

August 2015 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>



A few years ago I received a large flyer from Joyce Meyer Ministries. It was a colorful poster advertising a Women's Convention in St. Louis, and what caught my eye (besides the cool graphics and slick layout) was the theme of the Convention spelled out in large block letters: "**PURPOSE AND PASSION.**" Beneath that slogan was the catchy phrase "***It's time to start showing the rest of the world how elegant and beautiful godly women should live—full of PURPOSE and overflowing with PASSION!***" The whole piece was so well done that I too wanted to attend--but apparently Joyce must have realized the power of her poster, for in small print at the bottom it said "this is a women's convention, therefore we are unable to accommodate men or children." No fair!

Yet even though I missed Joyce's Women's Convention, I haven't missed out on the opportunity to give some thought to its theme and slogan. Purpose and passion have become synonymous with living a full and fulfilling life, and to be suspected of being without them is tantamount to social leprosy. Yet it is important to ask ourselves: what is the source of our purpose and passion...and in what ways are we channeling it in the world?

Surely no one would accuse Adolf Hitler or ISIS of having a lack of purpose and passion, and the world is all too well acquainted with the results of their particular forms of enthusiasm. But what about us? What opens us to a greater sense of purpose? What unleashes our passion? Our work, our vocations? Our families; our friends; our pets? Our "stuff?" Our political views? Our interests and hobbies? Our ambitions?

How about our connection to God? Our walk of discipleship? Our church?

It's not enough to simply have passion and purpose, as wonderful as it is to feel enthusiastic and "alive." *What* we ground our passion and purpose in is what truly matters. As Christians, we are called to ground our purpose and passion in the Gospel, the Good News we have received about our lives through the teachings and life of Jesus Christ. As we do that, we are promised a new spirit of truth, purpose, and passion that will make us new, vital, and power-filled. I assume that is the purpose and passion Joyce was hoping to have women connect with at her annual Women's Convention.

But sadly, the world is absolutely filled with misdirected purposes and passion, even among Christians...and history and current events amply demonstrate that if we do not find our purpose and passion in the values found in the Gospel, we will find our purpose and passion somewhere else. What is amazing to me is that God, who seeks to be the source of our greatest purpose and passion, will not take from us our freedom to seek our purpose and passion in every conceivable half-God, even when it brings misery and suffering on a global scale. This is a very sobering truth...and a sobering reminder of our responsibility to carefully choose our deepest purposes and our greatest passions.

Friends, as the summer winds down and the busyness of our fall schedules shortly resume, **I urge you to take time to examine where your purpose and passion lie. Consider your life: what is revealed by it, and who is helped by it. Consider your heroes, and the voices you are most attentive to. Most of all, consider your relationship to God, and seek to strengthen that relationship.** If you do that, then you, as Joyce's poster suggests, will show the rest of the world how elegant and beautiful people LIKE YOU live lives full of PURPOSE that overflow with PASSION. And what a blessing that would be--to you; to the world; and to God! --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

ATTENDANCE

July 5	65	July 12	35
July 18	56	July 26	49

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
Office: **832-2232** Cell **297-4316**
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Michele Omvig: Admin. Assist. **838-2989**
Church's e-mail: fcuccwc@wmtel.net
Sharon Perry: Stephen Ministry Ldr **832-5435**
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr **839-5619**
Choir Director
Melissa Hindt: Organist **209-8087**
Mary Van Diest: Pianist **832-3754**
Curt/Lorraine McCoskey: Cust's. **832-5341**
Tracy Wehrhan: Financial Secretary **297-0370**
Luverne Bierle: Church Treasurer **832-4752**



Great grilling starts with safety
Place your grill at least 10 feet away from your house, shrubs, or bushes.
Never leave a grill unattended.
If using a gas grill, check connections thoroughly before using.
Keep a fire extinguisher handy.
Never bring a grill indoors.
Remove grease buildup from grates and trays.
Use utensils with long handles.
Allow grill to cool before cleaning or discarding charcoal.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

2 - Bruce Perry
4 - Jessica Fiala
5 - Patty Gescheidler
6 - Vicki (Weissinger) Long
6 - James Van Diest
7 - Richard Tudor II
9 - Caitlyn Gapp
10 - Amy Olson
10 - Addison Marie Stearns
12 - Jan Maxon
12 - Howard Stearns
12 - Vicky Hahne
12 - Tracy (Jaycox) Bahrenfuss
12 - Regan Hollingshead
13 - Sue Hollingshead
15 - Audrey Burtnett
15 - Laurie Epps
15 - Ron Long
16 - Tom Riemenschneider
16 - Samantha DeWitt
16 - LaVonne Osmundson
18 - Andrea Gordon
18 - Debbie Jaycox
19 - Allison Yungclas
19 - Mary Van Diest
19 - Eric Larson
20 - Lieum James Luevanos
21 - Mark Carlson
21 - Mary Worthington
24 - Nick Oberender
26 - Britny Fortune
27 - Shari Rothrock
28 - Bob Weieneth
31 - Betty Ploeger
31 - Margy Wood



