

marthex



WINTER 2021

Our Lenten Journey

February moves us from Epiphany, the season of light, into Lent, the season of reflection and repentance. This year we journey through the stories in Luke's Gospel and the beautiful words of the Psalms as we move ever closer to Jesus' last days in Jerusalem.

For Lent 2021, we have planned opportunities for worship, reflection, and growth that creatively embrace the challenges of "pandemic time". Listed below are spaces for worship, study and reflection, both within the community and at home. We pray that your Lenten Journey challenges and inspires you, as we venture from ashes and death towards the Good News for all people revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus!

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Ash Wednesday

February 17, 7:30 – 8am & 4:30 – 5pm

Distribution of Ashes distanced drive-through in the Community House Parking lot. Masks are required.

Lenten Sunday Worship

Sundays at 10 am on Zoom

Holy Week Worship information will be announced soon!

Bless us, O God, in this holy season, in which our hearts seek your help and healing; and so purify us by your discipline that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns and with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

~From Lesser Feasts and Fasts

STUDY & REFLECTION

Sanctuary Reflection Time

Sign-ups required

Wednesdays in Lent, 9-11 am & 4:30-6:30pm

Beginning February 24 and throughout Lent, the Board of Worship and Arts invites individuals to come to the sanctuary for prayer and meditation. Watch for details on how to register to attend. Capacity is limited and sign-ups are required. Specific safety measures will be in place.

Lent Reflections on Zoom

Wednesdays, February 24 - March 31 at 7 pm

Guided creative reflection with Pastor Julie and Betsy Hanzelin

(see page 4 for details)

HOW LONG MUST WE SING THIS SONG?

Making space for lament and sustaining our souls with music

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HANGING IN THERE

Ministering to our young people pivot after pivot

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FCC HAPPENINGS

Staff announcements and preparing for the future

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OUR FAITH IN ACTION

A look at what we've accomplished and plans for the Harvey Community Redevelopment Project

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How Long?

Pastor Julie Van Til

When winter clouds hide the sun for long stretches, or the wind whips subzero temperatures sideways while waiting for a puppy to pee, it's easy to grumble. When a pandemic affects life for almost a year, and the best way to keep each other safe is to physically isolate, we can hear our souls grumble: how long, O Lord?

On a recent Sunday, we replayed our church's recording of U2's song "40". It's a basic yet profound retelling of Psalm 40:

*I waited patiently for the Lord
he inclined and heard my prayer
He lifted me up out of the pit/ out of the miry clay
I will sing, sing a new song/ I will sing, sing a new song
How long to sing this song/ How long to sing this song
How long, how long, how long, how long
to sing this song?*

The Psalm and song begin with a memory of God's faithful deliverance, as if to say, "I know. I remember. It's what keeps me going." And yet what follows this assurance is a cry. The memory makes space for lament. In it, you can hear the heart of a real human, leaning on God to help carry their honest and tired tears. The tune of the words U2 set to music tenderly offer the pain present in praise, the hardship present in hope.

Jesus sustained himself with Psalms and songs like this. They gave him honest, intimate language for both the suffering and the salvation he carried within him. What songs, old or new, help your full humanity find a home in God's presence?

*Be still, my soul, the Lord is on thy side
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain. . . .*

*Come, O Come, be our light, drive out the darkness
Come, Jesus come. . .*

*Blessed be Your name
on the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
blessed be Your name. . .*

During Lent, we'll walk among the stories of Jesus and the real life people he encountered, exploring the depths of his deep ache and profound love for the world. You are one of those real life people Jesus encounters today with knowing ache and overwhelming love. Songs help us connect to that gift. So, until our choir and praise team can welcome our voices to fill the sanctuary once again, now might be a good time to pull out old classics in your home that you know by heart. It also might be the perfect opportunity to discover new language and tunes that bring your full humanity into the presence of God.

Neither the hardship nor the hope of this time is wasted. Hold on, people of God!

You can find Youtube or Spotify channels based on favorite hymns and spirituals. Consider searching for "Porter's Gate" or "Good Shepherd Collective" to hear a few of the pieces of special music we've shared recently in worship.

