

September 2016 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
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<http://www.firstcongregationalwcc.org/>

"..And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward." –Matt. 10:42

Recently I was in Fort Dodge getting my tires rotated, and I stopped to get trash bags at Aldi's on the way home. While I was standing in the checkout line, I noticed a couple attempting to purchase 2 loaves of bread and a half gallon of milk. The checker rang up the items, and the man immediately grabbed them from the cart and hurried out the door while the woman produced a debit card and swiped to pay. The cashier paused while staring at her screen, and then without a word swiveled the smaller customer screen toward the woman and pointed to what was written there. It wasn't hard to guess what it said, since the woman let out a gasp, moaned, and hurriedly left the store.

Now if you have ever shopped at Aldi's, you know that declined debit cards aren't that rare of an occurrence (it has happened to me). Yet whether it is because of inept management of one's debit account (that's me) or genuine poverty, it inevitably leads to embarrassment for the customer and inconvenience to those in line. But yesterday it was different. The checker sat silently staring into space, wondering if they were going to return with the bread and milk, when the man in front of me leaned over and asked her, "How much was it?"

"Three dollars and eighty-one cents," she replied, and hearing this, the man handed her a twenty and said, "I'll pay for it." The checker raised an eyebrow, and asked, "Are you sure?" to which the man curtly replied "Yes"...and so the checker completed the transaction, made change for the twenty, and asked him if he wanted the receipt. "No thanks," was all he said as he waited for her to ring his sale, and after paying for his goods he hurried from the store. I then watched her ring up my sale, and after paying for it I hurried out as well--just as the couple was breathlessly re-entering with the milk and bread.

As charity goes \$3.81 is a small pittance, and perhaps that is why the man paid for the couple's food without knowing whether they were truly needy, or just poor money managers, or worse—grifters running a scam at Aldi's. Perhaps he paid it out of a sense of impatience so he could get out of Aldi's and go home. Perhaps he was a disciple, or was helping these folks in the name of a disciple. Who knows? All I know is that he paid for their bread and milk and departed...a good deed done without hesitation, without weighing the pros and cons, without wanting a background check or the assurance that his goodwill was not being misused. And seeing this, I wonder how many other countless "cups of cold water" are offered every day by anonymous folks who simply act on the impulse to help, without thought of risk or reward. Perhaps is it these many anonymous cups of cold water freely given, rather than the large endowments and gifts of giant charities and foundations, that make possible the flow of the Living Water that runs through our common life, keeping us human, humble, and kind-hearted...and keeping us connected to the Primal Goodwill that has given us Living Water, and bread, and milk, since the Beginning.

To return to my story...I was almost to my car when I saw the couple leaving the store, hollering at someone in the parking lot while holding up their bread and milk as if they had just won the lottery. I wish the man who had paid for their groceries could have seen their smiles—it would have been a great reward for his kindness. For whether they deserved it or not, the \$3.81 boon they had received at Aldi's that day, and the thought that they had been smiled upon by someone in this weary world of ours, made them in turn smile in a way that made my heart glad.

How often in our lives do we have the opportunity to offer someone a cold cup of water, and in so doing bring a smile to their face—and the good news that someone has noticed and cared for them? How often do we count the cost of our compassion, when the gift of our kindness, our generosity, our LOVE is its own reward—a reward that aligns us with the kind, generous, and loving soul of the cosmos that we call God? In these days of skepticism and suspicion, of means testing and wide profit margins, every cold cup of water offered to the little ones of this world is the one drink that will truly satisfy our thirst for life as it could be; life as it should be...life lived with one another and FOR one

another as God, and Christ, intended it to be lived. May we all be blessed to be able to offer many cups of cold water in our earthly lives, and as we are blessed with a cup or two in return, may we give thanks for all the generous hearts which make such small acts *among the greatest acts of all.*
 -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

August 7 56 August 14 78
August 20 42 August 28 43



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 1 - Sunshine Yoders
- 6 - Debra Carlson
- 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 - Brittany Tudor
- 30 - Mark Brim

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
 Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316
 Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net
Michele Omvig: Admin. Assist. 227-8358
 Church's e-mail: fcuccwc@gmail.com
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

PARISH NURSE NEWS

Warning signs of too much stress

- Headaches
- Grinding teeth
- Shoulder, neck, or back pain
- Feeling tired all the time
- Upset stomach or heartburn
- Sweating a lot
- Uneven or fast heartbeat
- Getting sick a lot
- Feeling worried or depressed
- Smoking or drinking more
- Eating too much or too little
- Anger, feeling impatient. or a bad temper
- Inability to think clearly, or trouble forgetting things
- Trouble sleeping



SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

September's Saturday service - - September 3rd

Surprise! This month our Saturday service will be held on the FIRST Saturday of the month: September 3rd beginning at 5 p.m. The Worship board approved this change so that Sunday school could begin on the Sunday after Rally Day. Come join us on Labor Day weekend for a Saturday service of worship --and the celebration of the Lord's Supper!

KLAB starts September 21

Summer is over...that means it's time for KLAB to begin!

Kids Learning About the Bible is our Wednesday after-school Christian Education program for kids from kindergarten through 5th grade. We will begin our fall 2016 program on Wednesday, September 21, beginning after school (usually around 3:25 pm) and ending at 5 pm. We begin with free time and games, then enjoy snacks together, followed by a bible lesson and crafts.

Throughout the year we also have special activities, mission projects, a field trip or two, and holiday parties!

Parents, be watching for a KLAB newsletter to arrive early in September at your house.

Because of our safe church policy, every child who wants to attend KLAB must register. We are also looking for volunteers to provide snacks. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in fellowship hall if you would like to donate.

Care Center Services --September 18th

First Congregational has a city-wide reputation for leading meaningful care center services in our community. Our next scheduled care center services will be held September 18th. We begin at 1:15 p.m. at Windsor Manor, 2 p.m. at Crestview Nursing and Rehabilitation center,

and 2:45p.m. at Southfield Wellness Community. Everyone is encouraged to attend one or all of these services!

Breakfast

Church family - Mission Board would like to thank you for your tremendous support for our breakfast drive for UDMO in July. The following items were delivered to UDMO early in August and they were very appreciative:

13 boxes of pastrys
2 boxes of nutri-grain bars
6 bottles of syrup
7 jars of peanut butter
14 boxes of oatmeal
1 juice
1 box of raisins
3 jars of jelly
44 boxes of cereal
1 8 pkg. of individual cereal
5 bags of cereal
7 boxes muffin mix
9 boxes pancake mix
1 \$50.00 check

Thank you for embracing and supporting this project!

Adult Education begins Sunday September 18th

Are you on Facebook? Do you "Tweet"? Ever used Instagram or Snapchat? The world has changed because of social media, and so have our relationships, the ways we communicate, and even the ways we think and process information. Social media has allowed us to connect and communicate with one another in unprecedented ways, and yet it can also lead to increased anxiety, self-absorption, a sense of isolation, damaged reputations, dishonesty, and even suicide. Social media is above all else a *tool* that magnifies the power inherent in human communication in ways that must be treated with respect --and awareness.

Because of the power of social media and the need for increased awareness of its uses and misuses, we will begin our fall adult education classes with a multi-week study of "Social Media." We will examine our own use of social media; how it shapes the ways we communicate and relate; how it informs,

influences, and even creates mass events (think of this year's use of social media in this presidential election cycle); how it shapes human identity; how it occupies our time; and how it can be misused. Whether you are a social media addict or have never used social media (and never plan to) this topic is relevant to all of us who now live in a hyper connected world! Join us at 9:15 a.m. in the multipurpose room beginning Sunday, August 18.

Kids Against Hunger

Mark your calendars for Sunday Sept. 25 at 1:30 as this is the day our church will be meeting at The Bridge to pack meals for the Kids Against Hunger program. This is the program that measures, weighs, and seals bags of ingredients that can have water added and a nutritious meal is ready for a hungry family. KAH is a program that members of all ages can participate in and spend about an hour doing an activity that will help satisfy hungry families. So plan on spending about an hour at The Bridge on Sept. 25 and know the time has been well spent.

Interested?

The United Church of Christ Conference Nominating Committee is actively seeking qualified candidates to serve in a couple of important positions.

1. An at-large Board of Directors member from anywhere in the state
2. There are seven open positions for General Synod delegates. Five of these persons should be under 30 years old.

Marjorie Groves is a member of the UCC Nominating Committee. Please contact her for more information if you would like to learn more about either of these positions.
marjoriegroves@hotmail.com

Pecans

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

Email

We recently created a new gmail account fcuccwc@gmail.com and then slowly discovered that although emails were being

sent, not everyone was receiving the information and requests. A new internet domain was created along with a new email address, this seems to have solved our problem. You may send emails to this new one administrative.office@fcuccwc.org or the gmail, I will continue to check both daily.

Thrift Sale Sept. 23 & 24

Fall Cleaning and Sorting
Friday & Saturday, Sept. 23 & 24 - Women's

Fellowship will be conducting their semi-annual Thrift Sale.

Wed. Sept. 21 - 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 items that **are clean, complete, and in good repair**. We will **no longer accept older TVs** because there isn't anywhere to take them after the sale.

Thank you for your donations and help making this fundraiser a success.



2016 Scholarship Recipients

Bess Lyon

Kenton Johnston	\$290
Bryan Johnston	\$290
Jenna Short	\$290
Jacob Nixt	\$290
Jose M Burgos-Lozada	\$290
Alexis Tudor	\$290
Jan Ryherd	\$290
Total	\$2,030

Poole

Katherine Short	\$445
Brandon Arkland	\$445
Total	\$890

Helen Johnson

Jenna Short	\$565
Katherine Short	\$565
Alexis Tudor	\$565

Jose M Burgos-Lozada	\$565
Brandon Arkland	\$565
Total	\$2,825



KLAB Nature Day

On August 17 nine KLAB kids spent the day enjoying nature and learning about God's creation. Thanks to some good adult help, the kids built 9 bat houses which will be donated to Webster City. The group learned more about the life of bats before caravanning to Briggs Woods for lunch, then they had the opportunity to learn more about snakes from county park naturalist John Laird. The kids did a litter pick up on their way to the beach, and they finished the afternoon swimming in Briggs Woods lake. A huge thank you to adult volunteers Wil Groves, Arden Schlitter, Luverne Bierle, and Leah Maass for making this day a special one for KLAB!



Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$12,290.00	\$102,915.45
Other Income	.22	2.17
TOTAL INCOME	\$12,290.22	\$102,917.62
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	0.00	\$9,925.96
Pastoral Services	6,416.96	49,164.53
Maintenance and Repairs	2,579.00	75,327.63
Church Office	2,145.06	18,279.13
Music Ministry	225.00	5,175.00
Christian Education	55.94	361.82
Local Ministry	350.00	350.00
Misc. Expenses	50.70	1,317.07
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$18,850.95	\$159,901.14

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Webster City, Iowa Cabinet Meeting – August 9, 2016

Members Present:

Moderator-----	Pastor-----Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator----Al Yungclas	Trustees-----Tom Riemenschneider
Finance Sec.-----Luverne Bierle	Women's Fellowship-Karin Yungclas
Finance-----Tracy Wehrhan	Mission-----Lorraine McCoskey
Staff/Parish-----Dalene Schlitter	Worship-----Holly Riemenschneider
Christian Ed-----Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism-----Laurie Epps
Treasurer-----Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk-----Mary Van Diest

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Vice-Moderator, Al Yungclas. Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a prayer. Highlights of the Board Reports were given as follows:

Worship (Holly R.)-The next Saturday service will be September 3. The last Saturday service of the year will be October 15 with Sister Act performing. Choir rehearsal will begin on September 21st and will sing on Sunday, September 25th; **Trustees** (Tom R.)-will be getting a new light over the front door of the church, need to get sheet rock in mechanical room of the elevator shaft;

Finance (Tracy W.) the recipients of the college scholarship will be announced at the church service on August 14th; **Christian Ed** (Vicki B.)-is planning for Rally Day on September 11th;

Mission (Lorraine M.)-see full report; **Evangelism** (Laurie E.)-Meals 'n' More will not continue this year; **Women's Fellowship** (Karin Y.)-the executive board will be meeting on August 31st;

Staff-Parish-no report; **Treasurer's** (Tracy W.)-reported the offering for July 1916 was \$12,190.00 and the expenses were \$11,822.66; the July OCWM was not paid as there was not enough available funds to do so.

He reported that the church needs--**\$3,850.00 PER WEEK TO SUPPORT THE BUDGET.** Tracy moved and Vicki seconded to accept the reports of the boards and to put the treasurer's report to audit. Motion carried.

Old Business: 1-The church directory will possibly be ready in October. 2-Constitution—Went through the newly revised constitution and discussed in detail. Dalene S. moved and seconded by Lorraine M. that the cabinet should vote on the new constitution at the September meeting and the congregation will vote at the Congregational Budget meeting in November.

New Business: The church needs a lay delegate to attend the Iowa Conference Annual Meeting on October 22nd from 9:30-3:30. The Northwest Association boundary training will be held at our church on Saturday, October 8th from 9:00 to 4:00.

Reports of Boards and Committees

Pastor's Report: He thanked Todd Edeker for filling the pulpit while he was on vacation. Todd will also fill the pulpit on August 28th when he is gone. The church picnic was held on July 10th in fellowship hall due to rainy weather. August 14th will be Scholarship Sunday. The Worship Board has approved moving the September Saturday Worship from the 17th of September to the 3rd of September. Rally Day will be September 11th with Sunday school starting on the 18th of September. The chancel choir will resume singing in worship on September 25th. The summer KLAB event was held on June 24th, at the church, with games, a craft and a wiener roast. KLAB "Nature Day" will be on August 17th, from 10 to 4. We will meet at the church, have a lesson and build bat houses for the city, then caravan to Briggs Woods, have a wiener roast, listen to a presentation on snakes by county naturalist John Laid, have a nature hike/scavenger hunt, do a litter pick up and conclude with swimming at Briggs Woods beach. During the worship service on June 26th the following were taken into church membership: Amani McMurray, Jennifer Brim, Dilcia Franco, Jose Burgos-Lozada, Chris McNiel and Sunshine Yoders. The Safe Church Policy TEAM will meet in August to prepare for teacher safe church training before Sunday school begins. The Ecumenical Human Needs Committee task force met on June 29th and discussed the current guidelines and needs. Sharon Perry is helping process applications for assistance and is conducting screening interviews. The funds have been severely depleted in the last 6 months, down from \$18 K to now about \$4,500. Grants will now be limited to \$500 assistance in a year's time. Jose and Dilcia have joined the EHNC as Spanish translators. Stephen Ministry continues with 5 matches with care receivers. Relay for Life was held at West Twin Park on June 16th. It was not as well attended this year as in the past, but was again a meaningful and hopeful gathering. Our church raised \$664 for the cause. The ice cream social was held at Faith UMC this year. The turnout was tremendous and a sneak peek at the cast and songs of WCCT's summer production of "Fiddler on the Roof" was enjoyed by all. The social netted approximately \$1000 for UDMO. Our church worked one week at the summer lunch program. It was noticed there were more people coming in from the general public this year, in addition to the bussed in daycare children. The new Funeral Policy guidelines were published in the June newsletter. A copy of the new policies has been given to Boman and Foster funeral homes. Joyce Gelhaus and the pastor were a part of a Periodic Support Consultation held at First Congregational UCC in Fort Dodge on June 23rd. A Situation Support Consultation was held July 7th at Fort Dodge. Lifetouch was at the church on June 15th and 16th taking pictures for the new directory. The constitution committee has finished their revisions of our church constitution. The document now needs to go to the cabinet to be reviewed and approved.

Mission Board: Met on August 4th with Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Audrey Burtnett, Marjorie Groves, Lorraine McCoskey, Gayle Olson and Karin Yungclas attending. They discussed the school lunch program noting that Casey's donated ice cream certificates for drawings during the lunches. The associate pastor at Asbury Methodist led recreation two days a week. Audrey suggested having several lunch sites, rather than just at the middle school. Sack lunches were

taken out to the All Cultures Equal building. All the wasted food is a continuing concern. Ginnie Veach chaired the preparation and serving of the July meal at Beacon of Hope. There were more men at the July dinner than we've served before. Annette Howard, Beacon of Hope staff, says some of the new men have mental health issues and need more help than they can provide, but they have nowhere else to go. The shelter's needs remain the same, although they now serve lunch so need bread, lunchmeat, etc. Gift cards for grocery stores (especially Aldi's) are helpful. The next meal our church will serve will be on Tuesday, September 20th. Karin is in charge of the meal. Audrey and Marjorie will assist so they can learn to supervise a meal. The person who supervises the meal plans the menu. Plan for 50. The leftovers are left at the shelter. Karin and Audrey chaired our church's co-hosting the ice cream social with Faith Methodist. The recyclable bowls can be cleaned in the dishwasher at both our church and Faith. Pastor Craig and Marjorie received no response from anyone in the congregation interested in participating in prison ministry so the Mission Board will not pursue the topic. Rev. Paul Stone and Rev. Carroll Lang with the Church of the Damascus Road at the Ft. Dodge Correctional Facility say they would be available to speak if we need a pulpit supply sometime. Mary Vavroch served as captain of our church's team for Relay for Life. Cancer survivors and their families seemed to make up most of the Relay participants. The survivors' dinner was an addition to the Relay. The Relay for Life in Hamilton County is struggling, but the Mission Board is willing to support whatever fundraising activities are planned. The church collected breakfast foods for UDMO in July. UDMO will be collecting new coats for kids of all ages soon. They will no longer be accepting "gently used" coats. The board will be keeping TeraCycle on the agenda for future discussion. Gayle will contact Tom McLaughlin about scheduling a time for our church to package meals for Kids Against Hunger. Pastor Craig received a letter from the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ seeking donations for seminary scholarships. The letter will be forwarded to the Endowment Committee. Our church will pack the backpacks for the Backpack Program on April 25th, 2017 at 6:30 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church. Our church received word on the need for help with the August 6th, Christian Music at All Cultures Equal, event too late to do anything. They did ask Michele to send the info to the church e-mail list. They closed the meeting with a lively discussion of how the Mission Board might help educate our congregation in understanding, rather than contempt, which was Pastor Craig's recent message topic. The next meeting is September 1st, at 5:00 pm.

Next meeting: September 13th at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Van Diest, Church Clerk

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:

