  
*Bookkeeper*

Kalea Seaton  
*Nursery Caregiver*

Caitie Klein-Lester  
*Nursery Caregiver*

Cameron Michel  
*Technology Assistant*

*connect with us*



## SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 1

Click to learn more about the age group and interest based camps at our regional facilities in Newton, Iowa. FCC pays for 50% of registration costs for those connected with the congregation! Pastor Kara is your contact with any questions.



900 Lincolnshire Place  
Coralville, IA 52241  
319-337-4181

[icdisciples.org](http://icdisciples.org)

*There's Room  
at the Table  
for Everyone*

Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday  
9:00AM to 12:00PM

*clergy staff available  
by appointment*