THE GIFT TO SING

Sometimes the mist overhangs my path,
And blackening clouds about me cling;
But, oh, I have a magic way
To turn the gloom to cheerful day—
I softly sing.

And if the way grows darker still,
Shadowed by Sorrow's somber wing,
With glad defiance in my throat,
I pierce the darkness with a note,
And sing, and sing.

I brood not over the broken past,
Nor dread whatever time may bring;
No nights are dark, no days are long,
While in my heart there swells a song,
And I can sing.

~James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)~

COME TOGETHER STAY TOGETHER GROW TOGETHER



Dear Members and Friends of FCC:

Just as we are not merely good stewards of our church during the annual pledge campaign, the work of the Stewardship Committee continues throughout the year as well. We are asking for your help in closing the gap between the pledge commitments we have received for 2021 and our pledge commitment goal.

We are well aware of our budget's deficit this year. And while we can manage enough for this year and "end up in the same place we were in" before the pandemic, wouldn't it be amazing if, during this time when we have come together, when we are working to stay together, we might actually grow in Christ's love together in ways that are meaningful to our faith family and community?

So much around us has changed in the last few months. Since the beginning of our pledge drive, has your financial outlook improved? Has your spiritual and/or emotional commitment to Flossmoor Community Church and its efforts deepened? If yes, I ask you to consider increasing your pledge commitment in 2021. You can do so by going to the giving tab on our website, and in the pledge card's "Other instructions" let us know how much you'd like to increase your pledge.

We would love about twenty more families to make pledge commitments to our 2021 budget. If you are still undecided about making a pledge commitment, I urge you to move. You may not think what you can offer is much, but to us, it means that you believe in the work we can do together in the name of Christ.

Words can hardly describe how grateful we are for your support, and for your faith that together, as Flossmoor Community Church, we can do great things.

With great appreciation,

Kris McManus,
on behalf of FCC's Stewardship Committee

Find your Calling

Each spring, the Nominating Committee begins gathering information, dreaming, and discerning who to call to step into FCC Lay Leadership in the coming years. The membership of our Boards and Committees is made up of over 70 individuals who are called to serve, and the Nominating Committee holds the sacred responsibility of calling people to fill positions. Our desire is to place people where God can best use their gifts and skills for the work of the church as well as allow those chosen to grow in leadership in a place where their creative energy and passion can best be ignited!

Part of Nominating's task is to bring the congregation into our discernment process, as we believe the wisdom of the whole body can bring the best possible teams together. Beginning February 5, a Nominating Committee form will be available online for the congregation to assist in selecting our Church Leadership for the coming years. The form will include a description of the work of each Board and Committee, the number of vacancies, and room for you to nominate yourself and/or others. Help us in creating the team of leaders that will guide FCC in the future!



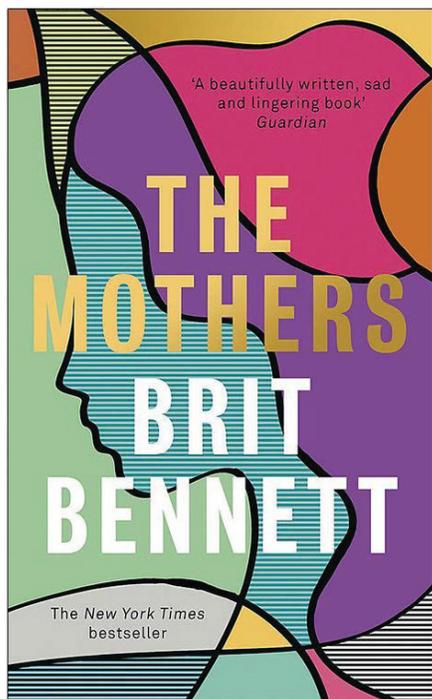
To dedicate the flowers in worship, please contact Megan Maginity at mmaginity@fccfaithful.org.

Following worship, the flowers are delivered by a member of our Diaconate Board to someone in our congregation who we know to be struggling.

