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



"Are you a racist?"

That's an unsettling question to hear...and if you are like me the very question is offensive in its insinuation. Of course I'm not a racist—racists are ignorant and vocal bigots who use charged racial epithets, tell racist jokes, wear white sheets or sport skinhead haircuts and nazi regalia, and refuse to share company with others of a different race. Racists commit unthinkable atrocities such as lynchings, chain-draggings, and church firebombings. Racists spout pseudoscience and pseudohistory, and even quote scripture to support their racist agendas. Of course I'm not a racist! Racism is....detestible; ugly; wrong.

But the truth is always a little murkier than it seems at first...and while none of us may be what we would call a "racist," the truth is that we have inherited a culture and society that has assuredly been racist for essentially **all** of its history....and yet for many of us who are white, this fact is either invisible or inconsequential in our daily lives. Yet its effects continue to be felt by people of color in both overt and subtle ways, including the disparity of judicial sentencing and incarceration rates between races, differences in public school discipline and suspension rates between races, a first name...and the disparity of the treatment of different races at the hands of law enforcement, which is the impetus behind the **#blacklivesmatter** movement.

Our newest UCC General Minister and President, the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, has made "racial justice" a priority in his national ministry, and he has called for a renewal of the UCC's commitment to study and speak openly about issues of race and racism, and to work for racial equality and justice. Therefore our first fall adult education offering on Sunday mornings will be a multi-week study of "Racism in America." During the study we will examine the historical and the sociological roots of racism in our country, as well as current events which are shaped by our racist heritage. We will hear stories of racism as recounted by those who have felt its effects, and we will specifically hear selected readings from the book <u>The Warmth of Other Suns</u>, by Isabel Wilkerson. We will also listen to each others' stories of how racism has been a part of our upbringing, and we will study and discuss "White Privilege" and other invisible ways that race has shaped our daily lives—and our destinies.

I expect this to be a powerful, illuminating, and at times uncomfortable topic—but one which will bring new understandings and new awareness into our discussions about race, and a new perspective into our own personal and collective relationships with those who physically, historically, and culturally appear to be "other." I hope you will join me Sunday mornings at 9:15a.m. beginning September 27 for this relevant and timely study! --Pastor Craig

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Μ	8 am - 1 pm
Т	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

August 258August 940August 1572August 2359August 30

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor						
Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316						
Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net						
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					



Positive excuses – I will exercise today because:

- It will improve my heart health.
- It may reduce my risk of cancer.
- It may make me look better.
- It will strengthen my bones.
- It may make me feel proud of myself.
- It may make me feel stronger.
- It may boost my metabolism.
- It will make my clothes fit better.
- It will improve my cholesterol levels.
- It is a way for me to take car of myself.
- It is cheap entertainment.
- It may help me sleep better at night.
- It will help me reduce my health-care costs.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 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 Pruismann
- 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

Backpacks

Join us on Tuesday, September 22 at 6:30 pm at Trinity ELCA to pack backpacks to help combat hunger.

Beacon of Hope

We are once again preparing and serving a meal at Beacon of Hope. The meal will be on September 30, sign-up sheets will soon be in Fellowship Hall.

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.

<u>Wed. Sept. 23</u> - 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.

<u>Please note</u> – Bring in items that are clean, complete, and in good repair. We will <u>no</u>



Ionger 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 Finance Board

I want to thank you for awarding the Bess Lyon Scholarship to me. Having scholarships to pay for my education allows me to focus on my studies so I can excel in college. Thank you so much for lessening the financial burden on me. God Bless, Jan Ryherd

♦ We would like to thank you for our recent award of \$1,200 to the Reach Out and Read program in Hamilton County. Even in its beginnings stages the program has received positive responses. As a result of your generosity more children will have greater access to developmentally appropriate books and parents will have more positive reading experiences with their child. Thank you! Kind Regards, Hamilton Co Reach Out and Read Committee

♦ UDMO would like to thank you for your monetary donation and the donation of all the gift cards. Your support is greatly appreciated! Sincerely, UDMO Staff

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.

KLAB starts September 16

It's time for another year of Kids Learning About the Bible—KLAB! Our program year starts Wednesday, September 16, right after school until 5 p.m. We will again enjoy activities/games, snacks, a Bible lesson, crafts, cooking, and music! A registration form for all KLAB students will be sent out soon—please be sure to fill it out and return it to the church. We will again be asking for donations of snacks each week for 12-15 children. If you would like to donate snacks, please mark the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in fellowship hall.

Adult Sunday School starts September 27

Our Adult Sunday school class reconvenes at 9:15 a.m. on September 27 in the multipurpose room. We will begin the program year by exploring "Racism in America" using a variety of resources, including excerpts from the book <u>The Warmth of Other Suns</u> by Isabel Wilkerson and the 3 part documentary about race in society, science, and history entitled "Race—the Power of an Illusion." Join us for this important study!

Blessing of the Animals—Saturday, September 15

Round up your dogs, cats, canaries, llamas and lizards--our third Saturday service in September will be a "Blessing of the Animals!" On Saturday, September 15 we will gather in the vacant lot next to the church to share a time of celebration and praise for the love, comfort and companionship we receive from our animal companions. As part of our informal worship service there will be time of sharing to introduce your animal companion, and a certificate will be given to each animal participant.

For seating please bring your own bag chairs or other outdoor seating(we want you to be comfortable) and for the safety of all our animal companions please be sure to have your dogs or other potentially aggressive animals leashed. We discourage the use of pet crates during the service—after all this is their special day...and of course you are welcome to bring your companion's favorite snack or treat. In case of rain, the shelter house at West Twin park has been reserved, and we will hold our service there.

Rally Day is coming! On Sunday, September 13 we will mark the end of summer with our annual Rally Day celebration. There will be games in the vacant lot beginning at 9 a.m., a special Rally Day worship celebration at 10:30a.m. followed by a church pot-luck lunch, and after lunch there will be WATER GAMES, including a dunk tank! To make this day a success, we need **volunteers** to help with kitchen duty, lead games, and bake cupcakes for the cupcake walk. If you would like to help, please speak with Vicki Blaufuss.



Melissa Hindt is our current organist.



Scholarships Awarded

A total of \$9,460 was awarded to the following scholarship recipients. **BESS LYON** Brandon Arkland - \$ 520.00 Alexis Tudor - \$ 520.00 Bryan Johnston - \$ 520.00 Jan Ryherd - \$ 520.00 Jenna Short - \$ 520.00 POOLE Katie Holdgrafer - \$ 930.00 PTACEK Erica Oberender - \$ 1,930.00 HELEN JOHNSON Alexis Tudor - \$ 1,000.00 Jenna Short - \$ 1.000.00 Brandon Arkland - \$ 1,000.00 Erica Oberender - \$ 1.000.00



9:30 A.M. WORSHIP 10:30 A.M. WORSHIP beginning September 13 9:15 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL beginning September 27

INCOME	JULY	YEAR TO DATE		
Pledges and Offerings	\$13,256.00	\$99,780.63		
Other Income	.42	<u>571.35</u>		
TOTAL INCOME	\$13,256.42	\$100,351.98		
EXPENSES				
Outreach and Mission	\$1,583.33	\$10,952.36		
Pastoral Services	5,186.92	47,664.58		
Maintenance and Repairs	3,298.57	42,917.88		
Church Office	2,054.07	18,414.81		
Music Ministry	225.00	3,812.50		
Christian Education	0.00	427.42		
Local Ministry	0.00	242.45		
Misc. Expenses	0.00	1,167.16		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$12,347.89	\$125,599.16		

Treasurer's Report

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Webster City, Iowa Cabinet Meeting – August 11, 2015

Members Present:

Moderator	Luverne Bierle	PastorRev	Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator	Sherry Leksell	TrusteesTom F	Riemenschneider
Finance Sec	Tracy Wehrhan	Women's Fellowship.	Joyce Gelhaus
Finance	Tracy Wehrhan	Mission	Ginnie Veach
Staff/Parish	Dalene Schlitter	Worship	
Christian Ed	. Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism	
Clerk	Dalene Schlitter, pro-tem		

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by the Moderator, Luverne Bierle. Pastor Craig Blaufuss, opened with a meditation and prayer. The minutes of the last meeting and board and committee reports were open for review and discussion. Worship Board Report was given by Tom Riemenschneider for Holly and she reminded us of the Saturday night service on August 15, 2015. Ginnie Veach reported that actually \$794.00 was given for Strengthen the Church and that the Ice Cream Social raised \$670.00. She also reported that \$500.00 was given anonymously for the UDMO food project. Vicki Blaufuss reported that Christian Ed will meet next Wednesday. Sharon Perry reported that Stephen Ministry had two more referrals. Joyce Gelhaus reported that the Women's Fellowship booklets were finished and could be picked up in the church office. Tracy Wehrhan reported that \$14,500.00 in scholarship money will be given on Saturday evening. Also every Board was given a budget sheet for next year and asked to fill it out and hand in to the office before the 3rd week of September. Dalene Schlitter made a motion that the minutes and corrections and additions be accepted. Vicki Blaufuss seconded the motion and the motion passed. The Pastor's report was given by Craig. He reminded us that church would be on Saturday August 15, 2015 and the scholarships would be handed out. We will also have Communion during the Saturday Service. In September the Saturday night service will be a Blessing of Pets and will be held in the vacant lot south of the church. He reported that VBS had not been very well attended by anyone from our church so the relationship with Asbury would be evaluated before next summer. Also the Free Lunch Program at the Middle School does not seem to be reaching the kids we hoped it would reach and that program will also be evaluated before next summer. He reported that he will be doing the funeral for Genese Hanus on Friday afternoon.

Treasurer Luverne Bierle reported on both the June and July income and expenses. Offering through July 31, 2015 is \$ 99,240.63 and expenses thru July 31, 2015 is \$ 104,190.19. Luverne made a motion that the report be put to audit. Tracy seconded. Motion passed. Luverne did report that in August we did pay Jensen Builders \$23,000.00.

Dalene Schlitter reported that Melissa Hindt would serve as organist and accompany the choir. She has played several times this summer and will continue this fall. An ad was placed in the Freeman Journal for a Choir Director and 2 men responded to the ad. Both will be interviewed next week.

Tom Riemenschneider reported on the renovation project. The men's bathroom in the basement has been painted and new wall board put up. This work was done by the Trustees. New flooring will be installed later this week. Jensen Builders continue to make slow progress on the other parts of the project. Tom reminded us that the project completion date on the contract was August 15th and if the project is not completed there is a \$100.00 a day fine that Jensen Builders should owe us. It was also reported that a check from the Insurance Company had arrived for the failure of the sump pumps in the elevator shaft and that this check would certainly help pay for that repair. Tom Riemenschneider wondered if there was any Memorial Money that could be used on the renovation for flooring in the entrance. Dalene Schlitter reported that she was on the Memorial Committee and if they came up with an amount needed she would present it to the Memorial Committee.

The next meeting will be September 8, 2015 at 7:00 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm. Dalene Schlitter, Secretary pro tem

Reports of Pastor, Boards and Committees

Pastor's Report: We are now worshipping at our summer 9:30 am hour. Tiffany Louk and Shelby Jansen have substituted for Melissa Hindt at the piano/organ this summer. Melissa is now scheduled for the balance of our Third Saturday services, which are scheduled for: July 18, Aug. 15, Sept. 19 and Oct. 17. She surprised us on Sat., July 18th by playing guitar in worship. We will include her talents on guitar in other services. Todd Edeker will lead worship on Aug. 2nd and 9th while Pastor Craig is on vacation. The August monthly communion has been moved to Aug. 15th, which is also scholarship Sunday. On Saturday, Sept. 19th, we will hold our service outdoors for a "blessing of the animals" (bring your pets!) and on October 17th "Sister Act" women's singing group will lead our service in song. Katie Sonsalla has arranged for summer soloists for the months of July and August. On Sunday, July 12th, an outdoor worship service followed by the annual Summer Picnic was held. The Evangelism Board organized this event.

The first KLAB summer event was a pool party at the AmericInn held on July 1st. Ten youth attended and had a great time. We joined Asbury UMC for a week of VBS, July 6-10, beginning at 1:00 pm. Pastor Craig again led games, Don Bruner led music and Gayle Olson helped with the preschool activities. Attendance was in the low 60's each day-about the same as last year. The number of children connected with our church who participated was not large (8?) and the number of volunteers from our church who helped was even smaller. Therefore Pastor Craig will ask the Christian Ed board to evaluate this program and suggest improvements, or an alternative to what we are currently doing with VBS. Our church was again the lead-off group of volunteers for the Summer Lunch Program which began on June 8th. Pastor Craig expressed his thanks to everyone who volunteered. While we had enough volunteers this year, there were concerns expressed about whether the program as currently operated is fulfilling a real need in our community. The Mission Board did discuss this and the Pastor plans to discuss this topic with the Webster City Ministerium when it resumes in the fall. The renovation has finally begun. The women's bathroom has been gutted and enlarged, the lower level ceilings are being dropped, and the lower level men's bathroom has been gutted as well. It is exciting to see the changes.

Board of Trustees: July 31, 2015 meeting. Present were Tom Riemenschneider, Les Ploeger, Bruce Perry and Joyce Gelhaus. Under Old Business: entry flooring-It was decided not to have Jensen Builders do this at a cost of \$3,100. The stairway samples were reviewed on the computer. Three more samples were chosen to look at-Canyon, Ginger Field and Thatch in addition to the Straw sample which we already have. New Business: The header was taken off the entrance in Fellowship Hall. This will give it a more open feeling. There will not be any stained glass at this time. The counter for the women's and men's bathroom was chosen. The color for both will be Parquet Latte-3453-77. It will have a honed finish. We are going to get a bid from Jensen to do the floors and walls in the men's bathroom, with the same product that was chosen for the women's. The Trustees will paint the basement hallway and men's bathroom. Bryan Gilbert's Flooring was available and came to our meeting. He is going to give us an estimate on the entry, with the same flooring that we have for the stairway landings. Bryan has tile to repair the basement floor tile. He is also going to give us a bid on flooring for the men's bathroom. (Tom, Les and Joyce went to the store and picked out the flooring.) We will also check on a wall covering for the Men's Bathroom. Next meeting-TBA-When we get the samples for the stairway. August 6, 2015 meeting. Tom Riemenschneider, Bruce Perry and Joyce Gelhaus were present. Old Business: Entry and stairway flooring-We are waiting to hear from Wayne if the flooring can be changed from Mannington to Tarkett. We should be able to save enough money with Tarkett Product (just as good) to do the entryway with the stairway and landings. We did choose Mannington, Canyon color, if we cannot change brand. New Business: Tom is going to check with Wayne to see if we could change the floor tile to vinyl in the women's bathroom. This is for safety reasons. Bruce made a motion to approve the bid from Bryan Gilbert for the floor tile to repair the basement and also the vinyl for the men's bathroom. This will come out of the donated funds. This motion was approved. Joyce will get white paint and Les and Tom will get the wall covering for the men's bathroom. Stacy Wearda requested to be replaced on the Trustees. We accepted this request and will wait until the end of the year to fill the position. Next meeting TBA.

Staff/Parish: June 16th meeting: Verna Bierle, Stephanie Hill, Greta Oberender, Dalene Schlitter, Shirley Yungclas, Pastor Craig Blaufuss were present. The Safe-Church policy committee consisting of Luverne Bierle, Dalene Schlitter, Mary Van Diest and Pastor Craig will be finding a suitable time to get together, possibly in an afternoon. Dalene reported on the current status in our searches for organist and choir director. With the exception of Sat evening,

June 20th and Sunday, July 5th, Melissa Hindt will play for church the rest of the summer. In the fall, she will accompany the choir at practice and play for Sunday services. The agreed upon wage being \$75 for church and \$25 for choir practice. Dalene is in contact with a prospect in regard to the choir direction position. The two of them will discuss practice time, date of practice and wage. More information will be available by the 25th of July, preceding the next meeting of Staff/Parish. While our administrative assistant, Michele Omvig is absent from July 8-10, Verna Bierle, Joyce Gelhaus or Holly Riemenschneider will be available to fill in for her. Next meeting will be after church on July 26th at 10:30. July 26, 2015 meeting: Stephanie Hill, Greta Oberender, Dalene Schlitter, Shirley Yungclas and Pastor Craig Blaufuss were present. Old Business: Status report on the safe church policy. The group will meet in August before the start of fall activities. Dalene contacted Emily Greenfield with particulars on a musical director position. Emily declined. Greta will contact local school music teachers to see if they have any suggestions on anyone who might be interested. Following the discussion it was decided that Dalene would post our request on the Iowa Central web site and also a help wanted ad would be put in the Freeman Journal and the Fort Dodge Messenger with the following wording-MUSIC DIRECTOR-Exciting new opportunity! Music Direction need for 1st Congregational United Church of Christ, Webster City. Part time paid position. 515-832-6884. New Business: none. Next meeting will be on August 15^{th} .

Mission Board: The Strengthen the Church Offering totaled \$794. The Olde Fashioned Ice Cream Social brought in \$794 which was divided between All Cultures Equal and Upper Des Moines Opportunities. Ginnie Veach and Karin Yungclas coordinated this annual event with Faith Methodist Church. Webster City Relay for Life raised \$33,000. Our church's total was \$850.00. The Our Reach Out and Read project, in cooperation with Kendall Young Library, has begun supplying books that are handed out to infants and pre-schoolers at well-baby visits to Webster City Medical Clinic. Other clinics are being contacted and invited to participate. An evening meal was prepared and served on July 29th, to the Beacon of Hope Shelter in Fort Dodge. Ginnie Veach led the group. She thanked all those who donated food items, cooked and served. The July UDMO donation project invited members to donate grocery store gift cards for the purchase of refrigerated or frozen foods for the pantry. A total of \$290 was donated. Gayle Olson cleaned out the grocery cart and delivered the items to UDMO in June. More than 20 members volunteered and packed Kids Against Hunger Meals on Aug. 5th at the Bridge. Volunteers are needed to pack foods for the Backpack program on Sept. 22 at 6:30 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church. The board thanked Jan Maxon for serving since January. She has found it necessary to resign. The next meeting will be Sept. 3rd at 5:00 pm at the church.

Evangelism Board: June 9, 2015 meeting: Pastor Craig Blaufuss, Carol Crystal, Laurie Epps, Marjorie Groves, Kay Harfst, Dawn Holdgrafer, Wilma Reinsel were present. The pastor reported that Diane Vasquez is recuperating at home from splenectomy. She will start chemo. Holly Riemenschneider had her left knee replaced, Dorothy Englehart is delighted to be able to walk (with cane) and drive again after getting a pacemaker. Since the last meeting Wilma has sent one sympathy and two get well cards. Stephen Ministry made a new match this week. The team continues to look for matches inside and outside of the church. Marjorie will add Michele to those who receive the boards minutes. Carol has filled June's roster of ushers/greeters. Two people will be greeters and two will be ushers (handing out bulletins, helping visitors, etc.) before the service. All four will collect the offering. It's nice to have two additional persons posted inside or outside at the north door to greet and hold the door for people-like the Perry's often do. Remind the ushers to all go to the front when taking up the offering and move to the back together as much as possible. The Evangelism Board will lock the Nursery door except on

Sunday mornings. During a funeral and a Meals 'n' More, unsupervised youngsters played or hung out in the room, leaving the room in disarray. We will ask the nursery attendants to lock the door on Sunday morning when the service is over. Worship on July 12th will be at Briggs Woods Shelter #2, at 10:30 am, followed by a church picnic. In case of rain, we can use the barn. People are asked to bring a dish to share and their own tableware. Evangelism will bring tablecloths, water and coffee. Dawn will get water, Laurie will bring garbage bags from the church. There is money in the church budget earmarked for Ecumenical Human Needs, but EHN seems to have enough money at the present. This will be discussed again in September. The Evangelism Board will host fellowship time after worship on Aug. 2nd. Laurie will contact us by email about what to bring. The board decided not to meet in July or August. If issues arise, we will "meet" by email. Dawn volunteered to clean the fabric activity bags and to remove used coloring book pages and broken crayons in September. Sharon will be doing this in July. Possible topics for next month's agenda are: (1) Some children enjoy playing with the stuffed toys in the activity bags vs. sanitation concerns (2) Ecumenical Human Needs donation. Next meeting is Sept. 8th at 6:15 pm.

The next Cabinet meeting will be September 8th, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cabinet meeting by clerk pro tem-Dalene Schlitter Boards and Committee reports by clerk-Mary Van Diest 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:

