



## YOUR FCC CONNECTION DECEMBER 2023

### PASTOR PENNY'S TWO SHECKLES.....

What does Thanksgiving, Christmas and the Book of Revelation have to do with each other? Good question, glad you asked. More than you realize.

God pressed hard upon my heart that now was the time to do a deep dive into the book of Revelation. With everything going on in the world currently and people asking so many questions where does one turn for the answers? Definitely not the major news networks or Facebook. The Bible, God's Holy word that is chalk full of answers if we are willing to go and find them.

You might be one that has said I would like to read Revelation, but I just won't understand it, or it is scary, or all just a mystery. Actually, you would be wrong on all accounts. Most of everything that is penned in this last book of the Bible is referenced throughout all of the Old Testament, spoken through God's prophets, apostles and talked about by Christ himself. This book is a lot more black and white than one might think, and a lot more literal than just figurative.

That being said, I can only imagine what John saw as he gazed upon the throne room of God! There are just some things that cannot be put into words. You have experienced that. A sunset or mountain view that is so breath taking that no picture can capture, no words can describe the sense of awe and wonder that you are experiencing at the moment.

So, what does this have to do with Thanksgiving? When you step back and look at the horrible judgments one might be tempted to say, "what kind of a loving God would do that?" One that after sending his people throughout the world to share the wonderful Gospel news of his son Jesus Christ Promises to take us up to him. And then instead of calling it quits allows those judgments to be drawn out and lengthened so that no one SHOULD perish. But there will still be those whose hearts will be hardened.

Why did God send 10 plagues to Pharaoh? Because he refused to bend and yield. If he had of after the first plague the story would have been done. But he could not and so suffer from his own doing. If you take a deep look at these judgements God keeps putting the pressure on, and yet in the end there will be those who still CHOOSE to run and hide from him instead of running towards, kneeling and bowing.

As I said with the Story of the flood, it didn't need to be that way and it still doesn't. We come with complete thanksgiving to the loving, merciful Almighty God (El-Shadi) who wants us so much that he made a way for us to one day see him in all of his glory just as John experienced.

We come at Christmas time knowing that the Word, Emmanuel God with us left that throne room and came to Earth to make a way. To become that sacrificial, slain lamb, the only one who owns the deed to this earth and can open the scroll. He is not just the lamb, but also the Lion of Judah, the mighty King and Bridegroom who has promised to return for His bride.

This year we focus on the Lion and the Lamb and anxiously await his return. While we do not know the day or hour, Jesus said you will know the season. The words in Revelation and throughout scripture give us the answers of what will happen not for fear, but for Hope, for Assurance, For an ultimate total Peace in and through him and a Final Victory.

Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many rooms, I go to prepare a place for you." He did and He is coming back at the appointed time when God says, "Okay now go get your bride!". What unbelievable love! What excitement knowing the time is getting near, but it is not just a present to keep. We are called to go and tell everyone we know and meet about the saving blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, lest no man, woman should perish.

God is working even in the midst of the Chaos. This past week hundreds of Palestinian men had dreams where Jesus visited them and they all accepted his free gift of salvation. We serve a God that is definitely NOT DEAD, but Alive and coming back!

What better gift to give someone than those precious words? Everything of this world will be destroyed, it is and will become worthless. This year give the gift that is Eternal! And who knows maybe this time when you read through the only book that promises a blessing just for reading it, you will also experience a Revelation!

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas And God's Abundant Blessings



God, we come to you today to offer prayers for our family and friends. We ask that you look after them today and keep them safe.

Donna Goertzen , Louise Hack, Lee & Val Jones, Bob & Sharon Nunnenkamp, Rob Nunnenkamp, Helen Nowka, Jim Ptacnik, Tanna Skarniak, Mary Jacobs, Gus Jacobitz, Stacey Holloway, Karren Radcliff, Stacey Friesen, Jason Wilson, Lori Comer, John Schulz, Rita and Gordon Bunner, Bob Phillips, Peggy, Carol Nunnenkamp and Connie Nicklasson.

**We also pray for all those in our congregation and beyond who may be suffering from with illness or the stress of a family situation..**

***We pray for those who suffer in silence that they may feel our prayers.***

If you want to add someone to our prayer list, we don't need to have a last name or know their situation. They do not have to be a member of our congregation – we pray for all the people. All requests are by permission only. Please contact: Linda Ptacnik ([lindap@hamilton.net](mailto:lindap@hamilton.net) or 402-631-9422 or [fcc@hamilton.net](mailto:fcc@hamilton.net)) I will see that your requests are shared – as well as updates as they are received.