AD ED

ADULT EDUCATION WINTER 2021

We never become too old to grow, learn, and connect while being formed and informed for following the Way of Jesus. Your presence and participation, whether regular or occasional, is most welcome!



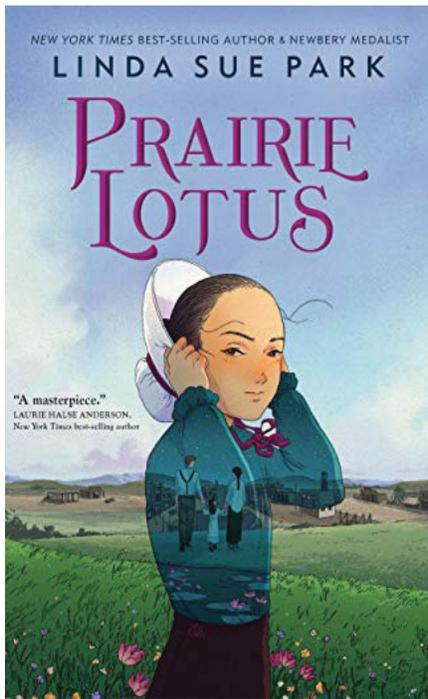
DISCOVERY BOOK CLUB:

The Mothers

Sunday, February 14
@ 11:30 am via Zoom

Led by Trina Hayes

The Mothers by Brit Bennett inhabits the lives of three 17-year-olds in a small, African-American, California community. Nadia is grieving after her mother's suicide. Best friend Aubrey suffers from abuse and boyfriend Luke's accident cost him his football career. "The Mothers," the church ladies of Luke's father's church, narrate and shape their stories like an interfering Greek chorus.



PARENT-CHILD BOOK CLUB:

Prairie Lotus

Sunday, March 14
@11:30 am via zoom

Led by Trina Hayes

Bring a parent, grandparent, or an older friend to talk about *Prairie Lotus* by Linda Sue Park. The book embeds the reader in the story of Hanna, a half Chinese, half white, 14-year old girl in 1880 in the Dakota Territory. Readers of *The Little House on the Prairie* series will have lots to compare. The reading level is for fifth grade and up, but younger, mature readers may also want to read it and attend.



LENT REFLECTIONS

Wenesdays @ 7 pm via Zoom
February 24 - March 31

Led by Pastor Julie & Betsy Hanzelin

As we walk through the Season of Lent this year, our Narrative Lectionary shares some familiar stories in Luke's Gospel as Jesus begins his journey towards Jerusalem. Pastor Julie Van Til and Betsy Hanzelin will lead us in study and creative reflection of these sacred stories, as we are invited to walk with Jesus towards the events of Holy Week. The texts are shared on the church website so you may prepare your heart and mind each week to enter the unfolding story of God as shared in the Narrative Lectionary.

FINDING YOUR STORY

Sundays March 7, 21 & 28

@11:30 am via Zoom

Led by Trina Hayes

Lent is a season of reflection. We'll use our wilderness time to find our memories and reflect on our own stories. Using handouts available on the FCC website, we'll learn mapping exercises, use checklists, and engage in techniques to make our memories into memoirs. We'll learn how to access memories of our lives and of people, places, and events we don't think we can remember.

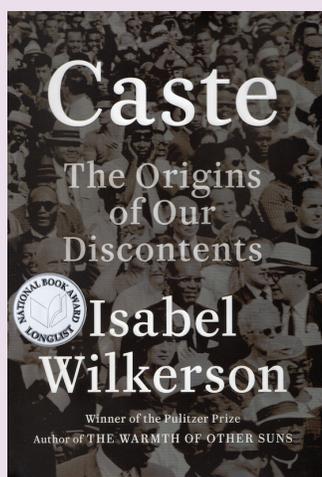
You may also use these techniques and handouts to interview relatives and friends to assist them in preserving memories for future generations.



All books are available for purchase through Bookie's book store, 2015 Ridge Road in Homewood, 708-377-0789, and we recommend your support of this local business and independent book store.

CONNECT EVENTS

Watch for occasional invitations throughout the year to participate in a presentation which is hosted or organized by a different organization, but fits well with our scope and priorities for adult education. . .

