



The MESSENGER

During Lent

➤ Coloring Pages



Look for a new page to color each week in the Centrum or Fellowship Hall and use this as a prayer exercise on Sunday morning or any time you are in the church building.

➤ Facebook & Twitter

To help us keep *A Season of Prayer* during Lent, Jim Warren is providing us with daily "prayer prompts" on our church's Facebook page & Jim's Twitter account (@PastorBLMFCC).

➤ Study Group



Jim Warren is leading a Lenten study group titled *Listen: Hearing that Still Small Voice and Finding Your Own* on Wednesdays through April 19, 5:30-6:30 PM, in the Conference Room.

This study of seven sessions will look at the many ways the voice of God speaks to us and explores things we can do to strengthen that connection. From meditation and music to study and social action we will listen for the voice of the Spirit and find it active in surprising places. Each session includes a 25-30 minute video, scripture, and time to ask questions.

Holy Week

➤ *Maundy Thursday* ~ FCC hosting meal & worship service April 13, 6:00 PM, with congregations of FCC and Centennial Christian Church participating

➤ *Good Friday* ~ FCC hosting worship service April 14, 12:10-12:50 PM, with congregations of FCC, First Baptist, Second Presbyterian, and Wesley United Methodist Church participating

➤ *Egg Hunt* ~ Saturday, April 15, 10:00 AM

➤ Easter



Sunrise Service ~ April 16, 7:30 AM

Worship 9:00 & 10:15 AM

Sunday School for all ages 10:15 AM

➤ Pictorial Directories are Here!



— If you had your picture taken, please pick up your copy of the directory at the Information Center.

➤ Gifts for Another Table

Non-perishable food items brought to church during the month of March will be given to families of Regional Alternative School. Suggestions are canned fruits and vegetables, boxed meals (such as Hamburger Helper and macaroni & cheese), canned soup, crackers, peanut butter & jelly, and cereal.

➤ Movie



A group is getting together to see the movie "The Shack" on Saturday, March 18, at 10:00 AM at Wehrenberg Theater. "Facing a crisis of faith, a father receives a mysterious letter urging him to an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness." If interested, call Vicki Hall (454-3081). If enough interest, we will go to Bob Evans after the movie for discussion.

➤ Brown Bag Bible Bunch

Jim Warren is leading a study on the book of Revelation on Wednesdays 12:00-1:00 PM in the Conference Room. All are welcome.

➤ Youth vs. Parent Volleyball



This Sunday, March 19, 5:00-6:30 PM at FCC outside weather permitting. Inclement weather will be youth vs. parent dodgeball inside. Dinner provided.

➤ Grief Journey Support Group

Those who have experienced the death of a loved one are invited to the Conference Room on Thursdays March 23, April 6 & 20, and May 4 & 18, 5:00-6:30 PM, for support, education, and healing through your journey of adjustment (no fee). Leadership is given by Ed Taylor, the Compassus Hospice Bereavement Coordinator.

➤ *Combined Sunday School*

Due to school Spring Break, our children/youth Sunday School classes will combine and meet in Major Hall at 10:15 AM on March 26 and April 2.

➤ *Warren Family*



As many of you know, Sharon Warren is receiving treatment for a reoccurrence of cancer. As a congregation we want to support Jim and Sharon and their family the best we can. In addition to our prayers, Jim and Sharon have indicated having help with house cleaning would be most appreciated at this time. If you would like to help the Warren family, we will be accepting donations of any amount to help pay for house cleaning twice each month. You may give cash or write a check made payable to First Christian Church with Warren family on the memo line and leave that in the offering basket or the church office. Your gifts will be tax deductible if they are written to the church. Thank you for helping support the Warren family during this difficult time.

-- Kathie Chapman, Faith Russell, and Jill West

➤ *Disciples Women's Ministries*

Thank you to Shirley Wotherspoon for last month's lesson on *Hagar*. We were also blessed by having Luella Mahannah introduce us to *INteGRity Counseling*. This is a ministry solely dependent on volunteers. They receive referrals for those who have nowhere else to go. It is a much needed mental health service for our community, and we are proud to be able to be a part of it.

Several ideas were given that will allow us to participate in this ministry. Here are a few of the suggestions for things they need:

1. *To help make clients feel welcome:* bottled water, K-cup coffee, tea, cocoa, etc., or small wrapped snacks like candy, cookies, crackers, etc.
2. *To help the office function:* 20# Inkjet paper and postage stamps
3. *To help clients get around town (for counseling and job interviews):* Uber Gift Cards (available at Dollar General, Walmart, CVS, Target, and other locations) or Connect Transit Bus passes (a 30 day fixed route pass is \$32, 7 day is \$10, or 1 day is \$3. They are available at Connect Transit, Uptown Station, Kroger, HyVee, and Meijer stores.)
4. Of course, financial donations are always welcome, and can be made by mail or on their website: www.integrityhelps.org

The ladies of FCC are busy planning the Spring Tea, Thursday, May 4, at 1:00 PM. It will be held in Fellowship Hall. The program will include information from three community service organizations: Baby Fold, Boys and Girls Club and Children's Home and Aid. Delicious desserts and coffee/tea will be served. A sign-up sheet is at the Information Center. Plan now to attend and bring a guest. Everyone is welcome.



The April 6 meeting will be at 1:00 PM in the Conference Room by the elevator. Sue Brumme will be bringing the program on *Jezebel*. Come and hear more about this interesting "Woman of the Bible." Mark your calendars now for an afternoon of fun, fellowship, and study.

There is a "Women's Spring Gathering" Saturday, March 25, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, at the Chiara Center (4849 La Verna Road, Springfield). Registration forms are available on the Regional website. Cost of the event is \$45.

Witness of the Faithful

Attendance: 3/5: 164, 31 3/12: 159, 31
Offering: \$25,897.09

Prayer Concerns

Awaiting Surgery: Mary Helen Haskell
Aftercare: Helen Joyce Barclay, Betty Beer, Dan Cavanaugh, Lori Craig, Mickey Drexler, Gene Fowler, John Hensley, Gene Hunter, Forrest Kaufman, Mary Smart, Jan Violano **Other:** Joe Violano
Treatment: Dave Eyman, Sharon Warren
Assisted Living: Alma Samuels (at Taylors' home)
Hospice: Darlene Bethel, Marsha Reeves
Nursing Homes: Judy Feezor (Aperion); Merle Murray, Virginia Warren (Heritage, Blm.); Sonna West (Heritage, El Paso); Harold Goyen, Joe & Jan Violano (Heritage, Normal); Corena Meyer (Liberty, Clinton); Niola Daily, Dave Dungan, Lois Murray (Martin Health); James Fry, Marilyn Kopp (McLean Co.); Roberta Blomgren (Sugar Creek)
Military: Chris Kavanaugh (Marines, CA); Harley Scott (Phillis niece/Navy, VA)
Sympathy to: ... family & friends of Barb Kidder on her death March 2 ... Barb (Tom) Dixon family on the death of her father, John Allison, March 7... Judy Fisher family on the death of her husband, Ray, March 11
Congratulations to: Luke Pool who passed the paramedics' state exam
Thank you notes received from: Don Dungan (health) and Jeri Jacob's family (sympathy)

A long obedience in the same direction...

Lying is a Sin

Have you ever told a lie? We all have lied at one time or another. From bending the truth just a little into a white lie, to outright, shameless, bald-faced lies, we've all lied. Although we've recently invented some new names for lies, such as "alternative facts" and "fake news," lying is still lying, and lying is wrong.

The dictionary defines a *lie* as "an intentionally false statement," and lies almost always have the purpose of deceiving another person. Lies inevitably hurt relationships.

The Jewish tradition has some especially strong language about lying. Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, who leads a synagogue in Bethesda, Maryland, notes that the Talmud teaches that inappropriate speech, which includes lies, "kills" three people: the speaker, the victim of the speech, and the person who hears it. Dobb points out that the actual verb really is "kills," emphasizing how dangerous lying is.

Christian tradition condemns lying with equal fervor. Almost every Christian church would unequivocally judge lying to be a sin. As one Baptist minister said, "To lie, or to knowingly let a lie stand as truth, is to place in jeopardy one's relationship with God." Imperiling one's soul is indeed a serious matter.

There's just not much wiggle room when it comes to lying. Lying is wrong. Lying is a sin. As a people of faith, we cannot countenance lying either in ourselves or in others.

(Perhaps the only exception is when a lie is told to prevent a significant evil. For example, if the Gestapo asked if Anne Frank was hiding in the attic, it would have been OK to lie and say, "No.")

I'm on a kick about lying because of the "alternative facts" and "fake news" being thrown around and passed off as truth. When did it ever become acceptable for people in government and the media to invent stories – to lie – just so we'd believe what they want us to believe? I know this has always happened to some degree, but it feels worse right now.

Alternative facts and fake news play right into our tendency to believe what we want to believe. If something supports what we already accept as true, we're more likely to believe it than something that contradicts us. Psychologists call this "confirmation bias." We favor information that confirms what we already believe.

So, if a news story appears that meshes with our strongly held political beliefs, for instance, we're likely to accept it at face value, and it's hard to convince us otherwise. Even if the news story proves to be fake news filled with alternative facts, we continue to hold on to it to prove the rightness of our position.

However, if the news story is fake news, then it's a lie, and we should hold accountable whoever invented the story. Moreover, those who repeat the fake news story are also guilty of lying and should likewise be held accountable.

We don't allow our children to lie, so why should we exempt politicians and journalists from the injunctions against lying? Why do we continue to listen to the same politicians and journalists who have lied to us over and over? Why do we continue to believe what they say?

Woven into the fabric of our faith are the commands to be honest and truthful. Strong communities – and nations – cannot be built on alternative facts and fake news. Each of us needs to be a truth-teller who is courageous enough to stand against those who lie. We Christians are called on to speak the truth. Always.

Lying is wrong. Lying is a sin.

-- Jim Warren

Lilies



If you would like to provide a lily for the Sanctuary on Easter, please complete this form and place it in the offering or mail it to the church office with \$12 per plant.

Name: _____

Given in memory/honor (circle choice) of:

____ In lieu of a lily, I would like my donation to be given to the Easter offering.

Christian Speaker at Eureka College

You have the opportunity to hear an outstanding Christian speaker address contemporary issues. Jim Wallis will lecture at Eureka College Friday, April 7, at 1:00 PM. The event is free, but you need to obtain a ticket by April 4 by going online to <http://cciwdisciples.org>.

I (Jim Warren) have heard Wallis and found him an engaging, articulate, and thoughtful speaker, and a faithful Christian. He comes from an evangelical background and has long been engaged in social justice issues. He's the best-selling author of twelve books, a public theologian, and a frequent international commentator on ethics and public life. I strongly recommend him to you.

His most recent book, *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America*, will be the focus of his presentation. The title of the book may be off-putting for some of you, but I believe you will profit from hearing him and reflecting on his words.

If you plan to attend and would like to ride with others, please let me know so we can go together. Perhaps we can even stop for some pie on the way home! We may schedule a time after Wallis's lecture to discuss his book and presentation. This is a Christian speaker of the highest quality, and I strongly encourage you to consider attending.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bloomington's Oldest Continuing Congregation - Founded 1837



**401 West Jefferson Street
Bloomington, Illinois 61701**

Return Service Requested

**Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #41**

Bloomington, IL 61701



Serving Sunday, March 19

- Acolytes:** Ellie Chapman, Maddie Chapman
- Child Care:** Trish Logan, Amy Nichols
- Deacons:** Stacey Erickson, Todd Chapman
- One and All Deacons:** James & Libby Nussbaum
- Jr. Deacons:** Brennan Reed, Teagan Gramley
- Driver:** Darrell Arvik
- Elders:** Rich & Karen Crusius
- Homebound Elders:** Darrell Arvik, Brenda Phillis
- Fellowship Time Host:** Nancy Guither
- Fill Candles:** Connie Rapp
- Greeters:** Bill, Susan, and Tom Chaney, Art & Camille Taylor
- Information Center Host:** Leslie Frizzell
- Scripture:** Todd Chapman
- Sound Tech:** Brian Metz
- Time for Children:** Scott Fisher
- Video Tech:** Chip Jamerson

Worship & Wonder Greeters: Corin Chapman, Chip Jamerson

Pulpit: Jim Warren – Acts 1:12-14 "A Time for Us to Pray"

I am asking us to pray because it feels like our church is in an "in between" time. This passage explains what the disciples did between the Ascension and Pentecost: they prayed. They prayed, and God gave them the Holy Spirit.

Serving Sunday, March 26

- Acolytes:** Bethany Warren, Lydia Warren
- Child Care:** Trish Logan, James Nussbaum
- Deacons:** John & Kathy Dailey
- One and All Deacons:** Todd & Corin Chapman
- Jr. Deacons:** Jaden Eft, Seth Newton
- Driver:** Ralph Lehmann
- Elders:** Madonna Courtright, Brenda Phillis
- Homebound Elders:** Rich & Karen Crusius
- Fellowship Time Host:** Teri Arvik
- Fill Candles:** Connie Rapp
- Greeters:** Mark & Michelle Gramley, Brian Metz, Austin Metz
- Information Center Host:** Mary Ellen Gottselig
- Scripture:** Darrell Arvik
- Sound Techs:** Brian Metz, Austin Metz
- Time for Children:** Tamara Shields
- Video Tech:** James Nussbaum

Worship & Wonder Greeters: Sue Brumme, Heather Damery

Pulpit: Jim Warren – Psalm 42 – "Prayer Isn't for Sissies"

Sometimes our only experience in prayer is that of absence; God doesn't seem to respond to our prayers. What do we do when that happens?

Mailed: March 15, 2017

Sunday Traditional Worship 9:00 AM
One and All Worship 10:15 AM
Sunday School for All Ages 10:15 AM
Youth Groups..... 5:00 PM

Senior Pastor

James Warren.....212-6873
jwarren@blmfcc.org

Minister Emeritus

John Trefzger

Music

Holly Irvin, Director of Music & Youth Ministries

hirvin@blmfcc.org

Lou Ann Fillingham, organ/piano

lafillingham@comcast.net

Bill West, One and All Music Coordinator

billwest211@gmail.com

Communications Coordinator

Jenifer Metz Petri.....808-1181

info@blmfcc.org

Office Administrator

Dawn Craig

office@blmfcc.org

Financial Secretary & Editor

Deborah Stumm

dstumm@blmfcc.org

Custodian

Wally Calvert

calvert62@comcast.net

Child Care Coordinator

Trish Logan

tlogan4@hotmail.com

Office(309) 829-9327

401 W. Jefferson, Bloomington, IL 61701

M-F 8:00-4:30; Closed Noon-1:00

FAX.....829-2865

Website & Calendar.....www.blmfcc.com