



YOUR FCC CONNECTION
JANUARY 2024

PASTOR PENNY'S TWO CENTS...

I want you to take this time to do something for me. I want you to raise your left leg, okay now you are starting off 2024 on the Right foot. I know this is tongue in cheek and if it were only so simple.

For many reading this, unfortunately, I know this last year has been unbelievably challenging. The beginning of a new chapter is starting off not like a brand-new start, but a continuation. So many are struggling not with just one thing here or there, but an onslaught of perpetual crisis. I know it's not the uplifting article you were looking forward to, BUT there is hope on the horizon. If you have listened to any of my sermons you know I love parallels. And I see the parallel right now in many of your lives with the story of a man named Job. While none of us stand jumping up and down for the gifts of long suffering and faith, we may find ourselves right dab in the middle of just that.

With the story of Job, Satan was having a conversation with God, that's right he is free to move about. And God "ALLOWED" Satan to unleash the sins and unpleasanties on Job all in an effort to see what it would take for him to curse God. To Satan's dismay no matter what happened to him financially, family, physically, emotionally and mentally, Job still refused to curse God. Oh, he had questions and poured his heart out as to why all of this was landing in his lap, but he remained faithful and true.

As I thought about his example, I started seeing Job in a lot of other people throughout the years. Those who endured so much, had everything taken from them and yet still penned the words "It is well with my soul". That one was from Horatio Spafford, who in my mind is definitely a modern Job. Also, coincidentally the movie "The Shift" came out before Christmas and is a modern-day sci-fi depiction of the Job story. It is interesting and will leave it there.

We are a good way into our study on the Book of Revelation, the only Book of the Bible that promises a blessing just from reading or hearing it! While one may look at this book as daunting or too difficult to read, hopefully I have been able to break down those two barriers. It is a Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ and at the heart of the message is God's unfailing love and redemption.

One may say reading all of the doom and gloom, I don't see much love coming from these pages, but you would be wrong. If God wanted to end things, He could with just a word, ...but He doesn't. After the Church, the Bride of Christ is raptured up to heaven God still allows time for those to come to Christ. With each passing page the heat keeps rising and the pressure cranked down. All in an effort for each stubborn, hardened heart to hit their breaking point of bending a knee and humbling themselves to accept Christ. Unfortunately, there will still be those who will refuse no matter what.

It was so cool to get to reach Chapter 19 on Christmas Eve. In this Chapter Jesus is coming back as King of Kings and Lord of Lords all while riding a glorious white horse. So in case you ever wondered if there are animals in heaven we will all be riding a white horse with him.

Jesus came as Emmanuel God with us as a baby, grown into a Savior who was the slain lamb that took away the sins of the world. But this next time he is coming as the Lion of Judah, the Mighty God, Prince of Peace and that is the HOPE we live for.

Knowing that, regardless of how your new year starts, what continuing crisis you are going through or what new one may lie ahead, we know beyond a shadow of a doubt if we have accepted Jesus, that we too will be coming back in the clouds of Glory as part of his army.

In Chapters 20 and 21 we will be captivated by the description of the New Heaven and the New Earth. One without sin, crisis, pain, heartache and evil. One where God is on the throne forever and ever. That is the Joy, Hope and Peace that we cling to and are given the charge to go and tell everyone we see the Gospel message - that salvation only comes in and through Jesus Christ. When we are obedient to that, just like Job, God will reward us in whatever form that may be. As for me I'm looking forward to my mansion over the hilltop in that bright land where we will never grow old.

Praying you had a healthy and happy Holiday season and to a wonderful New Year!

Shalom,

Pastor Penny



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, Stacey Holloway, Karren Radcliff, Stacey Friesen, Jason Wilson, Lori Comer, John Schulz, Peggy Dick Ladd, Marlene Flodman, Rita & Gordon Bunner.

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 or 402-631-9422 or 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.)

DEACONS / ELDERS / COMMUNION PREP

Jan 7

Deacons: H Enderle / D Enderle / C Parker
Elders: Phillips / Phillips
Communion Prep: April Campbell

Jan 14

Deacons: Willis / C Enderle / Marty Paz
Elders: Phillips / Phillips
Communion Prep: Linda See

Jan 21

Deacons: Nunnenkamp/Nunnenkamp/Forsman
Elders: Sanderson / Sanderson
Communion Prep: Bonita Forsman

Jan 28

Deacons: See / Dorsey / Weinrich
Elders: Sanderson / Sanderson
Communion Prep: Pat Phillips

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.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS / ANNIVERSARIES

- Jan 1 Stan Wilshusen
- Jan 1 Holee Nunnenkamp
- Jan 1 Linda See
- Jan 4 Mattie Auger
- Jan 4 Jana Luthy
- Jan 4 Allyson Schmidt
- Jan 5 Louise Mills
- Jan 7 Ryan Campbell
- Jan 7 Heather Enderle
- Jan 8 Terry Ott
- Jan 9 Deb Willis
- Jan 11 Lyn Seifried
- Jan 14 Mike Weinrich
- Jan 15 Dora Montelongo
- Jan 15 Ron Elge
- Jan 16 Nancy Furse
- Jan 17 Max Clark
- Jan 18 Ashley Schulz
- Jan 18 Warren Schmidt
- Jan 20 Sandy Anderson
- Jan 20 Jessica Clark
- Jan 20 Stephanie Holloway
- Jan 29 Mallory Norton
- Jan 30 Stanislaus Motley
- Jan 31 John Seifried



- Jan 10 Thad & DawnMarie Moe
- Jan 21 Ron & Colleen Elge

CWF LADIES

No Meeting in January



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

Pastor Penny

Cell Phone: 402-440-4605

Email: pastorpennys2cents@gmail.com

Website: 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 to First Christian Church:

Thank you for your generous donation to Aurora Elementary's Christmas Cheer Program. I was able to provide gifts for students added to our list at the last minute and the families are so appreciative. Thank you again and Happy Holidays!

