



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Member of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

120 W. Morrell St., P.O. Box 227, Otsego, MI 49078

269-694-6085

May 2022

A Message From Pastor Bruce...

Over a year ago the Leadership Council and FCC members and friends studied a book called, *Born Free*, by author, Steve Brown. This spring I will begin a new Bible Study based on a book called *Living Free*, by the same author. The study will take place on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00pm. If there are a handful of people that are interested, we will gather at 6:00pm also.

The main theme of the book, *Born Free*, is accepting that Jesus Christ lived, died, and rose again to set us free from the tyranny of Satan. We live by being justified by faith alone. We are to live free as Christians, and be daring. We are set free from false guilt so we may be bold in presenting the Gospel. The theme of *Living Free* is "neurotic" Christianity. The pagans of the world sometimes see Christians as wimps. *Living Free* is assertiveness training for Christians who are ready to get over their fear and guilt, and live in the freedom and boldness of Christ.

I have been teaching the message of God's grace for many years. I believe the grace message separates us from other church communities. It makes us different and clarifies the truth of the Gospel. Something I believe people desperately need. I do not think the grace of God can be taught enough, so I push ahead. When someone grasps the full implication of God's grace it changes their lives. They tend to think and speak differently, be kinder and less judgmental, and forgive more. A person will laugh more and even dance a little! When a church body begins to embrace and create a grace filled community it will grow spiritually, individually, and maybe even numerically. The ob-

jective of *Living Free* is to live as Philippians 4:13 teaches: ***For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.***

We all need to be strengthened in our faith, so I invite you to join me. I am sure we will have a grand time!

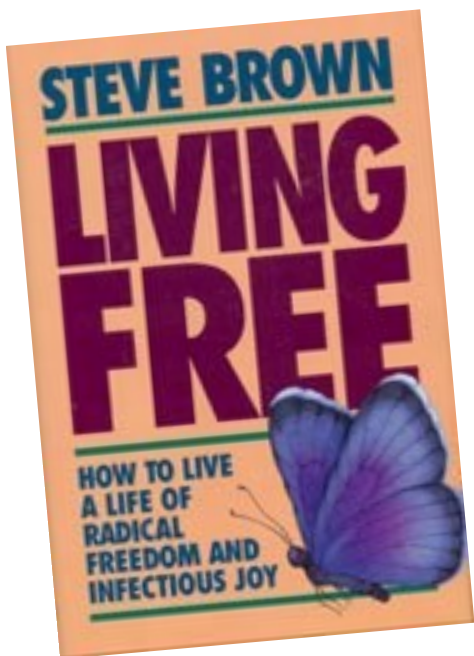
By His Hand of Grace, Pastor Bruce



The following names and dates are promoted by the FCC Prayer Team as a way to pray each day for church members, pastors, various ministries that FCC is involved in, as well as missionaries that we support. Please use it as a guide sheet during your daily prayer time. What better way is there to show love and concern for our church family and missionaries than to hold them up in prayer.

May 1 - Pastor Bruce & Lynn
May 2 - Jim Barker & Nancy Benedict
May 3 - Linda Beattie
May 4 - Shawonna Bell
May 5 - John Bierema
May 6 - Dale Blanchard
May 7 - God's Helping Hands
May 8 - Pastor Bruce & Lynn
May 9 - Ken & Georgiann Bleeker
May 10 - Gordy & Judy Boelman
May 11 - FCC Leadership Council
May 12 - Shirley Boelman
May 13 - Nancy Boettcher
May 14 - CRU Ministries
May 15 - Pastor Bruce & Lynn
May 16 - Ray & Jane Bomeli
May 17 - Shirley Brainard
May 18 - Lynn Bronkema
May 19 - Warren & Frances Brooks
May 20 - Jack & Julie Buck
May 21 - Back Pack Buddies
May 22 - Pastor Bruce & Lynn
May 23 - June Burge
May 24 - Lloyd & Louise Clawson
May 25 - Rick & Karen Clemens
May 26 - Gloria Crago
May 27 - FCC Quilters
May 28 - Marinus & Donna DenHarder
May 29 - Gail Doster-Parker
May 31 - The LEMA Institute

The FCC Prayer Team is a dedicated, committed, group of "prayer warriors". Requests are prayed daily for three weeks by each team member. Verbal and written requests are welcome. Prayer requests can be included in the bulletin or kept within the "team" - please make this known when you submit your request.





BIRTHDAYS

15th - Tim Lane
 20th - Paula Baker
 23rd - Don McPherson
 27th - Kim Sparks
 28th - Angie Hathaway
 30th - Lloyd Clawson

ANNIVERSARIES

May 6th

Jack & Shirley Hawley
 27 years

May 11th

Chuck & Patty Hyet
 26 years



**American
Red Cross**

BLOOD DRIVE
Tuesday
May 31st
12pm - 5:45pm

For an appointment visit
RedCrossBlood.org
 enter sponsor code:
 OtsegoFCC, or call
 1-800-RED CROSS

**First Congregational
Church**
 120 W. Morrell Street

From Your Leadership Council:

The next Fellowship Lunch date has been set as May 15th following worship service. The Council is still seeking an interested host for the meal. All are invited to attend.

The council has been prayerfully revising the Church By-Laws in hopes of having the revisions to the congregation soon. The budget committee and treasurer, will also begin the process of evaluating the annual budget in order to have it presented to the congregation at the Budget Meeting on June 12th.

Council members and Pastor will begin the process of picking new objectives for the coming year in preparation for the Annual meeting which is scheduled for Sunday, July 17th, following worship.

God's Helping Hands: "Light Up Your Life!" is the series that GHH will be focusing on this summer. In John 8:12, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." Using a lighthouse and other items and seaside critters, the team will be sharing the good news of salvation and challenging believers to shine the light of Jesus to the world.

Caribbean Children's Foundation: CCF is

nearly finished with the construction of the clinic on Ile-a-Vache. The price of building supplies has tripled following the August 2021 earthquake in Haiti. They are moving ahead with completion as building supplies and funding becomes available. CCF is hoping that mission teams begin to return to Haiti soon. They haven't had a team since February 2020. Please pray that God will soon bring peace to Haiti so that mission teams feel safe to return.

Wycliffe Bible Translators - from Mary Ann Lord: Thanks so much for your contributions of October, December and March! I'm holding off on asking the two Nawa translators, James and Jorge, to come to Pucallpa to renew working on the book of Luke with me because I would like to have important conversations with the translation consultant about key terms first. There are several key terms that I have formulated Nawa terms for, but they need to be run by the consultant. If she approves them, great. If she doesn't, then I will know I will need to go back to the drawing board with James and Jorge. Please pray for wisdom for all involved. Preceding the conversations with the consultant, I am making up a list of the key terms, and the proposed renderings, for the consultant to review ahead of time.



OVERALL BUDGET ANALYSIS

Year To Date

Attendance for

APRIL

April 3rd
66

April 10th
72

April 17th
84

April 24th
63

	July-March BUDGET	July-March ACTUAL	July-March DIFFERENCE
REVENUE	\$129,263	\$132,274	\$3,012
EXPENSES	\$129,263	\$134,134	(\$4,872)
OVER/UNDER	\$0	(\$1,860)	(\$1,860)

The above shows we have taken in **\$3,012** more than budgeted. We have spent **\$4,872** more than budgeted.