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# FCC NEWSLETTER

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The Official Monthly Newsletter of Faith Community Church - New Richmond



## SENIOR SUNDAY

**May 21, 2023**

Senior Sunday will take place on May 21st! Come out and join us during both services where our senior students will be honored and presented with a gift.

Parents of Seniors! Please be sure to send your senior and baby photos, as well as future plans, to Christa Poole or Pastor Ben at [ben@homeforever.org](mailto:ben@homeforever.org) or [christa.poole@homeforever.org](mailto:christa.poole@homeforever.org) by May 16th for our Senior Sunday slideshow!

Seniors and their families are invited to a special lunch following second service to celebrate this great accomplishment! Please let Ben know if you are able to make it!



## WHAT'S IN OUR LATEST ISSUE:

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# ministries

## SMALL GROUPS

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

If you are not a part of a group of people that is dedicated to each other and to the Word, then you are greatly missing out on God's plan for His people. Let's get you connected!

Contact Mike Eastep at [maelk4@gmail.com](mailto:maelk4@gmail.com)



**We are in need of more small group leaders! If you love the Bible and have a desire to be a part of and lead an intentional community of believers, please contact Mike Eastep.**

## MEN'S MINISTRY

**Wednesdays 5-6am / Saturdays 7-8am**

Men's ministry is a group of men coming together to study and discuss scripture.

We are currently working through Acts. D1 @ FCC. Join us!!

Contact Paul at [paul.warner@customtruck.com](mailto:paul.warner@customtruck.com)



## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

**[fccnr.org/womensministry](http://fccnr.org/womensministry)**

The FCC Women's Ministry exists to equip women to be disciples who plant the church.

There's a lot going on in the Women's Ministry. You can find all the information you need on the [Women's Ministry page at fccnr.org](#), or head to page 9.

Contact Stephanie at [stephanie.langer@homeforever.org](mailto:stephanie.langer@homeforever.org)



## MISSIONS

**[fccnr.org/missions](http://fccnr.org/missions)**

Church, please join us in praying for our very own Charlie Gess and his family as Charlie commits to serving the missionaries of Mexico Caravan

Ministries in Tijuana, Mexico.

Beginning June 2nd, Charlie will be coordinating efforts to provide local families with shelters, while pressing in the truth of the Gospel to the people of Tijuana, and the groups from all over the United States that are joining in the work.



Charlie can receive letters of encouragement and support at this address during his time in Mexico:

**Mexico Caravan Ministries  
ATTN: Charlie Gess  
555 Saturn Blvd. Ste. B-510  
San Diego, CA 92154.**



## RUBY'S PANTRY

**Every Third Thursday**

Our April distribution served over 225 families, and we had fun doing it! Our next distribution is Thursday, May 18th from 5-7pm at the Armory. Volunteers arrive at 4pm to build shares and load vehicles, all while getting to know each other and serving the community!

The sign up can always be found at [fccnr.org/events](http://fccnr.org/events) early in the month. Contact Chuck at [chuck.olson@homeforever.org](mailto:chuck.olson@homeforever.org) for more information!





## PRAYER MINISTRY

**Sundays @ 8am**

You are invited to join the Prayer Team! Join us for our time of prayer on Sundays at 8am in D3.



Questions? Contact Peter Bergeson at [pgbergeson@gmail.com](mailto:pgbergeson@gmail.com)

## FROM OUR PRAYER TEAM: A DAILY MORNING PRAYER (JOHN STOTT)

Good morning heavenly Father,  
good morning Lord Jesus,  
good morning Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, I worship you as the creator and sustainer of the universe.  
Lord Jesus, I worship you, Savior and Lord of the world.  
Holy Spirit, I worship you, sanctifier of the people of God.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

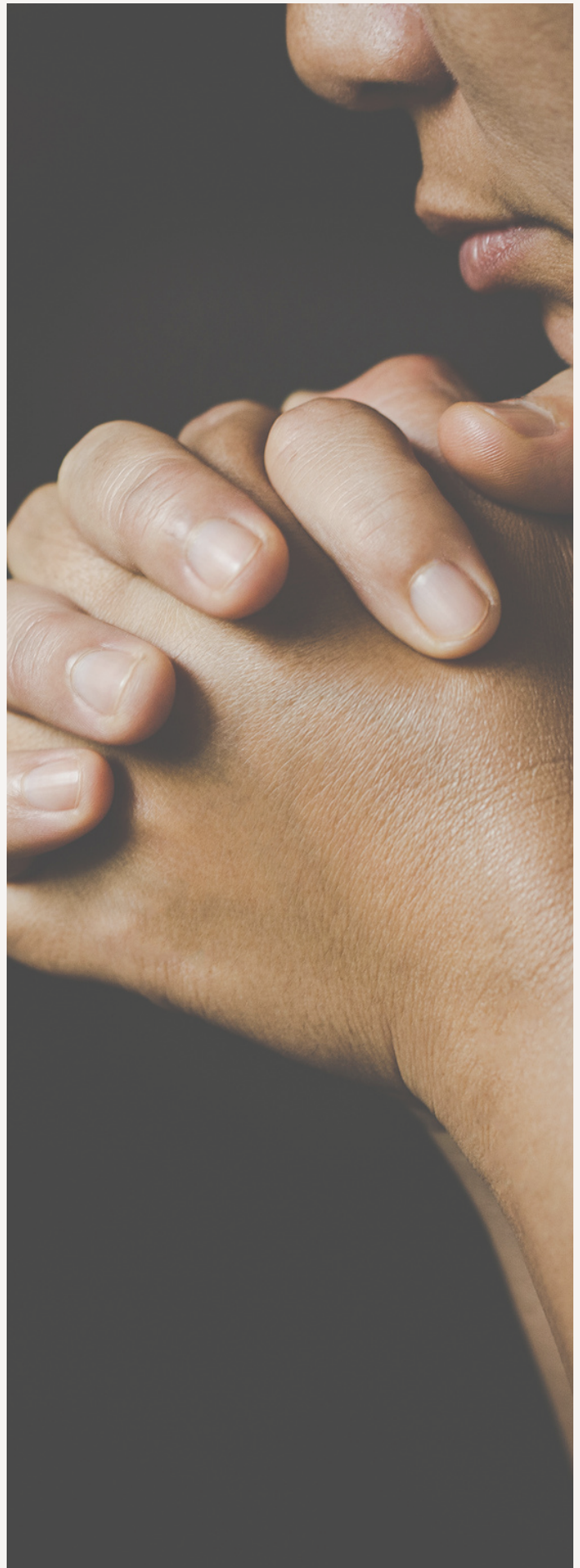
Heavenly Father, I pray that I may live this day in your presence and please you more and more.

Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you.

Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life:  
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God, have mercy upon me. Amen.

**-Peter Bergeson**



## SAVE THE DATE

**June 4th | 5-7pm**

Join us on Sunday, June 4th at 5pm for a Potluck & Covenant Member Meeting! Those who are in Covenant with FCC are welcome! Bring an item to share for our potluck dinner, and stay to hear what is happening here at FCC!

Childcare with a movie will be provided in D1 for children ages 3 and up during the meeting portion of the evening!

**COVENANT  
MEMBER MEETING**

@Faith Community Church

**JUNE 4TH AT 5PM  
WITH POTLUCK DINNER**

## BAPTISM AND COVENANT MEMBER CLASSES

**Join our classes in May**

Being baptized is making a public statement to our church family that you have been born to newness of life through Christ. Orientation class will be held on Sunday, May 21st during second service, and Baptisms will be the following Sunday, May 28th. Sign up [HERE!](#)

If Faith Community Church is your home, and you want to become a Covenant Member with us, please Register [HERE](#) and we will get you connected to the next steps of completing your journey. Class will be on Saturday, May 6th with inductions on June 4th.

## SENIOR LUNCH

**May 22nd @ Noon**

Senior adults are invited to gather on Monday, May 22 at noon for a potluck lunch. Bring a dish to pass. A senior-appropriate scavenger hunt will follow.

No sign-up is necessary! Just come and enjoy the company of other "Seasoned Saints"!



## NEW MINISTRY: GRIEF SHARE

**Fridays starting May 12th, 6-8pm**

Announcing the GriefShare Ministry: Faith Community Church will be offering a grief support group that will meet weekly starting Friday, May 12th through August 18th, at 6pm, using the GriefShare Study. This will be a group led by some awesome, godly trained leaders who have the desire to help you work through the intricacies of losing someone you love. Please go to the [fccnr.org/events](http://fccnr.org/events) page to sign up for the group. There is no cost to attend; donations for the books will be accepted.





We are gearing up for summer in KidZone! As you make your summer plans, keep these few things in mind!

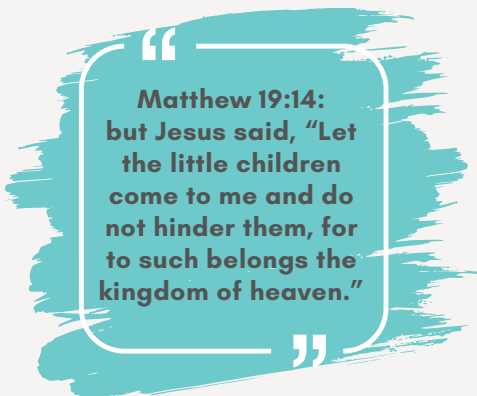


## SUMMER KIDZONE IS COMING!

### We need YOUR help!

KidZone will be available for ages 0 through 3rd grade for the summer. Parents of kids in grades 4 & 5, please take this as an opportunity to show your children what happens in big church! There is much value in preparing them to have realistic expectations of what a church service is like before they are adults sitting in one. Encourage them to worship with you, pray along with the congregation and then discuss any bits of the message they may have retained. These may only be small things (especially to begin with), but praise all attempts they make to listen, keeping in mind that it is normal for their attention to wander and okay for them to color or doodle during longer stretches that require active listening.

Church, please welcome these kids into services! If you don't know their names, ask! Let them know they are welcome, you're happy to see them, and they are an important part of their church.



We also need groups to serve in KidZone for the summer. Please check out the [events tab](#) to get your family, Bible study or small group signed up for a Sunday this summer!

## SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS!

August 1st-4th

Mark your calendars for VBS! We'll be headed to the Jerusalem Marketplace (Biblical Times!) August 1-4th. Stay tuned for further details! If you are a VBS enthusiast and/or are gifted in these areas we could use a few team leaders!

- Decor Team Lead
- Food Team Lead
- Set Up & Clean Up Team Lead
- Lights & Sound Team Lead

Contact Bobbi Blanchard if you are able to serve in one of these areas, or know of someone who is!



Did you catch the epic video during church? If not, click [HERE](#) for some fun details (and acting)!



# SAVE THE DATE (AND YOUR STUFF) FOR OUR KIDZONE TRUNK SALE

June 10th from 9am-4pm



The graphic features the 'KidZone' logo in large, colorful letters (purple, orange, green, purple) followed by 'TRUNK SALE' in black. A yellow tag with 'SALE' is attached to the right. Below the logo is a circular photo of a car trunk filled with toys. Text on the graphic includes: 'Clear some clutter without having to do a garage sale!! Reserve your parking spot and sell your stuff right from your trunk! Your \$25 registration will support Children's Ministry at FCC!', the Bible verse '1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.', the event details '9AM - 4PM SATURDAY, JUNE 10TH FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH, NR', and a note '\*Set up beginning at 7am'. A small illustration of a cupcake is labeled 'Kid-Run Bake Sale & Lemonade Stand'.

An opportunity for you to sell your "stuff" and for our KidZone Kids to serve with their families and live out 1 Timothy 4:12; to be an example in their conduct and love in their community.

Proceeds from parking lot reservations and bake & lemonade sales will benefit Children's Ministry. Specifically, our new sensory room. Thank you for helping our littlest church be the church!

#### To Sell Your Stuff:

- Gather your "stuff", fill your trunk!
- Come on June 10th & sell your "stuff"! Set up will start at 7 am.
- You might want to bring a table, clothing rack, or simply a tarp to lay your "stuff" on.
- Don't forget to have some change for customers!

#### To Serve With Your KidZone Kids:

- Sign up for a one hour slot to:
  - Set up
  - Sell baked goods
  - Sell lemonade
  - Welcome people and hand out tracts
  - Clean up
- Make some home baked goodies & lemonade!

Visit the [events page](#) to sign up for a parking spot and/or to serve!

# WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

## FCC Student Ministry | 6-12th Grade

CHAOS Students, Parents and Leaders! Thank you all for being a part of another fruitful year of student ministry! Over the course of the school year, we were able to consistently present the truth of the Gospel to over 150 students, while offering a great place for our kids to hang out and have access to some really awesome events. We assembled an amazing group of leaders, and we are SO excited about where the Lord will continue to grow this ministry going forward. If you are interested in volunteering in student ministry, please reach out to Pastor Ben at [ben@homeforever.org](mailto:ben@homeforever.org)

# YEAR END PARTY

Our year end party included outdoor games, fun, and a visit from the ice cream truck! Thank you to all of our volunteers who faithfully provided meals and treats for our Youth Group this year!



# DISCIPLE6

## Sundays 5-6pm

Disciple6 is coming to a close for the year on May 14th! What a wonderful first year of gathering! We've been meeting with a group of 20 students every Sunday at 5pm since the fall and have covered SO many wonderful topics in Scripture. AND, we're already looking forward to next fall (brown year) and all the new topics we will be able to cover together! If you are interested in your youth participating in this AWESOME study, or if you would like to volunteer to lead/provide a meal, please contact Pastor Ben at [ben@homeforever.org](mailto:ben@homeforever.org) for more information.

# CHAOS GAMES

## Wishlist Link

CHAOS is building their Game Collection! If you are willing and able to donate, head [HERE](#) to see what's on the kids' wishlist.

Games can be shipped directly to FCC, or dropped off in the church office!  
THANK YOU!





## ANNOUNCING OUR PLANS FOR FAITH TRAINING FOR FALL 2023/SPRING 2024

### **FALL 2023**

#### **John (1-3 John):**

Day: Sundays  
Dates: Sep 24 - Dec 10  
Time: 12-2PM  
Location: D3  
Length: 12 weeks

#### **Kings & Prophets (An Old Testament Survey):**

Day: Mondays  
Dates: Sep 11 - Nov 27  
Time: 6-8pm  
Location: The Worship Center  
Length: 12 weeks

#### **Knowing the Bible's Story (Theology):**

Day: Tuesdays  
Dates: Sept 12 - Nov 7th  
Time: 7-9pm  
Location: Worship Center  
Length: 9 weeks

### **SPRING 2023**

#### **James (Be a Hearer AND a Doer):**

Day: Sundays  
Dates: Feb 11 - April 12  
Time: 12-2  
Location: D3  
Length: 12 weeks

#### **The Judges (An Old Testament Survey):**

Day: Mondays  
Dates: Feb 12 - April 29  
Time: 6-8pm  
Location: Worship Center  
Length: 12 weeks

#### **Understanding and Communicating Narrative and Law (Genesis - Exodus):**

Day: Tuesdays  
Dates: Feb 13 - April 9  
Time: 7-9pm  
Location: Worship Center  
Length: 9 weeks



### **FAITH TRAINING ONE-TIME EVENTS**

#### **1st Quarter - Jonah Was a Prophet**

Date: Aug 27  
Time: 12-2  
Location: Worship Center  
LUNCH PROVIDED

#### **2nd Quarter - The Arian Crisis (and a History of Heresy)**

Date: Dec 3  
Time: 12-2  
Location: Worship Center  
LUNCH PROVIDED

#### **3rd Quarter - From the Pulpit: Faith Training Inspired by Sunday Teaching**

Date: Feb 4  
Time: 12-2pm  
Location: Worship Center  
LUNCH PROVIDED

#### **4th Quarter - Then and Now (A Comparative History of the 1-2nd Century Church)**

Date: May 5  
Time: 12-2pm  
Location: Worship Center  
LUNCH PROVIDED

## WOMEN IN THE WORD

### **The Lamb of God by Nancy Guthrie**

Our current study is "The Lamb of God-Seeing Jesus in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy" by Nancy Guthrie. This is the second book in the "Seeing Jesus in the Old Testament" series. We have been blessed with two teachers for this 10-week study. Rochelle Haugen leads our Wednesday morning study which meets from 9-10:30 am in room D3. Bobbi Blanchard leads our Wednesday evening study which meets from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Sonshine staff room. Both studies began on April 12. Sign up on the [Events page](#), the links on the [Women's Ministry page](#), or at the Connection Point if you want to join.

## ALL WOMEN EQUIPPED BLOG

[fccnr.org/womens-ministry-blog](http://fccnr.org/womens-ministry-blog).

Check out the Women's Ministry Blog! Subscribe to get updates on the [Women's Ministry Page](#).

## LADIES TIME OUT

### **Every Third Wednesday**

Ladies of all ages and stages have been meeting once a month at Ladies Time Out where we gather in the cafe and get to know each other over coffee and treats. LTO meets the third Wednesday of every month from 9-11am here at church.

Childcare and coffee are provided. We hope you can join us next time! This is a great event to invite friends and neighbors to, and introduce them to the beauty of relationships centered on Christ. Want to contribute? You are always welcome to bring a brunch item to share, and if you are bringing kiddos, please pack a water bottle. Stay tuned for Summer Dates at the park!

Contact Christa Poole at [christa.poole@homeforever.org](mailto:christa.poole@homeforever.org) for more info!

Next Gathering is May 17th.



## MOMENTS THAT MATTER

### **Ties of Faith Recap**

On April 29, Jamie Johnson led us in our second annual Ties of Faith during which we made blankets for Grace Place. FCC will donate a pillow to go with every blanket. Thank you everyone who provided supplies, blankets, and pillow cases.



### **Women's Monthly Book Club: May 20th**

Join us for a Ladies Book Club kick off potluck on Saturday, May 20th from 10am-12pm in the Cafe. The first book will be "The Cost of Control" by Sharon Hodde Miller (there are a few copies available in the FCC bookstore, otherwise please order online). Read this book for discussion at our first meeting. We will keep meeting on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Sign up [online](#) or at the Connection Point



### **SAVE THE DATE! Regressive Dinner**

Save the date! We will be hosting a regressive dinner (dessert first) on Saturday, June 24 from 4-7pm. More information coming soon.

## A NOTE FROM PASTOR STU DIX

Last November, on the eve of Cheryl reaching her retirement age, we were prayerfully thinking about our next season of life. We applied for summer seasonal jobs at Glacier National Park. We have both been offered jobs so my last Sunday as your Lead Pastor for the Interim will be on May 7. Pastor Dave Mobley will handle the Sunday morning teaching responsibilities for the summer. It has been a pleasure (mostly) to serve you. Thanks. Stu



## COFFEE HOUR

In efforts to provide an opportunity for our church body to connect, we have been having a monthly coffee hour between services. This has been a great time of fellowship, has provided an opportunity for 1st service attendees to meet 2nd service attendees, and hopefully has ignited some great conversations! If you typically attend 2nd service, come early and join us!

### Please join us on Sunday, May 7th

for a special coffee hour as we thank Pastor Stu for all he has done and celebrate his next adventure!



## CURRENT SERMON SERIES

### The Whole Story of the Bible in About 16 Verses

Following the storyline of the Bible as God reveals the fundamental truths of his plan to rescue his world and reconcile his image bearers. After 15 weeks in this excellent series, Stu will wrap it up on Sunday, May 7th!



## NEXT SERMON SERIES

### For Your JOY

Our next sermon series, taught mostly by Pastor Dave Mobley, is called "For Your Joy - Walking in the Love of God" and will run from May 21st - July 9th. This sermon series will focus in 1 John and will cover themes such as confidence, discernment, life eternal, and love! Join us at 9am and 10:45am all summer long!





# HOSPITALITY TEAM

## HELP WANTED

We are looking for welcoming smiles and helping hands to join the welcome and coffee teams on Sunday mornings. Stop by the connection point or contact chuck at [chuck.olson@homeforever.org](mailto:chuck.olson@homeforever.org) if you want to join the team!



# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## Fiscal Year-to-Date

(000s)	Actual	Budgeted
Giving	474	507
Expenditures	523	536

# GIVE

[fccnr.org/give](http://fccnr.org/give)

Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity.



# FCC T-SHIRTS

Only \$5.00!

We have lots of FCC t-shirts available for purchase at the Connection Point! Stop by and grab one.



# CONNECT

**We are the Church.**

Join us every Sunday morning at 9:00am or 10:45am for in person services. Stay up to date with what's going on and follow us on Facebook, or catch up on services you have missed on our YouTube channel!

 [@fccnewrichmond](https://www.facebook.com/fccnewrichmond)

 [@faithcommunitynr](https://www.youtube.com/fccnewrichmond)

# upcoming events @ FCC

## M A Y E V E N T S

- 1st:** Life of David Class 6-8pm
- 3rd:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 6th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am  
Covenant Membership Class 9am-12pm  
Matt and Madeline's Wedding 2pm  
All church is welcome to the ceremony!
- 7th:** Worship 9 & 10:45am w/Communion  
Coffee Hour Between Services  
Romans Study 12-2PM  
CHAOS Disciple6 5-6pm  
CHAOS Leader Appreciation BBQ 6:30pm
- 8th:** Life of David Class 6-8pm
- 10th:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 12th:** Grief Share Orientation 6-8pm
- 13th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am
- 14th:** Happy Mother's Day  
Worship 9 & 10:45am  
LAST WEEK of CHAOS Disciple6 5-6pm
- 17th:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Ladies Time Out 9-11am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 18th:** Ruby's Pantry 4-7pm
- 19th:** Grief Share Meeting 6-8pm
- 20th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am  
Women's Monthly Book Club  
Kickoff Potluck 10am-12pm
- 21st:** Senior Sunday  
Worship 9 & 10:45am  
Baptism Orientation Class 10:45
- 22nd:** Senior Lunch 12-2pm
- 24th:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 26th:** Grief Share Meeting 6-8pm
- 27th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am
- 28th:** Worship 9 & 10:45am w/Baptisms
- 29th:** Memorial Day
- 31st:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm

## J U N E E V E N T S

- 2nd:** GriefShare Meeting 6-8pm
- 3rd:** Men's Study 7-8:30am
- 4th:** Worship 9 & 10:45am w/Communion  
Covenant Member Meeting 5-7pm
- 7th:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 9th:** GriefShare Orientation 6-8pm
- 10th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am  
KidZone Trunk Sale 9am-4pm
- 11th:** Worship 9 & 10:45am
- 14th:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 15th:** Ruby's Pantry 4-7pm
- 16th:** GriefShare Meeting 6-8pm
- 17th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am
- 18th:** Happy Father's Day  
Worship 9 & 10:45am  
Coffee Hour Between Services
- 21st:** Men's Study 5-6am  
Women's Study 9-10:30am  
Ladies Time Out Park Date 9-11am  
Women's Study 6:30-8pm
- 23rd:** Grief Share Meeting 6-8pm
- 24th:** Men's Study 7-8:30am  
Regressive Dinner (Dessert First) 4-7pm
- 25th:** Worship 9 & 10:45am
- 30th:** GriefShare Meeting 6-8pm

## **WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?**

The other day, I was listening to the radio and the host referenced John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." It's a verse I've probably heard hundreds of times in my life. This time the Holy Spirit impressed them on my heart like He hadn't done previously. These words became stuck in that place between my head and my heart. If I am honest, a lot of scriptures get stuck there for me. It's that place where the Spirit brings things to mind and I know I am supposed to act, but it gets stuck before any real action happens. I wander around wondering why...why this verse... why now....and most importantly what am I supposed to do next.

As any good bible scholar will tell you, you HAVE to read the rest of the text, so I did. I don't want to spoil it all, but there is some really good stuff, the Son of Man is going to be glorified, God is going to be glorified; Jesus is making some HUGE claims about what is next for him. Moments after He was betrayed and knowing the cross was waiting for Him. Suddenly, Jesus tells his followers the ones at his table, his closest friends, the disciples that people will know who they are by how they love one another. How they love, will be what people will know them for, it will be how they are defined.

You might be asking yourself what this has to do with a search team update. That is a very excellent question, because this might seem like ramblings of a confused radio junky. Stick with me, there is a point!

It is no surprise to anyone reading this that our search has been long and challenging. We've prayed earnestly, we've asked you to join us in prayer and explored all the appropriate leads. The two candidates that we had with P3, were not the right fit for our church family. The Lord made that very clear at each turn. From our very first meeting, we have asked that the Lord would speak clearly, and equally as important that we would be listening to the Holy Spirit when He spoke. God has been faithful in His clarity to us. When we received word that P3, our search partner, had ceased operations without any warning - we were stunned. We were left with no candidates and no partners to assist in our search. The departure of Noah and Pastor Stu's final Sunday a few weeks away have renewed the urgency of our search.

I have been working with our district president, and we are nearing an agreement with another search firm that helps with pastoral placement. They have already taken over the workload for a number of other churches that were also using P3. This new partner is more of an active search partner. What this means is rather than us as a search team posting on a variety of job boards, and directing interested candidates to our search partner, they are out meeting with pastors and seeing who is being led to a new congregation. They already have a pool of candidates actively looking for pastoral positions; Lord willing, our next pastor is already waiting.



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# from the Lead Pastor Search Team

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The elder council is putting the finishing touches on a job description for our next pastor. With the changes to our church staff, some of the job duties and responsibilities needed to be harmonized with our current organization structure. This will be what we can put forward to match potential candidates with.

Now, allow me to try and wrap this up. Part of my faith journey is that the church family where I came to know Christ, where I was mentored and discipled, married my wife before, and where we dedicated our first child at, also had to be the church I worked at as a Jr. High Pastor. We experienced a leadership transition that split our church. During that time I saw people that I loved, and loved the Lord deeply say and act in a way that was not representative of the love that Jesus calls his disciples to show. I saw small groups and bible studies dissolve as lines were drawn and teams were picked. This experience left me so hurting and broken, that I was not sure if I ever wanted to be a part of a church family ever again.

My conviction has grown ever stronger, that the reason the Holy Spirit has kept John 13:35 in my mind, is because it is a calling for us as a body of believers for this very time. Oftentimes, we assume that this command is to go and be a light in the world. Without question, this is a calling on all our lives who have been saved by grace through faith. However, I ask you to consider how we can apply this command to those in our church family today. This season of our faith family is hard, but it does not have to be what defines us.

I am confident that the Lord knows who our next pastor will be, I have no idea when He will reveal that to us. While we wait, let us take the time to shower one another with the love that marks us as disciples of Christ. I dream of the day, when I get to make the phone call and invite a pastor to come and candidate for our church family. I want that phone call to be filled with so many examples of how well our family has loved each other while we waited, that he can't wait to come and meet the rest of the family!

In Christ,

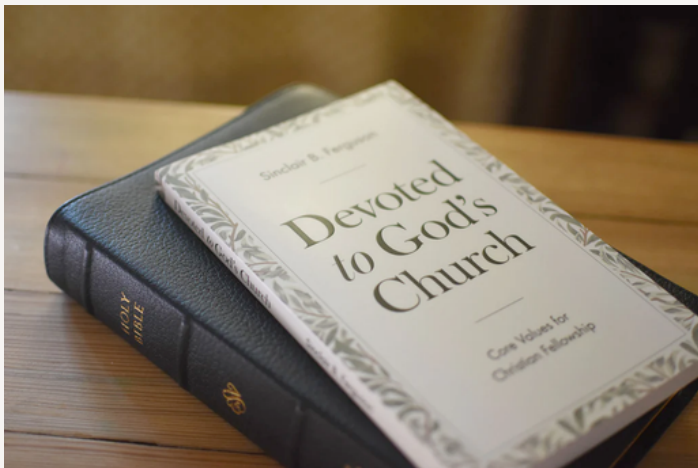
**~MATT TUINSTR  
PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM**



## DEVOTED TO GOD'S CHURCH

Church life has been on my mind regularly for the past few years. Partially due to normal difficulties found within a church family and partially due to changes that seem to be happening in local churches since Covid. Declining attendance, house churches and online plants have increased in our small city, as well as around the country. These changes have pushed me to want a better understanding of what Christ says about how His Church should look, specifically the local branches spread over the world.

I picked up a copy of Sinclair Ferguson's, *Devoted to God's Church: Core Values for Christian Fellowship*, and I was not disappointed.



Written by a trusted theologian, this book is not a how to fix your local church approach but instead a how to faithfully love the church God has already placed you in. As Ferguson says in the intro,

"...we are the church. So it is not a book full of ideas about how your church ought to change or what it needs to do in order to grow or to be successful. Rather it is about how we fit into our own church, given that each church has a unique location and a unique composition of members.

It [this book] tries to unfold some basic principles that are applicable to every Christian and to any congregation. It is, as the sub-title suggests, a book about our core values as Christians who belong to the family of God."

This is a simple, knowledgeable and practical read that tackles topics such as: the church as a family, being a disciple, what is a member, baptism, prayer and service; but I found the chapter on worship to be especially moving and convicting. When speaking on the thoughts we often have after participating in our local Sunday service, Ferguson had this to say:

"We 'liked' this or that part of the service; we didn't 'appreciate' another part because it didn't do much for us. Did it ever cross our minds to ask if God was glorified? Did I come and take part in the service as though worship was for my benefit? Perhaps that is why I didn't enjoy it. For all of us surely know that 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to come and enjoy Him forever.' But perhaps you didn't really go in order to meet with God and to worship and glorify Him. Nothing took you by surprise, nothing overwhelmed you...But God is overwhelming."

The wisdom found in this book is taken mainly from the New Testament but it is peppered with Ferguson's own rich experiences from church life all over the world. You can hear his passion for God's church as he attempts to biblically and thoughtfully answer the question, "What book would I recommend to someone who was thinking about membership..."? His hopes are that this book would be a helpful tool for any pastor or member wanting to rethink and deepen their "commitment to Christ and love for the specific church family to which" they belong. It would also be a great addition to any small group or discipling context.

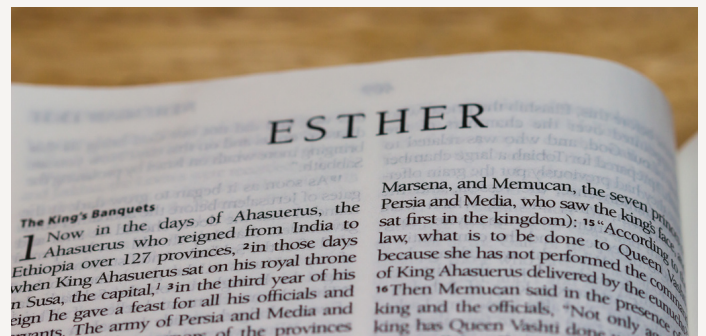
**-Melissa Evans**

## FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS...

Good day to anyone who is taking the time to read this month's newsletter. If you have ever been to Branson Missouri, you may have had the opportunity to visit the Sight and Sound Theater. As the name suggests, it is a theater where dramas in the form of plays are presented for your entertainment. The element that sets the Sight and Sound Theater apart from others is that the plays are all based and written directly from scripture and meant to bring to life stories with the goal of introducing the audience to biblical truths. The play that is currently showing is Esther. If you and/or your family is planning a trip to that area of the country between now and the end of the year, you are hereby strongly encouraged to take in the show. It is truly an amazing and moving dramatic account of the entire book of Esther.

As most of you are probably already aware, the book of Esther is an Old Testament account of a young Jewish woman named ... you guessed it Esther and her cousin/guardian Mordecai. Through a series of "coincidences" Esther becomes queen and is put into a position to save the Jewish people living in the Persian empire from being exterminated. It is truly an awesome story of God's providence even though He is never mentioned in the book. Though God clearly orchestrated all the circumstances necessary for the salvation of His people (like every other time in history) It was still incumbent upon Esther to choose to risk her life to try to save her people or not to, but Mordecai, in an incredible display of faith, urged her in chapter 4 verse 14; "For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Not sure, but this (last half of the) verse may be one of the most familiar verses in the Bible.

And who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this? To all of you faithful brothers and sisters at Faith Community Church who truly believe that God is sovereign in all things, this verse should speak directly to you every moment of every day. We are all placed exactly where we are at every given time for such a time as that moment, and this moment, and the next... Proverbs 16:9 says, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps." Many of you have probably seen one of those giant mosaic photos that show a beautiful image as you view it from far away. Then as you get closer, you see that it is made up of thousands of smaller photographs. Perhaps this is an object lesson we can apply to the sovereignty of God, where each photograph is a thought, a decision, an action or a circumstance that God moves into place on one side, then another on the opposite side, then yet another above and one below until His plan starts to take the shape He has envisioned from the beginning of time. We only see the "individual photo" as it pertains to our situation, but God is looking at them all and placing them where they need to go to create the big picture.



It is likely that Joseph had a very difficult time seeing the upside of being sold into slavery until he stood face to face with his brothers in Pharaoh's court where he said, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." Gen. 50:20 So, where are we going with all of this you may be asking. We believe that the God we serve is the same today and yesterday and forever and we believe that we are all here for such a time as this.



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## from the Elders

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**For such a time as this...** we believe that God brought Stu to Faith Community at the precise time that we needed him the most. If any of you has ever looked forward to retirement after a long career, you know how much you anticipate having a bit of relief from the challenges of holding down a schedule set by somebody else, meeting the expectations of others on a daily basis and handling the responsibilities of the job, whatever that may be. Finally, you can look forward to a well-deserved rest, at least for a while. Well, Stu was ready to retire and get some of that well-deserved rest when he chose to be faithful to what he felt God calling him to do and stepped in to be our Lead Pastor for the interim, rather than retire immediately. Stu has served Faith Community well and he has our deepest and most sincere thanks. We will certainly continue to lift Stu and his family up to the Lord in prayer.

**For such a time as this...** Chuck Olson is serving selflessly here at FCC by divine appointment. He continually humbles himself before God and men and we wish to also thank him for his commitment to our body. Please join us as we lift Chuck and his family up in prayer as he is aware of just about everything that goes on, good and bad, and yet he remains faithful to God and all of us.



**For such a time as this...** Noah served us in worship. We thank Noah for leading us well in worship and continue to pray for him and his family. Things happen in our lives that can either grow us up into a stronger faith or plant a root of bitterness that can hinder our walk with the Lord. We are truly sorry for the way things had to unfold, but believe that God will use it for good.

**For such a time as this...** The Lord, in His infinite wisdom, has brought Ben into our family. Ben, you truly have a shepherd's heart and we love you. You are an awesome teacher and clearly God has anointed you with that gift. He has brought you here to teach us and make us stronger in our own walk with God and we are so very grateful. We continue to pray for you and your family.

**For such a time as this...** Our Father, in His infinite love and wisdom, placed Bobbi here. We continually thank God for Bobbi Blanchard as she disciples and trains up our littles. Her heart for our children is clearly empowered by the Holy Spirit as she pours it out week after week. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts! We have so much to learn from them, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matt 18:3

**For such a time as this...** By the gracious knowledge of our Lord, Christa was added to our staff here at FCC. Christa Poole seeks Jesus, to be closer to Him and out of that devotion springs an eternal well of service and love toward our body. We thank you Christa for your faithfulness in what you have been called to do. We continue to pray for you and your family, that the joy of the Lord would truly be your strength.

**For such a time as this...** Our God who knows what we need and when we need it, placed Ron on staff. Ron Hansen carefully manages the finances of FCC and quietly and diligently works behind the scenes to care for us. Thank you for your selfless service and sharing your gifts with us to steward what God provides through His people.

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# from the Elders

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**For such a time as this...** Each small group leader was called by the Holy Spirit to help shepherd us. Our small group leaders have faithfully disciplined us (and continue to do so) in the Word and provide an opportunity for deeper fellowship with one another. Thank you all for your devoted service, support and care for the people of Faith Community as you share God's love with one another.

**For such a time as this...** Each of our ministry leaders obeyed the call of God. Our ministry leaders have been called by God to serve this body in very specific ways and have shared their gifts with us all, for which we are very grateful and we thank you. As you serve the body you serve the Lord, "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him." Jn 12:26

**For such a time as this...** Our Father calls us to worship. Our worship and technical teams have shared and continue to share their very special gifts that are so appreciated by all the body. Even though they go about their service in a seemingly effortless way, we know that a lot of time and effort goes into preparing for and leading each and every service and most events! We cannot thank you enough and pray that the Lord continues to empower you as you obey the Holy Spirit's prompting.

**For such a time as this...** God has drawn us all to himself and FCC. All of you who serve the Lord and our body behind the scenes, you are where you are for a reason. "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." **1 Peter 4:10-11**

"For such a time as this", is the part of the verse which speaks to God's sovereignty in orchestrating events, choices, circumstances and every other thing to accomplish His will, but we must not miss the first part of the verse which reads, "For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish." Which clearly implies that we all have a choice to act in accordance with our faith and do what we know to be right and good, or to not act and let God use some other means to accomplish His task, whatever it may be. But there will be consequences. In Esther's case, there really wasn't a choice...really. Nor do we...really, when motivated by a true faith in God and taking to heart Philippians 2:3, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." While seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

This short verse God has given us in the book of Esther could be applied to the Word of God at any given time in recorded history. God has given us His very Word *for such a time as this*. We must be in the word, reading it daily. Not just reading it, but applying it to everyday situations as James says,

**"BUT BE DOERS OF THE WORD,  
AND NOT HEARERS ONLY.  
DECEIVING YOURSELVES." (V.1:22)**

Perhaps it is time for all of us to hold up the mirror of scripture and take a long difficult look. Is Jesus standing and looking down at Faith Community Church and saying "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone..."?

We pray God's rich blessings on Faith Community Church as we seek the Lord in our lives and the lost in New Richmond.

**In your service as we serve Christ,  
FCC Elders**

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# Final Thoughts: Communion and Gossip

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Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." - John 13:35. On the Sundays that we celebrate communion we do it as a group of people who are united in love to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Satan hates us and our unity and our commitment to love one another. He is our enemy who works relentlessly to erode our unity, dilute our love for one another and diminish the power with which we, together, in love, word and deed, proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

It is no small thing that one of Satan's most effective weapons against us is gossip. He employs that tool in every church in the world. He has used gossip effectively here in the past and wants to keep using it here. He is probably using it in some ways right now to erode our unity, dilute our love for one another and diminish the power with which we, together, in love, word and deed proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Gossip. Satan's weapon to wreck a church. Now, people who speak ill about another brother or sister in Christ probably aren't intending to wreck the church. They may want to share a concern, they may want to express their hurt, they may want to vent a frustration. But don't be naïve. Gossip always serves Satan's desire to destroy.

So, since Satan employs the weapon of gossip in every church in the world, and since he has used gossip effectively here in the past and wants to keep using it here, and since he is probably using it in some ways right now, you have both the permission and the obligation to stop someone in mid syllable if and when they talk with you about someone who is not present to your conversation. "Stop. I will not listen to you speak this way about another member of our family. You may not intend your words to bring ruin here, but they will. So, stop. I will not listen."

You have both the permission and the obligation to stop someone in mid-syllable, no matter who they are. Don't help Satan utilize his favorite weapon against us. And if you have listened to someone gossip or speak about someone who is not present to the conversation, you have both the permission and obligation to go to that person and say, "I'm sorry I have listened to you gossip. Please forgive me."

We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes at his table and in our living, loving sacrificially with each other. And we have a powerful, crafty enemy who hates us and is committed to ruining this church. Stand against him.

"Sin is not ended by multiplying words..." - Proverbs 10:19

"With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors..." - Proverbs 11:9

"A perverse person stirs up conflict and a gossip separates close friends." - Proverbs 16:28

"Whoever would foster love covers an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends." - Proverbs 17:9

"Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down." - Proverbs 26:20

"Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless." - James 1:26

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." - Ephesians 4:29

-Pastor Stu Dix