

The Word on the (F) Street

Character: It's the Little Decisions That Count

Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

I am convinced that so many outcomes in our life are based, not on our one-time BIG decisions, but on the multitude of small decisions we have made along the way to get us to that BIG decision. As stated in the past, I have yet to know someone who took that first hit because they longed for a life of imprisonment, and alienation from friends and family. The same could be stated for our health, no one sets out to become obese only we make daily choices to eat that donut, or the extra portion and avoid exercise. Yet they made the first decision to use, and that led to a trail of decisions with undesired outcomes.

A biblical example of this is found in Judas. We read in John's gospel that when Jesus was reclining at Lazarus' home, Mary took a jar of perfume and poured it out on Jesus, then began to wipe it with her hair. Judas exclaims that it was a waste, and that it could have been sold and the poor. However Jesus made it clear beautiful act by Mary. In addition, John points out to us that Judas was stealing a little money, what's So what? Judas stole the big deal? Jesus even said we will always have the poor among us. Well, it is interesting to note that Judas did not appear to betray Jesus to his brutal death out of hatred, but out of greed.

"...opening the door to sin...can lead to stepping into greater struggles and downfalls than we could have ever imagined."

We can look at King David as well, and we see that he did not set out to have an affair and commit murder. He simply made some choices (like staying home from war), that led to an affair, that led to him committing murder, and that ultimately led to devastating effects on him and others.

The point is simple, opening the door to sin in small ways, can lead to stepping into greater struggles and downfalls than we could have ever imagined. The application can be more difficult: David needed a prophet to recognize his sin and repent. Where are we opening up the door in little ways? Where are we lacking in character that can allow for the door to be blown open? It is these little ways (lies, laziness, greed, gluttony, lust) that can lead to our own disgrace, and our loss of witness for God.

The good news is, as in David's situation, although there are often consequences, God is gracious and willing to redeem and restore a repentant heart.



Family Meeting Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

In the past, F Street Church has sought to have quarterly Family Meetings. Family Meetings are for those who are members of F Street Neighborhood Church, (defined as having a relationship with Jesus, active in giving, serving and attending) to gather to share some time together over food, learn about things happening, and give input to the direction of the ministry.



A Place of Acceptance and Direction
F Street Neighborhood Church

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Calendar for April 2022

3rd: Sunday Service

5th: 6:30am Prayer

6th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery

7th: 5:30pm FoodNet

9th: **Happy Birthday Xander Mailand**

10th: **Palm Sunday Service**

12th: 6:30am Prayer

13th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery

14th: 5:30pm FoodNet; **Happy Birthday Linoma Wingate**

15th: 6:30pm Good Friday Service

17th: **Easter Sunday Service**

19nd: 6:30am Prayer

20th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery

21st: 5:30pm FoodNet

24th: Sunday Service

26th: 6:30am Prayer

27th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery

28th: 5:30pm FoodNet

Please keep us up to date on birthdays & anniversaries! If you aren't sure that we have your information, talk to Jane Mailand or simply fill out a Welcome Card and hand it to her. In addition, if your address, phone, or email has changed, let Jane

In most years we never actually had all four of our meetings, and the past two years with COVID as a factor, it was even more of a struggle. As we look to the future we plan to have bi-yearly meetings. One in the spring, and one in the fall.

The next family meeting is to be held on Sunday, April 24th at 6:00 p.m. It will begin with a potluck, and include the topics: sharing 2021 budget review, non-profits updates, vision, and more.

Accessibility Matters

Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

F Street Neighborhood Church started with the vision to be a place of Acceptance and Direction. That idea of Acceptance and Direction means that we want to welcome all people (Acceptance) and share with them the truth of Jesus (Direction).

That acceptance also means that we need to have a facility that is accessible to all people. Apparently, this concept was not something that was considered some 100 years ago when our church building was designed. Accessibility means we want to continue to take down barriers that hinder people from coming to church or more importantly Jesus.

Here are just a few ways in which we see this.

Accessible Restrooms: Any time now we will be opening the new women's restroom (Northwest corner of the basement) and soon afterwards, we will be starting on the men's (in place of our current restrooms). This is access as both the men's and women's will have appropriate handicap stalls, additional stalls and baby changing stations. This also means that we will be eliminating the lines waiting outside of a locked door and they will be bright and clean.

This concept of accessibility was also picked up by the architects who put together the plans for the Art Chapel, which we hope to start this fall. After a visit to a Sunday morning worship, they noted our desire to open up our space, as the doors beneath the porch swung open. That is why the plans include not only all the appropriate accessibility for all people, but the ability to open a large portion of the front building to welcome people to come on in.

In the future, we trust that God will provide for us to be able to update our elevator (this is an accessibility concern for those who need it), and to build a permanent outdoor worship space. The outdoor worship space was a concept in practice, prior to COVID, to make F Street Church accessible to people from the neighborhood who might not be comfortable entering the building.

These are just a few of the things that are in process. We hope to accomplish them, and continue to be a place of Acceptance and Direction as we seek to share the good news

Let me close with this thought: In the gospels, we read one of the great stories about four friends who tear the roof off of a house to give their friend access to Jesus. I want to be careful not to imply that Jesus is only in the church, yet I do want to imply that we want to do all that we can to give people access to the place God has given us, to live out and teach the gospel.



Block Party **Becky Sallinger**

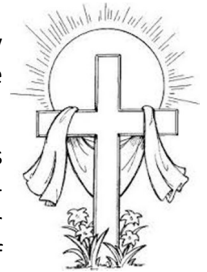
Please mark your calendars for our next block party on Sunday, April 24th! We will be outside in the parking lot if weather permits. Therefore, we will be extending an invitation to our neighbors by passing out fliers the week prior. This would be a great month to get involved. Let Becky know if you'd like to help by delivering fliers on Tuesday evening, April 19th: 402.430.0432.

Holy Week Services at F Street Church

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

During the month of April, our church family will gather to celebrate, and reflect upon the passion of Jesus during Holy Week.

On Palm Sunday, April 10th, we will witness the waving of the palm branches, by our children, as we recall the triumphal entry of our Lord into the city of Jerusalem. Pastor Jeff will be preaching that day at our 10:30 a.m. service.



At our Good Friday service on April 15th, we will be reminded of the sobering reality of Christ's death as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Join us at 6:30 pm that evening for this special service.

On Easter Sunday, April 17th, we will celebrate the glorious resurrection of Jesus, and his victory over sin and death. Pastor Bill will be preaching at our 10:30 a.m. service that morning.

Upcoming 3M Classes in April and May

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

With a view toward developing fully devoted Christ followers at FSNC, last fall we started offering a new series of classes called 3M, which include teachings on Membership, Maturity, and Ministry.

Last month our class on Membership, which helps folks become better acquainted with what it means to be a part of our F Street family, had fifteen in attendance! The next class which deals with Maturity, is scheduled for April 10th, and will focus on the habits that foster spiritual growth in our lives. Finally, the Ministry class, planned for May 15th, will explore how each of us is uniquely shaped to serve the Lord and his people.

The 3M classes occur following the Sunday morning worship service on the dates scheduled. We plan to provide lunch, so you will want to sign up when opportunity is given in the coming weeks so we will know how many to plan for. Please feel free to contact Pastor Jeff or myself with questions or to sign-up for these classes.





Lincoln School of Ministry Soon to Complete Its Fifth Year of Classes!

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

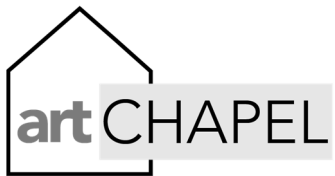
The Lincoln School of Ministry, now in its fifth year, and hosted by the F Street Neighborhood Church, is a one-year equipping and training program for Christians desiring to grow in their leadership and ministry skills.

The fall module (September-November) lasts twelve weeks, and provides students with a basic theological foundation and includes a survey of the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, an overview of Church History, as well as an introduction to Christian Doctrine.

Next, the winter module (January to mid-March) runs ten weeks. It provides practical instruction in key areas of ministry including Biblical communication, pastoral care, and evangelism.

Finally, the spring module (late-March to May) also lasts ten weeks. It addresses how to care for one's self, marriage, and family while serving others, as well as considering other important topics likely to be faced by leaders in the local church and community being served such as poverty, addiction, racism, etc.

In June we will be graduating the current class of students, who will have completed all three modules. This summer we will be receiving applications for next school year. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact me. The cost for each module is \$100, but we also have some scholarship monies available. We would love to have you join us for the next Lincoln School of Ministry.



Art Chapel Project **Jean Stryker**

This fall, we will begin the restoration of the clapboard building on the north side of the church to become the Art Chapel, a neighborhood art studio. Our contractor is on board, and permits are in progress. Fundraising has begun, and we are a little over halfway to our goal of \$120,000. We hope to be able to finish under budget by utilizing skilled volunteers when possible.

Can You Help?

In order to restore our building, and turn it into a hardworking studio, we need your investment. Would you consider what you might be able to give toward this project? Your donation, large or small, would be greatly appreciated! If fifty people would each give \$1000, our goal would be met. You can give via the Sunday morning offering by placing your gift in an envelope labeled "Art Chapel." To give online, go to the F Street Neighbor-

hood Church website, click on "Giving," and under "Choose Your Designation," select "Art Chapel Renovation." Please talk to Pastor Jeff Heerspink or Jean Stryker for more information.

The Plan

We're privileged to be working with the University of Nebraska College of Architecture on a design that will transform our humble building into a thing of beauty for our F Street Church family, and neighborhood. The UNL students have created a plan that will respect the history of the building, but adapt it to be a highly functional space for creative activities. There will be a large front deck with a side ramp, wide open interior retaining the original oak flooring, ADA compliant bathroom, and lots of storage. Finishes will include salvaged Nebraska wood, such as ash or red cedar. Jeffrey Day, UNL architecture professor, will head up the team this fall.

A while back, Jason Griffiths, another UNL architecture prof, visited a Sunday morning service at F Street Church, and was struck by our outdoor church setup. The idea that we would remove the walls from church to make it more comfortable for folks to attend services was inspiring to him. So, his students were tasked with finding a way to remove barriers that might keep a person from coming into the Art Chapel. The students rose to the challenge!

A section of the front wall of the Art Chapel will have the ability to slide, like a barn door, creating a large opening onto the deck and blurring the line between inside and outside. Opening the wall will speak, "Welcome" to the community, loud and clear. Imagine gathering for an art event where folks can move easily between indoors and out, and those passing by can easily see what's happening and join in without feeling self-conscious.

The Future

Just as our church building is busy seven days a week, we want to fill the Art Chapel calendar with events. Possible activities include hosting quilting, sewing, knitting, or crocheting groups. We will hold fine art classes, such as drawing, painting, printing and sculpture. We will offer Open Studio hours regularly, where people can follow their own creative interests independently. The public will be able to see our neighborhood artwork at First Friday events.

The Art Chapel will offer an expanded way for us to reach our neighborhood with Jesus' gospel. It will create opportunities for healthy interaction and help people find a place and community where they belong. Please pray for this exciting project!



Health Ministry Corner **Barb Douglas, HMFSC**

Greetings to all my Brothers and Sisters in Christ. May God's blessings shine on each of you during this time of Lent, and solemn reminding of what our savior, Christ the Lord, has done for us all. Growing up, Lent was a time of sacrifice, and giving up of something...usually food. It was kind of a mystery as to why we

did this practice of "sacrifice". As a child I really didn't always understand what "our sacrifice" had to do with Jesus dying on a cross. Weren't we supposed to be happy and glad that he did that for us? When I actually thought about it, he made ALL the sacrifice, all that I, or any believer, did was be thankful and live in a way that is pleasing to God. So I never really "got it" until later in life when I made the realization of how hard it is to live a life pleasing to God. How many of us understand that premise of living a life pleasing to the Lord?

I don't know about the rest of you, but I had a very difficult time getting the concept, and still do at times. To live a life pleasing to the Lord requires a lot of hard work. It is so much more than just "being good". After all, that has as many different meanings as there are people in this world! But the kind of "good" the scriptures talk about isn't anything we as human beings can truly understand, or accomplish on our own. That's why Christ asked the rich young ruler why he would call him good. For there is no one GOOD but God himself!

By reading the scriptures, we can get a kind of understanding about what Christ meant by that statement, "none are good but God." That was a defining moment for everyone that heard that statement, and it should be today for all of us. For there is no one good enough to face the God of the universe alone, and why on earth would we want to? I don't really think any sane person would even attempt such an irresponsible thing as that. And yet, I watch people try to do that very thing every day! The saddest part of that is the question they all ask, "Why does God turn his back on me? Why aren't things working the way I want them too?"

We all seem to miss the boat on that way of thinking. God doesn't expect us to get it right. And never does he think we can get it right without Christ showing us the way. The problem I run up against is this, I don't want to do it God's way, I want him to do things my way! Does that sound at all familiar? As an adult now, I have come to a very important conclusion, that my way is definitely not God's way!. How about yours? I came to a very disappointing realization, that if I can't even give up something as inconsequential, like food, and only for a meal or two, for a few weeks, how can I possibly give up "my way" forever? I can't, not without God's help, and that, my dear brothers and sisters, is the point of Lent: To help us to realize that no matter how long we have tried, or how hard we have worked at it, we can never do it right enough on our own.

Our works, our intelligence, our thoughtfulness, our best attempts at goodness, are like filthy rags, as we are reminded in

Isaiah 64:6, and again by Paul in Romans 3:10. As sinful, fallen beings separated from God, we often try to generate our own self-righteousness. This sin was attacked by Jesus at nearly every turn. He was in constant conflict with the Pharisees and scribes about this very thing. It is called "self-righteousness". If Lent does anything for us at all, it reminds us of our self-righteousness! Because aside from Jesus, we are completely incapable of living a life pleasing to God. There are a myriad of wonderful verses and stories in the Bible that tell us about this and how we can live a life pleasing to God. The Easter story is the climax of the "how" we can do this. This is extremely simple, but extremely difficult to understand. I learned this simple statement a very long time ago that helped me begin to get it, "I can't He can. So I think I'll let him!"

Nothing about living this life is easy, but there are many principles about how to live this life in such a way that God is always walking right by your side. That way when (not if) we fall, he is right there to help us stand up again. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, as 1 John 1:9 reminds us. As my dear grandmother used to tell me "Dear, confession is good for the soul." This Easter season, may God bless each and every one of us with this lesson: "I can't. He can. So I think I'll let him." That's about as simple as it gets.

Community Groups

Group: Men's Bible Study

Location: Green Room at Church Building

Contact: Tad Stryker

Day/Time: Mondays, 7 pm

Group: VA Small Group Study

Location: Victory Apartments (445 Honor Drive)

Contact: Ardeshir Mazhari, Keith Morrissey

Day/Time: Wednesdays, 2 pm

Group: Keith Morrissey's House

Location: 1750 Prospect Street

Contact: Keith Morrissey

Day/Time: Thursdays, 7 pm

Group: Women's Study: "The Holy Spirit"

Location: Fireside Room at Church Building

Contact: Beth Heerspink

Day/Time: Fridays, 10 am

Monthly Bible Reading Schedule: Wisdom Literature

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mar 28 – Psalm 19 | Mar 29 – Psalm 20 | Mar 30 – Psalm 21 | Mar 31 – Psalm 22 | Apr 1 - Psalm 23 |
| Apr 4 – Psalm 24 | Apr 5 – Psalm 25 | Apr 6 – Psalm 26 | Apr 7 – Psalm 27 | Apr 8 – Psalm 28 |
| Apr 11 – Psalm 29 | Apr 12 – Psalm 30 | Apr 13 – Psalm 31 | Apr 14 – Psalm 32 | Apr 15 – Psalm 33 |
| Apr 18 – Psalm 34 | Apr 19 – Psalm 35 | Apr 20 – Psalm 36 | Apr 21 – Psalm 37 | Apr 22 – Psalm 38 |