

September 2017 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwcc.org/>

You may remember that in May of 2015 our elevator control room flooded after its sump pump failed. Because the water levels were over 3 feet high the hydraulic fluid reservoir flooded, which made it necessary to have a company come and pump about 3,000 gallons of contaminated water out of the room and into a tanker truck to be shipped away for processing. In addition to this cost we had to repair some of the elevator controls and restore the elevator shaft firewall. The total cost of this flood was over \$10,000 (most of the cost was paid by our insurance), plus the mess and aggravation of having our elevator out of service for a few weeks.

Thinking back to the inconvenience and expense of that very minor “flood,” I am boggled by the enormity of the flood that is now ongoing in Southern Texas, and I am stunned by the sweeping devastation that is unfolding on television and social media before our very eyes. The authorities are estimating that 14-15 trillion gallons of water (14,000,000,000,000) have fallen from the sky in the last 4 days, turning freeways into rivers, neighborhoods into lakes, and essentially destroying what current estimates suggest will be at least 30,000 to 40,000 homes and half a million vehicles! Accuweather has now estimated that the cost of this natural catastrophe will exceed \$160 billion dollars—more than the costs of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy combined. It will take years for this part of Texas to recover, and for many thousands life will never be quite the same again.

In the midst of this surreal disaster there has been every predictable range of human behavior—from acts of heroism and selfless service to acts of looting. But two news stories really caught my attention: the first was the scandal of Joel Osteen’s megachurch’s belated decision to open its doors to flood victims (after massive social media criticism), and the second was the story of how fire ants are surviving the flooding by banding together to create living islands of ants which float above the flood waters. Now I have no interest in piling on more criticism of Joel (the pillory of social media is seeing to that) but it does seem odd to me that pesky fire ants have a greater sense of altruism and a greater understanding of mutual need in the face of disaster than a Christian pastor and his church. And yet, lest we cast the first stone, theirs is not the first church which became more concerned about its building than its mission...or offered “thoughts and prayers” but little else in the line of Christian compassion and action.

What seems obvious to me is that we could all benefit by imitating the example of the fire ants, who survive by interlocking limbs and lives, effectively choosing survival for all rather than survival of the fittest --while leaving others to the flood. We have already seen this kind of altruistic behavior in the countless rescues of flood victims by those brave souls who tied their lives and wellbeing to those in crisis....and as the rescues are completed and the flood waters recede, there will be countless more opportunities for all of us to join our lives to Harvey’s victims’ lives...by helping them rebuild their lives.

Friends, one step we can take together as a church is to direct our monetary gifts toward ongoing disaster response. The Iowa Conference has indicated that they will receive such gifts and forward them directly to the UCC disaster response ministries, which focus on long term recovery efforts such as spiritual care, community organizing, repair and reconstruction of homes, tools, building materials, and volunteer coordination. The Mission Board has chosen September 10 as the date in September that we will take up a special offering to benefit the long term recovery efforts for Hurricane Harvey. Meanwhile, continue to pray for the victims...and pray to discern what else we can do as Christians to assist in the rebuilding of their communities and lives. —Pastor Craig

Hurricane Harvey Special Offering-- Sept 10

Hurricane Harvey is the first Category 4 Hurricane to make landfall in the US since 2004. According to forecasters, the worst of Harvey's destruction is yet to come from flooding as it stalls over Texas, dropping upwards of 40 inches of rain. Harvey's full impact is yet to be determined, but history tells us that the need will extend beyond the capacity of local, state, and federal government. There will most definitely be a need for helping families recover after initial emergency response efforts have ceased. This is one of the main reasons the United Church of Christ continues to focus our efforts on recovery. We recognize walking with families and communities is what we are called to do.

The **UCC Disaster Ministries** is already gearing up for long-term recovery work in the area and your contributions for Harvey survivors means providing community support for holistic recovery, repairing homes for families, and restoring dignity for the most vulnerable who have lost everything in the wake of this catastrophic event. 100% of funds designated for disaster relief to the United Church of Christ are used for disaster relief and rehabilitation programming. **First Congregational UCC will take up a special offering for Hurricane Harvey relief on Rally Day, September 10. Please make your checks payable to First Congregational, and in the memo line write "Hurricane Harvey." We will remit the total to the Iowa Conference, who will forward 100% of our donation to UCC Disaster Ministries.**

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 6	48	August 13	56
August 19	37	August 27	49

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: administrative.office@fuccwc.org
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
Dale Olson: Financial Secretary 839-5619



PARISH NURSE NEWS

PARISH NURSE NEWS

Easy energy boosters when you need a lift.

- Keep your work area well lit, take a break and get out into the sunlight for a few minutes.
- Handle challenging tasks first.
- Use good posture and take frequent breaks to stretch or stand.
- Volunteer to help others.
- Plan something to look forward to each day.
- Give yourself credit for what you've accomplished instead of worrying that you have too much to do.
- Stock up on high-energy foods like apples, nuts, and dried fruit.

Women's Fellowship

Executive Board meets Wednesday, September 6 at 5:00 pm.



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 Pruisman
 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



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

Rally Day!—September 10!

Save the date! Rally day is Sunday, September 10, beginning at 9:15 with games for all ages in the vacant lot. Following worship we will enjoy a hamburger and hotdog cookout. The Christian Ed. Board will provide the meat, chips, and drinks (thanks to an anonymous donor); please bring a dessert or salad to share.

Saturday Service

Because Rally Day is September 10 we are holding our Saturday service on September 2 at 5:00 pm with no worship on Sunday, September 3.

Sunday School For all Ages Resumes September 17

Summer's over—it's time to begin Fall Sunday School classes on September 17th! Carol Crystal will be teaching the Pre- K thru Kindergarten class, Laurie Epps will teach 1st thru 3rd, Leah Maass will teach 4th thru 6th grades, and Donna Ryherd will teach 7th grade and up. We thank all of our teachers for making the commitment to share their faith with our children and youth in the classroom! Classes will start at 9:15 A.M. and worship will be at 10:30 A.M.

Adult Education Resumes September 17

Certainly one of the hot topics of our times is immigration, and in this matter there is no shortage of opinions and calls to action on both sides of the debate. During our latest UCC General Synod, delegates voted to become an "Immigrant Welcoming Denomination", and part of that resolution encourages churches and conferences to begin programs of study in order to educate themselves on the issues of immigration. Toward that end we will begin our Fall adult ed. programming with a multi-week study of "immigration." We will explore the current state of immigration, explore the history of immigration in our country, analyze the complex economic forces leading to immigration and sustaining it, discuss the risks and benefits of immigration, and of course we will discuss the theological dimensions of immigration. In addition, we will discuss some of the deeper questions at the heart of this highly charged topic, like: Why are some people born into "opportunity" while others are not so fortunate, and do those who are blessed with opportunity have any responsibility to those who are not? What is it like to want a "better life", and how far will people go to obtain it? What are immigrants, especially those who are not authorized to enter the U.S. legally, "stealing" from legal residents? Why have we as a nation not resolved this issue? And perhaps most importantly, how do we understand and act on the claims of our dual citizenship as both American citizens, and citizens of the Kingdom of God? If you would like to become better informed about this extremely complicated and very relevant topic,

then join us at 9:15 a.m. beginning September 17!

KLAB Resumes September 20

Kids, get ready—KLAB is about to begin! Kids Learning About the Bible is our Wednesday after-school Christian Education program for kids. We will begin our fall 2017 program on Wednesday, September 20, 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! And new this year—a KLAB group for older kids! Donna Ryherd will lead a group of older students who have “outgrown” our traditional KLAB program. 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—October 1

First Congregational has a city-wide reputation for leading meaningful care center services in our community. Our next scheduled care center services were originally to be held September 17th, but as a favor to Trinity ELCA we have traded dates with them. Our new date is October 1, and we will begin services at 1:15 p.m. at Windsor Manor, 2 p.m. at Crestview Nursing and Rehabilitation center, and 2:45 p.m. at Southfield Wellness Community. Help is always needed and welcomed at one or all of these services!

No Stephen Ministry meeting in September

Our Stephen Ministers will not meet in September, but will resume meeting on Thursday, October 5, 6:30-8:30 pm.

Choir

Choir will start practices on Wednesday, September 13 and perform on Sunday, September 17.

THRIFT SALE

September 22 & 23

Fall Cleaning and Sorting

Friday & Saturday, September 22 & 23 -

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

Wed. September 20 - 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 your help making this fundraiser a success.

Scholarships

August 13 was Scholarship Sunday and we awarded the following:

2017 Scholarship Recipients

Bess Lyon

Jose Burgos-Lozada	\$575
Lauren Leman	\$575
Jacob Nixt	\$575
Jenna Short	\$575
Alexis Tudor	\$575

Poole

Katherine Short	\$925
-----------------	-------

Ptacek

Amanda Groves	\$2500
---------------	--------

Helen Johnson

Jose Burgos-Lozada	\$775
Lauren Leman	\$775
Jenna Short	\$775
Katherine Short	\$775
Alexis Tudor	\$775



Budget Time Approaching

Each board has a worksheet available in the office upon which they can prepare their budget for 2018. The Finance Board has asked that we hold the line on expenses; if necessary to increase an item, look for another place to reduce. We need to make a conscious effort to be good stewards. These worksheets should be given to the Finance Board (turn in to the church office) by September 20.

Food Pantry Challenge

The Enhance Hamilton County Foundation is issuing a "Stock Up for Fall" challenge throughout September. Funds donated will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$4,000. Send your check to Darcy Swon, EHCF, 501 Bank St Suite 1, WC. You may designate which Hamilton County food pantry you want your funds to go to. UDMO, Trinity Lutheran, St. Paul Lutheran, Asbury/ACE (all Webster City), Bethesda Lutheran Church (Jewell) or the Stratford Food Pantry.

Fill the Loft

Thank you again for all of your support with our July Mission project of filling the choir loft with paper and pancakes. The first of August found us delivering the following to Trinity Lutheran Church and St Paul Lutheran Church food pantries:

- 26 boxes of pancake mix
- 17 bottles of syrup
- 2 boxes of Cheerios
- 8 toilet paper packages
- 8 paper towel packages
- 4 boxes of Kleenex
- 1 package of napkins
- 1 box of dryer sheets

They were very appreciative of our donations, so thank you for your help!
Mission Board

Iowa Conference Annual Meeting/"Speaking Into the Silence"

The Iowa Conference will hold their annual business meeting Saturday, October 7, from 9:00am-3pm in Des Moines at First Christian Church, 2500 University Ave. As a church we are entitled to two voting delegates and a youth voting delegate (age 13-29). Come and spend a

day engaged in the work of the Conference and the wider church! If you would like to volunteer to serve as a delegate, please speak with Pastor Craig. The deadline for registration is September 22!

Also, the Iowa Conference is pleased to announce another "Day of Sharpening" that will precede the annual business meeting! The subject is mental health, and the program is being led by Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund (VP of seminary Advancement at Christian Theological Seminary) and Ms. Angela Whitenhill (a licensed minister & licensed clinical social worker for National Benevolent Association). The program is entitled "Speaking into the Silence: Mental Health and Faith" and it will be held Friday, October 6, from 9:30am-4pm, also at First Christian Church of Des Moines. If you are interested in attending this event, please see Pastor Craig for more information, or go the Iowa Conference website.

Sale of Lots

Dear Members and Friends of First Congregational UCC,

Over the past months the Trustees have been in discussion and have compiled information on selling the two lots south of the church. The Trustees' reasons for selling the lots were brought to the August Cabinet meeting for discussion. The cabinet agreed with the Trustees, to inform the congregation about the possibility of selling the two lots.

Following are the Trustees' reasons for the possibility of selling the two lots.

- The lots are a non-revenue asset.
- The lots have limited use. The Sunday School and KLAB kids are able to walk to West Twin Park or the St. Thomas Playground for their activities.
- There are not any future plans to do any building on the lots.
- The church would save approximately \$2,200 in lawn care, mowing and snow removal annually.
- The garage would be sold with the large lot. We would save the maintenance

costs of roofing, painting and other repairs on the garage.

- The Trustees know through realtors that there is a shortage of lots in Webster City, in part because of the Vero Blue Company buying them.
- Last spring the Trustees obtained estimates on the sale of the lots. The estimated sale price on the large lot (81'X 132') on the north is \$20,000. The estimated sale price on the small lot (66'X132') to the south is \$10,000. If we sell the lots and invest the proceeds, the interest off the investments will be used to supplement the General Fund.

Please prayerfully consider the sale of the two lots. If you have comments or questions you may e-mail the church office, put a written note in the Trustees' box in the church office, or visit with a Trustee, by September 10, 2017. At the September 12, 2017 Cabinet meeting, we will make the decision whether to bring the sale of lots to a vote of the congregation.

Respectfully the Trustees,
Joyce Gelhaus, chairperson
Tracy Wehrhan Tom Riemenschneider
Bruce Perry Sherry Leksell

Thanks

◆We were overwhelmed with the boxes of pancake mix and bottles of syrup. It is nearly always taken by our recipients. Thank you so much.

Social Ministry Committee and Pantry Workers
Karen Hinderks – Trinity Lutheran

◆Dear Scholarship Committee,
Thank you so much for awarding me 2 scholarships this year. I am very appreciative, and it will go to good use this year at UNI. Thank you for investing in my future as a student.

Lauren Leman

◆Dear UCC family,
Thank you so much for helping me continue my education! I cannot wait to start at ISU and to see what my future holds! Your continuous support means the world to me. I will be continuing with music education and (God willing) will be joining the Cantamus Women's Choir! May God bless each and every one of you! Thank you!

Love,
Jenna Short

◆Dear church family,
Thank you so much for the scholarship for this school year. Classes start up again in two weeks and I'll be entering my senior year. I'm working toward finishing my bachelor of science in supply chain management. I just finished an internship with Decker Truck Lines and I think I'd like to pursue a career in purchasing when I graduate. Thank you for all of your love, prayers and support.

Katie Short

◆UCC Finance Board and Church Family,
Thank you so much for the scholarship again this year. I'm so grateful for all I've been able to do because of your generosity. It allows me to continue to pursue my degree in Finance, as well as reach my education goals. Thanks again.

Alexis Tudor

Amazon Smile

Don't forget, if you are shopping online use this link to get to Amazon Smile.

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/42-1357070>

If you choose First Congregational UCC of Webster City as your charity of choice all purchases made through Amazon Smile benefit 1st Congo.

Treasurer's Report

INCOME	July	YEAR TO DATE
Pledges and Offerings	\$13,564.00	\$100,641.47
Other Income	.00	12.03
TOTAL INCOME	\$13,564.00	\$100,653.50
EXPENSES		
Outreach and Mission	.00	\$9,928.88
Pastoral Services	5,328.67	49,597.31
Maintenance and Repairs	1,651.77	18,324.56
Church Office	2,244.81	19,876.60
Music Ministry	301.75	4,379.50
Christian Education	0.00	312.83
Local Ministry	6.39	36.39
Misc. Expenses	29.92	791.81
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$9,563.31	\$103,247.88

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Webster City Iowa Cabinet Meeting - August 8, 2017

Members Present:

Moderator-----Al Yungclas	Pastor-----Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator----Donna Ryherd	Trustees-----Joyce Gelhaus
Finance Sec-----Dale Olson	Women's Fellowship----Karin Yungclas
Finance-----Tracy Wehrhan/Dale Olson	Mission-----Lorraine McCoskey
Staff/Parish-----Shirley Yungclas	Worship-----Mary Vavroch
Christian Ed-----Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism-----Laurie Epps
Treasurer-----Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by the Moderator Al Yungclas. Pastor Craig gave a devotional followed by a prayer. Joyce noted a correction to the minutes in the Mission Report - Relay for Life was in June. The minutes stand as corrected. Tracy gave the treasurer's report as follows: June offerings--\$10,088.88, expenses-- \$20,625.92 and for July offerings--\$13,564.00, expenses-- \$9,563.31. Tracy moved and Vicki seconded to put the report to audit. Motion carried. No Old Business: New Business: Joyce, speaking for the Trustees, stated they thought it was time to sell the two vacant lots across the street with the approval of the church. The value is around \$30,000. The mowing and snow removal for them is \$2200 a year. Vicki moved and Tracy seconded to send out a letter to the members of the church asking for their opinion about selling the two vacant lots across the street. Motion carried. Fort Dodge Choral Society is having a concert in our church on October 28th.

FINANCE BOARD MINUTES

Attendance: Duane Vavroch, Don Bruner, Nate Lahr, Dale Olson, Tracy Wehrhan
Tracy presented the treasurer's report for the month ending June 30, 2017. It was noted that income fell short of the monthly expenses by over \$ 10,000.00 and income for the year has fallen behind last year's income by about \$ 4,800.00. Discussion was held on what to remedy this short fall and Dale informed the board that a notice was put into the newsletter regarding the need to keep members monthly giving up to date. Tracy also informed the board that a transfer of \$ 5,000.00 was made the end of June to cover the short fall. This transfer came from the general fund bond interest account. Dale moved and Nate seconded to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Motion passed. Duane presented the applications for the scholarships and made the applications available to the board to peruse. Dale moved and Nate seconded to give the following scholarships:
Bess Lyon – 5 for \$ 575.00 for a total of @ 2,875.00

Poole – 1 for \$ 925.00

Ptacek Medical - 1 for \$ 2,500.00

Helen Johnson – 5 for \$ 775.00 for a total of \$ 3,875.00

Discussion was held and voted on. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted

Board of Trustees

Old Business

- Fire Box- Tom and Holly painted the caulking around the box a brick color to match the church color. It looks good.
- Outside sign- Ray Kinnetz has finished the sign. Ray wanted to let us know that when he took the plastic out to clean and reglue he noticed stress fractures all around the edge. It will just fall apart when opened. We will take care of this when it happens.
- The back hallway. Tracy received a bid for the repair. It seemed high so Tracy is going to try to get another bid.
- Elevator room is not done. Tracy talked to Jaycox and they know that it is not done.

New Business

- The lights in the sanctuary need to be cleaned. Tom and Joyce will do the cleaning.
- We received information on stained glass window inspection. We decided to have them inspected from the firm in Minnesota.
- The city took out the tree stumps from the ash trees on the church lot. We will plant grass on this at a later date.
- We approved the bill from Home Appliance for the repair of the vacuum.
- A basement window has been broken on the south side of the church. Pagels have ordered a new window and will be putting it in.
- We had a discussion on the church lots. This was tabled until July meeting.

Old Business

- Tracy is working on another bid for the back hallway repair.
- The lights in the sanctuary have been cleaned. New LED small bulbs were put in each chandelier. As long as we have enough spare large bulbs we are not going to change the large chandelier bulb to LED.
- Last meeting we had a request sent in for our stained glass windows to be inspected. They were inspected on July 10. Then received estimates for our meeting, one for just repairs and one for repairs and new protective glass. We are going to get a second opinion. Tracy will make a contact in Clear Lake and Pastor Craig will call the conference office.
- Discussion on sale of church lot.

New Business

- There was an issue with the sanctuary not cooling. Mark Trueblood came and checked it out and found that one unit needed Freon.
- Joyce filled out the Emergency Shelter form. It was reviewed and then decided who to put on as contact people. It was turned in on Friday, July 21.
- Church Requests
 - a. The Fort Dodge Choral Society would like the church for a concert on October 28, 2017. It was approved.
 - b. Tudor Baby Shower on 8-26-17. It was approved.
- Fire Alarms- The fire alarms will be inspected but the calibration is not needed. We will look into smoke detectors. Tom will contact the fire department to see where we need to put the smoke detectors.

Mission Board Minutes

Our church was responsible for the volunteer team the first week of the summer lunch program at the middle school, June 12-16. The Beacon of Hope meal July 18 will include Sloppy Joes with buns, potato salad, baked beans and watermelon, with the Mosbachs supplying the meat. Karin and Al Yungclas checked the shelves needing replacement at the Beacon of Hope. The plastic shelves are breaking; the wood ones are made of particle board and are sagging. The steel ones are fine but could be shored up. The Mission Board could use help with cost analysis of steel vs. wood shelves. The Relay for Life continues to struggle for walkers and donations. The July 22 event raised around \$22,000 for Hamilton County and \$583 from our church's luminaria, Piecemakers' quilt silent auction and pickle jar contents. The Ice Cream Social June 21 was again a success, although very few folks came for ice cream and bars after the 7 p.m. community theatre entertainment; we suggest setting time next year at 6:00-7:30 p.m., rather than ending at 8. Noting all the leftover bars, we also propose requesting fewer pans of them. We enjoyed the cooperative effort with Faith United Methodist Church. The Social brought in around \$706 before bills were paid. Proceeds will be divided between All Cultures Equal and Ecumenical Human Needs. We have a good start toward filling the choir loft with paper products, pancake mix and syrup for Trinity's and St. Paul's food pantries. We'll wait until August to see how much is gathered and whether UDMO will be included along with the church pantries in our distribution. The Food Truck from Des Moines will be coming to the All Cultures Equal Community Center on a regular basis and help is needed unpacking it the truck and repacking groceries one day and assisting people who come for the food the next day. Gayle and Pastor Craig will try to go to ACE when the truck comes next to see what would be involved if our church volunteers. Gayle also will see about a date in 2017-2018 when our church could help with the Backpack Program again. The next Mission Board meeting will be August 24 at 5 p.m.

Pastor's Report

KLAB: We have made no progress in meeting over the summer. Luverne Bierle and Arden Schlitter will not be helping with KLAB this fall, but Alan Yungclas and Lyn Leksell have agreed to serve as adult volunteers along with Wil Groves.

Adult Education: We will begin the fall programming year with a multi-week study of immigration.

WCMA: I continue to cover for Rev. Kroona of Trinity when he is away. Donations over the summer for the Backpack program have been few, but we still have \$10,000 in savings to resume the program this fall. Our date to pack the backpacks at Trinity ELCA will be Tuesday, April 24.

Stephen Ministry: We continue to have 4 Stephen Ministers matched with care receivers. We continue to meet monthly for peer supervision and continuing ed.

CoM: We conducted a Periodic Support Consultation at First Congregational UCC of Algona July 18th.

Iowa Conference: The interviews for the new Executive Conference Minister have begun, and the recommended candidate will be voted on at the annual business meeting of each Conference (ours will be held in October). Rich Pleva will retire in February 2018, and the Nebraska Conference office will close at the end of 2017, leaving 2 offices open for the business of the Tri-Conference: in Des Moines and Sioux Falls. The Nebraska office work will be absorbed by the Iowa Conference office. Sara Lund will offer an all-day continuing education event October 6 on the stigma of mental health illness.

UCC Three Loves Initiative: The 3 Great Loves is the newest UCC commitment to express how our Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation work together to address the inequities in our current world. The denomination will roll out dates for each of the initiatives over the course of the next 2 years, but congregations can engage in any or all of these at any time, and forward their stories to the 3 Great Loves website (<http://3greatloves.uccpages.org/>) for publication.

Bible Study: I have again discontinued the Southfield Bible study due to low attendance, but Vicki and I will continue holding a Bible study at Crestview on the 3rd Thursday of the Month.

Mentoring program: I continue to work with Kathy Getting and others in investigating Mentoring Programs for young people. On July 27th we visited with staff at YSS in Ames, to learn about the mentoring programs they are administering. They strongly suggested that we work with the school system in WC to organize a mentoring program, since there are more risks involved in mentoring outside the school system in the community. AEA has a mentoring program outline as part of their Behavioral intervention strategies—our next step is to research what that program entails and then possibly approach the WC school administration about hiring a staff person to implement the program.

ACE food pantry: ACE is now a site for USDA food distribution, which occurs on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month. To be eligible participants must fill out an income form establishing that they fall within income guidelines. ACE also has donations from non-USDA sources which they are also distributing with more flexibility. If you would like to help with the distributions on Thursdays, please call ACE for details. Also ACE is seeking volunteers to help spruce up the building and grounds for the Salsa Festival. Work days are Aug 19 and 20.

The breakdown of my ministry since June 11

Worship services led: 8; Christian Ed: 4; Meetings: 11; Visitation: 17; Funeral: 1

1 week vacation May 15-22

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:

