

Here's What's Happening at FCC



Have you ever had somebody bless you, and instead of feeling comforted, you immediately wondered if you should update your will? That happened to me at the doctor's office. I was there for an exam, and at the end of the appointment, my doctor took my hands, looked at me, and said, "Mark, I am praying for you." Then he lowered his head for a moment of silence.

Now, I know that should have been beautiful. And it was. Sort of. But I am also human, which means my brain immediately went to the worst possible place. Because when a doctor grabs your hands and starts praying, part of you thinks, "Doc, do you know something I don't?"

I mean, I appreciate prayer. I believe in prayer. But when your doctor starts praying at the end of an exam, it can feel like medical code for, "Well, I have done all I can do. It is in God's hands now. Good luck."

So, I said, "Doc, do you know something I don't?" He smiled and said, "Mark, it is just my way of saying it is a blessing for me that I get to be your doctor." Now that is bedside manner.

And I left that appointment thinking about blessing. We use that word a lot. We say we are blessed when things go well. We say we are blessed when the bills are paid, the family is healthy, the test results are good, the car starts, the Packers win, and the coffee is strong enough to raise the dead. And don't get me wrong, those are blessings. Especially the coffee.

But Jesus had a way of taking words we thought we understood and turning them inside out. In the Beatitudes, Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness."

That word "blessed" comes from the Greek word makarios. It can mean happy, fortunate, favored. But in Jesus' world, "blessed" was not usually a word people used for the poor, the grieving, the meek, or the desperate.

The blessed were the important people. The blessed were the powerful people. The blessed were the ones who looked like they had won at life. Caesar was blessed. The elite were blessed. The folks at the top of the ladder were blessed.

And then Jesus stands before a crowd of ordinary, hurting, overlooked people and says, "No, let me tell you who the blessed really are." Blessed are the poor. Blessed are the grieving. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are the hungry for justice.

Jesus is not blessing the pain. Jesus is blessing the people. He is looking at the ones the world ignores and saying, "You are not forgotten." He is looking at the ones who mourn and saying, "You are not alone." He is looking at the ones who have been pushed to the edge and saying, "The kingdom of God has not passed you by."

Blessing is not just what happens when life goes your way. Blessing is the nearness of God, especially when life does not.

Maybe that is why my doctor's words stayed with me. He was not saying everything was perfect. He was not handing me a guarantee. He was simply reminding me that blessing is not always loud. Sometimes blessing is a hand held gently at the end of an exam. Sometimes it is a moment of silence. Sometimes it is someone looking at you and saying, "It is a gift that I get to be part of your life."

And maybe that is what we are all called to be for one another. We can be people who notice. We can be people who hold a hand, speak a word, send a card, make a meal, sit in the silence, and remind each other that God is near.

The late Rachel Held Evans once wrote about a God who keeps showing up among the wounded, the doubting, the grieving, and the left out. At Rachel's funeral, the Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber offered a benediction that sounds to me like the Beatitudes spoken in our own language:

"Blessed are the agnostics. Blessed are they who doubt. Blessed are those who have nothing to offer. Blessed are the preschoolers who cut in line at communion. Blessed are the poor in spirit. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

Blessed are those whom no one else notices. The kids who sit alone at middle-school lunch tables. The laundry guys at the hospital. The sex workers and the night-shift street sweepers. The closeted. The teens who have to figure out ways to hide the new cuts on their arms. Blessed are the meek. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like. Blessed are the mothers of the miscarried. Blessed are they who can't fall apart because they have to keep it together for everyone else. Blessed are those who 'still aren't over it yet.' Blessed are those who mourn. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you."

And maybe that is the blessing we need today. Not a blessing that pretends everything is fine. A blessing that says, even here, even now, even with all you carry: You are of heaven. And Jesus blesses you.

Peace and Blessings
Pastor Mark



**Please Keep These Loved Ones
in Your Prayers**

Those facing illness or health concerns:

- Kathy W.
- Dorothy C.
- Sue P.
- Carol B.

Those needing ongoing love and support:

- Our shut-ins and all who live with chronic health challenges
- Our church leadership, as they serve and discern
- All who are struggling or in need—seen and unseen
- The Mission School of Hope & Clinic and the communities they care for

*May God's healing, strength,
and peace surround each one.*

**Need Prayer? Send your request to
prayer@fccweb.net**

**Would you like to be part of our
Prayer Chain?**

Please email the church office at
office@fccweb.net to let us know.

"The Shared Table" **2026 Giving Program**



"The Shared Table"
Giving Sunday Focus for 2026

**Here is our program
for this year's giving focus.**

Theme: "The Shared Table"

A healthy church operates exactly like a great potluck: everyone has a seat, and everyone brings their unique measure of Time, Talents, Presence, Prayer, and Finances to the mix.

The 3-Week Sermon Series

- **September 6, 2026:** Pulling Up a Chair (Presence & Prayer)

The gift of making space, showing up, and holding the community in prayer.

- **September 13, 2026:** Passing the Plate (Time & Talents)

Using our 168 hours a week to serve one another and pass what we have to our neighbors.

- **September 20, 2026:** Staying Late & Clearing the Table (Finances & The Full Measure)

Pooling our resources, giving what we have, not what we don't have, to keep the lights on and the doors open. **Sunday Potluck**



Help Wanted: Maxwell Street Days Parking Fundraiser! September 12-13

Friday Setup: We need a small crew to handle setup on the Friday before, starting at 3:00 PM.

Available Saturday Shifts:

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Sunday Take Down: We need help packing everything up on Sunday at 3:00 PM.

Please see the sign-up sheet on the communication table.

Alzheimer's Walk

This year I'll be walking again in the Alzheimer's Walk in Walworth County on Saturday morning, September 9th. The walk takes place in Lake Geneva, along the lake front, for a total of 3 miles. There is also a shorter walk through the historic district of 1 mile.

The walk itself starts at 10 am, but the ceremony starts at 9:40.

I would love for you to join my team and walk with me that day! I'll be walking the lake front route of 3 miles, but if you choose to do the shorter walk, that's fine. We will plan on going to lunch somewhere afterwards.

Another thing you could do is to support my walk by donating to it. Currently, I am a Grand Champion for having raised over \$1,000. My goal is to once again join the Elite Grand Champions club by raising over \$2,500. I'm a little more than \$1,000 from that goal. You can donate to my page and/or join my team by going to my page: [Joanne's Alzheimer's Walk](#) or by grabbing one of the donation sheets on the table in the Narthex. Or... you could just hand me a donation before September 19th.



The Hope Center in Waukesha is asking for household appliances such as toasters, microwave ovens, and clothing irons. They said that single moms cannot afford these items, so they come into the Center looking for them.

If you have a household appliance you were planning to replace, or would like to buy a new item, please drop it off at the church office.

Also needed are backpacks. Many of their homeless patrons, especially men, carry their belongings in back packs. Like the household appliances, they are used by patrons as soon as they hit the shelves.

Thank you!



The Missions team invites you to take a Kindness tracker chart, located below the Missions Kindness bulletin board in the Narthex.

This will be a visual reminder to you to pay attention to your good deeds. Smile & say hello to someone you pass. Share kind words. Lend a hand. Check in on someone. Donate what you can. The act of kindness can be as simple or as elaborate as you want to make them!

Catch someone else performing an act of kindness. The project will continue primarily through the summer, but we hope you continue to track your acts of kindness throughout the rest of the year and beyond!

Worship This Weekend

We will be worshipping in-person and via Zoom this Sunday at 10:00 am. Visit these links for important information:

[SONG LYRICS](#)

[ORDER OF WORSHIP](#)

To access worship via Zoom, please use the information below:

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM WORSHIP](#)

Phone Number: (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 459 288 4444

Password: 2623637249

Adult Bible Study will meet before church in the large classroom at 9:00. You can access the Bible study via Zoom as well:

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM BIBLE STUDY](#)

Phone Number: (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 459 288 4444

Password: 2623637249

Praise
PLAYLIST

Sunday's Praise Song Sneak Peak

[God So Loved](#)

We the Kingdom

CONTACT US

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It's Easy to Give to FCC.....

Because we are flexible! There are several ways:

1. The traditional way, by putting your offering in the collection plate during weekly church services. Offering envelopes are available in the church office. Contact us at office@fccweb.net.
2. Bill Pay through your bank account. You can talk to a teller or Customer Service if you have questions about it. If you like to use Bill Pay to pay your monthly bills, you can add FCC to your list of creditors. It's quick and easy.
3. Online. You can give through Tithe.ly or Paypal ([HERE](#)) and click the "Give" Button at the bottom of the page.
4. If you prefer to make lump sum offerings, you can make a Direct Charitable Distribution from your 401(k) or other retirement fund directly to FCC. There are no income taxes on this type of distribution because the money does not come to you; it goes directly to the "charity" of your choice, i.e., FCC. Talk to your financial advisor who can set up Direct Charitable Distributions as often as you wish—monthly, quarterly, annually etc. Making a Direct Charitable Distribution actually makes your money go farther!