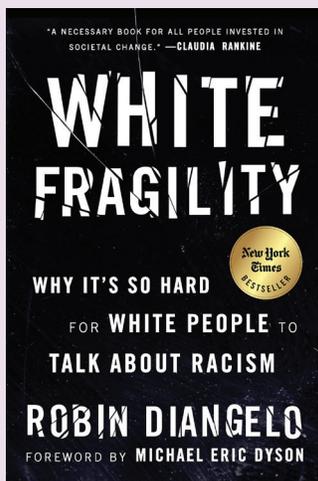


ONE BOOK ONE FLOSSMOOR: *Caste*

Thursday, February 18 @ 7 pm

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents is a nonfiction book, published in 2020, by Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson, that describes racism in the United States as an aspect of a caste system – a society-wide system of social stratification characterized by notions such as hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, and purity.

Start reading now and then join the book discussion at 7 p.m. on February 18, even if you haven't completed the book! More information available at www.flossmoor.org/471/One-Book-One-Flossmoor.



SOUTH SUBURBAN DIVERSITY DINNERS: *White Fragility*

Thursday, February 18, 6 - 8 pm

Join a diverse group of community members from the Chicago Southland in a safe and respectful virtual book discussion surrounding Robin DiAngelo's book, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. We will be using the Zoom video conferencing platform, and space is limited.

This is a free event, and all are welcome to attend! RSVP mandatory to receive meeting link.

Please RSVP by February 16 to Hildy Kingma, Phone: 708-283-5622, Email: hkingma@vopf.com

DID YOU KNOW?

You can find the link to join live Zoom worship and an archive of past worship recordings at fccfaithful.org/zoomworship. This will provide easy access for you and you may share it with friends wishing to check us out and join us for worship.

You can invite friends and neighbors to join us in our journey to end racism without the "church talk". Direct them to fccfaithful.org/anti-racism for links to classes and conversations and a list of resources and past work. It's a great way to invite those who are uncomfortable with church to join us in our efforts.

Drats, where's that Zoom link? No worries - if you've missed or misplaced an email with information about a class or discussion you'd like to join, simply visit fccfaithful.org/happenings for a list of current events and their corresponding sign-ups and links.



FCC Weekday Preschool

We at Weekday have missed all of you tremendously! The holiday season wasn't the same without the music, crafts and glee bursting from the Weekday hallway. This Winter has given time to reflect, recharge and plan for creative outdoor opportunities this Spring:



An Outdoor, 8-Week Social Experience for ages 3-5*

(*current Kindergarteners welcome)

April 6 - May 28

Registration begins Tuesday, February 23, Only 36 spots available

We are thrilled to offer this outdoor experience to our preschool age community! We recognize families are seeking opportunities to safely provide socialization, play and fun for this age group. Our teachers are excited to share their passion for learning in a safe environment to enrich children's lives at FCC Weekday- OUTDOORS! The total cost for *The Art of Play* is \$450 for all 8 weeks (\$100 deposit at sign up, \$175 due April 6, \$175 due May 4.) Registration will go live February 23 at fccweekdaypreschool.com.

- 1.5 hour sessions, (staggered times offered in the mornings and afternoons) 4 days a week for 8 weeks, Tuesdays through Fridays
- Small teacher to child ratio, groups of 6 kids per adult (mixed age groups)
- Staggered drop off/pick up times.
- An all-outdoor experience, utilizing multiple FCC property locations: Weekday playground, FCC ramp, grass areas & FCC Community House black top. A variety of activities, songs, crafts, and exploring the outdoors will happen everyday!
- We will remain in session in light rain with appropriate outdoor gear. The Art of Play will be canceled if thunder & lightning are present or forecasted.
- Emergency bathroom use only; children are encouraged to use the potty before coming to limit indoor time
- Snacks will not be served, small water bottles will be available if necessary.
- All participants are required to be masked and will be given individual bagged supplies when necessary for participation.

Additionally, registration for the 2021-2022 FCC Weekday Preschool school year will begin mid-April, stay tuned!

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at dcollins@fccfaithful.org.

Dallas Collins, Director of FCC Weekday Preschool



Children's Ministries

Children's Ministries has been chugging along during our time apart. Our families are going through and dealing with a lot right now, with most of our parents feeling overwhelmed working and assisting their children with remote learning. The kids spend so much time online, they're too screen fatigued for yet another Zoom call.

Therefore, we have gone to great lengths to find creative ways to safely meet outdoors on the front lawn in person for Sunday School. Each age group meets once per month and is encouraged to join the congregation in Zoom worship on Communion Sundays. This strategy has been well received and we have 4-8 kids each week, even in the snow (see pics next page)! It's great to have them out playing, safely running around, and enjoying socially distanced interaction with other kids. We also recognize that there are many families that aren't comfortable with this yet. For those families, (and the groups not meeting in person that week), we offer weekly Sunday School stories and lessons recorded and posted on Discord for them to watch at their convenience.

We have also teamed up with Travis and the Youth Ministry families to have combined fellowship events once per month. In December, we hosted a Family Scavenger Hunt with vehicles driving around town to complete hilarious tasks for points and prizes. In January we had a Drive-In movie experience in the Community House parking lot and watched "Soul" in the snow! We look forward to Spring weather providing more opportunities to gather for fun and fellowship!

Leslie Maxie,
Director of Children's Ministries

YM YOUTH MINISTRIES



pictured above: Children's Ministries enjoys Sunday school safely distanced outside in the snow

This month, I celebrate my one-year anniversary with the church. Even though Covid has made it the most bizarre first year ever, I'm excited to see relationships continue to grow while we continue to engage with zany group events and challenging Bible study content!

Speaking of new ideas, our first quarter of 2021 contains several significant changes to the current Youth Ministry scene. First of all, we have all been blessed to participate in the "FCC Talks about Race" sessions, which have featured several of our teens expressing their vision of an anti-racist community and assisting in discussions, providing working definitions for the church-wide dialogues.

While our young people have shown a strong interest in serving as agents of change and justice, we still like to act like kids on occasion! After a strong showing for our Christmas Drive-Thru Scavenger Hunt in December, The Youth and Children's Ministries have elected to start a new tradition of featuring family-wide events on a more regular basis! In January, we enjoyed a drive-in movie experience in the Community House Parking lot featuring the most recent Pixar film, "Soul." We are excited to try even more creative fellowship events in the near future as the weather warms!

As our church-wide conversations on race relations come to a close, we are excited to announce a new format for our Sunday Morning Youth Program. While health concerns still force us to meet online, the month of February will depart from our traditional Bible study format to make space for some new "Micro-Crews" events! Rather than dialoguing in a larger group setting, we aim to build stronger relationships and more directed teaching exercises with small groups of 4-5 people. To first aid students in becoming better acquainted with the adult Lay Advisors who shall be leading these groups, we have planned numerous team building games and activities for all to join throughout February during our Sunday Morning programming. By the end of the month, we hope the fellowship times will open up doors for more in-depth conversations as we launch into our Micro-Crew format in March. And who knows?!? Once the pandemic starts to die down and the weather warms up, we may even get to meet in these smaller groups in person!

This past year has been a whirlwind of trial and error. We appreciate all of the kind words and support provided by church members and parents while trying to sort out a "new normal" for our Youth Ministry. Without you, none of this would be possible! If nothing else, the fact we are still meeting, still having meaningful conversations, and still having lots of fun speaks volumes on the resolve and love ingrained within the FCC community. We thank God for the great times we have had despite these difficult circumstances and look forward to seeing the blessings Christ shall bestow upon us with a new year, new ideas, and new activities!

Rev. Travis Adams
Director of Youth Ministries

FCC HAPPENINGS

Rev. Randall Tate Departs for Next Chapter

During his 18 months with FCC as our Assistant to the Pastor for Pastoral Care, Rev. Randall Tate was a loving, wise presence among us. This past summer, he took on an interim role with a church that needed support as they looked for their next pastor. This work required more of his time and leadership, and he felt called to see the church through the transition work ahead of them in the new year.

