



Congregational Christian Church The Red Brick Church in Stillman Valley

(Evangelical, Independent)

207 W. Roosevelt Road, PO Box 370
Stillman Valley, Illinois 61084-0370
Rev. Dr. Chris Brauns
Associate Pastor David Bogner

MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER

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Christians should pay close attention to evangelical teaching about forgiveness. The gospel is at stake. Don't accept all you read and hear. Much of today's teaching on forgiveness threatens to reshape the gospel. I look forward on Sunday evening (3/7/2021 at 6:00 PM) to updating our congregation about current forgiveness

and repentance projects.

Crossway published *Unpacking Forgiveness* in 2008. By God's grace, it is still a part of forgiveness discussions 13 years later.

Writing a book requires sacrifice from everyone involved, especially family. Our children were young when I was "unpacking forgiveness." I picture Mary Beth praying faithfully as a four-year-old for the book. I also remember a Fourth of July when my family celebrated without me. I'm thankful for my patient wife!

The sacrifices have continued since publication. Off the top of my head, across the last 13 years, I remember preaching in Washington D.C., Florida, Montana, Washington state, Texas, Wisconsin, Iowa, Vermont, New Jersey, Indiana, Kentucky, England, and Africa. I'm sure I'm missing somewhere. I can't begin to list the radio or podcast interviews. Just thinking about all the writing, preaching, and interviews makes me *tired*.

Given all that writing and preaching requires, someone might ask, "Is it worth it?"

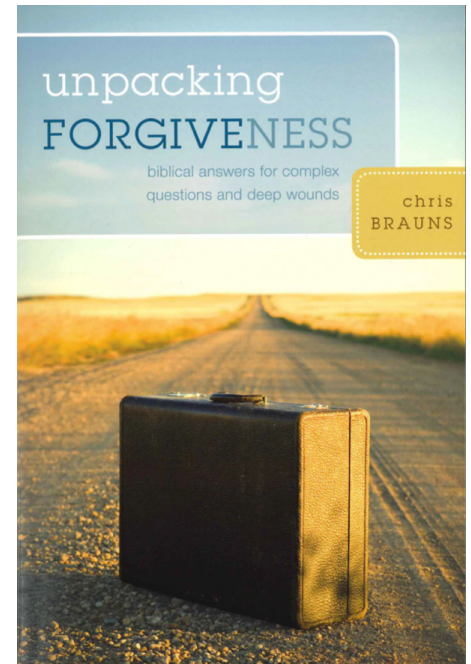
The answer is emphatically "yes." It is imperative that I (and we as a church) continue to submit to the Lord's call to see all of life – including forgiveness – through the lens of the gospel. This is a discussion we must not concede. I'll explain more on Sunday.

The truth of forgiveness is at the heart of the gospel. If we misunderstand what the Bible means about forgiveness, then not only will our resolution of interpersonal conflicts be short-circuited, but also the understanding of how God forgives those who repent and put their faith in Jesus will also be at risk.

Sadly, even within conservative Christian circles a biblical understanding of forgiveness is increasingly rare. On Sunday evening, I will summarize some of the ways that a biblical understanding of forgiveness is being distorted.

* * * * *

We continue to reboot from the pandemic. Our Christian Education programs are ramping back up. Mortar Groups are meeting. People are returning to church. *Let's be as proactive as possible in encouraging people to be mortared into community.*



CHAIRMAN OF BOARDS/COMMITTEES

Deacon Board – Stephen Brass218-5076
Deaconess Board – Deb Bonne979-0885
Trustee Board – Brad Baker670-0039
CE Committee – Marlene Miller289-8453
Memorial Com. – Jeff McLindsay440-2042
Mission Com. – Clayton Midtsem262-4254
Music – Lance Mennen985-2484

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through February 28th, 2021

Total Approved 2021 Budget = \$491,248

Divided by 52 weeks/year = **\$9,447/week**

Budget Giving through Feb. 28 \$85,024
Actual Giving through Feb. 28 \$69,759
Budget Giving vs. Actual Giving \$-15,265
Actual Expenses through 2/28/21 \$70,174
Actual Giving less Actual Expenses \$-415

As of February 28, 2021, total capital campaign contributions received were \$1,192,441. This is 76% of total pledges made for the building program.



**Do we
have
your
e-mail
address?**

If the church office does not have your email address, please be sure to email your address to

the office at the following email address:

to the office at the following email address:

ccoffice1@comcast.net

The email address for Pastor Chris is:

cdbrauns@gmail.com

The email address for Pastor David is:

davidbogner4@gmail.com

We will be emailing out announcements, news articles, coming events, etc., so don't miss out!! Be sure we have your email address.

SPRING FORWARD



Daylight Savings Time
begins March 14th

SUMMER CHURCH CAMP

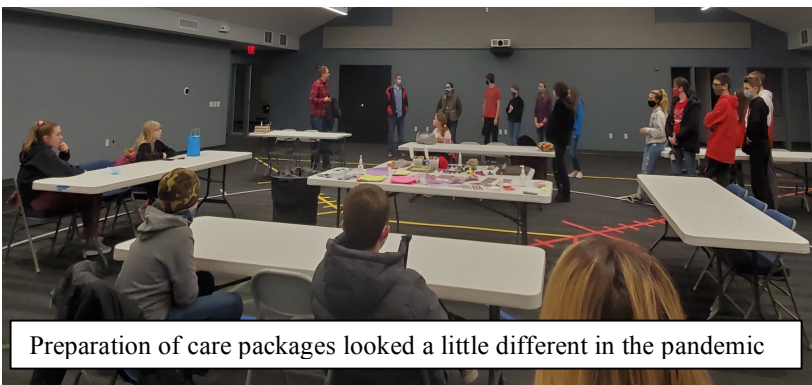
Parents are reminded to be sure and pre-register their child / children for Summer camp this summer! Both Camp Forest Springs and Camp Timberlee are registering! The CE Board offers \$100 scholarship for summer church camp and both camps also have scholarships available.

