

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



“In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” –Mark 1:9-11

Have you ever experienced a “turning point” in your life? Of course you have! All of us have encountered turning points in our lives--moments when our lives suddenly changed direction and purpose. When you took your first step; when you left home for kindergarten, for college, or for good; the day you said “I do”; the day you became a parent; the day you experienced a death that literally changed your life...all of these are turning points: moments when we stand at the threshold of a door that is opening before us, and we enter it...unsure of what we will find, or where it will lead--only knowing that we are summoned to enter.

When I reflect on the story of Jesus’ baptism I realize what a turning point this moment was for him...and I wonder if even Jesus knew the magnitude of this turning point as he left his work and life as a village carpenter and began his public ministry. Did Jesus know what parts he would be summoned to play in his short ministry: the parts of healer, exorcist, miracle worker, teacher, and prophet? Did he know that there would be days when he would not even have a place to lay his head? Did he know that many would hail him as the messiah, while others would dismiss him as a fraud, or a heretic? Did he know that his own disciples would promise to follow him anywhere...only to abandon him in his hour of need? Did he know that he would die on a Roman cross? Did he have any idea how many lives he would touch with his life and death...even the lives of those he had never met?

I also wonder about our lives as Christians, and the turning points that will lead us to new ministries. Will we, like Jesus, experience a turning point--compliments of God-- that will send us to do ministry in a food pantry or a soup kitchen, a homeless shelter, a senior complex, a school, a prison, or a neighbor’s home? Will we experience a turning point that sends us across the country—or across the street?

Do we have any idea what parts we will play in our ministries after our turning points? Will we, like Jesus, also be asked to play the part of an evangelist, a teacher, a healer, a prophet, a missionary? Will we be asked to be a friend to the friendless, a visitor to the sick, a companion to the lonely, the homebound? Will we be asked to be a mentor to the youngest in our midst, and teach them with the curriculum of our lives?

Do we know how our ministry will be received by our friends and our critics after our turning points? Will we lose friends? Will we gain others? Will we alienate those who do not share the same beliefs that we do? Will our efforts to minister be criticized as too small, too insignificant, or too imperfect? Do we have any idea how our ministries will touch others’ lives...even the lives of those we will never meet?

You may not agree with me, but I don’t think Jesus had all the answers to those questions when he was baptized in the Jordan. And I don’t think we will have all the answers to those questions when we reach our turning points, and are summoned to step away from our relatively secure and predictable lives and join with Jesus in the vocation of ministry.

Yet this much I know...unpredictable and uncertain as they are, turning points are gifts that bring us new opportunities, new challenges, new blessings, and new life. As you continue your observance of Lent, I urge you to take a few moments and recall some of the turning points in your life, and how they have brought you to this time and place...

And then I would urge you to invite into your life a new turning point, compliments of the still-speaking God...who loves us enough to intrude upon us, summon us, and send us on to new ways of living, and new ways to love and serve others! –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:

- 1 - Jan Ryherd
- 1 - Lara Yungclas
- 1 - Maxwell Harfst
- 4 - Jordin Smith
- 4 - Vicki Blaufuss
- 5 - John Van Diest
- 6 - Jennie Williams
- 13 - Shirley Yungclas
- 13 - Shirley Hillyer
- 14 - Talon Stockdale
- 16 - Craig Blaufuss
- 18 - Mark Hollingshead
- 19 - Maribeth Martin
- 20 - Verna Bierle
- 20 - Jacob Meinders
- 21 - Colleen Fogle
- 21 - Connie McFadden
- 22 - Jacob Fogle
- 23 - Todd Sonsalla
- 24 - Garrett Shelton
- 26 - Melody Burtnett
- 28 - Shelly Sjoberg
- 28 - Nicolas Groves
- 28 - Jackson Leman
- 31 - Marcy Nelson
- 31 - Ted Yungclas



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

- 7 - Robert & Mary Van Diest
- 15 - Curt & Lorraine McCoskey

ATTENDANCE

February 1	0	February 8	65
February 15	97	February 22	86

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
 Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316
 Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net
Michele Omgig: Admin. Assist. 838-2989
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Sharon Perry: Stephen Ministry Ldr 832-5435
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr 839-5619
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



Dog Safety Rules-

Ask the owner's permission before you approach a strange dog.
 Before you pat a dog, slowly offer a hand to sniff.
 Do not leave a young child alone with a dog.
 Never approach a mother dog who is nursing pups or a dog who is napping.
 Don't try to outrun an unleashed dog. Stand still until it loses interest in you.
 Don't stare a threatening dog in the eyes. Turn sideways, withdraw, and try to put an object between you and the dog.
 Don't over exercise a dog by playing roughly.

Meals'N More

Join us for an Irish Feast at Meals N' More on March 4 at 5:00 pm. Choose from corned beef and cabbage or Irish stew. Please use the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall to list your choice.



**Meals'N
 More**



Thrift Sale April 24 & 25

Spring Cleaning and Sorting

Friday & Saturday, April 24 & 25 -

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

Wed. April 22 - 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 - Bringing 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 making this fundraiser a success.

One Great Hour of Sharing

An offering will be taken on Sunday, March 15 to support One Great Hour of Sharing. Our giving through One Great Hour of Sharing unites us with Christians from Church World Service and nine denominations:

- American Baptist Church
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Cumberland Presbyterian Church
- Church of the Brethren
- Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Reformed Church in America
- United Church of Christ
- United Methodist Church

Our partnership alone is worth celebrating; what we do together is even more inspiring. Our giving is magnified beyond what any of us could do alone, when we serve together in the spirit of Christ. For over 65 years, we, the United Church of Christ have worked with and through partnerships to serve God through our sharing, and in return we see the image of God who unites us all.

New Members to Join March 8

On Sunday, March 8, 6 people will be taken into membership at first Congregational UCC during our worship service. They are: Charles and Alyssa Kenville, Brenda Johnston, Sally McIntyre, Kaleb Sterler, and Brandon Arkland. We rejoice that you are uniting with us and continuing the ministry of Jesus Christ in our midst!

Baptism of Talon Stockdale

Join us in church on Sunday, March 15 as we share in the joy of the baptism of Talon Stockdale, the son of Troy and Emily Stockdale and the little brother of Ava Stockdale.

Baptism of Presley Rose Halliday



Presley Rose Halliday was baptized during worship on Sunday, February 15th. Her parents are Christie and Jim Halliday. Presley's grandparents are Ron and Laurie Epps, and Bob Halliday and Rex and Maggy Utech; Presley's Godparents are Marshal Halliday and Kayleigh Weig.

Lenten Luncheons

Tuesdays February 24 through March 31, lunch will be held at First Baptist Church at Noon. Cost is \$6, call the office by Monday noon to reserve a spot.



Valentines for our Kids

The Sunday School and KLAB kids want to offer the congregation a big THANK YOU for all the goodies and valentines they received in the month of February. Our kids put together valentine mail bags and placed them on display in Fellowship Hall, and when they took them home February 11th they were amazed at all the love that went into those bags! What a great way to say "Happy Valentine's Day" to our children!



Thanks

Dear Friends,
Thank you so much for fitting us in to your busy Sunday schedule on such short notice for Henry's baptism~ We love being a part of the UCC's family! And we love getting to see everyone on the occasions we do get back! The quilt is as beautiful as the first one we received for Jackson's baptism; both boys have gotten a lot of use out of them.
With love,
Chad, Emily, Jackson & Henry Elkin

Shoeman Water Project

Mission Board is encouraging each of you to consider learning more about it and using the bin we have in Fellowship Hall to drop off a pair

or two of gently used shoes you might have in your closet. The funds generated from exporting these shoes help underwrite projects that ultimately provide clean water for those who do not have that necessary commodity. If you want to know more please grab a brochure by the shoe bin or look on-line at the Shoeman Water Project.

Strengthening Families

The Hamilton PROSPER Team is pleased to offer a free, fun and effective program for parents and caregivers to attend with your 6th grade child. You are invited to join them on Tuesdays for family engagement, the program includes a family meal and childcare.

The program helps parents to be kind but firm, improve communication, deal with anger more effectively and to be consistent with rules and expectations. It helps youth with handling peer pressure, dealing better with stress, showing respect for others and understanding their family.

The program will be at Trinity Lutheran Church starting on March 24 at 6:00 pm; the meal is served at 5:30 pm. Pre-register at the Hamilton County Extension Office.

1st Congo

UCCer's UC in the news has lots of new faces on the board. Check it out by the water fountain in Fellowship Hall.

Grief Support Group

Stephen Ministers are offering a grief support group for anyone coping with the loss of a loved one. They will be each Sunday afternoon from 4:00 to 5:30 starting April 12 through May 24. Call the church office for more info.

Easter Day—April 5

Easter is coming! Join us for a special Easter celebration beginning with an Easter "Son-Rise" service held in the sanctuary from 8:30 to 9:00 am. Following the service, the Christian Education Board is hosting another fabulous Easter breakfast, with activities for the kids as well. Our traditional Easter service with Holy Communion will be held at 10:30 a.m. There will be no Sunday school classes held that day.

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

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Webster City, Iowa

Cabinet Meeting – February 10, 2015

Members Present:

Moderator-----Luverne Bierle

Vice-Moderator----

Finance Sec.-----

Finance-----

Staff/Parish-----Dalene Schlitter

Christian Ed-----Vicki Blaufuss

Treasurer-----Luverne Bierle

Pastor-----

Trustees-----Joyce Gelhaus

Women's Fellowship-Joyce Gelhaus

Mission-----Ginnie Veach

Worship-----

Evangelism-----Wilma Reinsel

Clerk-----Mary Van Diest

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by the Moderator, Luverne Bierle. As the Pastor, Rev. Blaufuss, was unable to attend due to illness, Vicki Blaufuss opened with a prayer. Wilma Reinsel moved and Vicki Blaufuss seconded to accept the minutes of the January Cabinet meeting as printed in the February newsletter. Motion carried. Committee and board reports were open for review and discussion. The reports are later in the minutes. Vicki moved and Dalene seconded to accept the reports. Motion carried. Luverne presented the Treasurer's report: January offering of \$8,807.00 with January expenses of \$11,830.44. Luverne moved and Ginnie seconded that the report be put to audit.

After discussion, it was decided to keep the Cabinet Meeting date the second Tuesday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. Pastor Craig and Luverne are researching a Safe Policy for the church.

REPORTS OF PASTOR, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Pastor's Report: Due to the weather, worship was cancelled on February 1st so Holy Communion will be celebrated on February 8th. Presley Halliday will be baptized during worship on February 15th. Lent begins February 18th with an Ash Wednesday service in the East chapel beginning at 7:00 pm, with the Imposition of Ashes offered at 6:45 pm to those who wish to receive the mark of ashes. On February 22nd Katie Sonsalla will lead our children in singing during worship. Rosine Kennedy, the choir director at Trinity ELCA, will start leading the choir rehearsals on Wednesdays, beginning February 11th in Nancy Shelton's absence. On March 8th we will receive 6 new members into our church during worship. Five of them: Sally McIntyre, Brenda Johnston, Charles and Alyssa Kenville and Kaleb Sterler have attended two new member classes. The sixth new member candidate, Brandon Arkland, is petitioning to join our church by way of transferring his membership from Webster City Church of Christ. The Women's Lenten lunches will begin February 24th at First Baptist Church. The cost per meal is \$6.00. Michele, church administrator, asks all who wish to attend on any given week to contact her by the preceding Monday so she can give an attendance figure to First Baptist. Faith UMC is considering hosting a men's Lenten luncheon as well; no further details are available at this time regarding that possibility. At the last scheduled round of Care Center services on January 18th, Crestview had only 2 residents in attendance (plus one visitor). The last three times we have offered scheduled services there, the attendance has been poor. Consequently Pastor Craig has

notified Crestview and the WCMA that we will no longer be holding worship services there. Pastor Craig wishes to thank everyone who helps with these services. The ORFF music program at KLAB has been resumed with the help of Ann Sherve-Ose. They are working on both singing and playing the ORFF instruments every other week. KLAB has been talking about "love" and will hold a Valentine's Party February 11th in the gym at the Bridge. The Confirmation students are studying the life and ministry of Jesus. The next field trip will be to the Hindu Temple in Madrid. The Adult Education class has begun weekly conversations based on pre-selected topics of interest to the class, and are currently discussing "faith." Several pastors in town went to WCHS on February 6th in response to the tragic death of Jorden Leeper, in order to support grieving students. Stephen Ministers helped lead worship on January 25th. Their continuing education programming for 2015 will be based on the resource "Christian Caregiving: a Way of Life" by Ken Haugk. Three Stephen Ministers are currently matched with care receivers. Our next grief support series will begin Sunday, April 12th. We will only offer 3 support groups year, rather than 4. The annual relicensing event for all Association licensed clergy will be held on Saturday, March 21st. This all day process entails worshipping together, some continuing education, lunch, and individual interviews of all licensed clergy. Pastor Craig will be taking a break from the CCPE group that he has been involved with for the last two years.

Christian Ed: Met on January 7th with Pastor Craig, Vicki Blaufuss, Todd Sonsalla, Jane Klaver, Leah Maass and Wil Groves attending. Dates to remember: February 22nd-Youth choir to sing in worship with director Katie Sonsalla; April 5th-Easter Sunday will begin with son-rise service starting at 8:30 am with breakfast from 9:00 am until 10:00 am. The following people will bring food: Vicki-4 casseroles; Leah-1 casserole; Jane-1 casserole; Todd and Jan-a breakfast dish and fruit; Wil-milk and juice. KLAB will end around the first of May. The KLAB ORFF youth, directed by Ann Sherve-Ose, will do a musical performance as soon as they are ready. The Christmas program will be December 20, 2015 directed by Wil Groves. Next year, fall of 2015, Sunday School class division was discussed. As of now the classes will be divided into two groups. The first class will consist of youth from Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade and taught by Laurie Epps; the second class will be for grades 5th thru 9th grade and taught by Leah Maass. The date to honor our graduates will be determined after speaking to the parents of the graduates. The next meeting will be March 11th, at 5:15 pm to finalize Easter plans and the remainder of the Sunday School year through May.

Mission Board: The 2015 officers are Chair: Gayle Olson-- Secy: Karin Yungclas-- Cabinet Representative-- Ginny Veach and Alternate-- Lorraine McCoskey. The meeting dates will be the first Thursdays of the month at 5:00 pm. The Beacon of Hope meal served on January 20th was well received. The next Beacon of Hope meal will be served on March 31st with Gayle as the captain. It was noted that more people are needed to prepare and to serve the meal. A good turnout helped with the Backpack packing on January 22nd. A discussion was held on ways to lessen the amount of waste involved; also wondered about reusable cloth bags to distribute to the students. The Souper Bowl meal after the annual meeting was successful and enjoyed. A donation of \$428.00 was given to the Upper Des Moines Food Bank. Possible mission trip ideas for this year were discussed. Fourteen Church World Service Hygiene kits are ready to be mailed. Donations of postage money would be appreciated. Reported on Shoeman Water Project: Used shoes are being collected which will eventually be sold overseas with the proceeds to be used for clean water access. Please bring shoes. Lorraine McCoskey will promote One Great Hour of Sharing this year. On February 27th Steve Mather from Romania will be at our church for an evening soup supper provided by Donna Ryherd and Joyce Gelhaus. Mission Board members will supply the relishes, bread, and dessert. Everyone is welcome to attend. Lorraine

asked for ideas for our entry in the D/SAOC auction which will take place in Fort Dodge on April 11th. Our “baskets” have been the highest sellers for the last several years. Submit ideas to any Mission Board member. The next meeting is on March 5th at 5:00 pm.

Trustees: Reported that the elevator has been inspected. The sump pump that is under it had been plugged and that has been fixed. The nursery and quilters have swapped rooms. The quilters have painted their room and all the toys in the nursery have been disinfected. On February 1st Mark Trueblood will be starting to work on the air system. Bids are out on renovation project and requested to be returned by February 22nd for the Trustees to review.

The next meeting will be on March 10, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Clerk

Mary Van Diest

Treasurer’s Report

<u>INCOME</u>	January	YEAR TO DATE
Pledges and Offerings	\$9,232.00	\$9,232.00
Other Income	7.81	7.81
Memorial/Special Income/Interest	1,641.42	1,641.42
TOTAL INCOME	\$10,881.23	\$10,881.23
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	\$1,038.38	\$1,038.38
Pastoral Services	5,081.08	5,081.08
Maintenance and Repairs	2,349.50	2,349.50
Church Office	1,847.71	1,847.71
Music Ministry	612.50	612.50
Christian Education	170.89	170.89
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	687.41	687.41
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$14,528.56	\$14,528.56

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Address Service Requested

God is still speaking
to everyone in the home of:

