



CONNECTING POINT

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

Don't Curse the Darkness, Light a Candle!

That's great counsel for all of us, including those who have been doing more **cursing** than anything else lately. **Don't curse the darkness, light a candle!** In other words, don't just point out problems, help find solutions. Don't criticize everyone and everything. Do something to correct what's wrong and commend what's right. Don't sit around sulking, shaming and shouting about how bad things are. Get up and do something positive to make things the way they ought to be.

In the Church, we are not in the **darkness cursing** business. Never have been and never will be. Instead, we've been called and commissioned to "let our light so shine before men" (Matthew 5:16). To put it another way, we've been called to light a candle. Not put another log on the fire of conflict. The church does not exist to list all the things that are wrong. Rather, we've been enlisted to encourage and exhort others that things can be different ... better.

For years I've said if people would direct half as much energy to doing something positive and constructive as they do to whining, complaining and griping, they wouldn't have anything left to whine, complain or gripe about.

Sure, there are always going to be things that need fixing. So let's fix them instead of fussing over them. Sure, there will always be problems. But let's solve them instead of stewing over them. Sure, there will always be differences to deal with, obstacles to overcome and injustices to make right. Let's be the people who give it all we've got to reconcile and repair instead of walking away while things are still a wreck and people are filled with despair.

What if Jesus had looked at us and said, "What a sorry bunch that is. They don't deserve Heaven"? That would have been a correct assessment by the way. But He didn't do that. He would have been merely **cursing the darkness**, and He never did that. (Read that last sentence again.) The Bible says in Romans 5:8, that instead, **He lit a candle**. Paul puts it this way, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

How about you? Have you lit any candles lately? Or have you slipped into the same old habit of **cursing the darkness**?

In your marriage, have you made a list of all the things that are wrong? And all the reasons why there's no hope, no future and no point in trying anymore? I've got a better idea. Why not **light a candle**, instead?

At your job, are you fed up and frustrated with the way things have been going? Tired of being overworked, underpaid and never appreciated for who you are and what you do? Are you sick of seeing others who always seem to get better treatment, better benefits, or better everything than you do? Tempted to air your grievances and give those in charge a piece of your mind? Think it's time for those in the know to know exactly how you feel? Here's a better suggestion: **light a candle**.

In your relationships, have you been hurt by a friend? Betrayed? Slandered? Gossiped about, mistreated or rejected? Or maybe just ignored? Would you like to get revenge, pay them back and even the scales? Can I suggest an alternative? **Light a candle**.

What about concerns for our country? Economic uncertainty, unemployment, abortion, violence, racism, drugs, crime, injustice, threat of terrorism, a \$36 trillion national debt, the political gridlock in Washington, D.C., ad infinitum. Ad nauseam. What could one person possibly do that could help our country and somehow make a positive difference? You could **light a candle**.

What about the concerns in your church? Finding all the volunteers it will take to minister to the kids in the youth programs this year? What about collecting enough funds in the weekly offering to maintain facilities, pay salaries, and support the various ministries of the church? Or the many who still don't trust God when it comes to tithing? What about the need for more parking? More leaders? More workers? More everything?

If all you did were think about what you're facing, you could easily get frustrated and overwhelmed by it all. Or, you could **light a candle!**

Now that's good advice ... for all of us.

Blessings,

Pastor David



That You May Believe: A Journey Through John's Gospel

The Gospel of John is a bold and beautiful invitation to know Jesus—not just to know about Him, but to believe in Him and have life in His name. Unlike the other Gospel writers, John’s purpose is explicitly clear: *“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”* (John 20:31).

In this series, **“That You May Believe,”** we will journey through key moments in John’s Gospel—signs, conversations, miracles, and declarations—that reveal who Jesus truly is. From the Word made flesh, to the Good Shepherd, to the Resurrection and the Life, John leads us again and again to the heart of faith: trusting in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Whether you’ve walked with Jesus for years or are just beginning to ask questions about Him, this series is for you. As we open the pages of John’s Gospel, our prayer is that each of us would come face to face with the living Christ—and that we would believe. And in believing, that we would find life. True life. Eternal life.

Let’s open our hearts and minds to the One who came so that *we may believe*.



Loving God, watch over our children as they begin their new school year. Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning.

Guide and protect all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy. Give wisdom, patience, and joy to teachers as they serve their students.

In Jesus’ name we pray.
Amen.

St. Peter Lutheran Church
Greene, Iowa

A BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRAYER

From the Church Secretary:

Summer is here. I’m in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays about 9 am and will be there until the day’s work is done (sometimes that’s an hour, sometime it’s 2-3 hours). If you need something and I am not here, just leave a note on the desk .

If you want something in the bulletin or in the on screen announcements, I need the information by close of business on Wednesday before the announcement is to run. Thanks.

Julie



Psalms 113:3
From the rising of the
sun unto the going
down of the same the
LORD’S name is
to be praised.



Great Faithfulness

Read Ruth 1:15-18 (NLT)

¹⁵ “Look,” Naomi said to her, “your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same.”

¹⁶ But Ruth replied, “Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.” ¹⁷ Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!” ¹⁸ When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more.

Reflect

Do you have a Ruth in your life? Someone who has remained loyal to you no matter what?

Loyalty, commitment, and faithfulness often seem like lost virtues these days. When a marriage gets tough, most people split rather than work it out. If someone has a misunderstanding with a friend, they just ghost them. Rather than commit to a local church body, many Christians these days church hop.

I’ve heard leaders of clubs and organizations lament that many of the volunteers they depend on say they’ll help out, but they fail to show up. I’ve even heard employers complain that they’ve had employees they just hired stop showing up for work right after the company had invested time and money into training them!

That’s why, when I read Ruth’s declaration of loyalty to Naomi, I am astounded! Now, I don’t necessarily blame Orpah for returning home to her family. She had married Naomi’s son, not Naomi. She had fulfilled that vow until death parted them. Now, she was facing a lifetime of loneliness and hardship. Her best chance for survival and happiness was in Moab. I can’t hold her decision to obey her mother-in-law and return to her own family against her.

But Ruth took loyalty to the next level. She didn’t just remain faithful to her husband until death. She remained committed to the family that she had married into even after her husband was gone. She even pledged her loyalty to her mother-in-law until death parted them! And it wasn’t just an empty promise. She swore an oath that God could punish her anyway He saw fit if she were to break her vow to Naomi.

Even more amazing to me is that Ruth’s fidelity to Naomi came at great personal cost. No one can accuse her of only sticking with Naomi for what she stood to gain. All Ruth knew was that she was leaving her family and her people to live among strangers who considered her kind to be enemies. She knew that she was giving up her best chance for remarriage and motherhood. Plus, she knew that in order to live among the Israelites, she’d have to commit to following their religion and their God. She had no way of knowing at that point what Naomi’s God was going to do in her life as a result of her faithfulness.

When I consider Ruth’s selfless devotion to Naomi, I can’t help but consider how her faithfulness reflects God’s faithfulness to us. One of my favorite verses says “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” ([Lamentations 3:21-23](#)).

Ruth is a beautiful example of faithfulness and there is much we can learn from her. But the Lord is the *perfect* example of faithfulness! As believers, it is our job to reflect that faithfulness in our marriages, families, friendships, churches, and workplaces. Loyalty shouldn’t be a pleasantly surprising characteristic of Christians but an expected one.

Respond

Lord, I know that You are a God “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” ([Exodus 34:6](#)). Like Ruth, help me reflect Your faithfulness to others. I want to selflessly consider others as more important than myself ([Philippians 2:3](#)). All for Your glory! Amen.

Reveal

Keeping our commitments at work, remaining loyal to friends and family, staying faithful to our spouses, and being willing to sacrifice for the good of others is a great testimony. Reveal God’s faithfulness to others by being faithful to others.



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FCC SHUT-INS

The Gardens

Darlene Nelson (#108) 712-434-5311
Delores Wheeler (#402) 712-229-5418

Heartland Care – Marcus

Charlotte Barnes (#209) 712-229-3244
Della Rupp (#201)
Connie Johnson (#301)

Accura – Cherokee

Randy Cox (#206)
Glenn Wallace (#206) 919-815-0334

The Beck

Joanne Nelson (#106) 712-229-9202

Home

Bea Carver
1123 W. Bluff St.
Cherokee
712-225-2656

Time To Celebrate



Birthdays

2nd—Joyce Clark
4th—Dick Baker
7th—Penny Lundell
9th—Linda Vannatta
10th—Sylvia Kerns
14th—Kieth Ludvigson
17th—Mike Cronin
20th—Della Rupp & Cale Curtin
22nd—Charlotte Barnes

Anniversary



4th—Polly & Guy Fishman (46 years)
5th—Marcia & Mark Casey (37 years)
15th—Pam & Mike Cronin (27 years)

If you have an August birthday (or anniversary), and I missed getting you on the list, please let me know and I will get our records updated. I apologize if I did miss someone. Thank you. *Julie*

UPDATED

INFORMATION

I am finding some information (current address or phone, birthday, anniversary date, etc.), is not right in our records. If you aren't sure if your information is right, please call Julie on Tuesday or Thursday morning or take a form from the table in the foyer, complete it and leave it in the office. Thank you!



MCS Birthday Party - August 9

Barry Nelson is in Charge

Weekly / Monthly Activities

- ☐ **Bible Study** - Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. **(on break for now)**
- ☐ **Homemakers** - 2nd Thursday 9:30 a.m.
- ☐ **Scout Troop 107** - Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.
- ☐ **Bible Buddies** - Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. **(on break for now—will be back after Labor Day)**
- ☐ **Quilt Batts Connections (Sewing Days)** - First Full Weekend (Friday @ 9 a.m. & Saturday all day)
- ☐ **Quilt Batts Meetings** - 3rd Tuesday 7:00 p.m.

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WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE

August 2025

3	10	17	24	31
Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Angela Hall	Dixie Draper	None
Children's Sunday	Children's Sunday	Children's Sunday	Children's Sunday	Children's Sunday
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Angela Hall	Dixie Draper	None
Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion	Shut-In Communion
David Hall	Kirk Nelson	Larry Heschke	Kevin Schmillen	David Hall
Communion Coordi-	Communion Coordi-	Communion Coordi-	Communion Coordi-	Communion Coordi-
Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks	Kirk Nelson	Barry Nelson	Larry Heschke
Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message
Mike Sparks	Guy Fishman	David Hall	Kirk Nelson	Mike Sparks
Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader
Sharon Henkel	David Hall	Sharon Henkel	David Hall	Sharon Henkel
Piano	Piano	Piano	Piano	Piano
N/A	Eleanor Johnston	N/A	N/A	N/A
Singers	Singers	Singers	Singers	Singers
Angela Hall	Larry Heschke	Angela Hall	Nancy Nelson	Angela Hall
David Hall	Nancy Nelson	David Hall	Larry Heschke	David Hall
PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint
Nancy Nelson	Braella Inman	Nancy Nelson	Braella Inman	Nancy Nelson
Sound	Sound	Sound	Sound	Sound
Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks	Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks	Larry Heschke
Janitorial	Janitorial	Janitorial	Janitorial	Janitorial
Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman
Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman

BOARD OF ELDERS & DEACONS



MONTHLY MEETING

August 10, 2025

Following the Morning Worship Service

CHRISTIAN HOMEMAKERS

AUGUST 14, 2025 @ 9:30 AM AT THE CHURCH

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

Date	Offering	Attendance
7/6/2025	\$1,598.00	On Campus: 31 Online: 21 Total: 52
7/13/2025	\$1,263.00	On Campus: 63 Online: 23 Total: 86
7/20/2025	\$3,616.00	On Campus: 37 Online: 26 Total: 63
7/27/2025	\$N/A	On Campus: 47 Online: 23 Total: 70

The Larrabee United Methodist Church Invites You To An

Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social



FREE WILL OFFERING INCLUDES:

Tavern, Hot Dog, OR Coney,
Homemade Dessert & Drink

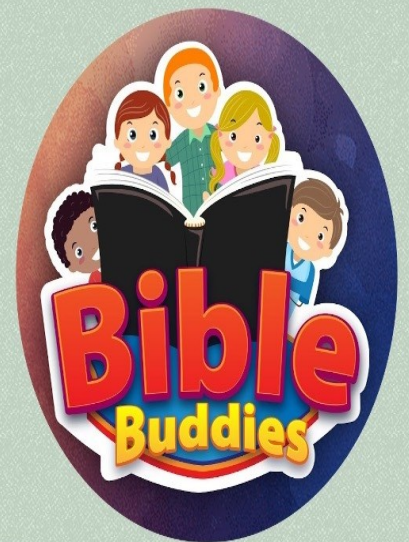
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO MISSIONS

Serving: 4:30 P.M. To 6:30 P.M.
Sunday, August 10, 2025
At The Larrabee Community Center

For the Entire Family
Meal Provided



BIBLE BUDDIES FALL KICK-OFF



COOKOUT

SEPTEMBER 3 @ 6:30PM


First Church of Christ
772 N 2nd St
Cherokee, IA 51012
(712) 225-2667
www.cherokeefcc.com

Registration for Children
Ages 4 through 5th Grade

Food! Games! Fun!

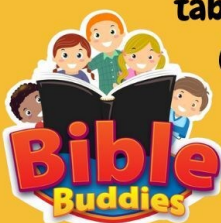
Pull together

POP TABS



Make a difference

We're so proud of our Bible Buddies students for pulling together this year and making a difference by collecting 13 lbs 11 ozs of pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House Charities.



Way to go, kids!

Ronald McDonald house was so pleased to receive them.

Keep on collecting your tabs. Maybe next year we can get 14 pounds!



Bible Buddies is taking the summer off.

Our Fall kick off event is
Wednesday, September 3rd
@ 6:30 pm!

(See full announcement on page 6.)

First Church of Christ
772 N. 2nd Street
Cherokee, IA 51012
(712) 225-2667

MISSIONS THE CHURCH SUPPORTS



Handbags with Hope

Purses and Toiletries for Women in Need

Accepting donations of new or gently used purses or handbags and toiletry items to fill our handbags.

Handbags With Hope is meant to bless women struggling from abuse and addiction.

Items Needed:

- toothbrushes
- toothpaste
- mouth wash
- deodorant
- pads
- tampons
- lotion
- soap
- shampoo
- conditioner

