

**September 2014 Newsletter**  
**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
**1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595**  
**515-832-2232**  
<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>



*“But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.” -- Matthew 5:44-45*

Have you ever won a fight?

I remember a time when I got into a real fight. I was about 12, and it erupted near a playground one afternoon after school. I guess you could say that I “won” (no one was seriously hurt—mostly a lot of shoving), but I remember going home and feeling like anything but a winner. Maybe it was the adrenaline in my bloodstream that was causing my agitation, but there was a sickening feeling in my gut and my heart that nothing had been solved at all with our brawl; instead I now had to wonder what would happen next between us. Would this fight escalate our feud, which up to that moment had only been a “war of words?” Would he bring some friends along with him the next time, and even the score? Would he vandalize our house? Would I have trouble with him in school?

Now by age 12 I had heard a hundred adults say “fighting doesn’t solve anything,” but that day I experienced the truth of those words for myself, for I realized our fight had exacerbated the conflict between us and fueled a fire that would only burn hotter than ever. And sadly, we see this truth being played out constantly all around us—from the fights between family members leading to a murder in our own town... to the fights we are witnessing in Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza, Syria, Ukraine, and yes, even Ferguson, Missouri. All of this fighting has frankly solved little, if anything; all of this fighting has been justified in the name of “victory”; all of this fighting has only stoked more fuel on a worldwide firestorm of violence which shows no signs of burning out any time soon. And the few voices left who cry out “violence doesn’t solve anything” are generally disregarded, ridiculed, even silenced...because *nearly everyone is convinced that their fight is justified, and that it can be won.*

We Christians find ourselves in the difficult situation of following a world religious leader who was both opposed to violence *and* a victim of violence. Jesus was one of the few voices in his day who cried out against violence, saying in essence “fighting doesn’t solve anything!” ...and we know the horrible way he was silenced by the authorities of his day. His message and the cross are a constant reminder to us of how costly it can be when a non-violent message meets a very violent world...and all of us must negotiate the costs we are willing to bear as we follow Jesus’ teachings on non-violence. But one thing seems clear to me: all of humanity needs to face the difficult truth that fighting rarely resolves human differences, but only prolongs and feeds intensifying cycles of attack and retaliation—whether the fighting is happening in our families, our cities, or in foreign lands. *We need to choose a different answer to our disagreements other than resorting to violence in all of its forms; we need to choose a different way to respond to aggression, insults, and injuries other than returning those violations back upon the aggressor in larger and larger doses.*

In this charged climate of worldwide violence where every fight is seen as justifiable and winnable, **every non-violent act and thought counts.** Yes, pray for peace (we’ve certainly heard that suggestion enough!) but more importantly, ACT for peace. As the scriptures say, do not render evil for evil; do not allow yourself to get caught up in fights of any kind—even those on social media. Speak and live your truths as your conscience dictates, but relinquish the Crusader mentality that insists you must vanquish those who oppose your beliefs and your values. Realize that all—even those you most despise—are loved no less by God than you. And believe, as Jesus taught, that the only fight worth winning—and indeed the only fight capable of being truly “won”—is the fight within you to let love guide your response to all others’ actions...rather than hatred, the desire to attack, and the thirst for revenge. —Pastor Craig

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

M 8 am - 1 pm  
T 9 am - 1 pm  
W 8 am - 12:30, 1 pm to 4:30  
Th 8 am - 12:30, 1 pm to 4:30  
F 9 am - 1 pm

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

3 - Jeff Fogle  
6 - Debra Carlson  
7 - Helen Nessa  
7 - Brandon Lahr  
8 - Donna Downs  
8 - Vada Rae Williams  
9 - Robbie Maass  
10 - Brylie Ann Butrick  
11 - Gage Milton Smith  
15 - Hannah Stirling  
15 - Mark Vance  
16 - Morgan Struchen  
17 - Paige Heslop  
17 - Kamryn Sue Pruisman  
18 - Erin Fiala  
18 - Verna Weieneth  
19 - Liz Lahr Smith  
20 - Mary Byrne  
21 - Claire Marie Bailey  
24 - Zachary Sjoberg  
24 - Will Weieneth  
26 - Kayla Nelson  
28 - Dena Rohmiller  
28 - Britany Tudor  
30 - Mark Brim



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

1 - Ron & Laurie Epps  
1 - Travis & Stacy Wearda  
3 - Jim & Donna Downs  
9 - Marlin & Marian Abbott  
18 - Tyler & Sara Abens  
18 - Les & Leanna Ploeger  
18 - Jim & Cindy Henning  
19 - Landen & Betty Ploeger  
23 - George & Galene Groves  
25 - Bob & Heather Butrick  
28 - Jon & Mary Gilbert

## ATTENDANCE

<b>August 3</b> 101	<b>August 9</b> 67
<b>August 17</b> 72	<b>August 24</b> 64
<b>August 31</b>	

## Church Staff

**Rev. Craig Blaufuss**, Pastor  
Office: **832-2232** Cell **297-4316**  
Pastor's email: [revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net](mailto:revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net)  
**Michele Omvig**: Admin. Assist. **838-2989**  
Church's e-mail: [fcuccwc@wmtel.net](mailto:fcuccwc@wmtel.net)  
**Sharon Perry**: Stephen Ministry Ldr **832-5435**  
**Nancy Shelton**: Choir Director **835-0208**  
**Myra Maxon**: Organist **832-3662**  
**Mary Van Diest**: Pianist **832-3754**  
**Curt/Lorraine McCoskey**: Cust's. **832-5341**  
**Myra Maxon**: Financial Secretary **832-3662**  
**Luverne Bierle**: Church Treasurer **832-4752**



## PARISH NURSE NOTES

Bullying is a big deal. Parents and others involved in children's lives should take bullying seriously

Signs of being bullied:

- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking being sick.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Falling grades, loss of interest in school, or not wanting to go to school.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry.
- Self-destructive behavior such as harming oneself, running away from home, or talking about suicide.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.

## KLAB starts September 10

It's time for another year of Kids Learning About the Bible—KLAB! Our program year starts Wednesday, September 10, right after school until 5 p.m. We will again enjoy activities/games, snacks, a Bible lesson, crafts, cooking, drama, field trips, and music!

To help keep KLAB a ministry of our entire church, we need more volunteers to help! We will again be asking for donations of snacks each week for 12-15 children, and we are actively seeking adults/older teens to help with activities, crafts, drama and music. You do not need to make a weekly commitment to help—volunteering once a month, or even just one time will be greatly appreciated! If you would like to help with KLAB in any capacity, please speak with Pastor Craig.

## Adult Sunday School starts September 14

Our Adult Sunday school class reconvenes at 9:15 a.m. (note the new time!) on September 14 in the multipurpose room. We will begin the program year looking at "Mysticism and Mystics"—the encounters of human beings with the sacred and hidden dimensions of Life. We will explore the mystical traditions not only of our own Christian faith but also of other world faiths, and we will also explore both ancient and current practices and techniques that can lead to mystical experiences.

## Coats for Kids

UDMO is offering a program to supply coats for needy children, up to age 18. You can pick up a tag with info on what size coat to purchase at Mornin Glory. Monetary donations are also appreciated.

## Ice Cream Social

St. Mary Parish in Williams, Iowa is holding an ice cream social on Sunday, September 7 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. They will serve pork loin sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans, pie, homemade ice cream and a beverage. Cost is a free will donation.

# Thrift Sale Oct. 3rd & 4th

## Fall Cleaning and Sorting

- **SORT**
- **CLEAN**
- **REDUCE**
- **RECYCLE**
- **DONATE**



On Friday & Saturday, Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>

the Women's Fellowship will be conducting their semi-annual Thrift Sale. Beginning Oct. 1 we will be accepting those items cluttering up your lives. If you need assistance transporting your items, call Cindy Henning.

Please note that the organizations we donate to after the sale have restrictions on what they are taking. We ask you to help us by bringing only items that are clean, complete, and in good repair. Ask yourself, would I want to purchase this item, before you bring it to donate. We will no

longer accept TVs

because do not have anyone to take them after the sale.

If you have questions contact Cindy Henning at 515-297-0422.



## Thanks!

Upper Des Moines would like to thank you for your support. Your donation of school supplies is much appreciated.  
UDMO staff

## Dear Friends of Iowa Conference,

Join us...an opportunity to learn more about the Iowa Conference and make decisions that link our local churches, our associations, our committees and commissions, our Conference, and the national UCC setting. We will elect leaders, consider a budget and hear reports. Please join us!  
A day of worship, lunch gathering, and plenary.

## 2014 Annual Meeting

**Date:** October 11, 2014

**Location:** First Christian Church, 2500 University Ave, Des Moines 50311

**Time:** Register = 9am  
Worship/meeting = 10am - 3pm

**Cost:** only \$25/person includes lunch



### WARM HEARTS WARM HOMES WINTER WEATHERIZATION 2014

**Central Iowa RSVP**, in partnership with a number of community organizations, will be coordinating the **Warm Hearts Warm Homes Winter Weatherization Program** in Hamilton County for 2014.\* We have set the date for winterizing homes for **Nov. 15, 2014**, from 8:30 to noon. A **task force** is being established to take the necessary steps of action to have a successful weatherization program. Members of the task force will assume particular responsibilities, and report their progress to the group on a monthly basis.

#### **Task Force** Areas of Responsibility:

- Publicity—KQWC, Daily Freeman-Journal, City Newsletter, Chamber Newsletter
- Challenging civic groups, churches, businesses, banks to set up teams of volunteers (3-4 people plus one team leader)
- Establishing list of teams of volunteers (need 15 teams)
- Determining eligibility of applicants (goal of serving 30 households)

- Scheduling audits of homes, assigning auditors to visit homes
- Assigning teams to homes
- Communicating with team leaders for training and preparation

**Your help is needed** to organize the WHWH Winter Weatherization Program, and to promote the program as a worthwhile effort for the whole community. Will you give some of your time to ensure the success of this program? Your participation would be greatly appreciated. **Please let me know** if you are willing to be on the task force. The first task force meeting will be held in mid-August. Here's to a successful weatherization program!  
Becky Koppen  
Central Iowa RSVP  
North  
515-832-2525  
[rsvphamco@cirsvp.org](mailto:rsvphamco@cirsvp.org)



\*RSVP is currently securing funding sources for this project.

### RVTV

Due to a lack of volunteers, we WILL NOT be participating in the RVTV Chili Cook-Off on September 8. We want to thank those that volunteered to help. We appreciate it. Please attend the activities and let Webster City shine again. We are a great town!

### Budget Time Approaching

Each board has received a worksheet upon which they can prepare their budget for 2015. The Finance Board has asked that we hold the line on expenses; if necessary to increase an item, look for another place to reduce. Our offerings are behind our expenses this year; (offerings through July were 93,936.40; expenses were 114,333.62.) We need to make a conscious effort to be good stewards.

These worksheets should be given to the Finance Board (turn in to the church office) by September 14.

## Scholarships Awarded

A total of \$9,500 was awarded to the following scholarship recipients.

### BESS LYON

Brandon Arkland - \$ 450.00

Alexis Byrne - \$ 450.00

Bailey Fogle - \$ 450.00

Sherry Leksell - \$450.00

Jan Ryherd - \$ 450.00

Katie Short - \$ 450.00

### POOLE

Erica Oberender - \$ 900.00

### PTACEK

Erica Oberender - \$ 500.00

Karmen Wehrhan - \$ 1,400.00

### HELEN JOHNSON

Alexis Byrne - \$ 800.00

Bailey Fogle - \$ 800.00

Sherry Leksell - \$ 800.00

Erica Oberender - \$ 800.00

Katie Short - \$ 800.00

## Scholarship Thanks

First Congregational UCC Family,

Thank you for awarding me with a scholarship for a second year! I am so excited to be finishing my last year of pharmacy school so I can finally join Andy down in Joplin, MO. Thank you for your support and we promise to visit!  
Karmen Wehrhan

Church Family,

I want to thank you for all of your support over the years. Thanks especially for your monetary gift. This scholarship will be put towards my education at Iowa State University, helping me to continue my aspirations of becoming a meteorologist. Your continued support is much appreciated. I always look forward to visits home to see all of you Sunday mornings. Thank you again, for everything!  
Jan Ryherd

Thank you so much for the three scholarships. I really appreciate it and it will be very helpful with all of my school needs. I hope to see you all soon, peace and love.  
Erica Oberender

## REMINDER BOARD



Start off the school year right by making this wipe-off board, which can help you remember important things.

### What you need:

- Adult help
- 5" x 7" picture frame with glass (available at a dollar store)
- Lined notebook paper
- Scissors
- Low-heat glue gun
- Buttons, ribbon, stickers or foam shapes
- 1" piece of Velcro
- Erasable marker

### What you do:

1. Using the cardboard insert or picture from the frame as a pattern, cut the notebook paper to fit the frame. Then insert it behind the glass.
2. Decorate the outside of the frame by gluing on buttons, ribbon, stickers or foam shapes.
3. Glue one side of the Velcro to the erasable pen and one side to the frame. Then attach the pen to the frame.
4. Place the board on your desk, dresser or kitchen counter. On the glass, write daily reminders about assignments and activities.

**Choir practice starts September 3, 6:00 pm.**



9:15 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL  
10:30 A.M. WORSHIP

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Webster City, Iowa**  
**Cabinet Meeting – August 12, 2014**

Members Present:

Moderator-----Verna Bierle	Pastor-----Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator----Luverne Bierle	Trustees-----Tom Riemenschneider
Finance Sec.-----Myra Maxon	Women's Fellowship--Joyce Gelhaus
Finance-----Duane Vavroch	Mission-----Ginnie Veach
Staff/Parish----- Dalene Schlitter	Worship-----Holly Riemenschneider
Treasurer-----Luverne Bierle	Evangelism-----
Christian Ed-----Vicki Blaufuss	Clerk-----

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by the Moderator Verna Bierle. Pastor Craig Blaufuss opened with a meditation and prayer. The minutes of the previous Cabinet meeting were approved as printed.

**Reports of Pastor, Boards and Committees:**

The board and committee reports were open for discussion and review. Holly Riemenschneider, reporting for **Worship**, stated that the music videos were well received at the Saturday night service.

The Worship Board will be reviewing how often Saturday night services occur. Vicki Blaufuss, **Education**, reminded us of Rally Day on September 7<sup>th</sup>. Details under Education report. Tom Riemenschneider, **Trustees**, reported that work was progressing on the air conditioning system. He stated that final renovation plans had just been received from Schlotfeldt Engineering. After the trustees review the plans, they will be presenting it to the cabinet and congregation for consideration. Myra Maxon, organist, reported that the new pedal board had been installed on the organ that day. Dalene Schlitter moved, Holly Riemenschneider seconded that the old pedal board could be given to the organ installer: motion carried upon vote. Dalene Schlitter, **Staff/Parish**, reported that they had approved vacations for Michele Omvig and Pastor Craig. Ginnie Veach, **Mission**, highlighted their activities. Details under Mission report. Duane Vavroch, from **Finance**, stated that boards should begin preparing their proposed 2015 budgets and turn into the church office by September 14. He reminded us that we are behind in giving this year so that we should prepare for zero growth in the budget. Luverne Bierle, **Treasurer**, reported that \$5,000 was taken out of a money market in May to cover expenses, followed by \$10,000 in June. The money market currently has about \$82,000 in it but \$70,000 is designated for the building fund. He reported for June 30, 2014 the offering was \$12,250.88 and June 30, 2014 expenses were \$21,684.04. He also reported that the July 31, 2014 offering was \$17,945.00 and July 31, 2014 expenses were \$16,273.90. Luverne moved and Duane Vavroch seconded that these be put to audit. Motion carried. Joyce Gelhaus, **Women's Fellowship Chair**, stated that the next Executive Board meeting would be Tuesday September 2 at 5:00 pm. Duane Vavroch moved and Holly Riemenschneider seconded that all board and committee reports be accepted. Motion carried upon vote.



Minutes of above cabinet meeting were taken by clerk pro tem, Myra Maxon.

## **Reports of Pastor, Boards and Committees:**

### **Pastor's Report:**

We are now incorporating more music "videos" with a more contemporary style at the Saturday Services. Worship service was led on June 22<sup>nd</sup> by Outreach Inc. workers Frank Hammer and Kathy Hamilton. On June 14<sup>th</sup> we commissioned our Romanian Mission trip participants who in turn led our worship service on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Scholarship Sunday was held during the August 9<sup>th</sup> service. Care Center worship services were held on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and August 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to Cindy Henning for making the large yellow banner that announces to the public when our Second Saturday Service will be held. The church again provided leadership for the summer lunch program and donated 80% of the books distributed to the children. As part of my work with RSVP, we are trying to resurrect the Warm Hearts Warm Homes weatherization program, with a goal of serving 30 low income/disabled households. Volunteers are needed to help organize the event and to be team members. The date for the weatherization will be Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 9:00-12:00 am. Joined forces with Asbury UMC for the "Workshop of Wonders" VBS held July 28-Aug. 1. Attendance was down this year but it was still a good week of fun, learning, and interaction with the children. Special events were held this summer to keep the momentum going with KLAB. They made decorations for VBS, played Frisbee Golf at Brewer Creek Shelter, had a wiener roast and a pool party at the AmericInn.

### **Mission Board:**

From their July 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting reported the following: The Ice Cream Social made \$935; Relay for Life raised \$1,026; paper collection for UDMO will continue through end of July at which time Gayle Olson will see that it gets delivered; Ginnie Veach is in charge for the July 30<sup>th</sup> Beacon of Hope meal; Gayle will look into lining something up in August for Kids Against Hunger. From their August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting reported the following: Lorraine McCoskey will check with the WIC program at Public Health to see if they will collaborate with us in getting books to young children under the UCC Literacy Initiative; 40 men were served in July at Beacon of Hope; the men are now making and selling jewelry; Karin Yungclas will captain the September Beacon of Hope meal; for Warm Hearts/Warm Homes need at least one team (4-5 people) from our church. Next meeting will be September 4, 5:00 pm.

### **Trustees:**

The air exchanger in the bell tower needs to be replaced. Motion made by Les Ploeger and seconded by Bruce Perry to purchase a new air exchanger for around \$11,850. Motion carried. Funds are available for the air exchanger. Will check with Mark Trueblood if he knows anyone to take care of the bat dung in the bell tower. The final renovation plans have been received from Schlotfeldt Engineering. He gave us an estimate for the project and what his charge will be. Gretchen Bruner and Les Ploeger had questions about the two estimates for carpet. They will contact both places on their questions and get new estimates. Tom had an estimate on the wood graining.

### **Christian Ed:**

Rally Day will be September 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:15 am in the empty lot across from the church with games for all ages. A potluck will follow worship with the church providing the drinks. Some of the games include face painting, fish pond, cupcake walk and bingo after the pot luck and a dunk tank with water balloons. Vicki will obtain the prizes for rally day. All Sunday school classes will start at 9:15 am this fall. Senior High will be on Wednesday night from 5:00 until 6:00 with Todd and Katie Sonsalla teaching this group, using the Devo materials. The broken couch in the teen room will be removed. Leah

stated she had several chairs to replace the couch. Candle lighters will be from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. As Leah teaches this age group, she will make a list, train and provide a list to the office to be placed in the bulletin weekly. Verna Weieneth has offered to help with KLAB by setting out the treats. KLAB will start September 10<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 -5:00. Helpers include Wil Groves, Al Maxon, Nancy Shelton when she is able, Leah to possibly do a cooking component. Todd stated he would ask his mother to help with crafts. Meals 'n' More will be the first Wednesday of each month. A signup sheet will be placed on the bulletin board. Teachers for this coming year are: Jenna Short--Pre-K thru Kindergarten; Laurie Epps—1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>; Leah Maass-- 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>; with Todd and Katie Sonsalla teaching the teens. Leah will check with the other teachers to see if they would like to follow the book that she uses. On Sunday mornings, the teachers will bring the students to the sanctuary at 9:50 am for singing with Don Bruner or Katie Sonsalla. A Christian Ed director has been tabled at this time.

Next cabinet meeting: **Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.**

Moved by Luverne Bierle with a second by Holly Riemenschneider that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried upon vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Van Diest, Church Clerk

Myra Maxon, Clerk Pro-Tem

### Treasurer's Report

<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b>July</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
Pledges and Offerings	\$17,945.00	\$93,936.40
Other Income	8.57	1,017.22
Memorial/Special Income/Interest	1,643.16	19,435.71
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$19,596.73</b>	<b>\$132,522.01</b>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>		
Outreach and Mission	\$1,583.33	\$11,542.35
Pastoral Services	5,277.91	48,229.63
Maintenance and Repairs	6,710.56	27,709.41
Church Office	1,930.10	17,116.29
Music Ministry	604.00	4,228.00
Christian Education	0.00	761.44
Local Ministry	0.00	2,255.42
Misc. Expenses	168.00	2,491.08
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$16,273.90</b>	<b>\$136,533.45</b>



First Congregational United Church of Christ  
1000 Willson Avenue  
Webster City, IA 50595

**Address Service Requested**

God is still speaking  
to everyone in the home of:

