



FIRST CHRISTIAN

FAIRFIELD, IL

Encounter Grow Serve

April 2024

CRAIG'S COLUMN

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As I write this article it is Easter week. It is a time of sorrow but also great celebration. We will take the time to worship the God who saves us through His son Jesus Christ. We will remember the cross and all of the difficulty Jesus Christ went through because of us. We will remember the burial as he was taken down from the cross and placed in a borrowed tomb. And we will celebrate the resurrection and His victory over death. We know He was the first who conquered death and we can know with confidence we will follow in time. Our God is truly worthy of our worship because He made a way for us to be His children and in His presence for all eternity.

Like most families, after our time of worship, we will gather for a meal together as we celebrate what God did for us. We will enjoy one another's company, and the children that are part of our family will remind us of the innocence and joy of this time of year. We who are older will remember our own time of wonder and joy because of what we see in the children who are with us on this day during this time. Our minds will be taken back to Easter's when we were kids and our own time of decorating eggs, coming down stairs on Sunday morning, seeing our plastic colored baskets full of jelly beans, chocolates, chocolate bunnies, and green stringy grass. We will remember those who sat at our tables who are no longer with us and we will relive the joy of those relationships and the simpler times we had together as family.

One of the greatest things we can do for our families and children is to make wonderful memories; to make sure they are reminded of what is truly important in this life which includes a relationship with God and loving relationships with family. This should also include our church family. I personally have many fond memories of my home church and the people who took the time to pour into my life. This includes everyone from the greeter at the door, to Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, people who welcomed me in the auditorium and made me feel like I belonged. Not only did this include those who are older than I was, but also my friends and peers who I sat by in church on Sunday and who are part of many experiences I had on trips and outings.

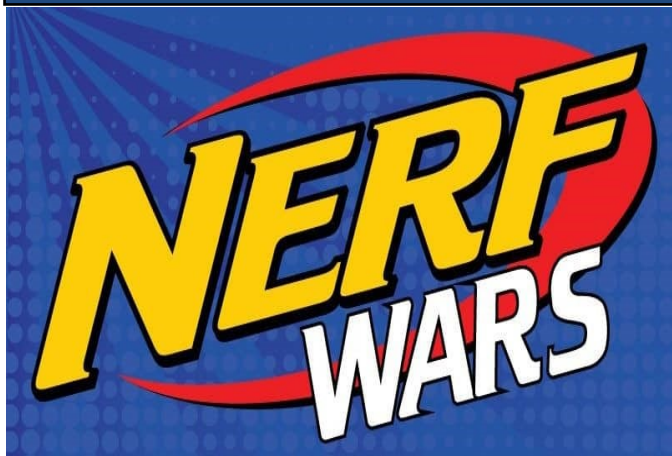
I still remember the building, and it is still there, but honestly when I think of my own church I think of the wonderful people who are part of that family. As we go through the spring and as we have a number of new people begin to come and be a part of our church family let us make sure to do our best to make those kinds of memories for each person who attends. Let's make sure we invite those who need to hear about Jesus, welcome those who we do not know, and make them feel at home and part of the family. You see as important as the building is, what we have inside is the most important thing we can offer to the world. Never forget the people are the most important asset God has to change the world and this includes you.

If you are visiting with us we would love for you to become more and more part of our family. Part of that introduction is something we call Pizza with The Pastors. If you have not had an opportunity to attend Pizza with the Pastors, we would like to invite you to lunch on April 28, immediately after 10:15 am service. It is a time to sit down with the pastors and some leadership to get to know us and to have an opportunity to ask any questions about the church and what goes on here. It won't take very long; just a meal together and short get to know you time. We hope you will take this opportunity to learn more about us and the church and give us the opportunity to know you just a little better.

Thank you all whether you've been here one Sunday or for years for being part of my church family and the community that loves, supports, and still pours into who I am. I love being part of this church and what God is doing here in Fairfield.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CALEB@FCCFAIRFIELDDOM



LOOKING AHEAD:

Nerf Wars is here again! This is an event for the entire family, so parents come on out and have a blast with your kids! Be on their team (or team up against them?). This is ALWAYS one of the best events of the year. Nerf Wars will be Friday, April 12 from 5:30-8:00 pm. Supper is provided. All you need is a gun and we provide the ammo (over 2,000 darts in fact). See you then!

WHEN: April 12 from 5:30-8:00

WHO: FCC Kids and their families

Strike A Pose

We like to try and keep parents up to date as to what the kids are learning on Sunday morning. In the month of April, we are entering into our series "Strike A Pose." We'll be looking at how God used the early church to build HIS CHURCH. As we learn we'll look at different ways we, too, can help build God's church here in Fairfield. I love this series because it reminds our kids they have an important role in God's kingdom as well!



STUDENT MINISTRY

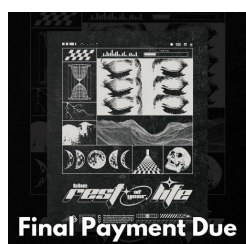
KYLE@FCCFAIRFIELDDOM



Children's Church - In the month of April, the Attic will be going through 4 stories that are taught frequently in children's church. We will be focusing on stories like Jonah, Noah's Ark, David vs. Goliath, and the 10 Commandments. We will be looking at these stories in detail and figuring out how these stories that everyone has heard of directly apply to our lives.



Movie Night - On April 26th, the Attic will be hosting a movie night at Kyle's (across FCC parking lot). This will be at 6:00 PM. Invite your friends and come hang out, watch a movie, and eat some snacks.



CIY Payment - If you are going to CIY Move this summer, the final payment will be due by the end of the month of April. Make sure you get that in. If you cannot make this payment for any reason, please let Kyle know and we will work it out.

MISSION SPOTLIGHT

Jim & Andra Howe visited us in January and reported on their mission in **Nairobi, Kenya**, under **ACMI (African Christian Mission International)**. Currently, they are in Swahili language classes and attend an all-Kenyan church. One focus of their work is ministering to “street people,” and mostly young girls, helping rescue them and guiding them. On Mondays they have a weekly Bible study for about 40 ladies and 55 children where a meal is served. There are three Kenyan men on the team who used to be “street boys.” themselves. Now as Christian adults, they provide cultural guidance and walk the streets of the slum with **Jim & Andra**, where there is sewer and trash flowing. In 2023, a drop-in center was built where these “street kids” could come and spend time with the team. As part of this time, kids who come receive a Bible and have a time for study. The team also walks to where the ladies live, selecting a few each week, to get a first-hand look at their specific needs in their homes. It becomes personal and opens doors for ways these women can be further supported, such as a bed ministry, providing diapers for children, and recognizing health problems.

“We are trying to reach as many people as we can,” Andra said. On Wednesday nights Jim leads a men’s Bible study in the church, where they also started a children’s ministry. As part of this, the Howe’s have started a tradition of celebrating the children’s birthdays. Currently, they are celebrating 12 baptisms in 18 months. Our Easter Golden Bowl is being collected to help with a building project for these “street kids”.

Home Mission options are coming up! If traveling abroad, long distance, or a week away isn’t in your calling, the mission team has several upcoming ways **First Christian Church** is serving nearby home missions. We are excited for ways to **Encounter, Grow, and Serve** together.

Check the Welcome desk for nearby Mission service projects:

Saturday, April 27, **Feed My Sheep**, Fairfield

Saturday, May 4, **Oil Belt Christian Service Camp**, Flora

Wednesday, May 22 – Thursday, May 23, **Need to Breathe concert & FAME**, Indianapolis, IN

Saturday, June 8, **Compassion Pregnancy Center**, Fairfield

Saturday, Sept. 7, **Shiloh Children’s Ranch**, Shelbina, MO

Where are you led to serve in missions?

NURSERY SCHEDULE

Week 1	Barbara Bozarth / Elizabeth Long	Cindy Hayes / Diana Higginbotham
Week 2	Amy Doty/Sidney Eckleberry	Kelly Scott/Macie Edwards
Week 3	Matta Gray / Drew Vaupel	Jackie Grepares
Week 4	Mason & Marissa Spitzner	Bob & Dena Hall
Week 5	Clinton Hayes / Sidney Eckleberry	Heather Neuman / Caleb Higginbotham

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 1 Shaelynn Hall	April 8 Dayne Gray	April 13 Dave Bliss, Jr.	April 16 Amy Doty Matta Gray Jade Lewis Fred Read	April 19 Clinton Legg	April 23 Karsen Keck	April 27 Terry Weedman
April 2 Jill Mitchell Matthew Legg	April 10 Bryce Kovacich Nash St. Ledger	April 14 Malori Simpson Rhett Simpson		April 20 Bruce Gualdoni	April 24 Lydia Green	April 28 Dylan Fleener Radley Wright
April 3 Sara Vaughan	April 11 Faith Grepares Steve Liston	April 15 Terri Carter	April 17 Talan Keoughan	April 21 Lucy Britt	April 25 Sheri Lavine Linda Vinson	April 29 Annette Bliss Bruce McKibben
April 6 Jenesis Rockett			April 18 Levi McCulley	April 22 Becky Hildebrand Olivia Vaughan	April 26 Brandon Webb	

FEBRUARY 2023

Fund	Beginning Balance	Income	Expense	Ending Balance
General	459,016	62,028	68,347	452,697
Mission	171,623	48,433	24,581	195,475
Totals	630,639	110,461	92,928	648,172

Spring Prayers

Spring can be a great time for spring cleaning, starting new projects, or even [refreshing your prayer life](#). Listed below are a few ways to increase your prayer life this spring. (Originally posted in [guideposts.org](#))

Pray in a garden

Saying your prayers in a new location can be a great way to get a new perspective. Pray amongst the flowers. As you pray, slowly breathe in and out. Savor the scent of life around you—from the nourishing soil to the fragrance of the flowers. Remember that everything around you was made by God.

Pray by the window

If you can't make it outside, you can still focus on your prayer time by making a comfortable prayer spot in your home. Consider making yours next to a window so you can look out over God's creation—like the budding flowers, the new green of the trees, and the birds. Maybe even add a vase of flowers or houseplants to lighten up the space and truly bring you into the spring mindset.

Pray while you walk

With warmer weather finally here, spring is the perfect time to begin or restart your daily walks. Focus on your steps and breathing, talk with God as you go. Let the world around you guide your prayers. If you see the tree on your block beginning to finally grow green, thank God for the nature around us that brings us joy and keeps us alive. If you pass by your neighbors,

March Service Intercession Schedule

Please prayerfully consider stepping into this ministry and helping to invite the Holy Spirit to move greatly in our services this month. Contact Cindy Hayes (618-599-1251) or the church office (618-842-4311) to fill one of the open spaces. We will provide everything you need for this time. You can pray at the church, your home or anywhere!

	8am	10:15am
April 7	<i>volunteer needed</i>	<i>volunteer needed</i>
April 14	<i>volunteer needed</i>	<i>volunteer needed</i>
April 21	Archie & Jean Duckworth	Nancy Farmer

Prayer Pals

Prayer Pals is a program at First Christian with a goal of covering our kids & families in prayer and aiding in developing lasting, intergenerational relationships inside the church. We pair each child preschool age through high school age with an adult volunteer. The adult will then pray for their child and family on a regular basis. The pals will greet the child at church and begin conversations to build a relationship. The pal will recognize significant life events (birthdays, baptisms, graduations etc.) with a card or small gift. Cards and small gifts are available at the church if needed. It is asked that the pals deliver a card/encouragement a minimum of 4 times a year. We have seen significant growth in relationships of our kids and their pals since the inception of this program. We are always adding kids as they age up or new families join us in worship so we are starting a list of willing volunteers to be assigned as needed. If you are willing to join this ministry or have questions please see Caleb Higginbotham, Kyle Borah or Cindy Hayes. Also, if your child doesn't have a Prayer Pal and you would like to have them become a part of the ministry, please speak to Caleb, Kyle or Cindy.



Pray for others fervently—with intensity, zeal and passion. James 5:16

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way . 1 Samuel 12:23

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see..." 2 Kings 6:17

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ...

Ephesians 3:14-21



FCC LADIES DAY

"BE BLESSED"

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

- Praise & Worship with Kara Blanton
- "Exploring the Beatitudes" with Debbie McKibben
- Card making project with BJ Courtright
- Craft project for nursing home residents
- Lunch
- "Bees and the Beatitudes" with Sheila Walker
- "Seek Ye First" with Alyssa Short and April Smith
- Closing with Debbie McKibben

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