

THE *Marion* CHRISTIAN

A MOVEMENT FOR WHOLENESS IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD



Marion

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

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The start of a new year always brings hope and excitement for what could be. For many of us at Marion Christian Church there is hope and excitement (and perhaps a little trepidation) as we enter the pastoral search process. The Pastoral Search Committee has been formed and will kick off the search process on February 5th in consultation with Regional Minister Rev. Joshua Patty and Rev. Liz Woodward. Serving on the search committee are Deanna Long (Chair), Amy Cameron, Zach Cooper, Abram Evers, Tim Feldmann, Sharon McIntosh, Marilyn Rambo and Vanessa Renaud. This team will conduct the search for both the intentional Interim and the settled pastor.

So what happens in the meantime? Services and activities will continue. A huge thank you to Gary Sneller for filling the pulpit in January. Marion Christian Church is blessed to have so many talented individuals willing to share a message with us that we have the pulpit filled through April.

There are so many wonderful things happening in our church - our recent vote to become an open and affirming congregation, a vibrant Wednesday night youth program, and the painting of the education wing just to name a few. May the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ continue to guide us on this exciting journey. Will there be hiccups along the way? Absolutely, but with faith, love and patience we will continue to be a blessing to each other and to this community.

Respectfully,

Becky Clemens

MCC Council Chair

JOIN US IN
Worship
SERVICE 10AM
CHILDRENS CHURCH
AFTER CHILDREN'S MOMENT



Marion
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

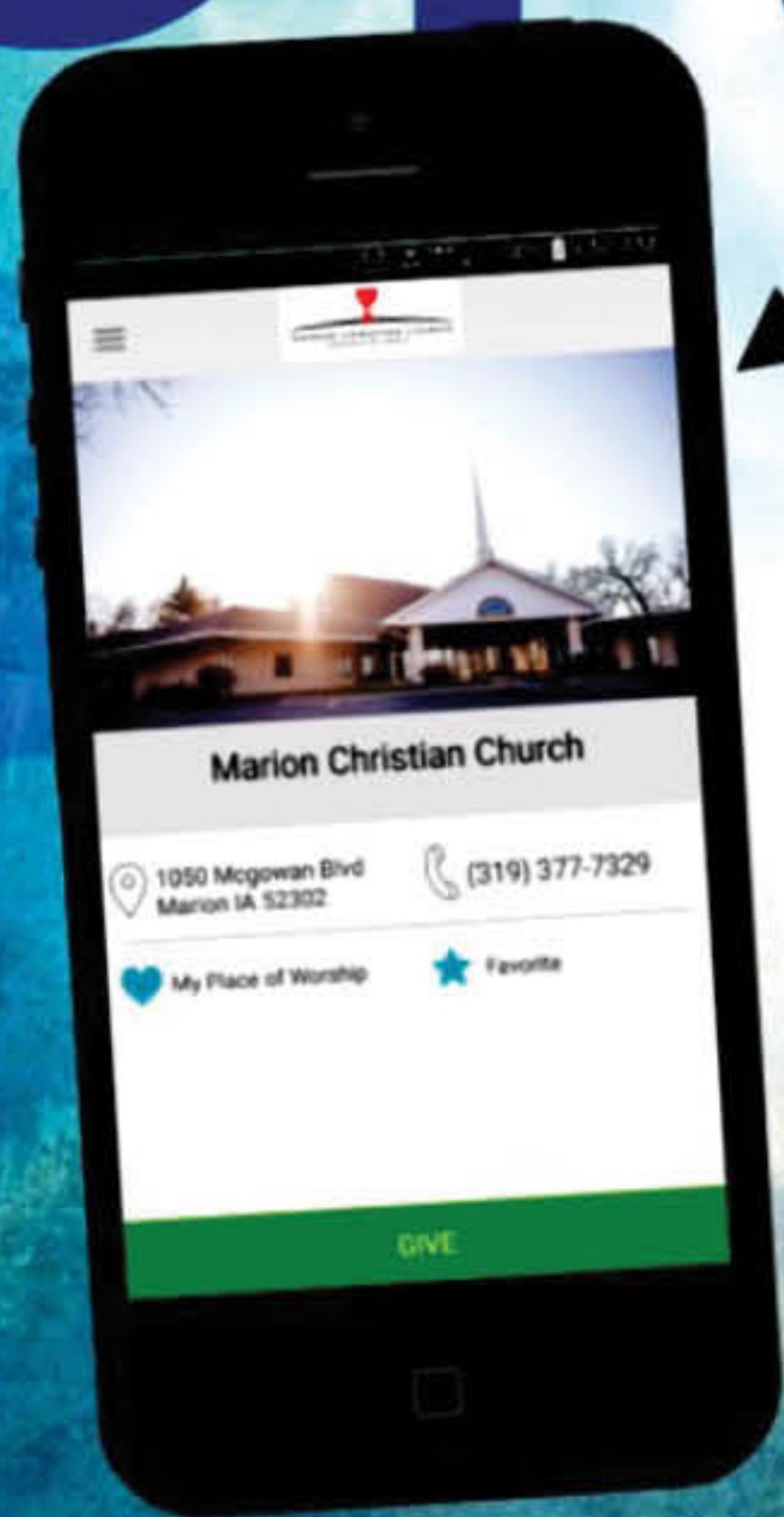
What's happening!

JUST SCAN THIS CODE TO GO RIGHT TO THE GIVELIFY APP!



GIVING

just got easier



FIND THE GIVELIFY APP IN THE APP STORE OR GOOGLE PLAY TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS ONE AT A TIME OR TO ESTABLISH REGULAR WEEKLY OR MONTHLY GIVING.

Givelify



FIND MARION CHRISTIAN CHURCH ON THE MAP & YOU ARE READY TO GIVE!

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

**10AM
WORSHIP SERVICE**

**AFTER CHILDREN'S
TIME
SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR
K-5**

WED., FEB. 1

**6PM
THE OASIS**

SUN., FEB. 5

**5PM
VALENTINE'S DAY SOIREE**

WED., FEB. 8

**6PM
THE OASIS**

WED., FEB. 15

**6PM
THE OASIS**

WED., FEB. 22

**6PM
THE OASIS**
**6:30PM
ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE**

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Thank You

The church has received thank you notes from the following local organizations for the support we provided them in 2022. Your support truly makes a difference in our community and the lives of others. Thank you!

Central Furniture Rescue, His Hands Clinic, Willis Dady Shelter, Marion Cares, Marion Food Pantry, Catherine McAuley Center, Christian Conference Center, Habitat for Humanity, First Light Racial Reconciliation, and the Disciples Mission Fund.

WORLD & GLOBAL MISSIONS

Patty Wise will be leaving on February 10th for a mission trip to Tanzania. She is planning on taking supplies that will be donated to either the Tumaini Schools in Karatu, Vocational School for Women or the FAME and Lake Eyasi Medical Clinics the group will be working at. If you are interested in donating items for this mission trip please bring them to church by February 5th and place them in the large wood box in the narthex. Items they are looking for are:

- Jumbo crayons for pre-school along with crayons for elementary
- Children's books – we will be assisting in teaching them English
- Learning games – colors, shapes, numbers and alphabet
- Spiral notebooks
- Pencils
- Art supplies

- Watercolor markers
- Children's card games
- Books / activities for science & art
- Bandages
- Antibiotic ointment
- Vitamins
- Pre-natal vitamins
- Disinfectants
- Tylenol - anti pain meds
- Eye glasses

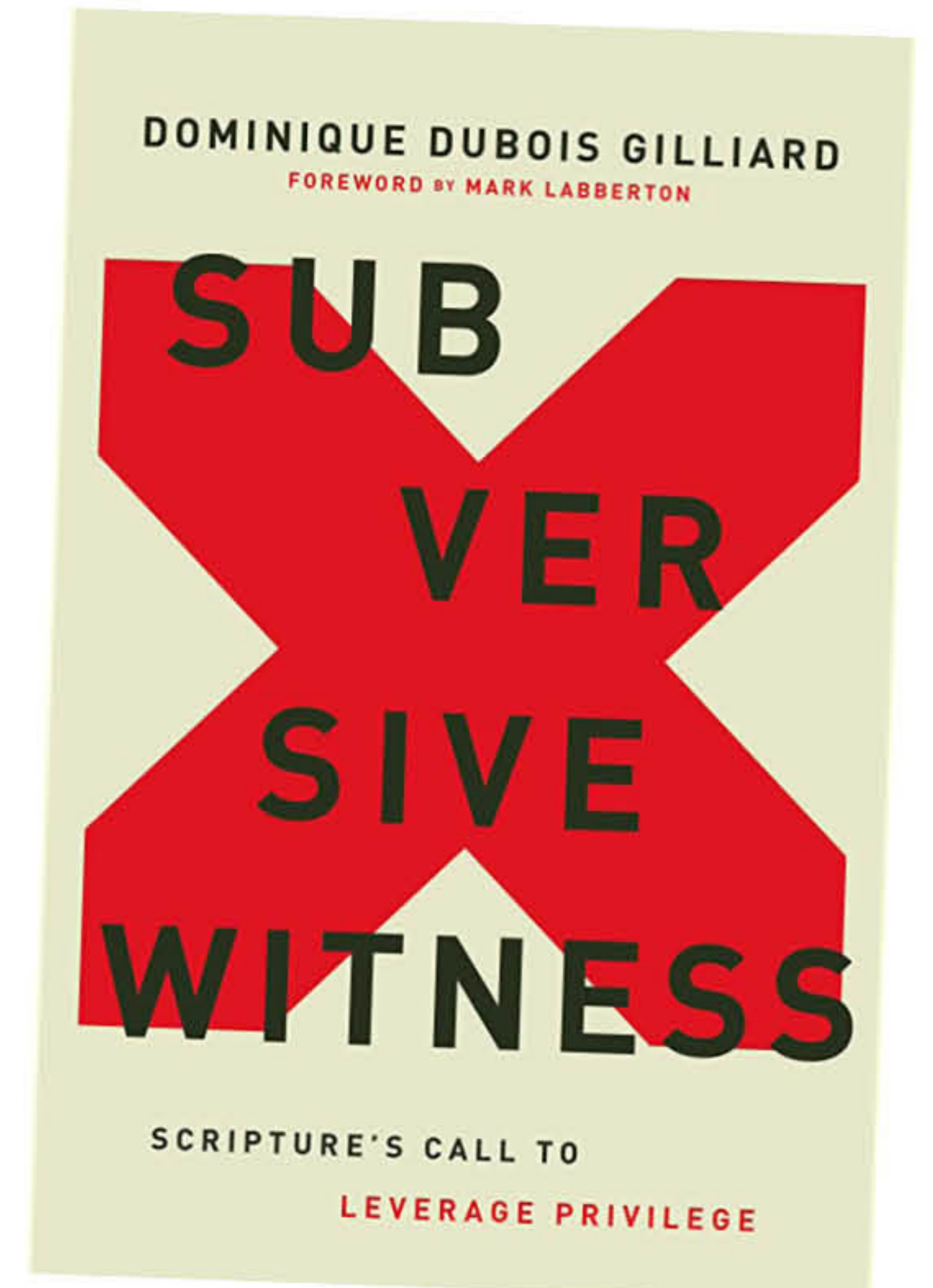
Underwear, t-shirts & socks of all sizes.
If you would like to donate cash, we are suggesting a donation to the medical clinic where it could be applied to a patients bill that can't afford their care. Any donation will be greatly appreciated!! If you have any questions you can contact Patty at 319-558-9482.
Asanta Sana (Thank you very much in Swahili)

Upcoming Events

Privilege. For many of us that word conjures thoughts of wealth, power, elitism, and superiority. That kind of privilege many times can be abused and used selfishly by people. Sometimes that kind of privilege can be denied or minimized by people. But actually, from a Scriptural point of view, there is another way to understand privilege. Privilege from a spiritual point of view is any benefit or blessing we have received whether bestowed through the providence of birth, or afforded by the culture we live in, or earned by virtue of our own hard work. And as a benefit or blessing that we have received, we are challenged by our faith to steward or leverage our privilege to further the kingdom of God and to love our neighbors.

This Lenten season, the Community Growth and Formation Ministry Team is offering an opportunity for us at Marion Christian Church and friends in the community to look closely at our privilege and explore ways to use our privilege to benefit others. We are encouraging everyone to read the book, Subversive Witness—Scripture's Call to Leverage Privilege, by Dominique Dubois Gilliard (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021) during this season of Lent. This book looks carefully at 6 biblical stories that illustrate how privilege was used by Pharaoh's daughter, Esther, Moses, Paul/Silas, Jesus, and Zacchaeus to benefit others and suggests ways that we can use our privilege likewise to benefit others today. A discussion group will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am to explore more deeply how the biblical stories presented in the book and our own personal stories may intersect. Gary Sneller will lead the discussion group. Books will be available at the church on Sunday mornings beginning February 5 (\$8.00) or you can purchase the book (or e-book) from your favorite bookseller.

During Lent, we are encouraged to examine our lives of faith. Often that leads us to "give up" something for Lent or add a spiritual practice to enrich our lives of faith. This year, let's focus on how we can be better stewards of our privilege so that God's kingdom may increase on earth and others may be blessed.



SNACKS FOR WILKINS SCHOOL

Please sign up at Information Central to provide 25 prepackaged snacks for Wilkins Elementary Students
Or go to sign up genius and use the link <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4fafa92dabffc34-wilkins1>
We need 4 people each week to sign up!



Upcoming Events

Love for All

VALENTINE'S SOIRÉE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH | 5PM

HOSTED BY MCC'S HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

**WHETHER YOU HAVE A VALENTINE OR NOT,
YOU ARE LOVED! ALL ARE WELCOME TO
SHARE A MEAL TOGETHER PROVIDED BY THE
MCC HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH**

Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY 22ND | 6:30 PM
MARION CHRISTIAN CHURCH - SANCTUARY

This will mark the beginning of the Lenten Season leading us on an intentional journey towards Easter. Ash Wednesday invites us to introspection and awareness of our need for God. As we progress through Lent we also focus outward to consider our part in God's story of redemption, transformation, and resurrection life.

MCC Council Meeting

MCC Council MEETING

Sunday, January 22, 2022 | 1:00pm

Present: Becky Clemens, Dean Decious, Krystal Monawar, Marilyn Rambo, Ryan Wilcox, Patty Wise, Justin Lightfoot, Darrell Boatwright, Sue Boatwright, Tom Fuller, Joe Hamilton, Sharon McIntosh, Deanna Long, Gary Sneller, Joyce Talley, Gloria Waltke, Erin Wittkowski, Jill Law, Cathy Fuller, Mike Kibler, April Evers

The meeting was opened with prayer by Chair Becky Clemens.

STANDING BUSINESS:

December Minutes - Sharon McIntosh moved and Joyce Talley seconded to approve December 12th minutes. Carried.

December Financial Report - Erin Wittkowski presented a synopsis of the December and year-end financials from Nick Monroe, and also thanked Nick for five wonderful years serving as the church's treasurer:

Total pledge/offering for December is \$20,969.32 (budgeted \$20,416.67) and our total cash inflow for the month is \$27,329.71 (includes pledges/offering, capital improvement, and funds for encumbered accounts).

Total actual operating expenses for December were \$21,103.96 (budgeted \$24,652.12) leaving a net loss of \$134.64 for the month of December. The YTD net giving is -\$18,527.92 (red).

Total Encumbered funds expense for December is \$2,396.41 with a YTD total of \$440,013.87 (including Building Insurance Funds).

Capital Improvement Campaign income is \$7,966.30 bringing the YTD total to \$129,529.96 (this amount included Memorials Funds that were intended for Capital Improvement Fund -\$2,510.00).

Checking account balance as of 12-31-2022 is \$132,289.30.

Nothing to report that would be considered outside of the budget. Expenses represent normal operating expenses which exceeded giving for December. Now that the year has ended, the church was short on giving by a total of \$18,527.92. To offset this loss, the PPP Grant funds have been reduced by this amount to return that shortfall to the checking account balance, leaving \$13,000+ still in the fund.

Ryan Wilcox moved and Krystal seconded to approve the December financials. Carried.

Ministry Team Reports -

INREACH: Congregational Guardianship- Mike Kibler & Tom Fuller, Elders; Joe Hamilton & Dean Decious, Deacons

Mike is continuing to review and approve invoices, vouchers, etc., as they arise each month. Attempting to be as prompt as possible to expedite those that Darrell has alerted us to in regards to the Ed wing projects. In other news, the Boy Scout Troop Trailer has been donated to Troop 35 to serve as an additional equipment hauler or for events that don't require their much larger trailer. When weather and schedules work to-

gether, Jim Wittnebel and Mike Kibler will convene to examine the Troop equipment that remains in the shed. After Troop 35 has determined what, if anything, they want, the remaining items will be donated or recycled, if possible, or landfilled, if necessary. That will leave only the Pack equipment in the shed. It is unknown at this time if that would free up enough space to reconfigure their corner of the shed overall.

Tom notes that John Macintosh replaced a kitchen faucet that kept blowing the nozzle off, which, I assume, was quite a surprise to whoever was using it!

Carrie said not all the wastebaskets are getting emptied. The custodians have been talked to before, I believe. Is there anything we'd like to do?

We need to know who unlocks and locks the church doors on Sundays - the people doing setup? -the person who is speaking that day? Prior to the pandemic we had a person make a security sweep of the building following the last service in addition to the regular Sunday night check. Is that something we should resume?

We scrounged up keys for the main building and educational wing. I had a few spares made. They are in a brown envelope in a drawer by Celeste's desk. Darrell has one for the educational wing. John Macintosh has a set as well. We should determine who else should have a set so they can get into the building in case of a power failure, etc. Alternatively we could install a combination lock box on the outside of the church with a set of building keys inside.

A question not specifically related to Guardianship: prior to the pandemic, we had a Communion "team" of four persons. Since we have resumed coming forward for Communion, would having a communion serving team again be appropriate?

OUTREACH: World and Local Missions - Sue Boatwright & Cathy Fuller, Elders; Gloria Waltke, Deacon

We finished off the year with Xmas support to 10 Marion Cares kids and 8 MCC kids (4 families). Due to the budget constraints, we elected to not give out the remaining budgeted financial support to locals. We have given some funds earlier, and for many organizations we were able to provide in-kind assistance to meet their needs.

We will be determining our 2023 budget soon.

The date for the rummage sale is set. Set up May 14-17. Sale dates 18th-20th, and hours. 8am-5pm.

OUTREACH: Community Growth and Formation - Gary Sneller & Kiley Harris, Elders; Deanna Long & Krystal Monawar, Deacons

From 1/12/23 notes:

1. Lenten book study:

We are offering a congregational book reading/discussion group during the 6 weeks of Lent (Ash Wednesday is February 22), Subversive Witness—Scripture's Call to Leverage Privilege, by Dominique Dubois Gilliard (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021). Books will be available to purchase at church on Sunday mornings (\$8.00). Discussion group, led by Gary,

will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:00am.

2. Update on "Open and Affirming" discernment process: Our congregational vote will be Sunday, January 22, following worship. MCC "Open and Affirming" Team members will be available on Sundays January 15 and 22 to answer any remaining questions about what this means for MCC. MCC "Open and Affirming" brochures will be replenished in the sanctuary. If there is an affirmative vote, next steps would be publicizing our congregational identity as "Open and Affirming"; planning a "welcoming" celebration; registering our "Open and Affirming" status with Disciples Alliance Q advocacy group; and offering an opportunity to give a voluntary, personal contribution to Disciples Alliance Q during Pride Month (June). Deanna is point-person on this project.

3. Fellowship Time: Community Growth and Formation will provide snacks and serve Fellowship Time on Sunday, January 29. Kylie will bring pastry, Krystal donut holes and juice, and Deanna fruit and some bars/cookies.

4. Open House event 2023: We as a church need to start planning now for an open house event celebrating the re-opening of our church building (perhaps in September). Ideas include a formal program, including Marion city leaders, food, music by the Praise Team, tours of the building, and fun activities for children and adults. Although Community Growth and Formation Ministry Team would provide overall coordination, this will be a whole church project!

5. Chains Interrupted (human trafficking) presentation: We still want to schedule a brief presentation to the congregation by Chains Interrupted early this year with a lunch and fuller presentation following worship. We are looking now at March 5 or 26. Krystal will coordinate.

6. United Way of East Central Iowa Day of Caring: This annual event is May 11, 2023. We might want to get a group together from the congregation to participate. See, <https://www.uweci.org/events-blog/event/dayofcaring2023/>

7. After our Zoom meeting, Krystal brought this to our attention via email:

Patty Wise (Krystal's mother) will be traveling to Tanzania, Africa February 10th to March 1st on a mission trip. She will be going with a group from Noelridge Christian Church. They primarily focus on a school there (that MCC has helped raise money for before) where they teach English to the children in the village. So this trip they will be working with the school, a hospital and building a house. The group will take items with them to give to the people in Tanzania. A list of items needed will be offered to the congregation for donations. Donations need to be received by February 5th. Gary will coordinate with the World/Local Mission Ministry Team.

INREACH: Congregational Care & Evangelism - Sharon McIntosh, Elder; April Evers & Jill Law, Deacons

We had a short meeting to discuss Bryce's going away party for the congregation. It was decided to

MCC Council Meeting

MCC Council MEETING

Sunday, January 22, 2022 | 1:00pm

have cupcakes, as that is what Jan Patschke had suggested. It was felt that we should order 125, as we've been having around 80 in attendance each Sunday. I will order the cupcakes from Sam's and Jill is going to order some festive picks to put into the cupcakes. I will also purchase little paper plates. We also thought it would be good to have some fruit, so April will provide that. Milk, ice tea, coffee, and water are the beverages.

I mentioned I would like each ministry team to provide fellowship treats again in 2023. Therefore, I'm going to send an email out to the Elders asking if they would help with this again by taking one or two Sundays at a time. Again the free will offering can go to their individual teams. I would like to have this schedule completed prior to my winter vacation. We discussed that I will be gone from January 24th until March 22nd, and if anything is needed, I am available by phone or email. I mentioned providing meals if a member needs help and to let me know if that happens while I'm gone.

UPREACH: Worship, Music/Arts & Media
– Kari and Ryan Wilcox, Elders; Sue Thompson & Joyce Talley, Deacons

The deacon schedule for worship has been sent out, along with an updated contact list including all council members. The suggestion of reverting back to the original version of The Lord's Prayer was discussed and the worship elders have approved this change. Gary and Tammy have graciously volunteered to do much of the preaching through April, therefore elders will not be responsible for the congregational prayer during this time, with the exception of a few Sundays. Thank you, Gary and Tammy!

UPREACH: Spiritual Growth and Formation
– Laura Brade, Elder; Jenna Holmes & Tim Feldmann, Deacons

No report

OLD BUSINESS:

Open and Affirming Vote – The vote from the Special Congregational Meeting was 48 yes and 3 no. Erin Wittkowski thanked Deanna Long and her team for all of their research and work. (The official Welcome Statement for being Open and Affirming is at the end of the minutes.)

Pack 35 Cub Scout Troop – The troop has been re-chartered and will begin meeting at Marion Christian when the remodel is complete. Currently they are meeting at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection.

Building Recovery/Remodel – Darrell Boatwright reported that 98% of the painting in the Christian Education wing is completed. During the "dramatic pause" waiting for the third phase to begin, carpentry odds and ends are being worked on to further decrease the funds needed to pay outside contractors. The money saved by painting has now allowed us to add dropping ceilings in the offices to the next phase. The Council thanked Darrell for his dedication, time and talent through this long process.

NEW BUSINESS:

Search Committee – Becky announced the members to be Deanna Long (Chair), Amy Cameron, Marilyn Rambo, Tim Feldmann, Vanessa Renaud, Zach Cooper, Sharon McIntosh, and Abram Evers. They will be searching for both an Interim and a settled Senior Minister. Becky Clemens moved and Sharon McIntosh seconded to approve the committee. Carried. Chair Becky Clemens and Vice-Chair Justin Lightfoot will serve in an ex-officio capacity.

Announcements – Becky urged everyone to be positive as we go through the process of finding a minister, and she reminded the Council that we have pulpit supply through April. Newsletter deadline is usually the Monday after meetings.

General Discussion – Some ideas were offered, including adding more announcements to the bulletin, bringing back activity bags for children, changing the bulletin format, improving the web site, reinstating a Communications Team, updating and maintaining the Facebook page, inquiring about potential baptismal candidates, and reinstating lists for serving as greeters, serving communion and handing out bulletins. Gary Sneller volunteered to serve in a ministerial capacity for baptismal candidates. Krystal Monawar voiced interest in tending to the web site and being on a Communications Team. The meeting adjourned with a prayer by Becky Clemens.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Rambo, Church Clerk

Open and Affirming Declaration

Often when you hear "All are welcome," all doesn't really mean all. At Marion Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ALL MEANS ALL! This includes ALL persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, political views, or physical or mental capacity. We recognize, celebrate, and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. ALL persons have worth and are unique creations made in the image of God.

As Disciples of Christ, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Congregation, welcoming ALL to participate fully in the life of the church, including leadership, baptism, communion, marriage and ALL forms of ministry. We are a community of faith that works toward openness and understanding, offering justice, healing, love and wholeness for ALL people.

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, as God's beloved, ALL are worthy and welcome!

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2023 11:00AM

The meeting was called to order by Chair Becky Clemens.

The purpose of the meeting was to vote on the adoption of the proposed welcoming statement for Marion Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to become a declared Open and Affirming Congregation. Deanna Long moved and Mark Fuller seconded to adopt the following Open and Affirming statement:

Welcoming Statement as an Open and Affirming Congregation

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gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, political views, or physical or mental capacity. We recognize, celebrate, and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. ALL persons have worth and are unique creations made in the image of God.

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Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,

as God's beloved, ALL are worthy and welcome!

Discussion:

Elder Rev. Gary Sneller brought to the congregation the fact that so many people yearn for belonging. Tom Fuller inquired about the 2 "YES" options, and Deanna Long explained that both options were suggested by Alliance Q.

The vote results were YES 48 and NO 3. Adoption of the Declaration passed.

The meeting closed with a prayer by Rev. Gary Sneller.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Rambo, Church Clerk