

Four Mile Church Pillars

Pillar 11. Build each other up in Christ (exhort/affirm/encourage/peacemaker)

- a. FMC is committed to taking our next steps towards Christ together by exhorting, affirming, and encouraging others
- b. FMC holds that Jesus is the head of this church & He calls His church to build up, strengthen, and encourage believers
- c. FMC helps all believers find their confidence in Christ
- d. FMC desires that all should engage in ministry expressions with a Holy Spirit empowered affirmation of Truth
- e. FMC promotes our ultimate encouragement that Christ is triumphant over sin and death
- f. FMC rejects the lies, doubts, guilt, and shame from the accuser
- g. FMC does not sit in judgement on anyone's situation; we will stand beside you, no matter what you are going through
- h. FMC is always about the business of pointing people to the person, words, & works of Jesus Christ, the cornerstone

Relevant Scripture

1. Rom 12: 1-2 (The Message), So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.
2. Acts 2:42-47, And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.
3. Rom 12:3-8, For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.
4. 1 Cor 12: 27-31, Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts.
5. Eph 4: 11-16, And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
6. 1 Thes 5:11, Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.
7. Romans 14:19, So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

8. Hebrews 3:13, But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

9. Jude 1: 17-23, But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

10. Eph 4:29, Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

11. 2 Cor 13:11, Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

12. Heb 10: 24, and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

13. 1 Cor 14: 12, What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

14. Prov 29:5, A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.

Reformed Theological Tenets

1. ECO Polity, While believers may experience their membership in Christ's body in spontaneous and unstructured gatherings, they fulfill the Lord's purposes best when they covenant to fulfill the biblical vision of membership in particular congregations. These covenantal relationships provide the real-life context for the Holy Spirit's ongoing transformation of believers into spiritual maturity, by nurturing understanding, encouragement, correction, and discipleship-in-mission.

2. ECO Polity, Becoming a covenant partner is important not only to the congregation but even more importantly for the covenant partner, as they are positioned to receive encouragement, support, and correction that the Lord promises to those who share spiritual fellowship. In committing to the cause of a life lived in and through Jesus Christ, covenant partners grow in Christian community together to become more Christ-like. In Christian community, we realize the fullness of life together and life in Christ, and discover our unique place in a common mission and narrative of God's work. The covenant partner and the congregation are both blessed and become a great blessing as they covenant together, intentionally, in Christ's work.

3. Westminster Catechism, Q. 107. What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen," teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing Kingdom, power, and glory to him; and in testimony of our desire and assurance to be heard, we say, "Amen."

4. Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 107. Is it enough, then, if we do not kill our neighbor in any of these ways?

A. No; for when God condemns envy, hatred, and anger, he requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, to show patience, peace, gentleness, mercy, and friendliness toward him, to prevent injury to him as much as we can, also to do good to our enemies.

5. Westminster Catechism, Q. 36. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification are: assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

Recommended Books:

1. Getz, Gene. Building Up One Another
2. Ewell, Sam. Building Up the Church
3. Crabb, Larry. Encouragement: The Unexpected Power of Building Others Up
4. Jeremiah, David. The Joy of Encouragement
5. Leeman, Jonathan. Don't Fire Your Church Members
6. Goldman, Caren. Healing Words for the Body, Mind, and Spirit: 101 Words to Inspire and Affirm
7. Chapman, Gary. The Five Love Languages
8. Wolfe, Paul. My God is True: Lessons Learned Along Cancer's Dark Road
9. Dunn, Bill, Leonard, Kathy. Through a Season of Grief
10. Kaiser, Walter. A Biblical Approach to Personal Suffering
11. Furman, David. Being There: How to Love Those Who are Hurting
12. Herod, Dan. Suffer Well: Walking Victoriously Through Your Valleys

Venues to Implement the Pillar

1. Partner with the Serve Pillar to provide encouragement to those FMC serves.
2. Volunteer as Auxiliary Deacon assistants in areas where encouragement is needed such as reaching out to our shutins or writing letters to those who are experiencing grief.
3. Volunteer to support FMC funerals.
4. Serve as greeters for worship services
5. Serve as a mentor in one of our student ministry programs
6. Encourage elders, deacons, and church staff with candid, loving, and helpful feedback

Platforms & Exercises to Develop the Pillar

1. Have an open discussion on the 5 Love Languages and create lists about how we can speak different love languages better.
2. Identify 10 Bible verses that offer hope in times of struggle such as Lam 3:22:23.
3. Discuss as a group how FMC might provide hope to those who receive a cancer diagnosis.
4. Prepare a list of Scripture that speaks to suffering in this age as a Christian.
5. Meet with those in the Serve Others Pillar to discuss ways in which FMC can better encourage those in need as we serve them.

6. Pair up and practice listening to your partner. Ask him or her what their biggest concern is. After you hear their issues, pray with them and then take 30 mins to go to Scripture and look up what God has to say on the matter. Then reconvene and talk your partner through what you learned from Scripture. Pray again with each other.
7. As a group, discuss the perils of flattery.
8. Discuss conflict resolution and how to deescalate a conflict.