

By the time you read this article we will have already introduced our prospective new members to the United Church of Christ. Teaching some of the UCC essentials always reminds me of what makes our denomination special, and I realize that we often take for granted the uniqueness of the UCC. I believe what makes the UCC distinct (and a blessing!) in Protestant Christianity can be summed up in one word: “Freedom.” The United Church of Christ, perhaps more so than any other mainline Christian denomination in this country, takes seriously the words from the 8th chapter of the Gospel of John, which proclaim “**If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.**” The freedom we receive as disciples of Jesus is the very lifeblood of the UCC—it is woven into the very fabric of our denomination. Let me briefly point out some of the freedoms that are part and parcel of our denomination.

Jesus is our only “boss” in the UCC. Our local congregation, like all UCC churches, has *autonomy*: we are not controlled by any other entity in this denomination. We ratify our own constitution; we elect our own members to manage the affairs of this congregation; we call and dismiss our own pastors. This congregation can even choose to leave the UCC at any time, and we know that some churches in the UCC have chosen to use that freedom! The Conference and National Office of the UCC may speak to us, but they do not have the power to speak *for us*. What binds us together as one people is *covenant*: the acknowledgement that we belong together and should strive to listen to each other and take each other seriously, even when we don’t always agree with each other.

We have theological freedom in the UCC. One of the most important phrases coined by the UCC is this: “*the testimonies of our ancestors’ faith are not the tests of ours.*” This denomination welcomes searching spirits and requires no litmus tests of faith in order to belong to it. You can be theologically conservative, moderate, or liberal and still belong to the UCC! This freedom has special importance to me because it allows me the freedom to think and imagine outside the “box” of conventional belief, as my conscience and search for truth and meaning may lead me.

We have the freedom to be authentic to who we are, and still witness and serve in the UCC. Did you know that the first African American ordained by a Protestant denomination, Lemuel Haynes, was ordained in 1785 by Congregationalists? Did you know that in 1853 Antoinette Brown was the first woman ordained since New Testament times—also by Congregationalists? Were you aware that the first openly gay man ordained to Christian ministry, Rev. William Johnson, was ordained by the Golden Gate Association of the UCC in 1972? In the UCC, *all* of us, not some of us, are called to minister and serve in the name of Jesus, and the UCC has been at the vanguard of opening up church leadership and ministry to those who have been previously set at the margins by the historic practice of the Christian faith.

We have the freedom to allow God to “Still Speak.” One of our taglines in the UCC is “God is Still Speaking.” This is a daring freedom indeed, for our belief that God is still revealing new truths and new insights is what has led us as a denomination to embrace truths that may seem unbiblical, even heretical. Our early endorsement of the equality and holiness of same-sex marriage (General Synod 25); our commitment to ordaining women and non-heterosexual clergy; our embrace of the basic tenets of science, including evolution and environmental activism...these are a few concrete examples of how we believe God is still speaking to us in our time and place in ways that are leading us in new directions, and new understandings, of our faith.

These are some of the freedoms we have as UCC members; freedoms that define who we are as a unique people of faith. May we join with our newest members and celebrate the Good News of our freedom in Christ... and may we celebrate the life of our denomination, whose foundation rests on the great gift of this freedom! —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

April 3	91	April 10	81
April 17	59	April 24	71

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 835-7902
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr 839-5619
Sunshine Yoders: Choir Director 835-7626
Melissa Hindt: Organist 209-8087
Mary Van Diest: Pianist 832-3754
Curt/Lorraine McCoskey: Cust's. 832-5341
Tracy Wehrhan: Church Treasurer 297-0370
Luverne Bierle: Financial Secretary 832-4752



PARISH NURSE NEWS

You and your family should know these warning signs of a stroke. Clot-dissolving treatment that can reduce brain damage from many strokes needs to be given within 3 hours.

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing with one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

4 - Richard Abbott
5 - Kari Rabe
5 - Becky Myers
6 - Mitchell Downs
9 - Jon Reinsel
9 - Connie Gustafson
11 - Bob Butrick
11 - Ina Cormaney
11 - Lauren Leman
11 - Kelly Midtling
11 - Mabel Prescott
12 - Heather Butrick
15 - Lailah Jean Luevanos
15 - Lukah Lee Luevanos
16 - Neil Oberender
16 - Katie Fox
19 - Gretchen Bruner
22 - Hayden Butrick
22 - Sue Jaycox
22 - Lisa Swanson
25 - Mike Burtnett
26 - Carol Crystal
29 - Linda Lahr
29 - Jennifer Yungclas



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

2 - Emily & Troy Stockdale
4 - Al & Jan Maxon
7 - Craig & Vicki Blaufuss
16 - David & Liz Weieneth
17 - Tracy & Glenda Wehrhan
29 - Dan & Donna Ryherd
30 - Joseph & Amy Doolittle

You are cordially invited to the
Webster City UCC Women's Fellowship

May Dinner

Wednesday, May 25th

5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Meal Cost - \$6.00

Meal prepared and served by

Pastor Craig and Company.

Desserts provided by Morning Star Circle

Reservations would be appreciated by

Contacting the UCC church office at

832-2232 or fcuccwc@wmtel.net

Program Presented by:

Joel Peterson

Joel will talk about his trip to Same and Kigogo, Tanzania where he worked on a water and sanitation project in that west African nation.

The team worked with the villagers and its water board to provide clean water to villagers so they will no longer have to walk or push bikes to purchase impure water. The children will then be able to attend school, the women will be able to contribute to the economy, and the health of the villagers will improve. Future water and sanitation projects will help the residents of two other Tanzanian villages.

Pecans are still available from Haystack Circle. Contact Dalene 835-0636 or Pat Kesler 712-540-0750.

Women's Fellowship Spring Thrift Sale

Give yourselves a pat on the back. This was the most successful sale ever. We raised approx. \$1800 before expenses. This will help us give support to many deserving organizations in this community and around the world.

Thank you to each of you who helped donate, sort or unbox items, clean-up and haul the leftovers, bring food for workers, or worked during the sale. This project could not be done if not for each of you.

Thank you all so much!!! The next sale will be announced this summer.

Cindy Henning

Chairperson, Thrift Sale



Remember Beacon of Hope When You Shop

We at 1st Congregational United Church of Christ serve a meal at the Beacon of Hope homeless shelter in Fort Dodge every other month – but we'd like to do more! The shelter staff has a shopping list of needs, and the Mission Board will set up a container to collect items you donate. Every time a team from our church goes to the shelter to serve a meal,

we'll take the items along to give them. If we fill the container before it's time to go, Alyssa Kenville will drop off the items on her way to work in Fort Dodge. Thanks! – *The Mission Board*

Here's what the Beacon of Hope needs:
Deodorant and disposable razors
Laundry detergent
Pain relievers, such as Tylenol or ibuprofen
Cough drops and antacids
Garbage bags (30- and 55-gallon sizes)
Toilet bowl cleaner, Windex, Pine-Sol
Paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex
Copy paper
AA and AAA batteries

Scholarships

The Finance Board will be receiving scholarship applications until June 30th. Applications are available from the church office.

Pickle Jar

The UCC infamous pickle jar will be making a return appearance on May 1! This time around is for raising some money for our own Webster City Special Olympians. (We do have a couple of these young people in our midst!) They will be going to Ames on May 20 for the state meet and we have raised funds in past years to help them with a special meal, shirts or various other things. After talking to one of the WC coaches she said funds this years could be put towards buying snacks for the team or helping to pay for a meal out while in Ames for the meet. if this is something you would like to help support please be prepared to stuff the pickle jar on May 1!!

Your ever faithful requesters of the Mission Board

Clean Up! 14 hardy members of our church met at the Kmart/ McDonald's parking lot Tuesday evening and picked up 10 bags of trash. Be sure and check out the green area to the east of the parking lot and see how clean it looks now!! A BIG thanks to all of you who helped.

Mission Board

Mother's Day May 8

We will honor "mothers" of all ages during the May 8 service.

Promotion/ Participation Sunday: May 15

On May 15 we will conclude our Spring Christian Education programming and recess for the summer months. On this Sunday we will honor our teachers and students for their participation in Sunday School and KLAB, and present children's Bibles to students K-4th grade and adult Bibles to students in the 5th grade and above who have not yet received them. Join us for a special Sunday that honors our Christian Education ministries!

Graduation Sunday: May 15

On May 15 we will honor our five High School graduates, Chelsey Wagoner, Chase Berhow, Lauren Leman, David McMurray and Zachary McMurray, during worship. A cake and punch reception in their honor will be held after worship.



KLAB Ends May 4

Another successful program year of KLAB is drawing to a close! May 4th will be our last scheduled day of KLAB, and we will celebrate by taking our annual pilgrimage to the Dairy Queen! WE want to express our thanks to Ginnie Veach and Verna Weieneth for serving snacks, and to Wil Groves, Arden Schlitter and Luverne Bierle for leading games, and assisting with crafts and "keeping order". Thanks also to Anne Sherve-Ose who has led the ORFF program and musical component of KLAB. And many thanks to those who generously provided snacks and drinks throughout the year!

Care Center Worship Services Once again on May 29 First Congregational leads the Webster City Care Center Worship services, beginning at 1:15pm at Windsor Manor, 2 pm at Crestview, and 2:45pm at Southfield. This is a valued ministry to our elderly in the community! All members of First Congregational are invited to come and

support this ministry at any or all of these services.

Summer Worship Services begin June 5

Our summer worship services will begin Sunday, June 5. The time of the summer services will be 9:30 a.m., and the choir will be in recess for the duration of the summer. Summer music is needed! If you, or someone you know, is willing to offer music for our summer services, please let Dalene Schlitter, of the Music committee, know.

Meals'N More

You Are Invited to a Potluck Supper "Mother Knows Best - Collection of our favorite recipes from our Mothers."

Please bring a favorite food to share that your Mom made for you along with the recipe. Your recipe will be in the 2nd Edition of "Mother Knows Best." Wednesday, May 4th 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Mabel Prescott will do defibrillator training between 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Strengthen the Church Special Offering: May 15

On Sunday, May 15 we will be receiving the Strengthen the Church special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. This offering builds the UCC's future. It funds new congregations and renews existing ones. It supports programs for youth and young adults and nurtures current and future leaders. Directed to local Conferences, Local Church Ministries and the Stillspeaking Ministry, Strengthen the Church gifts help to create vibrant church communities of extravagant welcome.

Stressed? Discouraged? Lonely? Sad? Don't Suffer Alone. Help Is Available.

Sometimes we fall into a trap where we think it's a sign of weakness to ask for help. So when we're stressed, discouraged, lonely, or sad, we try to keep our struggles hidden and are reluctant to ask for help. However, that's not God's plan. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." God wants us to care for others—and allow others to care for us in our time of need.

If you're sad or struggling inside, don't suffer alone. Ask for help. We've got a team of Stephen Ministers who are ready to provide confidential one-to-one care, encouragement, and support to help you through a tough time. Find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders: Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Dale Olson, and Sharon Perry. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to bring God's love and care into your life.

Easter Activities



Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>MARCH</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$17,481.00	\$52,393.23
Other Income	.13	.58
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,481.13	\$52,393.81
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	\$1,583.34	\$4,749.94
Pastoral Services	10,802.54	21,384.70
Maintenance and Repairs	34,356.11	62,015.39
Church Office	3,380.92	8,780.79
Music Ministry	1,150.00	2,900.00
Christian Education	0.00	25.00
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	817.64	1,032.99
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$52,090.55	\$48,798.26

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Webster City, Iowa
Cabinet Meeting – April 12, 2016

Members Present:

Moderator-----	Pastor-----Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator---- Alan Yungclas	Trustees-----Tom Riemenschneider
Finance Sec.-----Luverne Bierle	Women's Fellowship-Joyce Gelhaus
Finance-----Dale Olson	Mission-----Lorraine McCoskey
Staff/Parish----- Dalene Schlitter	Worship-----Holly Riemenschneider
Christian Ed-----Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism-----Sharon Perry
Treasurer-----Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk-----Mary Van Diest

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by the Vice-Moderator, Alan Yungclas. Pastor Craig opened with a devotional "Finding the Perfect Touch". Highlights from Boards were given: Trustees-winding down on the renovation project; Finance-are revising the scholarship application form; Evangelism-Mabel Prescott will demonstrate how to use the defibrillator at the May Meals'n'More dinner; Treasurer's -March offering was \$17,481.00 and expenses were \$13,904.46. Dale moved and Holly seconded to accept the report. Tracy moved the report be put to audit.

Old Business: The Church Constitution Committee will meet on April 20, 2016.

New Business: The cry room for babies will be the East Chapel and the nursery room will be open for toddlers. The Evangelism Board is working on the details. Dale Olson gave a brief report on his duties as moderator of the state board. Marjorie Groves also holds a position on the state board.

Reports of Boards and Committees

Pastor's Report: On March 6 the children sang in worship under the leadership of Katie Sonsalla, and on March 13 the KLAB kids offered a song played on the ORFF instruments,

under the direction of Anne Sherve-Ose. Maundy Thursday service was held on March 20 at 7:00 with readers from the choir leading the Tenebrae readings. On Easter Sunday we held an 8:30 am “Son-Rise” service, which included a skit done by our youth and a 10:30 am traditional service with pew communion. Due to low attendance at our Maundy Thursday and “Son-Rise” Easter service I am requesting the Worship Board evaluate these services and offer suggestions or alternatives. We led the Care Center Services on April 3. Thanks to all who help with those services—and a big thank you to Don Bruner, who resumed leading the singing at these services upon his return from Florida. Two new students have joined KLAB so we are now averaging 10-12 students weekly. We are studying the story of Joseph from the Old Testament and Anne Sherve-Ose will continue to lead music on April 6 and 27. The last KLAB day is May 4 when we will make our annual trek to Dairy Queen for treats, then spend the remainder of the day at the park. The Adult Education Class is now studying “eco-theology” and our human impact on the environment. Six individuals have indicated they wish to join the church. We are in the process of scheduling membership classes. The Safe Church Policy TEAM (Leah Maass, Stephanie Hill, Lorraine McCoskey) will meet Tuesday, April 26 (changed to May 3) at 6:00 pm to review the policy and begin implementation. Stephen Ministry has completed four lessons in “Discovering God’s vision for your life”, and the group has scored their “Spiritual Gifts” inventory. The findings showed that each person in the program had spiritual gifts that made them a good fit for the Stephen Ministry Program. Three Stephen Ministers are matched with care receivers. We are now partnered with Quakerdale’s Hope for Healing program, but have yet to receive a referral for assistance from them. The group has also started a “Prayer Box” in fellowship hall. Anyone who has a prayer need may slip a prayer request in the box, and our Stephen Ministers will pray over that request at our meetings. At the urging of Rev Flagg of Asbury UMC, Van Diest Medical Center is now asking patients if they have a church preference, and if they desire for the church to be contacted about their hospital stay. There have been mixed results to this new initiative—thus far the hospital is not making all the necessary inquiries or calls. The Summer Lunch program will resume this summer; date to start has not yet been announced. Pastor Craig has asked to be relieved of his responsibilities in organizing and promoting this program. He has discussed his concerns about the program with the WCMA, Lori Hartnett and the Mission Board. He will be working with the High School class on the 2016 Baccalaureate Service. The NW Association Annual meeting was held April 2, 2016 in Larchwood, IA. Thirty-three attended the annual all day meeting. Unfortunately it was a poorly organized meeting, but Larchwood UCC offered excellent hospitality, and in spite of the disorganization, the routine business of the Association was conducted. Items of business included: 1. Presentation of a large information packet concerning the impending Tri-Conference Staff proposal that will consolidate the staff of the South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa Conferences. The proposal recommends reorganizing into one unified staff with one Executive Conference Minister, 4 Associate Conference Ministers, and 1 pool of office staff replacing the current staff of the 3 Conference offices. A Tri-Conference Executive Board would oversee the collaborative work of the staff, evaluate the ECM, and establish salary compensations and searches for staff; this Board will exist in addition to each Conference’s governing board it is important to stress that this proposal is NOT a merger of 3 Conferences into 1; each Conference retains its own identity and its mission priorities. This proposal will be voted on at each Conference Annual Meeting (fall 2016) and will proceed if at least 2 of the three Conferences pass it (if only 2 Conferences pass the proposal, it would be modified to be structured for 2 conferences). If approved a new Executive Conference minister search would be undertaken and a new ECM called by the fall of 2017. 2. A report from Our Sacred Space (Pilgrim Heights) was given. There have been staffing challenges in the last year; the acting director, David Mears, left in March but the Board is interviewing three candidates to replace him There is a camping schedule posted on the OSS website, and volunteers and paid

staff are being recruited. There have been improvements made to the facilities; a new shower house is completed and a new vegetable garden will be planted this year with the produce used for meals. Also, a new outdoor classroom is nearly completed that will enhance learning for the campers. The camp has been accredited and recertified by the American Campers Association. It continues to draw not only church campers but also hosts weddings, banquets and other gatherings. Financially it is in the best shape it's been in since 2007! The bad news is that 2 furnaces have gone out, which will cost over \$20,000 to replace. 3. The NW Association Committee on Ministry reported that it had conducted 5 Periodic Support Consultations with churches in our Association in 2015, and relicensed 9 pastors. The CoM also conducted a boundary training event for clergy in October; all clergy are required to attend boundary training every 3 years. In addition, the CoM meets with pastors new to the Association, and sends out and reads information reviews from all clergy and churches in the Association. 4. We amended and ratified a budget for 2016-2017 for \$13,425. This budget is paid for with Association dues that churches remit, based on \$3 per member. 5. We discussed the need for our current Association bylaws to be updated. It is unknown when they were last updated, and they need to be changed to reflect our current practices and organizational structure.

Staff Parish: Met on March 8 with Pastor Craig, Verna Bierle, Stephanie Hill, Greta Oberender, Dalene Schlitter, Shirley Yungclas and Sharon Perry in attendance. Old Business: 1. Funeral Policy Booklet—Joyce Gelhaus and Greta have not met regarding this issue. Pastor Craig visited with Pastor Mike Kroona about Trinity Lutheran's policy. Trinity requires that a funeral home director be present for both member and non-member funerals. 2. Safe Church Policy—a team of members from various committees and one at large member will form the team. Leah Maass will represent Christian Education, Stephanie Hill will represent Staff Parish and Lorraine McCoskey will be the member at large. The team will establish the safe church policy rules. 3—Staff assignments as follows: administrative assistant, Michele Omvig, Dalene and Sharon; organist, Melissa Hindt and choir director, Sunshine Yoders, Greta and Stephanie; Pastor Craig with Shirley and Verna. The custodian, Curt McCoskey, assignment will be delayed until after the Trustee's interview with Curt. New Business: Trustees, Tom Riemenschneider and Joyce Gelhaus, were in attendance. With remodeling almost complete and a task force soon to become active regarding a revision of the church constitution, an update needs to be done on the job description of the Custodian's job. Following discussion, it was deemed advisable for the Trustees to interview the custodian to get his ideas on the job description and to make changes if needed. Dalene moved and Sharon seconded a motion to accept the job description presented to Staff Parish after their interview with Curt. Motion carried. Next meeting is April 19, 2016 at 6:15 pm.

Mission Board: Met on March 10 with Pastor Craig, Audrey Burnett, Marjorie Groves, Alyssa Kenville, Gayle Olson, and Karin Yungclas. Dalene Schlitter and Barb Wollan will do an audit of finances. Lorraine McCoskey has been approved as a member of the Safe Church task force. The constitution review task force consists of Vicki Blaufuss, Audrey Burtnett, Dale Olson, Holly Riemenschneider and Tracy Wehrhan. A member of the Blairsburg United Church of Christ approached Craig about taking on pastoral duties at that church, as well as First Congregational UCC in Webster City. The Cabinet decided against this concept. Discussion of the book "Artificial Maturity" takes place at the Kendall Young Library on April 4 at 6:30 pm. For the Beacon of Hope meal Lorraine says the three salads should be Jell-O or fruit with each serving 15. The Beacon newsletter lists ongoing needs at the shelter. Gayle will ask Michele to make a large copy of the list which will be put on a box in which donations will be collected. As Alyssa works in Fort Dodge she is willing to deliver the items on a regular basis. A jar will

possibly be put out to collect monetary donations also. Marjorie will write an item for the March 20 bulletin about the shelter's ongoing needs. Under prison ministry the Rev. Carroll Lang responded to Marjorie's email asking about possible projects with the Fort Dodge facility. He sent copies of several Church of the Damascus Road newsletter with ideas-ranging from supplying children's books for incarcerated dads to read to their children via taped recordings to financial support for the Church of the Damascus Road to forming teams to help former inmates re-entering society. Marjorie will contact Carroll to find out if books are still needed and if so, whether they need to be paperback. She will also ask for the kite quilt pattern, in case the Piecemakers would like to make the quilts for inmates as they are released. Craig has talked with Hamilton County Sheriff, Denny Hagensen, who recommended talking with the jail administrator. Alyssa noted we'd need to undergo background checks before entering the prison to participate in worship and would also need training on setting boundaries. Reporting on an Urban Immersion/Mission Trip—the Urban Immersion organization does take all-adult groups; adults would eat and take training with the youth groups but would do service projects and be housed separately. Our church youth need involving mission/work projects like this, esp. the weekend or long weekend ones. Audrey will check with Rev Chris Burtnett about possibilities of volunteering at Our Sacred Space. Alyssa will check with Kerryn Oliver of the Jewell and Alden UCC's about their work in Kansas City and also with Plymouth UCC in Des Moines about possible joint projects. Craig says that a youth mission trip would need female and male chaperones if both sexes are participating. For the Domestic Sexual Assault Outreach Center cake auction on April 16, our church will be doing a Home Entertainment Center "basket". The goal is to raise at least \$1,000 from our congregation to buy a large flat screen TV, Blu Ray DVD player and a popcorn maker. Marjorie did items on One Great Hour of Sharing for the bulletins. She and Craig have selected a short video to play Palm Sunday promoting OGHS. Faith United Methodist Church will coordinate the Christmas holiday fundraising bell-ringing with the Salvation Army. The city clean-up will be April 19 at 6:30 pm. Our church will pick up trash on the hillside by K-Mart and McDonald's. Craig reported on the discussion in the Ministerial Association about the summer lunch program and whether it mostly benefits the day care centers. Marjorie will bring a poster identifying the peace pipe as money for Heifer project. The next meeting is April 7 at 5:30 pm.

April 9th meeting: Present were Marjorie Groves, Alyssa Kenville, Karin Yungclas, Lorraine McCoskey, Gayle Olson and Pastor Craig. Lorraine reported that \$1,475 has been donated for our DSAOC basket. A Samsung Smart TV and a Bose sound system have been purchased with these funds. The remaining cash of \$75 will be given as a donation to DSAOC. Approximately 25 men were served at the March Beacon of Hope meal. Gayle will be in charge of the May 18 meal with Lorraine helping out if needed. Ginnie Veach will be captain for the July meal. The city clean-up is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, at 6:30 pm. We will again work on the Kmart area. The city will furnish gloves and garbage bags and will pick up the filled bags. Alyssa has been checking into possible mission trips that would include kids. She is talking with their SS class and encouraging them to be involved in service projects on a local level to start this process. She is looking into the possibility of participating in Reggie's Sleepout in Des Moines in the fall. Lorraine has been in touch with a contact member given to us, about doing some volunteering at Our Sacred Space Camp (Pilgrim Heights) but has not heard back from them. Pastor Craig reported that the summer lunch program will be in operation again this summer. The board decided that our church would sign up for a week of volunteering for this program. Pastor Craig shared a contact he had received in regard to our previous discussion about a prison ministry. Mary Vavroch has graciously agreed to be our captain for a Relay for Life team again this year. Our board will help with any fundraising activities that she will need help on. Alyssa will be in charge of getting the pickle jar out for Special Olympics the first Sunday in May.

Audrey is heading up our Strengthen the Church offering which usually takes place in May. Karin is chairing our part of the ice cream social with Faith Methodist which probably will be in June. Gayle will help, but will step aside if Marjorie would fill this role when she returns from her trip. Gayle will be in touch with the city to find out when they will be planting trees this spring. Pastor Craig would like to see KLAB kids involved in this type of project if timing would work out. Next meeting is May 12, Thursday, at 5:15 pm.

Worship Board: Met on March 10 with Holly Riemenschneider, Linda Lahr, Gretchen McGlynn, Cindy Henning and Pastor Craig. Communion schedule is: Maundy Thursday, March 24, intinction with Holly and Cindy; preparation on March 26 with Verna, Cindy and Gretchen; March 27, pews, with Cindy, Verna, Linda, Holly and Gretchen and April 10-April communion. They reviewed communion procedures for intinction and pew communion. Seven trays of wine/grape juice and bread are needed ask ushers to watch if another juice tray for pew communion is needed. Need only 1 tray of bread for intinction. Assignments were made for serving the Fellowship Coffee on March 13. The licensing bill for music products will be paid. The Saturday services will be on the 3rd Saturday starting in June and ending in October. Services will begin at 5:00 pm. Dates are June 18, July 16, August 20, September 17 and October 15. The summer morning worship time of 9:30 am will begin on June 5 and go through Sept. 4. The 10:30 am services will return on September 11th. In the future we propose that the congregation vote on summer service times at the next annual meeting. Flowers for Mother's Day were discussed. Holly will compare prices for quantity of 50 and check out small plants or geraniums. Pastor Craig will let Linda know when he is taking vacation so she can get a substitute. He will be gone on January 1, 2017. The permanent monthly meeting time will be the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm. There will be no meeting in April, next meeting is May 12.

Evangelism Board: Met on February 9 with Pastor Craig, Carol Crystal, Sharon Perry, Kay Harfst, Kolleen Taylor and Laurie Eps. See the pastor's report on the Stephen Ministry's activities. The defibrillator has been checked and returned to Fellowship Hall. Mabel plans to offer training to anyone in the congregation at our May Meals and More as well as after one of the morning Fellowship Coffees following Sunday morning service. The Hospitality Committee met last month to plan out and divide up the duties for the year. Donna Ryherd offered to chair this committee. The last Meals and More will be a pot luck in May. Everyone is encouraged to bring a dish and recipe from their own mother's recipe book. Sharon will collect the recipes and compile a small cookbook.

March 15th meeting was held with Pastor Craig, Sharon Perry, Kay Harfst, Kolleen Taylor, Wilma Reinsel and Laurie Epps attending. A group of men have volunteered to prepare the meal for the May 25 Women's Fellowship Annual Meeting. The Stephen Ministry group is currently focusing on marketing and public relations. The Hospitality Committee has asked the ushers to double as greeters. They are responsible for having a couple of candle lighters ready and to pass the collection plates in an organized manner. A discussion on the future of the children's nursery was held. With the implementation of the Safe Church Policy having a volunteer supported nursery would involve ensuring two adults to be present at all times. Unfortunately this is simply not feasible. The families with very small children have been comfortable stepping to the back of the sanctuary or to the East Chapel (where there is a speaker so they can hear the worship service). We can't emphasize enough how important it is for our children to feel welcome during our worship service. Kolleen and Kay volunteered to clean out the small cupboard in East Chapel that should work to house a small supply of toys for the young children. Sharon volunteered to solicit help from Carol to consider the nursery toys for that same small supply of toys to be

relocated to East Chapel. Kay will ask our Piecemakers about a couple of small quilts to include in the cupboard that can be used to spread out as a play mat. Laurie will send some printed material to Michele to include in the bulletin to encourage families to attend and for the congregation to remember... those noisy children are the future of our church!! Next meeting is April 12 at 6:15 pm.

Board of Trustees: Met on March 16 with Pastor Craig, Tom Riemenschneider, Tracy Wehrhan, Holly Riemenschneider, Bruce Perry and Joyce Gelhaus present. Curt McCoskey, the custodian, was present to go over the new Custodian Job Description. Discussed what he does daily, weekly, and as needed. He tries to do the cleaning when people are not around the church as early morning or late in the evening. He is satisfied with his salary. He is compensated for funeral and weddings from the families. He plans on continuing to be custodian as long as he is able. He will be on vacation from June 27-July 5. He noted that the vacuum is still not working very well. Old Business: Scott Jaycox has moved the diaper changing tables, has to finish the ceiling in the basement, the cabinet and to put the wood strips up above the door in the sanctuary. The pew, which was broken, will not be returned and the coat rack will not be put back in the entry because it is a security issue. Renovation update-Jensen Builders are going to replace the women's restroom door. After the new door is in and stained we can then make the payment for the remainder of the project. There has been no communication on Wayne's bill. Kinnetz Signs bid for the interior signs was \$1,180.69. This is for three restroom signs, eight room signs and the directory sign. They will all be moonlit pond in color. The bid was approved. The bid for the exterior signage was \$1,721.42. We believe that this is a good price but will wait to see how we come out on finances after all the other renovation bills are paid. The bulletin boards were delivered but were damaged so were returned. Replacements should be sent around April 15. New Business: Two requests for church usage were approved-Michele Omvig for her son's graduation on May 22 and Brittany Tudor for a bridal shower for Jordan Smith on June 2. Tom will be putting up the Last Supper picture in Fellowship Hall. Joyce will check with Randy Temple about painting two restrooms that formerly held the changing tables. Next meeting is Thursday, April 28.

Christian Ed: Met on March 9 with Pastor Craig, Vicki Blaufuss, Curt McCoskey, Jane Klaver, Leah Maass, Wil Groves and Mary Van Diest present. Preparations for Easter Day were made: Wil and Leah are working with the children to present a skit for the "Son-Rise" service; Leah and Pastor Craig will have the KLAB kids make Empty Tomb rolls; Mary Van Diest will make two breakfast casseroles; she will make Easter bags with appropriate books, trinkets and candy to give to children 12 and under; she will take the children to the lower level after the breakfast for the "Resurrection Eggs" story and for their Easter treats. Leah will email Vicki with ages, birthdays, school grade and address information of the Brim children. Graduation Sunday honoring the high school seniors of the church will take place the same day as teacher recognition/promotion Sunday, May 15. Seniors will be acolytes and will wear their caps and gowns. Vicki will make corsages for them. Next meeting is April 12.

Women's Fellowship: Executive Board met on April 4. Joyce Gelhaus lifted up Audrey Burtnett, MaryAnn Byrne and Pam VanderLugt. Verna Bierle gave the treasurer's report: Old Balance--\$2,945.23, New Balance---\$3,174.96, and Savings Account---\$1,736.34. Old Business: The nursing home birthday parties will be held on Thursday, May 5. Crestview at 2:00 pm, Southfield at 2:45 pm. The program will be a hymn sing. Each circle is to contribute 3 dozen cookies which should be at the church before noon that day. The May Dinner will be on Wednesday, May 25, starting at 5:30 pm. Cost for the meal will be \$6.00. The meal will be

prepared by Pastor Craig and men from the church, decorations by Mayflower Circle and desserts and being hostess by Morning Star Circle. Cindy Henning will invite Jewel and Blairsburg UCC members. The Thrift Sale will be on April 22, 23. Cindy will check with Beacon of Hope and The Second Chance Thrift Store if they will take donations. New Business: Relay for Life dinner will be on Thursday June 16, at West Twin Park. It is expected will serve 80 to 100 people. Relay for Life are providing dinner for survivors. Our church is asked to provide salads. Each circle will make 3 salads and have them at the church by 3:00 pm that day. Mayflower circle-potato salad, Morning Star circle-fruit salad, Haystack circle-vegetable salad and Providence circle the salad of their choice. The Women's Fellowship Reorganization proposal was discussed and changes updated. Cindy Henning mentioned that we take this proposal to our circles for feedback or an alternate idea. The final vote will be made in May. This will be a trial year with no changes to the Constitution or Bylaws yet. If someone would like to be co-chair, please let Joyce know by May 1. Dates to Remember: April 6—Meals and More at 5:00 pm with Haystack Circle in charge; April 8---Providence Circle at 5:30 pm at Linda Lahr's home and program by her; April 13---Haystack meets at 7:00 pm with hostess and program by Gretchen McGlynn; April 14---Morning Star at 9:00 am with Ginnie Veach as hostess and Holly Riemenschneider doing the program; April 14—Mayflower at 1:30 pm at church with hostesses Wilma Reinsel and Verna Bierle and program by Audrey Burtnett; April 21---Piecemakers at 9:30 am. On April 21 from 9:00 am-9:00 pm is Thrift Sale Work Day; on April 22 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm is Thrift Sale Work Day; on April 22 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm is Thrift Sale; on April 23 from 8:00 to noon is the Thrift Sale; on April 28 at 9:30 am Piecemakers meet and on May 3 at 5:00 is Executive Board. Joyce briefly discussed the proposed changes to Women's Fellowship.

Next meeting: May 10, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Van Diest, Church Clerk

First Congregational United Church of Christ
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to everyone in the home of:

