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FCC NEWSLETTER

The Official Monthly Newsletter of The Faith Community Church - New Richmond

ANNNND THEY'RE OFF!

A message from your CHAOS Mission Team

Thank you for your support and for your prayers for the 2022 CHAOS Mission to Mexico! We reached our fundraising goals. Please pray for our safety and fruitfulness in Mexico, and for the growth and unity of our mission team while we love, labor and live for Christ! We can't wait to get back and tell you all about it! See you soon!

Mexico Mission 2022 | July 31st - August 6th

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WORSHIP & THE WORD

Bless The Lord O My Soul (Ps 103)

Sovereign Grace Music

"Through mercy and compassion His great love is proved
He covers my transgressions like the snow
As far as east from west are all my sins removed
Bless the Lord, O my soul"

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 103:1-5

I love when the people of God sing God's Word. This is on of many conviction I have regarding our corporate worship: That our worship would closely be based on, if not verbatim, the scriptures.

As we sing this particular section of scripture we are reminded that our sins have been dealt with and are no longer separating us and God. Not only has God removed our sins but he has done so out of a fatherly heart of love and of mercy. This is important to note because God has not just dealt with us as a debt collector who, once he has been paid, wants nothing to do with us. No! God has "saved us from the pit" and has now called us His children!

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.

Psalm 103:11-13

We are not merely forgiven, we are forgiven and adored and cherished and promised a life with a good God. Bless the Lord! And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

THE GOSPEL SHOULD MAKE US PECULIAR

An excerpt from the latest All Women Equipped Blog:

"Instead of being surprised by patterns of sin or ignoring them, Believers can have a better perspective and hope (2 Corinthians 15:19-20). A gospel perspective will help us gently restore one another (Galatians 6:1-5), humbly confess our own offenses (James 5:16), set aside personal expectations (Philippians 2:3), give people a safe place to be vulnerable (2 Corinthians 12:9-10), generously extend mercy and forgiveness (Matthew 18:33). There is more beauty in guiding someone to godly sorrow over sin and true repentance (2 Timothy 2:25) than there is in forcefully demanding a false perfection (James 4:1-3)."

Check out the entire Blog Post on the FCC website! (fccnr.org/womens-ministry-blog)

PRAYER TEAM

James 5:16 ESV

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."

One of the biggest blessings I have experienced as a Christian is the privilege of praying for other people. We are in need of more people to be on the prayer team. Are you curious about this role in the Church or feel that the Lord is calling you into this ministry? Give me a call or shoot me an email to find out more about serving on this team. Martha Swanson, 651-890-2894, blueegg@frontiernet.net

happenings

WHERE DO WE COME FROM?: A CHRISTIAN HISTORY

September 18th | 12:30-2pm

Join us on September 18th from 12:30-2, for an exciting history of the church, presented by our very own Pastor Stu Dix, called "Where Do We Come From?"

Beginning with the birth of the church, this course will cover the essential historical events of the Christian faith, which contribute to the way we live, worship, study and love today in the name of Jesus!

Lunch will be provided, RSVP will be required at fccnr.org. Sign up today!

Please note that we are also offering two more classes soon:
- Christian Marriage, and
- Discipleship Explored, (the follow up to our Christianity Explored class)

COVENANT MEETING

August 28th @ 5pm

Our next Covenant Meeting will be on Sunday, August 28th at 5pm. We will have a potluck so please bring a dish to pass!

MINISTRY FAIR

September 11th | 10-12:30pm

Come and check out all the ways that you can get involved at FCC!

BAPTISM ORIENTATION

Aug 14 during Second Service in D1

Baptism is a public testimony identifying a believer with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we take this step of being baptized we are making a public statement to our church family that we have been born to newness of life through Christ.

Go to fccnr.org/nextsteps to check out the Baptism resources. If you want to take the orientation, register at fccnr.org/events. Baptisms will be held on August 21st.

WORSHIP NIGHT | SAVE THE DATE

September 24th, 2022

Stay tuned, more info to come!

VBS UPDATE

August 9th-12th

It's not too late to register for VBS! We're really excited to welcome kids aboard the Rocky Railway to learn about how Jesus' power pulls us through! New this year is an opportunity for fellowship and community for parents! Join us anytime during VBS in the "Fellowship Fueling Station" (a.k.a. the cafe) for some grown up treats! Also new this year will be a VBS program the Sunday of VBS week! Kids will have a chance to share with you the songs they learned on the Rocky Railway and bring their families along for the ride! Since many of our VBS kids are not regular attendees at Faith, Sunday school will be closed that day and all kids will come in to worship with their parents. Nursery will still be open!

Register at fccnr.org/events.

Volunteers contact
Bobbi at bobbiblanchard@homeforever.org

CHAOS OPEN HOUSE

FCC Student Ministry

CHAOS Open House meets every other Wednesday this summer from 4-6pm. CHAOS Open House is free time for games, music, sports, and hanging out with friends. Wanna read your Bible and talk through it together? We can do that too! Snacks will be available for donation.

CHAOS Open House Dates:
Aug 3rd
Aug 17th
Aug 31st

Questions? Contact Pastor Ben Sepulveda at ben@homeforever.org

LADIES TEA PARTY

Have you registered yet?

Registration closes on August 7th. If you have registered but not yet paid, please stop by the Connection Point.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2022

Save the Date: October 29th

Join us for the "Living Hope in a Hard World" conference here at FCC on October 29. We will be studying Romans 5:3-5. Watch the webpage for more details. Registration information coming soon!

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2023

Save the Date: January 20-22

The FCC-WM Events Team needs you! We are planning a retreat at Oak Forest Retreat Center for January 20-22, 2023. Anyone interested in helping us with the retreat, please contact Stephanie at stephanie.langer@homeforever.org.

DISCIPLE HER MENTOR TRAINING

7-Week Study

Faith Community Church Women's Ministry exists to equip women to be disciples who plant the church. Sign-up for the next round of mentor training. This is a 7-week study where we will spend time in God's Word, memorizing, journaling, praying together, studying "Disciple Her" by Kandi Gallaty and holding each other accountable. This study will provide you with the foundation for mentoring the women in your life or leading a DH-Group here at FCC. We will be leading on two different nights for 7 weeks. The evening cohort will meet on Thursdays from 6:30-8:00 beginning September 8 and the Saturday cohort will meet on Saturdays from 10:30-Noon beginning September 10. Sign up on the Women's Ministry page or at Connections. Contact Stephanie Langer for more information at stephanie.langer@homeforever.org

DH-GROUP COHORT

Meeting Reminder

We will meet on August 6 from 10:30 to Noon in room D2 for our quarterly sync.

WOMEN'S GAME NIGHT

August 5th @ 7pm at FCC

Feel free to bring any of the following: a snack to share, your favorite board game, and a friend. Or just bring yourself :)

LADIES TIME OUT

Every Third Wednesday

Join us at Faith Community Church in the Café every third Wednesday from 9-11am for Ladies Time Out. This is a time for ladies of any age and stage to hang out together and enjoy some treats and conversation. It's a fun "time out" for everyone and great way to connect! Childcare is provided.

housekeeping / ministries

SABBATICAL FOR PASTOR CHUCK

for the month of August

Faith Family! Pastor Chuck will be on Sabbatical in August, in order to spend time with his family and to enjoy a very well deserved time of rest, rejuvenation, and prayer. Please communicate anything that would typically be brought to Chuck's attention to Pastor Ben until the completion of the Sabbatical. Also, help us to support Chuck by volunteering to help fill the many roles Chuck serves for our church family, and by praying for him during his time away.

Pastor Ben Sepulveda | ben@homeforever.org

RUBY'S PANTRY

Every Third Thursday

This is a great opportunity to serve your community! Thursday, August 18th from 5-7pm at the Armory. Volunteers arrive at 4pm and can sign up at fccnr.org/events.

Contact Chuck at chuck.olson @homeforever.org

SMALL GROUPS

You can't live the "Christian life" outside of Christian community.

The Small Group Spring Quarter has begun! At FCC we believe that real connectedness and change happen best in small groups. Please get involved in a small group if you aren't already!

Contact Stu at stu.dix@homeforever.org

MEN'S MINISTRY

Wednesdays 5-6am
Saturdays 7-8am

Men's ministry is a group of men coming together to study and discuss scripture. D1 @ FCC. Join us!!

Contact Paul at paul.warner @customtruck.com

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Monthly Giving Needed: $60,417

June giving was $50,324 bringing the fiscal YTD average to $63,411.

GIVE

fccnr.org/give

Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity.

FAITH COMMUNITY

CONNECT

We are the Church.

Join us every Sunday morning at 9:00am or 10:45am. Stay up to date with what's going on and follow us on Facebook!

@fccnewrichmond

@faithcommunitynr

from the Lead Pastor Search Team

24 HOUR PRAYER EVENT

We had a very successful 24-hour prayer event July 29th-30th! Thank you to all who prayed during that event and thank you to those of you who have been praying and continue to pray!

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

The Lead Pastor job posting officially closed on August 1st.

Applications went straight to P3 and now P3 will sort through all applicants and send us the ones that match up with our profile and who look to be a good fit for what we are looking for. This next phase is expected to take us into September where we should start to see the candidates. I know this seems like a long process and it is. We are thankful for P3 and their expertise in this area.

PRAY

Please continue to pray for the new Lead Pastor, our Faith family, and the team as we continue this process. Also look forward to an upcoming event that you can participate in.

QUESTIONS

As always, we welcome your questions, so please ask.

~TAMMY WHITE, LEAD PASTOR SEARCH TEAM

THE POWER OF PRAYER

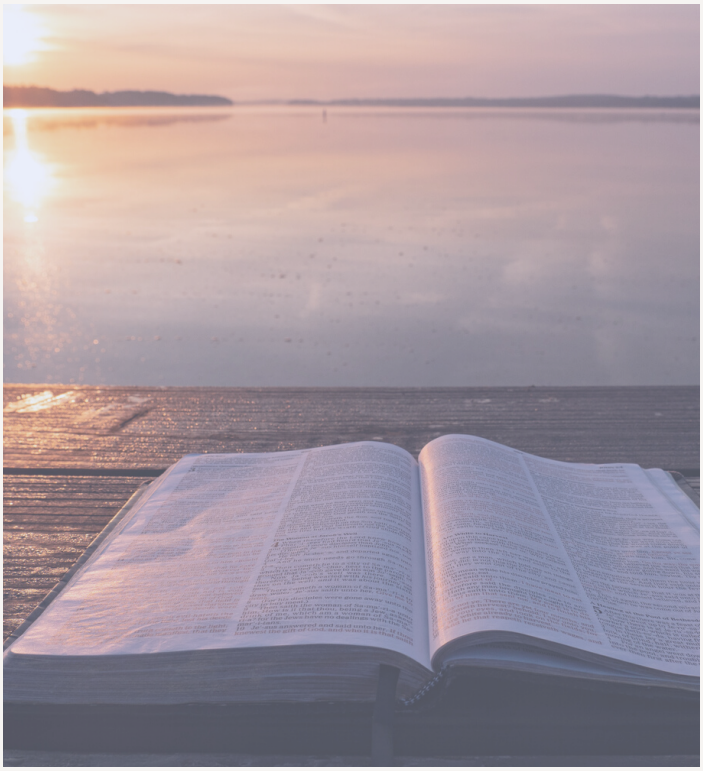
On July 29th and 30th, our Lead Pastor Search Team hosted a 24-hour prayer event at our church building. Starting at 5:00PM on Friday, every half hour people would come to the church building (we also had people praying from home and even had people praying overseas from Hungary) and they would meet with God, lifting prayers on behalf of our new lead pastor, his family, our own faith family, and the larger community of New Richmond. This cycle of prayer went on around the clock until 5:00PM on Saturday.

Based on feedback that we have gotten, this event was a resounding success - so much so, that there have been some discussions about doing another 24-hour prayer event sometime in the future. A number of people said that they were moved seeing their brothers and sisters coming to the church building at all hours of the day and night to lift their prayers and petitions to our gracious Father. They said that their time of prayer was a powerful encounter with God and that they were drawn closer to him by the experience.

YOU CAN STILL BE INVOLVED

If you were not able to participate in the prayer event, don't worry, there is still a way you can be involved! During the prayer event people were encouraged to write out prayers on note cards and hang them in the rooms where they were praying. Over the next several weeks we are asking people to continue to write their prayers down on note cards and post them in the church lobby. There is no limit to the number of prayers you can write down. Eventually, all of these prayers will be collected together and they will ultimately be presented to our new lead pastor and his family when they arrive.

Another way that you can get involved in prayer here at Faith Community Church is to become part of our prayer team. Prayer is a powerful way to connect with God and it is a powerful way to lift one another up in the body of Christ. We all need prayer and we all need to pray. Please consider taking a step of faith and join our prayer team. We need you.



A FINAL NOTE...

The elder council would like to thank the Lead Pastor Search Team for planning and coordinating the 24-hour prayer event. It was really encouraging to so many people involved and to see all of the prayers that were posted.

As always, if you have any questions - maybe questions about prayer, the elders would like to encourage you to reach out to any one of us. We would love to connect with you!

God's blessings to you all,

Steve, Steve, Randy, Jason, and Jodie

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

RANDY KOSTROSKI

Have you ever sought someone's advice when you were faced with a decision and weren't quite sure how to handle it? I think that most of us have been there, seeking wisdom from a parent, grandparent, teacher, boss or an experienced friend we thought would be able to shed some light on our problem or dilemma. The question then becomes, after receiving the wise counsel, were we willing to implement what we learned even if it was contrary to what our own preconceived solution was, or did we kindly thank them for their great advice and then go and do what we had planned to do all along, ignoring the advice we got? How did that work out for you? With me not usually so well.

Perhaps, even though we disregard very sound advice from people who really know what they're talking about, things still work out okay. Maybe not as good as they may have, but we manage to get by.

Sometimes I regard what I learn in scripture the same way. I have a problem that needs dealing with and though I go to the Word and get the wisdom and guidance I need to move forward in the best possible way, I all but ignore it. Why? Even though I'm convinced of the truth of scripture and can even draw on positive results of past experiences, I choose to go my own way mostly because I want to. Because I want to. The thing is, sometimes it isn't just advice I'm getting from the Word of God, but a command. I just don't see it that way. Fortunately, God is very gracious to me and eventually brings me around. There are many things I (and possibly you) read in the bible that we tend to gloss over without realizing the imperative of what was said.

One example is in Matthew 18:15, *"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."* Though this seems like good advice, which it is, it is far more than that, it is an imperative. A command if you will. Likewise, if we read further in the same chapter in verses 21-22; *"Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times."* This is clearly a command to forgive an offense as often as it occurs. I wonder if when Peter asked the Lord this question he had a particular person or offense in mind? I wonder if he thought that he was being extremely generous and hoped to impress Jesus with his super spirituality? I wonder if his jaw dropped to the dirt when he got the response that he did? I wonder if he thought the "advice" was questionable?

Peter actually went pretty far in his willingness to forgive (up to seven times). He probably went further than most people are willing to go, since many people consider themselves good to forgive an offense even once. If we view forgiveness as more of a guideline than a command, this attitude might be understandable though incorrect. How willing are we to forgive? It's a question that perhaps we need to put to the Holy Spirit in us and sincerely look for Him to reveal any unforgiveness in our hearts. We all know the Lord's Prayer and the part which says "*and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."* (Matthew 6:12) but we don't often look to verses 14 and 15 which say, *"For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* Wait. What?

OUR FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS IS IMPERATIVE TO OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

The Gospel of Luke records another instance of Jesus' teaching regarding forgiveness in chapter 17:3-4, *"Pay attention to yourselves*! *If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."* We must forgive one another, clearly a command.
When Paul was verbally accosted and slandered by a church leader on a visit to Corinth, the rest of the body stood by and made no defense. After he left Corinth, the incident prompted the writing of 1 Corinthians to delineate and emphasize the need for proper church discipline. Dissent and false teaching could not be tolerated and this person needed to be separated from the local church – excommunicated – if you will, to maintain unity in the body. After the church followed through, the man repented and Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to encourage them to forgive and restore this person. In 2 Corinthians 2:6-11 he writes, *"For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs."*

PAUL UNDERSTOOD AND TEACHES THE CORINTHIANS (AND US) THAT UNFORGIVENESS IS DISOBEDIENCE AND THE CHURCH CANNOT SURVIVE DISOBEDIENCE TO THE LORD.

It was vitally important for the church to forgive this member and welcome him back into the body because, as he wrote in his first letter to them, *"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."* (1Corinthians 12:26)

BY BEING FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT TO FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER, WE FOIL THE PLOT AND DESIGNS OF SATAN.

He will not miss an opportunity to drive a wedge into the body that leads to division, isolation, and bitterness on the part of both the unforgiven and the "un-forgiver". We must be diligent to forgive so "that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled." (Hebrews 12:15)

Oswald Chambers wrote in his devotional book My Utmost for His Highest, *"The golden rule to follow to obtain spiritual understanding is not one of intellectual pursuit, but one of obedience. If a person wants scientific knowledge, then intellectual curiosity must be his guide. But if he desires knowledge and insight into the teachings of Jesus Christ, he can only obtain it through obedience. If spiritual things seem dark and hidden to me, then I can be sure that there is a point of disobedience somewhere in my life. Intellectual darkness is the result of ignorance, but spiritual darkness is the result of something that I do not intend to obey."* When we find ourselves in a state of limited spiritual growth we need to examine our hearts to see if there may be some residual anger or bitterness being harbored toward someone we need to forgive. In Mark 11:24-25 Jesus warns that unforgiveness can hinder our prayer life as well when He says, *"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."*

Though to this point I've focused mainly on the Body of Christ and fellow believers, forgiveness must also extend to those outside the church. It may well be the very best way to extend the love of Christ to unbelievers, demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Please read the following passage from the Gospel of Luke

(6:27-38) in which Jesus tells us to love others by choosing to forgive them:

"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Corrie ten Boom, in her book The Hiding Place, recounts meeting a guard from Ravensbruck concentration camp where her sister died and she suffered terrible indignities. To keep it brief, she was unable to bring herself to forgive this man who had since repented and given his life to following Christ. She related how the Holy Spirit worked through her as she prayed fervently for His grace, which He provided abundantly, so that she was ultimately able to forgive him. I would submit that none of us is really capable on our own to truly, completely forgive apart from God's abundant grace imparted through His Holy Spirit in us.

AS JESUS EMPOWERS US THROUGH OUR FAITH AND OBEDIENCE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO TRULY FORGIVE OTHERS, SHARING WITH THEM THE LOVE, GRACE AND FORGIVENESS THAT WE ENJOY AS PART OF HIS FAMILY.

Forgiveness is hard. It is the greatest single gift God has given us and as such, is the greatest gift we can give one another. It demonstrates not only our love for others, but extends God's love to them as well. It is empowered by the Holy Spirit, restores and heals relationships, is contagious and affirms our love for and obedience to God. Just as Paul wrote to the Ephesians in 4:1-2; 32 *"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."*

As we begin to realize the depth to which we've been forgiven, we will truly begin to realize the depth to which we are loved.

FORGIVENESS IS A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING, ONE WE ALL SOMETIMES NEED TO RECEIVE AND SOMETIMES NEED TO GIVE.

Fortunately, whether we realize it or not, there is more than enough to go around. Praise God!