

Here's What's Happening at FCC



I ran across a definition of the word “awkward” that made me laugh: *Awkward: the agonizing emotional state of experiencing a glitch in the human operating system.*

That feels about right.

- Awkward is waving at someone you think you know, only to realize they are a complete stranger and now you are just a very friendly weirdo in public.
- Awkward is holding the door open for someone who is still half a parking lot away, and now they feel obligated to do that sad little jog toward you.
- Awkward is when the server says, “Enjoy your meal,” and you say, “Thanks, you too,” because apparently you hope she gets to eat soon.

- Awkward is saying goodbye to someone and then realizing you are both walking in the same direction. So now you either must keep talking or pretend you suddenly need check your email on your phone.
- Awkward is going in for a hug when the other person was clearly offering a handshake, and for two terrifying seconds nobody knows what body parts are supposed to go where.

We all know awkward. The more I think about it, the more I wonder if following Jesus is supposed to feel a little awkward. A little uncomfortable. Because Jesus has a way of making life strange before he makes it holy.

For starters, Jesus keeps making us share space with people we would not have chosen. We like to imagine church as the place where we finally find “our people.” And sometimes it is. But if by “our people” we mean people who think like us, vote like us, talk like us, like the same music, complain about the same things, and already agree with us on every issue, that is not a church. That is a country club with a steeple.

The church is much stranger than that. The church is a room full of people who may have very little in common except that we all need grace and none of us is as easy to love as we like to think. That is awkward.

It is awkward to sit beside someone who frustrates you and still call them brother or sister. It is awkward to pray with someone you would normally avoid in the grocery store. It is awkward to admit that the person who gets on your nerves may also be deeply loved by God.

God does not seem embarrassed by our awkwardness. That is good news, because the Bible is full of awkward people. Moses did not want to speak. Jonah ran in the wrong direction. Peter could turn a simple moment into a situation. The disciples argued about greatness while Jesus was teaching them about servanthood, which is basically the spiritual equivalent of pulling on a door that clearly says "push."

And still, Jesus called them. Still, Jesus loved them. Still, Jesus used them. Following Jesus is going to look awkward sometimes. It is going to look awkward when the world tells us to hate certain people, and Jesus tells us to love them. It is going to look awkward when everyone else has already written someone off, and Jesus tells us to reach for them anyway. It is going to look awkward when we find ourselves sitting at the table with people who do not look like us, think like us, vote like us, talk like us, or show up with purple hair, piercings, and a story we did not see coming.

It is going to look awkward when we forgive someone who hurt us. It is going to look awkward when we pray for someone we would rather complain about. It is going to look awkward when we try to be kind in a world that keeps rewarding cruelty.

Maybe awkwardness is not always a sign that something has gone wrong. Sometimes awkwardness is a sign that grace is teaching us a new way to move through the world. Following Jesus was never meant to make us look polished and comfortable. It was meant to make us look more like him. And if loving the forgotten, blessing the difficult, forgiving the undeserving, feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, and reaching toward the edges makes us look a little awkward, well, good. Let's do it anyway. Jesus did.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Mark

Food for Families 2026-27

For those of you who don't know, our church (through our Missions team) supports families in the Clarendon Avenue Elementary School who would have difficulty feeding their families over the weekend. Typically, we hand out forms at the Clarendon Open House and forms are also included in the Friday take-home folder for each student. Need varies from year to year, but last year we fed 6 families. We've helped as many as 14 families in one year! We don't turn anyone down. If they tell us that they have a need, we provide them with food.



We also provide each family with a special meal at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. For those larger meals, families come to the church to pick them up.

Currently, Janine Coley does all the shopping, although this year I will be shopping for the holiday meals. Tom and Kay Rowntree pack all the meals in plastic bags each week. We have several helpers who deliver the bags of food to Clarendon lockers. This happens after school on Thursdays, around 3:45 before the secretaries leave. Currently, we have Scott Chapman (2nd Thursday) delivering. I will most likely also take a week to deliver, besides doing all the administrative work and the holiday meals. **We could use two - three more deliverers each month. Would you love to volunteer???**
Please let Joanne know.

We will also be featuring a food of the month for members to bring in. Janine Coley will be letting you know more about that soon. **And we can always use more plastic bags.** We double bag the food items each week. There will be a bin in the Narthex for contributions.



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

Those facing illness or health concerns:

- Dorothy C.
- Sue P.
- Carol B.
- Oliver

Those facing grief:

- Family of Kathy Wilson

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 Is In This Story"](#)

Katy Nichole & Big Daddy Weave

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!