When I am out of town and/or unavailable, Tanna will be handling the e-mail requests. You may contact her at 308-391-9054 ([eagleskarn@gmail.com](mailto:eagleskarn@gmail.com).)

**DEACONS / ELDERS / COMMUNION PREP**

Dec 3

Deacons: Willis / Clark / Luthy  
Elders: D Phillips / P Phillips  
Communion Prep: Clark / Luthy

Dec 10

Deacons: Anderson / Weinrich / Skarniak  
Elders: P Phillips / D Philips  
Communion Prep: Karen Wilshusen

Dec 17

Deacons: Nunnenkamp . Nunnenkamp / Forsman  
Elders: Sanderson / Sanderson  
Communion Prep: Carol / Holee Nunnenkamp

Dec 24

Deacons: Enderle / See / Dorsey  
Elders: Sanderson / Sanderson  
Communion Prep: Deb Willis

Dec 31

Deacons—OUR YOUTH  
Elders: Nielsen / Anderson  
Communion Prep: Linda See / Linda Ptacnik

Parents: Our Youth is scheduled to fill the 5th Sunday of the month. Please be sure to have them to church a little early for a walk-through.

**If you cannot serve on your Sunday, please get someone to replace you.**

*If you are comfortable with it, it is satisfactory if only One Elder offers prayers and serves.*



**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS / ANNIVERSARIES**

Dec 1 Sara Willis  
Dec 2 Carol Nunnenkamp  
Dec 7 Fern Paider  
Dec 11 Pat Phillips  
Dec 12 Rita Bunner  
Dec 17 Robertta Dorsey  
Dec 19 Bud Mills  
Dec 21 Karren Radcliff  
Dec 23 Tanner Enderle  
Dec 25 Jon Eaton  
Dec 27 Cadance Enderle  
Dec 28 Kimber Motley  
Dec 29 Gary Hurst

Dec 15 Dick & Pat Phillips (55)  
Dec 24 John & April Campbell  
Dec 22 Terry & Pat Willis (51)

**BIBLE STUDY**

**AFTERNOON Bible Study**

**Beginning January 16th—2:00 pm**

**Lisa Harper 8-Week Study**

**Wonderful Words of Luke**

**\*\*Will not meet the 1st Tuesday of the Month**

**Plans are to meet at the Senior Center**

**CWF LADIES**

**Tuesday, December 5th**

**CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**Rath's Café—12:30 pm**

**Bring a \$10 (or under) gift to share!**

**Pastor Penny**

**Cell Phone: 402-440-4605**

**Email: [pastorpennys2cents@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpennys2cents@gmail.com)**

**Website: [fccaurorane.org](http://fccaurorane.org)**

**You Tube: First Christian Church of Aurora NE**

**Facebook: First Christian Church of Aurora NE**

**For Inspirational Messages, go to YouTube Penny Schulz**

## THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

We had a great turnout for our Harvest Festival Dinner held in November. The cooks of First Christian Church can hold their heads high—the meal was fantastic. In addition to turkey and ham (Pat Willis, Louise Mills, Chawntiel Parker), we enjoyed mashed potatoes (Carol & Holee Nunnenkamp, Lyn Seifried) with gravy (Linda Ptacnik); Dressing (Pat Willis & Pat Phillips); and many side dishes provided by our congregation. (Note: this was the first year we did not have any pumpkin pie—that being said, next year we will probably have a dozen!)

Connie Nielsen took up her position behind the drink trays—always faithful and always on her toes. Karen Holloway, our Kitchen Superintendent, was getting over a dose of COVID so many hands helped—Pastor Penny and Kristen Scharrenberg took over Karen's sink and we all missed her!

At the time of this printing (November 28th) we have received \$14,125.00 for our Harvest Festival Drive. There is no time limit for contributions—you may bring yours to church on any Sunday or mail it to Box 143, Aurora NE 68818. Your generous contributions over the past few years have allowed us to finally get our new roof and tuckpointing done on the exterior of the church. ***Without taking out any loans.*** AND WE THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!



You are welcome to bring (or have delivered) a poinsettia to be displayed during the Advent Season. Please share a note (In Honor Of...In Memory Of...In Remembrance Of.... Etc.) so we may read the tributes during our Christmas Eve Services. You may take them home on Christmas Eve or leave them until December 31st.



Dear Lord, don't let us miss You this Christmas season. Help us to simplify our activities and traditions so we can focus our celebration on Your birth. Thank You for being the Prince of Peace, and we ask You for that supernatural peace to reign in our hearts. Thank You for the simple but life-changing message of Your love for us. In Jesus' Name, Amen

Thanks to several people in our congregation, we donated \$450 to the Christmas Cheer Program at the elementary school. Their project chairman, Paige McQuiston, was thrilled that we collected so much and was so willing to do the shopping for us. I am sure there will be many happy kids because of your generosity.

Our “ALL CHURCH WORKBOOK” for 2024 is nearly ready for production. With the help of Linda See, Karen Holloway, and Memory Auger, we will have it ready to distribute by the middle of December. I have completely revised it this year and hopefully made it easier to navigate—complete with a “table of contents.”

Serving as co-chairmen for the CWF for next year are Tanna Skarniak and Linda Ptacnik. Jean Sanderson and Pat Phillips will head up the work group for special functions.

Our Food Pantry contributions for December will be monetary to help cover expenses associated with the items that will be purchased for Christmas cheer baskets. Checks may be made to the Hamilton County Food Pantry and placed in the offering plate each week or mailed to P.O. Box 7, Aurora, NE 68818. The distribution of these baskets will be December 8th and clients will be notified by mail about this.

We realize that some may not be able to contribute on top of their own expenses—please do not feel you have to do this if you are not able.

Thanks to my helpers who volunteer their time each month. I appreciate each of you!!

...Pat Willis, FCC Representative

“My! How time flies—literally! This was the scene in our sanctuary the day of the time change. Dick lived, the clock did not. And now we have one that is better than ever and it may even change the time automatically—not sure on that. (Time will tell!) HAHAHAHA



This is just part of the beautiful fall décor on the steps of the church which has been on display the last few weeks. It is the creation of Deb Willis and Pat Anderson. Ladies, the picture does not do it justice—thank you for doing this the last few years. It is very much appreciated!

We will be decorating our beautiful sanctuary for the Advent Season immediately following worship on Sunday, December 3rd.....**MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!** A list of places you can help is located on the desk at the back of the sanctuary. A light lunch will follow—sooner we are done—sooner we eat!



Live Life in the Spirit continues to grow and reach more people, spreading the light of God's word to any who want to hear it. Recently we did a series on healing, which highlighted this gift of the Spirit and showed a glimpse of what is possible with that ministry. Then we tackled what is happening in Israel and around the world, and how to look at it all with a Biblical world view. This week our first episode digging into the book of Revelation goes live. We will dig in more than Pastor Penny can in her sermon, but not so far as taking it line by line. You can find us on YouTube, Rumble, iheart Radio, iTunes,

Spotify, the list goes on, and of course always on our website at <https://livelifeinthspirit.com>

YOUTH GROUP only met a couple of times in November because of scheduling issues and the Holiday vacation. However, we did have an active couple of groups with lots of discussions, crafts, games, and FOOD.

SADLY, four of our original members moved from Aurora to Monroe, Nebraska. Jade, Kierra, Eli and Aleki—you guys will be missed—don't be strangers—if you are ever visiting Aurora, please stop and visit. (I know I spelled some names wrong, but I will find my notes and get them fixed. Hard being a senior citizen these days!)

We did do a thing at our last meeting—We played shuffle board! The game has been painted on the floor in Friendship Hall for years but hasn't been used much. We found the pucks, the sticks, and what a game we had! The girls did the best but I am sure the guys will improve with time!

We will continue to meet each Wednesday after school until **3:30 PM**. With more school vacations, times will certainly change so we will let everyone know when that happens.



This lovely quilt is displayed at the back of the church. Another Karen Wilshusen creation and donation. Because we did not have the Bazaar this fall, we did not do a raffle. Instead we are taking sealed bids on it and the highest bidder wins the quilt.

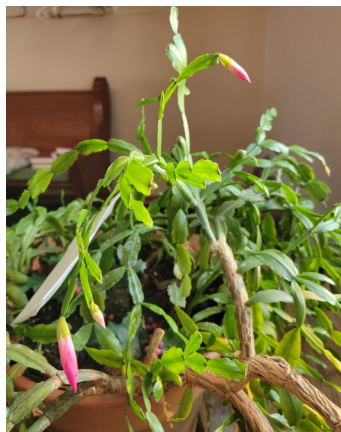
There are envelopes at the desk—take one—put your **bid and your name inside** on the ticket included—seal it and put it in the offering plate. The bids will be open until December 25th.

The monies collected will go into the general fund as we have done in the past.

THANK YOU KAREN FOR ALL YOU DO AND DID

### CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS!!!

The Christmas Cactus on the table at the back of the sanctuary actually has **THREE FLOWERS** coming on! Thank you to our horticulturist, Dick Phillips for watering it on a schedule to preserve it. Who knows what it will be like next year!!!



Be sure to pick up your Advent Devotionals when you leave today! We ordered enough for one per family and will be sending some out to our shut-ins.

Courtesy of your Worship Committee