Paige McQuiston, APS Student/Family Liaison

SIGN UP AND REHERSALS are beginning Sunday, January 7th for the 2024 Easter Cantata! Rehersals will begin on Sunday, January 7th at 2:00 PM at the United Methodist Church here in Aurora. **“Once Upon a Morning” by Pepper Choplin!** Books will be available and are \$10 Each. ****Side note**—last year our church was represented by Tanna Skarniak and she will be in the choir again this year.

Another gem found and shared by Pat Willis:

It is one thing to be *for* someone but another thing to be *with* someone, to stand by his or her side in good times as well as in hard times, times of sorrow as well as times of joy. This is our Lord's name: Emmanuel. He is with you right now. And when He left this world, He did so with these final words. “I am with you always.” (Matthew 28:20)

Lord, nowhere I go today will I be without You. You are with me always. In Jesus' name, Amen.

BOARD MEETING

JANUARY 21, 2024

FOLLOWING MORNING
WORSHIP

REQUESTING all members of the Church Board—Officers—Deacons, Elders, Deaconesses to be present.

A SINCERE THANK YOU to everyone who made our Christmas Season a warming, wonderful memory to be shared throughout the community. There are so many to be named... we really appreciate our Youth Group, Chris & Marcus, Allyson, Chancylor & Max, Tyler, Mattie & JoAnna and all the parents for their participation in our Celebration. We also thank Charlie Phillips and Ivy Sevren for the trumpet duets from the balcony. Dave Sanderson for the reading of the Christmas Story. The Enderle Family set up the luminaries to welcome everyone. And the music..Pat Willis, Pat Phillips, Cadance Enderle, Pastor Penny and Chantell Schulz. Our liturgist and cameraman, Kristin Scharrenberg. The beautiful solo by Pastor Penny. All those who participated in the Lighting of the Advent candles each week during Advent. The entire group of the Worship Committee and **YOU**, our church family and friends for worshipping with us!

A penny saved....pennies from heaven....our Youth Group found a treasure chest with \$2.02 in pennies on their work table. For two weeks now, pennies keep appearing in the chest and the chest has been brought to the Altar with our weekly offering. Thank you Allyson for doing this—and if you have a penny to spare or one you have found, please add it to their chest.

YOUTH GROUP met only twice in December due to Christmas and New Year's school vacations. The kids signed Christmas cards for all our shut-ins and they were mailed the middle of the month.

The last meeting was done doing competitive games—the “littles” against the “bigs” and the “littles” held their own. Pushing a baby marshmallow around cups with a straw was fun—and the “littles” were pretty darned good at it. Another game was using a straw to pick up an M&M candy and depositing it in a cup at the end of the table (without dropping it). The “Bigs” won that round, but not by much! Then everyone concentrated their creative self making snowmen from marshmallows and pretzels! Fuel them kiddos with enough pizza and pop and it can get a bit rowdy. HAHAAAA

We will begin meeting again when school starts this month—2:15—3:30 in Friendship Hall on Wednesday afternoons.

The poinsettias you brought to church to be shared in memory of your loved ones was awesome. We had so many, we had to use the choir railing to hold them all—below is a partial listing of those memorialized (some plants did not have names on them):

Connie Shaneyfelt
Fran Jensen
Gladys & Howard Hurd
Ruth Hurst
Stacey Enderle
Earl & Joan Kissel
Robert H. Willis
Orville & Irene Arnett
Milo & Ada Kissel

Bob Holloway
Ray, Verla & Roger Perry
Janice Danhauer
Gerald & Marge Honstein
Ralph & Dora Willis
Hilda Willis
Robert H. Willis

A BEAUTIFUL painting of the Lion and the Lamb also graced the front of the church. The painting, an original artwork was done by Dora Montelongo. Thank you so much!

The Christmas Quilt made (and donated) by Karen Wilshusen was auctioned off by sealed bids. Dawn and Heath Enderle were the high bidders. We thank Karen, Dawn, and Heath for this very generous donation!

HARVEST FESTIVAL STANDS AT \$21,125, which is over \$6000 of our goal. We thank the congregation and friends of the church for the many blessings we have received this year. We couldn't have done it without YOU!

The All Church Workbooks are done and many of you have picked them up at church or have had them delivered to you. I will be mailing books to those who did not get them—probably the week of January 7th. As always, there are some corrections and additions -

- ◆ Lori Comer needs to be added to the CWF Ladies
- ◆ Bonita's cell phone number is 402-631-9563

CHRISTMAS 2023