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

- 2 - Carl & Shannon King
- 11 - Luverne & Verna Bierle
- 11 - Mark & Jennie Brim
- 23 - Don & Gretchen Bruner
- 23 - John & Beth Van Diest
- 29 - Daniel & Samantha DeWitt
- 31 - Daniel & Amanda (Maass) Strahl

KAH

Since hunger and being able to eat do not seem to have seasons, the Mission Board has scheduled a packing time for Kids Against Hunger for this summer. We will be gathering at The Bridge on Wednesday, August 5 at 5:30 to pack the meals that get sealed up and sent overseas. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us for about an hour of your time, remembering that your hour allows children and adults to eat that might not otherwise.

Third Saturday Worship

Our next Third Saturday service begins at 5:00 pm on August 15th. We will present scholarship awards at this time and share the sacrament of communion.

Renovation

Renovation work at First Congregational has begun! A new ceiling is being installed in the lower level, the women's restroom in Fellowship Hall and the men's restroom in the lower level are undergoing extensive remodeling, and the doorway to the main stairwell is being enlarged.



UDMO

The Back to School Bash will be Thursday, August 6 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm at The Bridge, 905 Des Moines St.

UDMO needs help to make this happen, monetary donations or school supplies are greatly appreciated.

Vacation

Pastor Craig and Vicki are on vacation from July 27 to August 10.

Thrift Sale Sept. 25 & 26

Spring Cleaning and Sorting Friday & Saturday, Sept. 25 & 26 -

Women's Fellowship will be conducting their semi-annual Thrift Sale.

Wed. Sept. 23 - We will be accepting those items cluttering up your lives.

If you need assistance transporting your items, call Cindy Henning – 297-0422 or email

jbhfam@mchsi.com.

Please note – Bring in items that are **clean, complete, and in good repair**. We will **no longer accept older TVs** because do not have anyone to take them after the sale.

Thank you for your

donations and help in making this fundraiser a success.

Thanks

♦To the UCC Congregation

Once again I am sending a big Thank You for all the prayers, concerns and cards. The cards really keep my spirits up. One chemo down, 5 to go.

Thanks again, you are the best church family anyone could ask for.

Blessings,
Diane Vasquez



◆ Upper Des Moines would like to thank you for your donation. Your support is greatly appreciated.
UDMO Staff

◆ Thank you for your donation of \$335.25 from the Ice Cream Social that you sponsored with Faith UMC.
ACE
(There is much longer letter on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall)



Church picnic

On Sunday, July 12, 35 members gathered at shelter #2 at Briggs Woods for an outdoor worship service and picnic. The weather was steamy, but the food was delicious!



VBS

Over 60 children attended our joint VBS program with ASBURY UMC, held July 6-10 at Asbury. There were games, crafts, science

projects, snacks, story time—and lots of singing! This year the children also packed meals for Kids Against Hunger as a VBS mission project.



Swim party

It was a wet and wild party for our KLAB and Sunday School students, who gathered at the Americinn on July 1st for swimming and snacks!



Cabinet Moving

Trustees Tom Riemenschneider, Les Ploeger, and Bruce Perry recently moved the office cabinets to a new wall, to make room for the expanded women's restroom.

You are invited

Please join Bruce and Sharon Perry as they celebrate 50 years of wedded bliss on September 6, 2015 at 1st Congregational UCC. There will be a program in the sanctuary at 2:00 pm.

UCCer U C in the News has been updated again. Stop and view the board by the water cooler and see what Gayle, Wil, Vicky, Dorothy, Jenna, Kaelyn, Gretchen, Bob and Mary have been doing this summer.

Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>JUNE</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$9,814.00	\$86,524.63
Other Income	.46	570.93
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,814.46	\$87,095.56
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	\$1,583.33	\$9,369.03
Pastoral Services	10,909.93	42,477.66
Maintenance and Repairs	15,128.86	39,619.31
Church Office	2,283.17	16,360.74
Music Ministry	300.00	3,587.50
Christian Education	62.61	427.42
Local Ministry	175.00	242.45
Misc. Expenses	0.00	1,167.16
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$30,442.90	\$113,251.27

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Address Service Requested

God is still speaking
to everyone in the home of:

