



The Carillon April, 2026

First Congregational Church
Your Independent Worship Center
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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES MARCH 23, 2026 DRAFT

Present: StaceyChurch – Moderator, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Jean Morehouse– Board of Charitable Giving – Women’s Fellowship, Dean Morehouse – Men’s Fellowship, Bill Black – Trustees, Jack Stewart – Technology Board, Crystal Schmalz – Board of Christian Education

Absent: Brian Webb – Deacon’s

I. Meeting called to order at 6:40 pm. Stacey gave the opening prayer.

II. Jean made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2026 meeting with the change in the minutes being the Town Hall Meeting will be March 28, not February 28. Seconded by Dean. Passed.

III. Public comments – See Below. No security update.

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jean Morehouse

- At the next meeting, we will decide who will be the donor for the next quarter, and there will be an update in the Carillon.
- Community Closet is overjoyed with our donations of blankets, towels, and wash clothes.
- Noisy offering was last Sunday.

B. Board of Deacons – Carrie DeMull

- Rooms of Refuge went well the last week in February.
- Town Hall/Pancake Breakfast was March 28.
- March 29 was Palm Sunday.
- There will be a Good Friday Service at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary on February 3.
- Easter Service will be at 10:00 am on April 5 with communion. Cookie reception after worship instead of coffee hour.
- Small group surveys are coming out in the bulletin. Please fill one out if you are able.
- Pastor Luke will have his first baptism in the near future. Tracy Stern's son Nick has had their first baby, and Pastor Luke will be doing the baptism.
- Vacation for Pastor Luke: April 6 – 10, and July 13-19. Will need to find a replacement pastor for July 19. Deacons voted to grant vacation time.
- Deacons will be forming a group to contact people the congregation has not seen or heard from in a while. This group will be calling or visiting homes soon along with providing communion.
- Easter Egg Hunt will be Easter Sunday, April 5, after worship.
- Creation Care Sunday will be April 19.
- Lorene will make Easter Sunday guest cards to hand out to family and friends before Easter Sunday. Special cards will also be attached to the cookies given out on Easter Sunday.
- Susan Stewart will be our new Deacon Board member.

Welcome Susan!

C. Board of Christian Education – Pastor Luke

- Crystal will be holding an Easter Egg hunt for the children after worship on Easter Sunday. Crystal would appreciate any pre-stuffed eggs for the hunt. They can be brought to church Easter morning.
- Crystal purchased a bunch of children's videos for Sunday School at a Christian bookstore that was going out of business in Holland.

D. Board of Trustees – Bill Black

- Summary of the first 2 months of the year. Income is 28% of the budget with expenses being at 17%. Starting out the year strong.

- Snow plowing and utilities were high because of the cold weather and unusual snowfall.

- Toilets in Fellowship Hall bathrooms are being worked on. There will be guard rails installed in the stalls in both men's and women's bathrooms downstairs.

- New door sweeps were placed on the South Entry Doors.

- Some lighting has been replaced in fellowship hall.

- The steeple lights still need to be looked at.

- Trustees will get a key for Jackson Brooks. He will be starting

May 24.

E. Women's Fellowship- Jean Morehouse

- Balance in the WF account is \$7,780.86 after all donations were made.

- Travelogue given by Rachel and her family travels to Banff, Canada was well attended with a sloppy joe lunch, chips, veggies, and dessert.

- Nancy Clause, Pat's sister in law, will be presenting a White House Christmas. Come see how the White House is decorated during Christmas time on Monday, May 4, at 12:00 pm. A light lunch will be provided.

- Women's Fellowship will be packaging the Easter Cookies to be given out on Easter Sunday.

- New Lights will be ordered for the hall/narthex to provide more lighting in these areas. Women's Fellowship will pay to have these installed.

- Visitor bags have been assembled and are on the Welcome table.

F. Technology Board – Jack

- SA Moorman is finished with the security camera work.

- Cameras are working fine.

- Jeff still doesn't have the ability to view the cameras from the Tech Booth. Will be coming shortly.

- Tech booth is steadily getting volunteers.

G. Men's Fellowship – Dean Morehouse

- John Buckley from the Gerber Credit Union was the speaker for February.

- Bill Black was the cook. Sandwiches, veggies, fruits, and cookies were served.
- Gerber has purchased the old Rite Aid building and will be moving to their new location soon.
- Wood shop and men's coffee have been going well.
- Next meeting, April 1, Pastor Luke will talk about the Edmund Fitzgerald and chili dogs will be served.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

- 50 palms were ordered for Palm Sunday.
- Good Friday service, April 3, at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary.
- Altar was taken down on Sunday, March 28.
- Altar will be reset on Saturday, April 4.
- Pastor will be out of the office on April 6-10, but will be back for worship on the 12th.
- New member class will start after Easter Sunday.
- 26 new visitors to our church since the start of the year.
- Pastor Luke has been accepted into a doctoral program at the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. Studying Pastoral ministry in a rural context. Jean made a motion to let Pastor Luke attend the pastoral ministry program at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio for 2 weeks this July (20-24, 27-31) and one week during the summer for the following two years. This time off will be used as work time and not vacation time. Bill seconded. Will follow-up at the next meeting with any further information. Motion passed.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Pastor Luke motioned to accept the reports, and Dean seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business

- Update on Harmony Hybrid: 35 children have expressed interest in the program. Families have requested Tuesdays and Thursdays. Waiting to move forward.
- Ecumenical Service: Pastor Luke met with them to share our concerns again. We originally decided not to pursue partnering with them during this summer last fall because we were not able to have service at our church and we were not in a particularly good financial position to help with

printing of the bulletins at that time. Pastor Luke will be attending the meeting on March 27 and tell them our concerns and get back with us.

- Youth for Christ: Will meet April 7 after school at our church. Char will be here with her volunteers and the middle schoolers for the first time at our church.

- Spiritual Growth Initiative Update: Dean and Judy wanted an update from the EC as to whether the information given by them was taken back to their respective boards and discussed. Most boards said they had discussed it with them but will make sure to put it as an agenda item in the future, so it is discussed at every meeting.

VIII. New Business-None

Meeting adjourned with a closing prayer at 9:05 pm.

Next Meeting is Monday, April 27 at 6:30 pm in the library.

Respectfully submitted
Carrie DeMull



April Calendar:

- April 1 - Men's Fellowship Luncheon - 12:00 noon
April 3 - Good Friday worship - 6:00 pm
April 5 - EASTER Sunday - 10:00 am
April 6 - Women's Fellowship Board - 10:00 am
April 7 - Book Circle - 1:00 pm
April 7 - Young Life - 2:00 - 5:00 pm
April 11 - Funeral Service for Eric Webb - 1:00 pm
April 12 - Worship - 10:00 am
April 12 - Deacons Meeting - 11:30 am
April 13 - Tech Meeting - 6:30 pm
April 14 - Small Group (Pat Krehn's Home) - 10:00 am
April 15 - Trustees Meeting - 1:30 pm
April 19 - Worship with communion - 10:00 am - Creation Care Sunday
April 26 - Worship - 10:00 am
April 27 - Executive Council - 6:30 pm
April 28 - Small Group (Pat Krehn's Home) - 10:00 am



- Men's Fellowship Coffee - M/W/F - 9:30 am - ? - Fellowship Hall
Women's Bible Study with Beth - Wednesdays - 6:30 p.m.
Christmas Crafters - Thursday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm (bring your lunch)
Woodshop - M/W/F - 10:00 am - ? (When two or more are gathered)

Women's Fellowship Event

Pat Krehn's Sister, Nancy Claus was a part of the White House Christmas Decorating. She will be with us on Monday, May 4 at 12:00 noon to tell us about her experience for this past Christmas 2025.

Please sign up on the sheet by the church office or call Lorene and she will sign you up by April 26. Men & Women are invited.

A chicken salad lunch will be served.



April Birthdays

7	Carrie DeMull
8	David Zeerip
11	Yvonne Lee
19	Arnold Dougan
21	Bill Black Linda Oosterhouse
24	Beth Hooker
27	Mary Butterick



April Anniversaries

6	Gary & Beth Hooker
19	Arnie & Betty Dougan
30	Pat & Robin Dekleva

Our Church Family:

Sympathy ~

We express our sympathy to *Brian Webb*. Brian's son, Eric passed away unexpectedly on March 22 at the age of 52. His funeral service will be held on Saturday, April 11 at 2:00 pm in our sanctuary. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at 1:00 pm here at church.

Health Concerns ~

We give thanks that *Jim Rynberg* is home again and getting out and about.
Carrie DeMull shared that a MRI showed cysts on her kidney to be growing in size. She has an appointment coming up as to how to address this.
Glenn Dickmann recovering from a recent surgery.





*Thank you to each one who donated
Easter flowers to help make our sanctuary
a lovely place in which to celebrate our
Lord's resurrection.*

Bill Black in memory of Carol.

Jack & Mary Butterick in memory of their parents.

John & Gail Cooper in memory of family and loved ones.

Brad & Stacey Church in memory of Jerry & JoAnn Church.

Carrie & Tony DeMull in memory of our fathers.

The Dougan Family in memory of Duane VanDuzen.

Pat Krehn in memory of my parents, Roger & Noreen Westerweel.

Dean & Jean Morehouse in memory of Ann Werner & Karen Zick.

Dean & Jean Morehouse in memory of Jack Trowbridge.

Luke & Karla Pfeiffer in memory of Jon and Judy Clapp.

Luke & Karla Pfeiffer in memory of Geraldine Faurot and Dorothy Hunsberger Bow.

Rev. Rap & Karen Posnik in memory of Bill Osborn, our son.

Barb & Larry Ross in memory of our sister, Ann Werner.

Jim Rynberg in memory of Lila & John W. Rynberg.

Jim Rynberg in memory of David & John H. Rynberg

Luke & Crystal Schmulz in memory of Rev. Michael Schmulz and Nicolas Nashu Micko.

Pat & Tracy Stern in memory of Viola Beth Stern.

Barb Veldman in memory of mother.

Jack & Mary Butterick in honor of Jim Rynberg for his years of dedication to the beautification of the altar.

Brad & Stacey Church in honor of family and friends.

Carrie & Tony DeMull in honor of our mother and grandchildren.

Arnie & Betty Dougan in honor of family and friends.

Dean & Jean Morehouse in honor of our amazing church family.

Kelly Parks, Holly & Lyle Shepherd, Stacey & Brad Church and families in honor of Arnie & Betty Dougan.

Jim Rynberg in honor of London Walker & Watson Wuebben.

Susan & Jeff Stewart in honor of Jack & Fran Stewart.

Board of Charitable Giving:

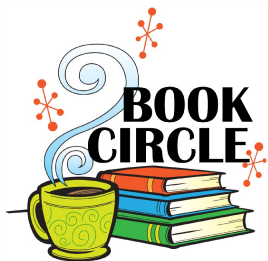
Thank you - thank you! for your generosity in the donations for Community Closet!!! We collected \$260.00 from the Noisy Offering and lots and lots of blankets and towels for which they were very grateful!

The Charitable Giving has decided for the 2nd quarter (April - June) to support Youth for Christ. Stay tuned for details as to how you can help.



Book Circle:

Book Circle meets Tuesday, April 7 at 1:00 p.m. at the Fremont Public Library. For more information contact Bev Williams 924-2525.



Women's Bible Study:

Women's Bible Study led by Beth Hooker will be meeting at **6:30 p.m.** (note the time change) beginning April 1. All women are invited to attend.



Men's Fellowship Luncheon:

Wednesday, April 1 - 12:00 noon. Men's Fellowship Luncheon Our Chef - Jack Butterick, Speaker - Pastor Luke on the Edmund Fitzgerald.



Palm Sunday Worship ~ March 29 ~ 10:00 a.m.



Good Friday ~ April 3 ~ 6:00 p.m.



Easter Sunday Worship ~ April 5 ~ 10:00 a.m.



Caring for God's Creation

Creation Care Sunday - April 19

April offers a beautiful reminder of God's handiwork. Earth Day encourages us to care for creation with gratitude and stewardship. Consider small steps — reducing waste, planting something new or enjoying the beauty of God's world with fresh appreciation.

The Wounds of Christ - Pastor Luke

In Easter, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As I looked over the upcoming passages for the season after Easter, I noticed something interesting in John 20. Jesus appeared to his disciples and showed his hands and side. He reveals his wounds. These wounds remain even after the resurrection. At first, I didn't know quite what to do with this, so I just noted it in my head. I had noticed that before, but this time it captured my attention. Something about the reality of Jesus still bearing wounds after the resurrection struck me. That through all eternity, Jesus will carry the marks on his body of what he went through. This seemed important to me, but I wasn't sure why.

If I had to guess, it is a reminder that though all is set right in Christ's resurrection, suffering doesn't go away. One of the criticisms of Christianity is that it is simply wish-casting. Just people wishing that everything would be made okay. But Jesus' wounds remind us that our faith takes suffering seriously. We don't, or rather shouldn't, brush away people's pain and hurt. Suffering is real, and its marks are carried with us. And no trite words or throw pillow bible verse make it better. Christ carries the suffering of the world for all eternity. Jesus walks with us in our hurt and feels it as well.

Yes, we celebrate and look forward to all being made right in the world. But at the same time, we take seriously the pain that sin and evil have caused. It is not simply forgotten and brushed aside. But the pain is healed by Christ in his death on the cross. Jesus' wounds remind us to take sin seriously. But it reminds us to be present with those who are wounded. In their wounds we see the wounds of Christ. Just as Jesus carries wounds, so do those around us. We can walk with them in their pain. We do not deny the hurt but believe that there is healing and comfort. Christ is not threatened by the pain caused by evil; he carries the wounds of it in himself. And he can sit with those also carrying those wounds. And so should we.