He shared, *"To the good people of Flossmoor Community Church, I want to thank you for the many ways you have allowed me to serve you as the pastoral care minister. Although the time we have shared together has been too short, it has been very fruitful. Your generosity, hospitality and love has been a blessing to me and my family. I pray that you continue to grow in faith, worshipping the Lord with your whole heart, mind, body and soul, remembering to do everything for the glory of God. I thank God for each of you."*

We've appreciated not only Randy's pastoral presence, but also his commitment to equipping the saints for the ministry God gave them. The way he's shared his life stories and deep faith have enriched us all. Please keep Randy and his next chapter of ministry, as well as his church, Park Manor, in your prayers.

New FCC Maintenance Manager, Simon Duckett

In October we were thrilled to welcome Simon Duckett to the FCC staff after the retirement of Dave Dau after 15 years on staff. A regular jack of all trades, Simon has been busy at work maintaining our building and grounds and keeping everything "tip top". Several times already, his experience and expertise have saved us from having to call in outside contractors: he has erected new walls, repaired Community House plaster, and resolved electrical issues to name just a few. Even before joining staff, he beautifully restored our beautiful (now red!) front entrance doors.

Simon moved to the US from his hometown in Northern England after meeting his wife, Theresa. They reside in Flossmoor with their three children Ewan, Roxanne, and Ruby. We are incredibly lucky to have Simon, his craftsmanship and expertise, and his friendly and charming demeanor is a welcome one on site!

Rev. Travis Adams Accepts Invitation to Serve as Interim Assistant to the Pastor for Pastoral Care



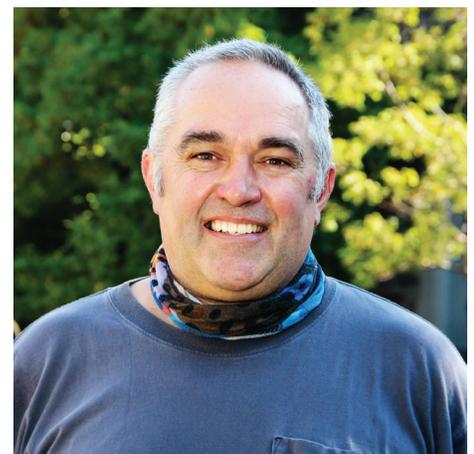
Following the departure of Rev. Randall Tate in December, we have filled the role of Assistant to the Pastor for Pastoral Care in an interim capacity. Rev. Travis Adams, our Director of Youth Ministries has accepted the invitation to serve in this additional way, providing consistency of care for our congregation while allowing us time to assess and adapt in the months ahead.

We have all been blessed to hear Travis's gift for preaching this past year. His experience and qualifications with pastoral care ensure that we will continue to provide loving care to our congregation who may be experiencing illness, difficult transitions, long-term challenges or are homebound.

In his 17-year career in ministry, Travis has worked in similar roles prior to his arrival at FCC. Most recently, he served at Third Baptist in Saint Louis as the primary liaison for their benevolence program while also visiting hospital patients as the Minister to Students and Missions. Prior to that he served overseas at Bloomsbury Central Baptist in London, England, working with the homeless community and homebound.

Travis will continue to serve as our Director of Youth Ministries simultaneously and feels amply prepared with the time and resources to carry out both positions with great care. Travis shares, *"I firmly believe the amount of love and support demonstrated by our Youth Advisors, Diaconate, and Stephen Ministers ensures both arenas of church life shall continue to thrive. If anything, my ability to perform duties for both the youth ministry and pastoral care role serves as a perfect testimony to just how deeply the virtue of compassion is integrated into this congregation's ethos. I cannot wait to continue doing great work with the great people at FCC!"*

Please reach out to Travis at tadams@fccfaithful.org should you or someone you know be in need of Pastoral Care.



FCC HAPPENINGS

Using This Time to Maintain, Protect, Adapt, and Improve Properties

During our time apart, the Properties Committee and FCC property and maintenance staff teams have continued to work hand-in-hand to make significant progress in number of important projects related to two very property-related goals: (1) maintain and protect our existing buildings and grounds; and (2) adapting our worship spaces and gathering/educational areas to meet pandemic-related and post-pandemic operational needs.

We're excited to share that much-needed masonry tuckpointing was completed on a number of portions of the main church building prior to the onset of winter. A new commercial refrigerator was installed in the kitchen downstairs. The large main office had a dividing wall erected, creating a private maintenance office and separate office for our administrative assistant. Pastor Julie's office is being painted and prepared for her. A number of improvements have also been made to the Community House: in addition to the installation of new downspouts, we have been making significant plaster repairs and undertaking the various painting/cosmetic upgrades necessary to begin sharing the space for public events and use as soon as COVID-related restrictions permit.

Most recently, we have begun a significant upgrade our IT network infrastructure. This project will allow FCC to simulcast worship services, funerals, concerts and other events held in the Sanctuary. Once we are able to return to the building safely for worship, we will also have the capability to continue to livestream the service to those that are unable to attend, as well as to stream programs for Christian Education opportunities. These network upgrades also included the installation of security and access control systems for both the Church and Community House. In addition to heightening our safety and security, this provides for increased use of the building by boards/committees and various outside groups, potentially also increasing our revenue possibilities.

Even with our doors closed, we continue to work hard behind the scenes to do everything possible to improve our sacred space and prepare it for a bright future upon our eventual and long-overdue return!

Planning for Regathering

As FCC considers wise practices for regathering in person in 2021, we hold on the one hand the knowledge that Covid deaths are climbing near a half million, so we want to continue taking slow steps. On the other hand, our area numbers are lowering, vaccines are being distributed, and we have more experience to guide what precautions must be set in place as we experiment together.

A small team of people from the Board of Worship and Arts is spearheading our first opportunity in Lent to simply enter the sanctuary in very small numbers and immerse ourselves in the prayerful silence. Soon, that team will expand to consider indoor interactive worship experiences when the time is right.

Until then, spring is coming, and multiple ministries plan to make use of the outdoors. Keep your eye out for some creative Easter opportunities from various ministries - and be on the lookout for us popping up in some unexpected places!



FAITH IN ACTION

Faith in Action Board Invites Congregation To Serve

Last Fall the Board of Faith in Action sought to meet the needs of our community partners who were deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the generosity and quick action of the congregation and community, we were able to ...

• PROVIDE FOOD ASSISTANCE

Food items for homeless individuals housed in local hotels were requested and the congregation graciously responded by dropping off donations behind the church during our touchless drop-off in November. FIA delivered over 100 bags of food to Respond Now.

• SUPPORT JONES CENTER STUDENTS

Using an Amazon Wishlist, congregants and friends provided 40 sets of sturdy classroom headphones, 40 individual whiteboards and markers, and almost 20 washable beanbag chairs to Jones.

• CARE FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH BETHEL COMMUNITY CENTER

Bethel took on 14 homeless families and numerous individuals (67 in all) and housed them in a local hotel since all PADS sites were closed. Through online signups, we were able to adopt all 67 individuals and provide warm clothing, bus passes, gas cards, and other necessities. Through extended outreach of more church members, we provided home baked goods and warm breakfast items, hand selected children's books, and bags of arts and crafts for all the children.

We look forward to 2021 as the time to continue to transform Faith in Action by supporting outreach efforts that encourage and equip congregants for service within and outside church walls. Through service, we can inspire hope, strengthen relationships, and transform communities.

Do you have a favorite local non-profit agency that might want help from church or community members?

Let us know who it is and we'll link their website and wish list on our Faith in Action web page. When we finalize the list, you will be able to click on an agency, find their wish list, and make a financial or in-kind donation. Please email your favorites to Jackie Riffice, Chair of Board of Faith in Action at jariffice@comcast.net by March 1.

Kiva Loan Ministry Continues

In 2016, Faith In Action (then called the Board of Outreach Ministries) designated Kiva.org as one of the recipients on the World Communion Offering. Kiva is an international organization that enables microloans to be distributed around the globe. Loans are made to individuals and groups, are repaid, and the funds are available to loan again!

We started with \$2,430 deposited into the FCC Kiva account in December of 2016. To date, we have made 177 loans, to recipients in 55 different countries, totaling \$8,875 of microloans to date. Representatives from Faith in Action monitor the loans, and choose new loans once our account balance begins to fill up! Following are two of our current loans, in the process of being repaid.



Nicera's story – Embu, Kenya
Nicera is blessed with a supportive husband and three loving children. She engages in dairy farming to earn a living for her family. Nicera has also been supplying 2 liters of her milk freely to her neighbors who are elderly and unable to work.

She believes that with a better breed of cows she will be able to produce more milk for herself and also help more elderly people in her community. Her dream is to achieve a production of at least 50 liters a day and with this loan, she is hopeful of realizing her dream.

Angela Andrea's story – 24 de Mayo, Ecuador

Angela Andrea is 46 years old. Her husband is a bricklayer and they have four children. They live in a community of hard-working people, the majority of whom work in agriculture. It has been hit hard by the effects of COVID-19.

She is a hard-working woman who earns her living raising chickens and pigs so she can help her husband get the family ahead. This loan will be used to buy feed and medicine for her chickens and pigs, which she sells by the pound to neighbors and merchants when they reach adequate weight.



For more information about Kiva, or to begin making your own personal microloans, please visit www.kiva.org.

FAITH IN ACTION

FCC Partnership for Community Redevelopment in Harvey



On October 6, 2020, the Governing Board of Flossmoor Community Church approved the initiation of an open-ended, multi-faceted relationship with entities committed to the long-term redevelopment of our neighboring community of Harvey, IL. During our Congregational Meeting in January, we heard an exciting presentation from FCC member, Jay Readey with more information.

The City of Harvey was once an industrial powerhouse in the Chicago's south suburbs. Through the loss of the steel and other industries that fueled its economic engine, plus the racism that accelerated disinvestment and white flight, the city fell on hard times. Harvey now has new political leadership, however, and its own plan to rise again, supported by multiple local and regional reinvestment efforts.



FCC will partner initially with **NeighborScapes**, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that renovates homes and rents them out at below-market prices to "Community Building Fellows" (CBFs), who commit to engaging at least 10 hours per month in the community through civic activity or community service. The effort will be overseen by an Advisory Board, made up of community leaders

from Harvey. NeighborScapes currently operates successfully in the Englewood neighborhood of Chicago and is led by Jay Readey.

WHY ARE WE INVESTED?

This project was chosen for several reasons:

- FCC will support the leadership provided by the project's Community Advisory Board, made up of Harvey-based leaders.
- FCC members will work alongside CBFs and other community members to do projects such as the following:
 - *Clean abandoned lots and plant trees and gardens to restore the neighborhood fabric*
 - *Renovate houses*
 - *Search tax and ownership records of nearby abandoned buildings and lots*
 - *Assist with the recruitment of Community Building Fellow (CBF) candidates*
 - *Mentor Community Building Fellows (CBFs),*
 - *Support projects as designed and led by CBFs*
- This project will start slowly and expand over time, eventually giving us the opportunity to invite others - neighbors, faith communities, student groups - to work alongside us and our Harvey colleagues.
- Community development requires a diversity of simultaneous efforts in order to be successful. This project will benefit from the community development efforts of Harvey, the Ingalls Foundation, the Southland Development Authority and its predecessor South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative, as well as the work of numerous social service and civic organizations operating in the area.

The FCC Governing Board expects this project will allow FCC members and the neighbors who join us to experience the expertise and leadership of the people we are serving, as well as to share what expertise and resources we can contribute. We expect the project to foster long term relationships, build community resilience, and forward our own efforts to redress the impact of systemic racism in our region.

Please pray for the groundwork being laid for this exciting effort and stay tuned as ways to "plug in" are announced in the coming months. Visit fccfaithful.org/HarveyProject for more information and a link to sign up as a volunteer. There are several ways for us to be a part of this project - even from home.



Flossmoor Community Church
Where Christ is Central and Diversity is Cherished

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