Thank you

Dear Red Brick Church Friends:

It is from my thankful heart that I want to express my appreciation to you all. Some of you I know by name and smiling faces, some I know only by your smiling faces. Your prayers are a great treasure to me, as God has worked through your prayers in my life. I recently had a visit from a special young mom who delivered to my door beautiful flowers, loving cards and a sweet treat while her young daughter hung out the car window and waved and waved at me. I am so joy filled to be a part of a church that teaches God's Word and how to live His Word in our world today. It is a privilege to pray with and for the Red Brick Church and its pastors.

Joyfully Praising Jesus,
Joanne Boyer



Preparation of care packages looked a little different in the pandemic

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- March 1st - Jamie Brauns, Christopher Brauns
March 2nd - Brent Bonne, Sydney Thomas
March 3rd - Kent Cronberg
March 4th - Jana Cox, Grace VanBriesen,
Grace Jacobson, Randy Stukenberg
March 5th - Tessa Baker, Shari Halsmer,
Arlett Bonne
March 6th - Sam Miller, Paisley Poliska
March 7th - Jeff McLindsay, Chelsea Colon
March 11th - Pastor Chris
March 12th - Jamie Adams
March 16th - Keith Wiltfang
March 17th - Emily Houston
March 22nd - Adrien Booker
March 23rd - Josephine Rosko
March 25th - Hadley Colon, Carter McCandless
March 26th - Homer Bailey
March 28th - Oliver Jones
March 29th - Jeremiah Bogner
April 1st - Avis Hall
April 4th - Heidie Raine, Natalie McCandless

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- March 11th - John and Sandy Stout
March 15th - Steve and Donna Arnold
March 21st - Gary and Connie Rhodes

CHILDREN'S C H U R C H

We are excited to announce that we are opening up our CHILDREN'S CHURCH again, beginning Sunday, March 7th during the 10:30 am worship service for all children Pre-K through those currently in 1st Grade.

Children will start the service in the sanctuary with their parents. During the praise & worship song just before the sermon, the children can leave and head down to our Preschool Department for the rest of the service.

Parents are asked to pick up their child/children from the Preschool Department immediately after the worship service.

We do ask that if your child plans to attend Children's Church, that they register beforehand through our Breeze registration.

AWANA THEME NIGHTS

March 3rd: Duct Tape Night. Show you leader something you have made out of duct tape.

March 10th: Neon Night; wear neon to your zoom call with your leader.

March 17th: Get your green on for St. Patrick's Day tonight.

March 24th: Favorite Song Night. Tell your leader your favorite song.

March 31st: No AWANA – Spring Break.

April 14th: In-person AWANA Closing at the Brick Center from 6:00 – 7:00 pm.

FROM PASTOR DAVID

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:27

Gatherings are happening more frequently as we grow into the Brick Center. Mortar Groups have made great use of the space. Women of the Word meets in it on Tuesday night and the youth on Wednesday night for Bible studies. The junior high Sunday school class is taking place in the northwest corner classroom. Teens also met in the Brick Center for a Super Bowl party, Sunday afternoon youth group, and a Board and Card Game Afternoon during the month of February.

Our youth continued a beautiful tradition of ministering to the widows of The Red Brick Church over Valentine's Day weekend. On Friday night, many gathered to make cards and prepare flower bouquets. During the day of Saturday, February 13, several families braved the snow and cold to deliver care packages that included the cards, flowers, and a sweet treat.



Great group of teens enjoying a game of Settlers

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD UPDATE

We are excited to be opening the nursery up for both the 9:00 and 10:30 worship services beginning on March 21st. We are in need of more nursery volunteers to be able to serve our young families in this way. Please contact Kari Janoski (815-297-3459) if you would like to serve in the nursery on Sunday mornings. There will be options to sign up for the 9:00 and 10:30 services for nursery in the Breeze registration beginning with the registration for March 21st.

We continue to have Sunday School for Pre-K through 8th grade on Sunday mornings during the 9:00 worship service. The current curriculum for Pre-K through 5th grade is on the Armor of God, and we will be studying Holy Week. Our Junior High students are continuing with the BIC curriculum. Our Junior High class has moved into the Brick Center and they are enjoying using the new space!

We are planning a change for our VBS program for this year. Due to the unknown nature of possible restrictions this summer, and due to the fact that our VBS attendance in summers past has well surpassed 100 children, we are not planning on having our traditional VBS this summer. Even with the new space the Brick Center provides, social distancing of that number of kids would be a great challenge. We are excited about our change for this year though! The details are still being worked out, but what we know is that we will be holding a Family VBS on a few weekday evenings this summer. Expect fun, food, games, and God's Word. Stay tuned for more details!

Easter Sunday is April 4th, and we are so excited to be able to worship together this year! There will be Sunday School as normal for Pre-k through 8th grade and Children's church will be available during the 10:30 service. We are also excited to be having an Easter Egg hunt again this year! It will be immediately following the 10:30 service, in the yard between the church and the administration building.

We are so excited to be having an in-person AWANA closing in the Brick Center on Wednesday, April 14th from 6-7 pm! We will follow the same mask rules that we do on Sunday morning, so please wear your mask as you enter and leave the building, and as you move about. You may remove your mask when you are seated. We are looking forward to seeing our AWANA Zoomers in person to hand out their awards!

Planning is beginning for our children's ministries for the fall. Furniture and supplies are arriving in the Brick Center! We are looking forward to fully utilizing the space God has provided in the Brick Center!

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH
PO BOX 370
STILLMAN VALLEY, IL 61084

