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**GREETINGS FROM PASTOR KENYON**

Hope for the Weak! Jn 18:28-40

There once was a Jewish Rabbi, a Hindu priest, and a politician who went on a hike. Night fell and they were exhausted. The hotel on the map was nowhere to be seen. So, they knocked on the door of a farm and asked if they could spend the night. The farmer said, "Of course, but I only have a small room with two beds. One of you will have to sleep in the barn." The Hindu priest said, "I need no material comforts. I will gladly take the barn."

The rabbi and the politician were settling in when they heard a knock on the door. They opened it to find the Hindu priest standing there. "So sorry, my friends, but there is a cow in the barn, and I cannot sleep beside such a holy animal." The rabbi said, "No problem, my brother. I'll take the barn. The Hindu priest and the politician were settling in when they heard a knock on the door. They opened it to find the rabbi standing there. "So sorry, my friends, but there's a pig in the barn, and I can't sleep beside such a filthy animal."

The politician said, "OK, let it be remembered that I sacrificed my comfort for the greater good." The rabbi and the Hindu priest were settling in when they heard a knock on the door. They opened it to find the pig and the cow standing there. So, from this morning's scripture reading in John 18 we find another pretty famous politician name Pilate.

Now, as we all know, Pilate was more than just a simple politician. So, this morning I'd like to spend a few minutes giving you some historical background on Pilate that I found to be rather interesting. First off, Pilate married into a political family. His wife Claudia was the granddaughter of Caesar Augustus. So, Pilate was a member of the emperor's family by marriage, not merit.

Pilate served as the Roman prefect of Judea for ten years, from 26-36 A.D. Now, a prefect is like a governor. It's a position of power, but not absolute power. Pilate took his orders from Rome and for that reason, he was insecure in his position. He ruled at the whim of his wife's family. Being appointed prefect of Judea was a mixed blessing in itself. Judea was a hotbed of insurrection. The Jews were a restless people, ready to begin a rebellion at the drop of a hat.

So, Pilate got off on the wrong foot with the Jews from the very get go. You see, as soon as he took office in 27 A.D., he needlessly provoked the pious folks in Jerusalem by riding into the city with his troops bearing their standards in full view. Now, it's important to understand that on the top of every flagpole the soldiers bore was a carved image of Caesar. For the Jews this was a transgression of the commandment to have no graven images. Even more grievously, because of the Roman custom of emperor worship, Pilate's action smacked of blatant idolatry. This thoughtless action provoked a riot. So, Pilate was in trouble from the very beginning of his reign.

*Continued on pg. 2...*



*Inside This Issue:*

GREETINGS FROM PASTOR KENYON	1-3
BOARD MEETING MINUTES	4-5
POWER OF PRAYER	6
NEWS/HELPFUL INFO	7
CHURCH CALENDAR	8

To view the worship service, please go to our website:  
[iolafcc.org](http://iolafcc.org)  
 ~~~~~Simply click on "LIVE VIDEO" if you are tuning in on Sunday morning.



## GREETINGS FROM PASTOR KENYON

*Continued from pg. 1...*

Then, there were some skirmishes in which Pilate proved himself a brutal ruler. Luke 13 mentions one of these where Pilate's soldiers killed some Galileans. To compound their crime, however, the soldiers then took the Galileans' blood and mixed it with sacrifices to their pagan gods. It really was a despicable act. Pilate's brutality probably grew out of his fear of being deposed. He was caught between a Roman government which had very little respect for him and a civilian population that was known for its intractability. And then he had to deal with this man named Jesus.

Remember, it was the religious leaders who brought Jesus to Pilate's palace. Which is quite interesting. You see, they were willing to bring Jesus to Pilate, but they refused to actually enter Pilate's palace. Why? Because this would make them ceremonially unclean by entering the residence of a lowly Gentile. That's because most Jews believed that if you took two steps over a Gentile threshold you defiled yourself. So, they wanted Pilate to do their dirty work for them, but they also wanted to keep their distance from him while he did it.

Now, to show you how afraid Pilate was of offending the religious authorities, he agreed to come out to them. The dialogue is intriguing. Pilate asks the religious authorities, "What charges are you bringing against this man?" referring to Jesus. "If he weren't a criminal," they answered defensively, "we wouldn't have handed him over to you." That alone tells us what we need to know about the charges brought against Jesus. They were totally unsubstantiated.

Pilate knew of no Roman law Jesus had broken. He tried turning him back over to the religious leaders: "Take him and judge him according to your own law." That didn't work. "We're not permitted to put anyone to death," they said. And it was true. The only man in the city who had the authority to pass a death sentence was Pontius Pilate. And the religious leaders were determined that Christ be put to death.

Then the religious leaders hit Pilate's weak spot: "If you let this man go, you're no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar." There's no question Pilate was frustrated by Jesus. It was also clear to him that Jesus posed no threat to the empire. He said himself that his kingdom wasn't of this world. So, Pilate returned again to the religious authorities and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him."

Then, Pilate tries to reason with them. Then he tries to bribe them. The, he remembered that the Jews had a tradition where they'd release one prisoner at Passover. So, he offered to release a notorious political prisoner named Barabbas! Still, they wouldn't be appeased. "Crucify him, crucify him," they shouted, referring to Jesus. He then tried turning Jesus over to Herod. But that didn't work either. Pilate was getting desperate. The mob was demanding that Jesus die, while Pilate's sense of justice told him this man was innocent. He simply didn't know what to do. He couldn't in good conscience find Jesus guilty, but it wasn't politically expedient to set him free. Three times, Pilate tried to release Jesus, fully convinced of Jesus' innocence, but the mob just wouldn't listen. "Crucify him, crucify him," they shouted louder and louder.

Matthew reports that when Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility". Here was the man who had the innocent Son of God put to death. And this time, it wasn't because he was brutal. It wasn't because he was trying to rob Jesus of his life. He wasn't. Pilate's only crime was, that he was weak.

*Continued on pg. 3...*



**GREETINGS FROM PASTOR KENYON**

*Continued from pg. 2...*

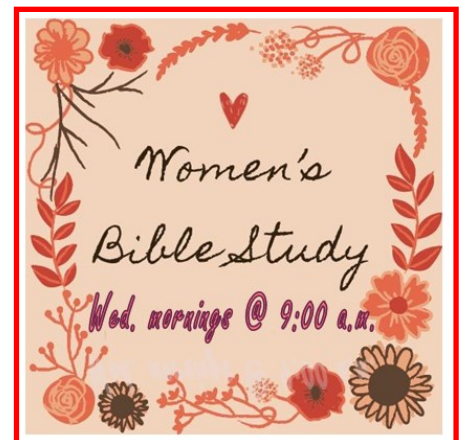
And friends, this is true of so many of us today. If we do wrong, it will probably never be because we're being brutal, or greedy or even hard-hearted. It will probably be because we are morally weak, spiritually weak. We keep quiet when we should speak up, we give in when we should never ever walk away, we willingly compromise our faith when we should remain true to our Christian values, morales and ethics.

Now, here's something I find really interesting. Pilate was one of the few people on earth to ever have a one-on-one interview with the Son of God. Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" And here's the unvarnished truth: After Pilate had scorned Christ, had him flogged, mocked and crucified, if Pilate had only owned up to his weakness, Christ would've forgiven him. He, too, would have experienced the grace of Jesus Christ.

And that's true for each of us. If we've been weak, if we've at some time or another, betrayed our values, if we've ever followed the crowd rather than voicing our convictions, if we've committed some kind of grievous sin, not because we were being mean, or because we're just a bad apple, but simply because we're weak, there's always room at the foot of the cross for each and every one of us. Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu once put it this way: "We tend to turn the Christian religion into a religion of virtues, but it is a religion of grace. You become a good person because you are loved. You're not loved because you are good."

Thank God there is hope for weak people like you and me. There was even hope for Pontius Pilate if he was willing to accept it. But sadly, he didn't. So, my friends, let's not make that very same mistake. May we always be ready to accept the forgiveness and grace of our amazing and wonderful God today.

Blessings, Pastor Kenyon





**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**First Christian Church Board Meeting  
March 08, 2026**

**In Attendance:**

|              |               |                    |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| John Scovill | Kenyon Kaehr  | Heather D. Mentzer |
| Steven Uitts | Donna Kaehr   | Pat Heinz          |
| Helen Uitts  | David Donovan | Skylar Starke      |
| Matt Powe    | Edna Donovan  | Susan Locke        |
| Gina Powe    | Bill Hobbs    |                    |

John Scovill called the meeting to order and opened with prayer. The minutes of the February 08, 2026, board meeting were reviewed. John asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. Pastor Kenyon had a correction on the pastor’s report. It should have read that Pastor Kenyon is soliciting ideas for a Spring church event, not that he is coming up with ideas. John called for a motion to approve the minutes, as corrected. Donna Kaehr made the motion, Matt Powe seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

John called for the financial reports. In the absence of Traci Ridge, Susan Locke reported that we had a balance of \$108,994.24 in the general fund as of February 28. Traci had received information from the insurance company regarding the church building, and the annual premium will remain the same at \$16,071.00. We had a total of \$147,845.43 in the checking account and \$55,636.53 in the CD at Community National Bank & Trust. We had \$65,332.08 in the building maintenance fund and \$43,880.47 in the investment fund at Edward Jones. At the end of February, we had total assets of \$312,694.51. John asked for a motion to approve the financial report. Matt made the motion. Skylar Starke seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

John then called for committee reports.

Worship Committee, Heather Mentzer: Heather had nothing new to report.

Membership Committee, Skylar Starke: Skylar had nothing new to report.

Memorial Committee, Denise Mentzer: no report.

Christian Education Committee, Donna Kaehr: Donna had nothing new to report.

Mission & Outreach Committee, Sherrie Riebel: no report.

Property & Facilities, Bill Hobbs & Dave Donovan: Dave and Bill had nothing new to report.

*Continued on pg. 5...*



## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

*Continued from pg. 4...*

Church Clerk, Judy McGraw: no report

John called for unfinished business. Pastor Kenyon had nothing new to report on behalf of the Youth Minister Committee. The installation of the new TV on the back wall is scheduled for next week. Matt and Bill have arranged to rent a lift for the installation and will coordinate with Dan Damron to do the programming for the new TV.

Matt gave an update on the search for a new mower. He presented a mower comparison worksheet that included the make, model, engine, fuel capacity, speed, transmission, deck thickness, mower weight, warranty, and price quotes for six different mowers from area dealerships. After some discussion of the pros, cons, and features of the various models (and input from those who do the mowing), it was decided to purchase the Country Clipper model at a cost of \$7,811 from Heck's Mowers in Westphalia. It includes a 4-year/600 hour warranty. Skylar made the motion, Donna seconded, and the motion carried.

There being no additional unfinished business, John called for new business. Heather and Gina Powe brought up for discussion the electric piano in the choir room, as it is in need of repair again. It was purchased sometime in the early 2000s, and it has plastic keys that break and have to be replaced. She contacted the gentleman who normally services that piano, and he said it would cost approximately \$2,500 to replace all the keys. Gina said that her family had recently purchased an electric keyboard for approximately \$3,000. It was decided to buy an electric keyboard to replace the electric piano. Pastor Kenyon made a motion to spend up to \$3,000 for this purchase. Bill seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Heather and Gina will check with Denise to see if it might be possible to use the memorial funds for Dorothy McGhee for this purchase.

Heather also mentioned that she and Annette Ratlief will host an open house sometime in April for Operation Shoebox. More information will be available once plans have been made.

There being no additional new business, John called for the pastor's report. Pastor Kenyon reported that the March penny dinner has been cancelled due to the Lenten and Easter sunrise breakfasts being scheduled so close to that same time. The March penny dinner proceeds were to go to the Gideons. Pastor Kenyon suggested a \$500.00 donation be made to them in lieu of the penny dinner proceeds. Skylar made the motion, Heather seconded, and the motion carried.

John called for a motion to adjourn. Helen made the motion to adjourn. Matt seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Pastor Kenyon gave the closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Locke  
Board Secretary



# APRIL

## Newsletter



### THE POWER OF PRAYER



If you would like to add or edit a prayer need or praise on the list, please call the church office.

Join us on Wednesdays; at noon or 6:30 p.m., as we come together for prayer.

#### Our Church Family and Shut-Ins:

L.C. Hill, Annette Ratlief, Janie Henderson, Phyllis Lueker & Lori Ensminger, First Responders, Police, Fire, etc...

Unrest in our Nation, Quick end to Iranian Conflict;  
Also, our Military— Annika H., Alex K., & Meaghan I.

#### The ministry, outreach and leadership of FCC; Local Needs:

Meals on Wheels, Allen County Ministerial Alliance food pantry ~  
Hope Unlimited domestic violence  
interventions ~ Pregnancy Resource Center finances and  
curriculum needs ~  
Spiritual Awakening in our church and community

#### Global Needs:

~ Peace in Jerusalem and Israel that they may turn to their  
Messiah ~ Global Community and the need for God-fearing  
leaders ~ Christians persecuted throughout the world, Israel—  
AT WAR; Pray for Rain for wildfires/ fire control in the US





EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 5  
**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**



**REMEMBER!!!**  
Save your UPC labels  
For our Missionary Fund



~Thank you!



**ELDER**  
Craig Mentzer

**DIACONATES**  
Denise Mentzer, Suzan Emmons,  
Bill Hobbs, Nathan Mentzer

**POWERPOINT**  
04/05 - Chris Sayles  
04/12 - Bill Hobbs  
04/19 - Travis Hermstein  
04/26 - Charmanne Sayles

**NURSERY VOLUNTEERS**  
Gina Powe  
Charlah Green  
Cindy Hill

**GREETER(S)**  
Susan Locke & Steve Uitts

Women's Ministry  
Monthly Meeting

6:30 p.m.

**2ND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH**

Total Monthly amount needed:  
\$16,943.19  
March combined giving: \$25,063.00  
**BUDGET MET FOR MARCH: +48%!!**



**TITHES & OFFERINGS**  
*Giving back to God*

**Ladies Lunch**

11:30 A.M. @ ROOKIES

**3RD MONDAY OF EACH MONTH**



# APRIL

## april

| SUNDAY                                                                                                                      | MONDAY                                                                                                           | TUESDAY                   | WEDNESDAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | THURSDAY                                                                                                                 | FRIDAY                                                                                                                                                                        | SATURDAY                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                  |                           | <b>1</b><br><br>Lenten Breakfast—<br>FCC<br>  | <b>2</b><br><br>Thursdays at 6:30pm    | <b>3</b><br>                                                                               | <b>4</b>                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>5</b><br><br>Evan Powe<br>Nathan Mentzer | <b>6</b><br>Beulah Green                                                                                         | <b>7</b>                  | <b>8</b><br>                                                                                                                   | <b>9</b><br><br>Thursdays at 6:30pm    | <b>10</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>11</b>                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>12</b><br>                              | <b>13</b><br>FH- Reserved<br> | <b>14</b>                 | <b>15</b><br>                                                                                                              | <b>16</b><br><br>Thursdays at 6:30pm | <b>17</b><br>                                                                            | <b>18</b>                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>19</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>20</b><br>FH- Reserved<br> | <b>21</b><br>FH- Reserved | <b>22</b><br>                                                                                                              | <b>23</b><br><br>Thursdays at 6:30pm | <b>24</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>25</b>                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>26</b><br>Traci Ridge                                                                                                    | <b>27</b>                                                                                                        | <b>28</b>                 | <b>29</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>30</b>                                                                                                                | <b>Wednesdays</b><br><b>Prayer 12:00</b><br><b>&amp; 6:30 p.m.</b><br> = Sparks & Embers |  = Choir Practice<br><br>Happy Birthday<br>Happy Anniversary |
|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                  |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                   |