

March 2018 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwcc.org/>

"We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." --John 9:4-5

Daylight Savings time is almost here! While I have a love/hate relationship with DST (as I age it takes more time for my biological clock to adjust to the change) what I most relish about it is the extension of daylight into the evening hours. Now let's be honest—DST doesn't give us any more "daylight" than what the earth's position relative to the sun provides. But the presence of additional daylight that is brought by the return of Spring and *enhanced by locating more of that daylight in the useful evening hours* feels great, and allows me to accomplish more outside activities... before darkness falls.

With this in mind It is odd to consider that the root of the word Lent is *Lencten*, or "lengthen" in Anglo-Saxon (a nod to Spring's lengthening days in Northern Europe) and yet the term is used to denote a period in the church calendar that commemorates the "shortening" of the Light as the forces of Darkness eclipse and finally consume it. As a child I experienced Lent as a frightening time, a light-stealing time...a time when the personification of light and goodness was opposed and snuffed out by the darkness of Men and the societies they create in their image. Yes, there was the Good News of Easter that ended the dreadful ordeal...but its saccharine sweetness seemed inadequate to compensate for the horrors of Holy Week, and did little to reassure this young child that the Light does indeed triumph over Darkness. For many years I was always glad to be done with Lent, for its dark horrors could not be undone by the *deus ex machina* that Easter always seemed to be.

However, these days I have reframed my thinking in order to see Lent as a kind of spiritual Daylight Savings time. Lent is an opportunity to make the most of the Light that us available to us by refocusing our attention and efforts on matters of the Spirit and its ineffable Light, and shifting our schedules to make Light-enabled Works a priority in our lives. Such Light-enabled works include the traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer and meditation, devotional and bible study, works of charity, works of repentance, and works promoting justice and peace. Your Light-enabled Works might include journaling, walking in the woods or in the cemetery to be alone with God, calling up friends old and new to encourage them (or let them encourage you!), watching a movie with a deep message, serving at Beacon of Hope, trying Healing Touch or scheduling time with a therapist...the list could go on and on. While I know there is nothing new in reciting this laundry list of Lenten works, what I want to emphasize is that these **life-changing works matter in a world that seems to be sinking ever deeper in darkness...and in the process taking us along for the ride.**

I will confess to you that my Lent has been off to a poor start regarding my commitment to refocus and shift my priorities to Light-Enabled Works...and I have suffered for it with a heightened sense of anxiety, a heightened sense of pessimism, and a heightened loss of connection to the healing and strengthening power of the LIGHT. Friends, this ought not to be so-- either for me, or for you! We still have a month of Lent left—which is enough time for each of us to turn away from the life-stealing Darkness that crowds out everything that is holy, hopeful, and life-giving ...and turn toward the Light of God. My prayer is that you read these words and heed them if you too are struggling with the "reason for the season" this Lent.

And Friends, always remember that we are a people who have seen "the Light" in Jesus (think about the deep meaning of that!) and in him we see the kind of Light that Darkness cannot overcome. May that Good News restore our faith-- and inspire our commitment-- to the Light-enabled Works that will make all the difference in our lives, and in the life of the world! –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

February 4 55 February 11 58

February 18 44 February 25 44

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor

Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316

Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net

Michele Omgig: Admin. Assist. 227-8358

Church's e-mail: administrative.office@fcuccwc.org

Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr 839-5619

Sunshine Yoders: Choir Director 835-7626

Melissa Hindt: Organist 209-8087

Curt/Lorraine McCoskey: Cust's. 832-5341

Tracy Wehrhan: Church Treasurer 297-0370

Dale Olson: Financial Secretary 839-5619



The Slowdown on Eating

- Sit down when you eat.
- Turn off the TV and focus on the pleasure of eating.
- Chew, chew, chew. Less work for your stomach and more nutrients can be absorbed.
- Be conscious of the taste and texture.
- Put down your fork between bites.
- Make eating a social event with family or friends.
- Ask yourself "Am I full?" If you're full, stop eating.

Game Night—March 17!

Stephen Ministry is sponsoring a game night at the church to be held in fellowship hall on St. Patrick's Day, from 6 -8 pm! Come wearing your green—and enjoy an evening of fellowship and games with your church family. You are welcome to bring your favorite game--and a snack to share!



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



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

3 Great Loves

As you are aware the UCC has an ongoing initiative for the next 2 years called the 3 Great Loves. The Mission Board has created a display for our Fellowship Hall which can highlight the ways in which our church is involved and sharing this love with

1. Our Neighbor
2. Our Children
3. Creation

If you or your committee, circle, SS class, KLAB, etc. are doing things which fall into these 3 Loves (and we are sure you are) please take a photo, or write up a note as to what you are doing and post it on the board in Fellowship Hall. This is a project for the ENTIRE church so please share the things you are doing! Let's fill and refill this board in the days and months to come.

Maundy Thursday Evening Service March 29, 7 pm

We will observe Maundy Thursday with a service of worship beginning at 7 pm in the East Chapel. We will remember Jesus' final hours leading to the cross, and share the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Lenten Lunches

This year Asbury UMC is hosting the Lenten lunches through March 20. Serving begins at 11:45 in the dining room with the luncheon concluding at 1:00. Cost is \$6 per person. Sign up in Fellowship Hall before noon on the Monday before.

Easter Activities Sunday, April 1

Easter is the pinnacle of the Christian faith, the day of our greatest celebration as Jesus "conquers sin and death, and reconciles the world to himself." Join us as we begin our Easter celebration at First Congregational with a light Easter Breakfast, starting at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, provided by the Christian Education board. During breakfast there will be an activity in the lower level of the church for children of all ages. At 10:30 a.m. we will gather in the sanctuary for our Easter Worship service, which will include the sacrament of Holy Communion served in the pews. There will be no coffee after worship that day.

Lilies

Easter Lilies are once again available through the church. You may take your lily home following the Easter service.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Our congregation, along with 1,000 other UCC congregations, is proud to be a 5-for-5 church. In addition to OCWM, we participate in One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church, The Christmas Fund, and Funding Future Leaders. The Mission board informs you and you respond generously. Thank you! On March 18 we will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The funds collected will help places lacking in health and education resources and where disaster has struck. Please thoughtfully consider your support for this opportunity to help.— *The Mission Board*

Summer Camp 2018

Summer camp is going...beyond belief! That is the theme of the 2018 Our Sacred Space's offerings of summer camp, beginning on June 10th. This summer, camp participants will explore some BIG questions about God, hope, and changing the world. There is a summer camp for kids of all ages, and new this year is a Service Camp (grades 7-12), an Eco-Camp (grades 4-6) and an Eco-Camp Mini (grades 2-3.) If you are interested in registering or learning more, please see the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

History Hunting

March 26, 1890 Daily Freeman
Building Committee—At the business meeting at the Congregational church Monday night, the following gentlemen were selected as a committee to look after the building of the new church: W. J. Covil, L. A. McMurray, L. L. Estes, C. T. Fenton, David Eyer, Jas. McMurchy, treasurer.—The work will be prosecuted with all the dispatch possible, and with a view of having the church ready for occupancy by the first of November next.

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When you want anything in the line of farm implements, don't forget to call on J. W. Evans & Co., where you will find one of the largest stocks to select from in the northwest.

January 25, 1899 Wester City Freeman p.5
Rev. Newell, of Lincoln, Neb., was greeted with two large audiences at the Congregational church Sunday. He is a young man, perhaps thirty-one or two years of age. He gives evidence of having a good education and being of a studious nature. His manner denotes great sincerity of purpose, and the hearer is impressed with the conviction that he is a young man of high character and genuine worth. He possesses a very level head and has much native ability. He lacks in oratory and force—

qualifications a good many people think are necessary in a preacher or public speaker. His subject yesterday morning was from the words—"If ye suffer ye shall also reign." Mr. Newell argued that pain and suffering were absolutely necessary in the world for the betterment of mankind. It is one of the laws of God and nature that men should suffer—that they should pass through the crucible of trial and pain. While all will agree with Mr. Newell's able discussion of his topic, it will be admitted that the subject is not a particularly captivating or popular one. Whether he will be given a call to serve the church in which he preached Sunday is a matter to be decided by the

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Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$11,888.00	\$11,888.00
Other Income	.00	.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$11,888.00	\$11,888.00
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	1,583.26	\$1,583.26
Pastoral Services	5,598.16	5,598.16
Maintenance and Repairs	2,634.78	2,634.78
Church Office	5,260.85	5,260.85
Music Ministry	816.31	816.31
Christian Education	28.98	28.98
Local Ministry	.00	.00
Misc. Expenses	545.06	545.06
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$16,467.40	\$16,467.40

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Webster City, Iowa
Cabinet Meeting February 13, 2018

Members Present:

Moderator: Donna Ryherd
Vice Moderator: Nate Lahr
Finance Sec:
Finance: Tracy Wehrhan
Staff/Parish: Stephanie Hill
Christian Ed: Curt McCoskey
Treasurer: Tracy Wehrhan

Pastor: Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Trustees:
Women's Fellowship: Karin Yungclas
Mission: Lorraine McCoskey
Worship: Linda Lahr
Evangelism:
Clerk: Stephanie Hill

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by the Moderator, Donna Ryherd. Pastor Craig gave a devotional entitled "Dear Lord, Please" by Matt Fitzgerald. The January cabinet meeting minutes were approved as printed in the church newsletter. Each of the represented boards reported who the chairperson, secretary and cabinet rep were and confirmed their meeting time. Linda Lahr representing **Worship Board** reported that the piano needs a cover to maintain the tuning. Al Yungclas may have found it. Tracy Wehrhan reported for the **Trustees** that a speaker will be placed in the nursery so that parents can hear the service while attending to children. Karin Yungclas reported for **Women's Fellowship** that they would be serving lunch at the church for the WCCT State Convention on March 24. They expect 75-100 people. This event conflicts with a shower scheduled that day. Women's Fellowship will serve fellowship following service 4 times during the year. Lenten Luncheons will begin after Ash Wednesday with UCC in charge of the March 13th luncheon. Tracy Wehrhan also reported for **Finance Board** that a bond came due last week with no decision on how it will be spent. The offering for January was \$10,638.00 and expenses were \$15,629.27. Tracy moved and Nate seconded to put the report to audit. Tracy also reported that the donation for the restoration of the stained glass windows is now \$16,715.00. The full report of the boards and the pastor's report are at the end of the cabinet minutes.

Old Business: None

New Business: Colleen Taylor has requested the use of the Orff instruments during the summer. The cabinet will request that the proposal be written outlining the purpose and time required as well as how any damage that might occur will be repaired. The proposal will be forwarded to the appropriate board most likely Christian Education.

The Safe Church Policy TEAM met on Wednesday, January 24 to discuss and evaluate the current Safe Church Policy. It was determined that this process should begin in August prior to the Sunday School and KLAB new year to review this policy with the Safe Church Policy TEAM and have Safe Church training for all church members who volunteer with our students. The volunteers will fill out their Application and Disclosure forms, to be kept on record for the upcoming year. The representative of the Staff-Parish Board will have the responsibility of setting the dates and times of any necessary meetings, and conducting these meetings. The representative of the Christian Education Board will record the minutes of the meetings and submit them to Cabinet.

No major changes, only a few clarifications, were suggested at this time.

Evangelism Board Greeters and Ushers: We are always in need of volunteers to fill the role of Greeters and Ushers on Sunday mornings. If you arrive on Sunday morning and see the need we always welcome the offer to help! Board Members taking the lead in recruiting greeters and ushers are: • Wilma: May – June • Kay: July – August • Carol: September – October • Laurie: November – December Welcome bags (adults) and Activity Bags (youth): Wilma continues to refill and refresh supply our Welcome Bags, sometimes using materials to fit the season, and always to ensure a sweet treat inside. Dawn maintains our Activity Bags for the youth, keeping them cleaned and well stocked. Misc: We agreed to host Fellowship Coffee on November 12th. Next meeting: November 14, 2017 at 6:15 p.m.

Mission Board We met February 1 and elected Gayle Olson as Mission Board chair, Marjorie Groves as secretary, and Lorraine McCoskey as Cabinet representative. Gayle reported that the Beacon of Hope shelter for homeless men, Fort Dodge, is at capacity. Gayle and Dale Olson and Andrea and Ed Mosbach served more than 50 at the meal January 30. Marjorie will captain the next meal, to be served March 20. The Souper Bowl lunch we provided after the Annual Meeting January 28 went well. \$294 was collected in the pickle jar. We will give the pickle jar money to Upper Des Moines Opportunity and the cans and packets of soups donated to the St. Paul and Trinity food pantries. 46 cans and 23 packets of soup, along with four boxes of crackers, were given. The Mission Board will host coffee fellowship on February 25 when we accept donations for the Iowa Conference UCC collection for seminary students. Special Offering Assignments: One Great Hour of Sharing (March 11), Karin; Strengthen the Church (May), Lorraine; Neighbors in Need (October), Audrey; Christmas Fund (December), Gayle. Lorraine will chair planning for our church's entry in the Domestic/Sexual Assault Outreach Center auction, scheduled for early April. The national UCC office is looking for stories on how local churches are serving the 3 Great Loves (Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, Love of the Earth). The next Mission Board meeting will be Sunday, February 25, after coffee fellowship.

Christian Ed It was decided that Mary would chair, Don would be our representative to Cabinet with Curt our substitute and Jane will substitute for Curt if necessary. Thanks to Wil Groves, Anne Sherve-Ose will once again teach the KLAB students the ORFF instruments. We are communicating this month by email to brainstorm ideas for Easter, church school and a meeting time. Jane graciously will take on the secretary's title.

Pastor's Report Worship: On Wednesday, February 14, we will gather in the East Chapel to observe Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. We again led care center services on Sunday, Jan 14. The piano has been out of tune, and after consultation with the piano tuner Susan Knapp a cover is being used on the piano to trap humidity and swell the wood. She suggested that this should bring the piano back in tune over time. KLAB: The younger KLAB kids spent 2 weeks making cat treats and containers to be sold as a fundraiser for Almost Home in Fort Dodge. Ye Olde KLAB Gang has been sewing fitted sheets as a mission project for the Neonatal ICU in Iowa City. Feb 7 we held a pre-Valentines' Day party for the kids due to school being in recess on Feb. 14. Starting Feb 21 Ann Sherve-Ose will work with the younger KLAB kids on the ORFF instruments. Adult Education: We are currently studying the "Hidden Histories" of the UCC and have studied the Puritans, Ann Hutchinson, the Salem Witch trials, and Samuel Sewall. Safe Church Training: Teachers and volunteers who work with youth met Feb 11 after worship to go over the current Safe Church Policy. WCMA: The Backpack program continues to remain financially strong, with over \$3600 donated last month! The Emergency Travel Fund has a balance of \$2021. Rev. Eichler reported that the SOS group was organizing a "paint the town blue" event beginning Feb 19, which will honor our police, sheriff's dept and state troopers. Free blue tape and ribbons will be available Sunday Feb 18 at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Stephen Ministry: We currently have 4 Stephen Ministers matched with care receivers. We met February 1st for our monthly 2 hour session, hearing check-ins and studying the topic of spiritual care. NW Committee on Ministry: We conducted a Periodic Consultation with 3 members of the Eagle Grove UCC church on Wed., Feb 7. Since their pastor Jim Cunningham retired in late October, the church has been served by the clergy of Jewell and Alden churches. They are currently in discussions with a funeral director in Eagle Grove, who wishes to buy the church and convert it into a funeral home with the stipulation that the congregation can continue to worship there on Sundays. They average 8-15 in worship each Sunday, and hope to secure a called pastor (part time) when the sale is completed. The CoM will meet Saturday, March 3 at the United Church in Primghar for the annual relicensing of clergy who serve churches in our association. The Iowa Committees on Ministry and the Board of Directors will attend a continuing education event in Sioux Falls, SD on April 20 and 21, which unfortunately was the scheduled date of the NW Association Annual Meeting which will be held at Mayflower UCC in Sioux City. The date for the annual meeting will be rescheduled; I am still waiting for the new date.

Office/Board	Chairperson	Secretary	Cabinet Representative	Meeting time
Pastor	Craig Blaufuss		Craig Blaufuss	
Moderator	Donna Ryherd		Donna Ryherd	2nd Tuesday at 7 pm
Vice Moderator	Nate Lahr			
Clerk	Stephanie Hill		Stephanie Hill	
Christian Ed Director	Mary Van Diest		Mary Van Diest	
Financial Secretary	Dale Olson			
Treasurer	Tracy Wehrhan			
Christian Ed Board	Mary Van Diest	Jane Klaver	Curt McCoskey/ Don Bruner	2nd Wednesday at 7:00pm
Evangelism Board	Laurie Epps	Laurie	Laurie	1st Thursday at noon
Finance Board				? Sunday after worship
Mission Board	Gayle Olson	Marjorie Groves	Lorraine McCoskey	1st Thursday at 5 pm
Trustees Board	Joyce Gelhaus	Sherry Leksell	Joyce	3rd Thursday
Staff Parish Board	Dalene Schlitter	Holly Riemenschneider	Stephanie Hill	1st Wednesday at 5:15pm
Worship Board	Linda Lahr	Gretchen McGlynn	Linda	2nd Thursday
Women's Fellowship	Karin Yungclas/ Kay Harfst	Cindy Henning	Karin	1st Wednesday at 5:00pm

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:

