

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God."

--Ephesians 2: 19-22

Paul's words to the church at Ephesus make it sound like it's a real gift to belong to a church. And he's right! A church can be an amazing place that is unlike any other, for as Paul reminds us, it is an opportunity to belong to the *household of God*. Have you gotten an offer that good from any other place you've been to this week? This month I thought it would do us all good to remember the many ways we are blessed to belong to a local "household of God."

Our Church is a place that can inspire us in life-giving ways. Can you imagine what human life would be like without inspiration? I can—in my days as a factory worker on an assembly line I often felt little inspiration, just mind numbing and spirit crushing bleakness. That is no way to live! But where do we find inspiration that is life-giving; inspiration that gives us a grand vision of Life, a clear sense of worth, and a calling to make the most of our lives? In our church, of course!

In our church we are inspired by the Good News that there is more to life than just eking out a living and consuming more "stuff." We are inspired by the Good News that we are more than just matter—we are Spirit as well. We are inspired by the Good News that we are creatures made in the image of our Creator...and we are reminded that we have a greater destiny beyond just eating, drinking, and being merry before we return to the dust from which we came. Our Church inspires us to live as members of the household of God—a membership that will transform our outlook, our priorities, and our actions!

Our Church is a sanctuary—a place to feel safe and know that we are no longer stranger and aliens in this world. Our church is a sanctuary—a safe place--where we can come to laugh with joy, or cry real tears of hurt and sadness. Our church is a sanctuary where we are free to explore our spirituality without being judged or expelled. Our church is a sanctuary where we can challenge ourselves and grow in our appreciation of the wonder of it all—what Paul called "the breadth and length and height and depths" of Life. And yes, our church is a sanctuary where we can make mistakes and experience GRACE: the Good News that we are still loved and forgiven. How many places in this world are sanctuaries like that?

Our Church is a place where we can practice learning to live by the rule of love, rather than the rule of pleasure, the rule of fear, the rule of power, the rule of survival of the fittest, the rule of revenge, or the rule of uniformity and conformity. Now let's be honest—learning to live by the rule of love is not an easy thing to do...even in the household of God! But there are few other places in life that make living by the rule of love THE priority...which is one of the greatest reasons why churches are still needed.

Our Church is a place that grows people together. You've heard the phrase "no man is an island", yet we see how people in our society are becoming more and more polarized with an "us against them" mentality. Our church seeks to take us as individuals and grow us together into something unique and important: a community of faith that is, as Paul describes it, a "holy temple"; a dwelling place for God. In our church we can laugh with each other, support each other during our hard times, encourage and console one another, listen to and hear one another, pray for one another and be there for one another....and in the midst of those kinds of relationships the Spirit of God is pleased to dwell.

What other blessings could we mention? There are so many, really...
 Our church is a place we do mission work together;
 Our church is a place we sit down and eat together;
 Our church is a place where we remember our traditions, while looking eagerly to the future;
 Our church is a place where we take risks for the sake of the greater good that may emerge;
 Our church is the place where we can grow toward the Peace that passes all understanding, and build our lives founded on that Peace.

Those are some really amazing blessings when you think about them...some amazing blessings that we all need in our lives!

Our church, First Congregational UCC, has so much to offer us:
 It is a building to be shared...
 a movement to be joined...
 a way of life to be lived...
 a "household of God" that is waiting to grow.

What our church continues to need is US—good members who join the faithful of all ages in responding to the call of God to grow together in faith and action so that the world may be blessed. May we never forget the blessings our church offers us, and prayerfully discern what God wishes us to contribute to our church in return. If we will all do that, then our church will continue to be a household of God where the Spirit of God is very pleased to dwell!

–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

March 6	74	March 13	77
March 20	77	March 27	107

Church Staff

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

To sleep like a log -

- Don't eat a heavy meal or sugary foods, or drink alcohol or caffeinated beverages within 3 hours of going to bed.
- Quit smoking
- Get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week (but not right before bedtime).
- Try to go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- Develop a quiet pre-bed ritual that gets you into the "mind-frame" of going to sleep.
- Reserve your bedroom for sleeping.
- Don't resort to sleeping pills for longer than a week or two.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 2 - Rolf Yungclas
- 2 - Karin Yungclas
- 2 - Scott Sjoberg
- 3 - Dorothy Stearns
- 4 - Sherry Leksell
- 5 - Jessica Paterson
- 9 - Wil Groves
- 9 - Lynn Leksell
- 15 - Jonah Alan Fiala
- 15 - Lorraine McCoskey
- 15 - Becky Barrett
- 16 - Jacob Lahr
- 17 - Alaina Imhoff
- 18 - Shelby Brim
- 19 - Christy Fiala
- 19 - Arden Schlitter
- 20 - Gen Carroll
- 22 - Lauren Christine Stirling
- 25 - Hailey Marie Brim
- 26 - Patty Yungclas



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

- 4 - Alan & Karin Yungclas
- 17 - Bob & Leah Maass
- 28 - James & Gretchen McGlynn

D/SAOC Auction

Deadline for donations is April 3. Our goal is \$1,000 in order to provide a large flat screen TV and Blue-Ray player.

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

Thrift Sale April 22 & 23

Spring Cleaning and Sorting
Friday & Saturday, April 22 & 23 -

Women's Fellowship will be conducting their semi-annual Thrift Sale. **Wed. April 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** - Bringing 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.

Meals'N'More

Join us on April 6 from 5:00 to 6:00 as the Haystack Circle hosts Meals'N'More.

Women's Fellowship Dinner

Reserve your calendar for Wednesday, May 25 for the Women's Fellowship dinner. Joel Peterson will be speaking on his trip to Africa to bring clean water solutions to people. Pastor Craig and his team will be preparing the meal. More details to come.

Volunteers Sought for Summer Camp Leadership

Dave Mears, Pilgrim Heights Director of Programs and Facilities, is searching for volunteers who would lead a week of camp, or serve as a camp counselor. Dave also is looking for paid summer staff, which would include college-age students. Want to volunteer, or know more? Please contact Dave at dave.mears@pilgrimheights.org



East Chapel Cry Room

With the implementation of the Safe Church Policy we are no longer able to offer a nursery supported by volunteer members. Please know we love having the children attend worship service with their families. However, if their restlessness overwhelms your patience we now have a space available to you. Any family with a small child is invited to use the East Chapel as a cry room; however a parent or grandparent must be with the child at all times. **Children without adult supervision cannot use this space.** There is an audio speaker located in the East Chapel so you will be able to hear the church service. We thank The Piecemakers for making two baby quilts that can be used as play mats on the floor.

Sometimes It's Hard to Ask for Help

We're brought up to be strong, self-sufficient, independent people. We tend to think that if we ask for help, it is a sign of weakness. So we try to keep our struggles hidden, stuffed deep inside. 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 experienced Stephen Ministers who are ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help you through a tough time. (It's confidential too!)

Find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders: *Pastor Craig Blaufuss, Dale Olson or Sharon Perry.* Our Stephen Ministers are here for you.

Easter



A big thank you goes out to Mary Van Diest for preparing gift bags for the children on Easter Sunday.

Clean-up Project

It has become a yearly tradition! We will meet Thursday, April 19th at 6:30 pm, at the east end of the K Mart parking lot to once again beautify mother Earth—and our city—by picking up trash along the west side of Superior street! Come on out and enjoy a nice warm Spring evening (keep your fingers crossed) and help clean up God's world!

Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$10,035.98	\$34,912.23
Other Income	.10	.45
TOTAL INCOME	\$10,036.08	\$34,912.68
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	\$1,583.34	\$3,166.60
Pastoral Services	5,396.08	10,582.16
Maintenance and Repairs	17,201.51	27,659.28
Church Office	2,768.68	5,399.87
Music Ministry	900.00	1,750.00
Christian Education	0.00	25.00
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	156.65	215.35
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$28,006.26	\$48,798.26

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Webster City, Iowa
Cabinet Meeting – March 8, 2016

Members Present:

Moderator----- Sherry Leksell	Pastor-----Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice-Moderator---	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-----substitute-Luverne Bierle	Clerk-----Mary Van Diest

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm by the Moderator, Sherry Leksell. Pastor Craig opened with a meditation titled "Disposal of the Body" followed by a prayer. Pastor Craig reported that there hasn't been any discussion yet on the summer lunch program. Highlights of the boards and committees were given; Dalene reported that the Staff/Parish Committee met and assigned two members to each of the staff and are going to begin work on the funeral policy. Sharon reported from Evangelism that they will be discussing the pros and cons of keeping the nursery open. Joyce Gelhaus reported from Women's Fellowship that they will be doing the birthday parties at the nursing homes on May 5th. Don Bruner will lead a hymn sing for the entertainment. The May Dinner will be held on May 25th with Joel Peterson being the guest speaker. He will tell of his trip to Tanzania to assist the people on having a clean water supply. Rumor is that the men will be cooking the meal that evening. Morning Star Circle will furnish the dessert. Tom Riemenschneider from the Trustees reported that the lock has been repaired on the door of the bridal room. He also reported that once the estimate on new signage is received, they will determine if it will be done now or put on the bucket list. Luverne Bierle reported for the treasurer that the Clifford Doty CD came due and was sold. A bond that pays 4% interest was purchased with these funds. He reported that the February offering was \$10,035.98 and expenses were \$13,904.46. Dale moved and Holly seconded to accept the reports of the treasurer, the boards and committees.

Old Business: Tom and Joyce reported that the remodeling project is winding down. The representative from the congregation on the Safe Church Policy will be Lorraine McCoskey. Dalene moved to approve her for this position. Motion was seconded and carried. She will join Leah Maass from Christian Ed and Stephanie Hill from staff/parish on this Safe Church Policy. Dale Olson, Tracy Wehrhan, Holly Riemenschneider and Vicki Blaufuss have offered to work on revising the constitution.

Reports of Boards and Committees

Pastor's Report: An abbreviated Ash Wednesday service was held on February 10th in the East Chapel with ashes and communion. On February 28th Josi Greenley substituted on the organ for organist, Melissa. March 6th we will hear the Sunday School children in song being led by Katie Sonsalla and the following week Anne Sherve-Ose will lead the KLAB kids on the ORFF instruments during worship. There will be a Maundy Thursday service in the sanctuary on March 20th, at 7:00 pm. There will be 2 services Easter Sunday: a Son-Rise service at 8:30 am, possibly with a skit done by our youth and a 10:30 Easter traditional service with pew communion. The attendance at KLAB continues to remain at about 7 children weekly. We have just finished studying the 2 creation stories in Genesis and are now focusing on Holy Week. The adult education class will finish the series "A New Place to Be" after Easter. Reported in Stephen Ministry that our grief support group completed six sessions on February 28th. The three attendees greatly benefitted from this support group. We are discussing ways to "get the word out" both in our community and in our congregation about Stephen Ministry. We have completed two lessons in "Discovering God's vision for your Life" and the group is finding the lessons helpful. We continue with three Stephen Ministers matched with care receiver. At our last meeting we discussed partnering with Quakerdale's Hope for Healing program, and we decided as a group to become a partner in this program. Representatives from Hamilton County Service Providers, UDMO, Hamilton County Social Services, EHNC and the WCMA met on February 16th to share resources and information on emergency assistance to those in need. While each organization has different guidelines for assistance, we decided that the order of response to emergency needs in our community is: 1) apply with UDMO, 2)-apply with county social services, 3)-apply to Ecumenical Human needs. From the WCMA he reported that we will send in a check for \$254 to the Salvation Army as 10% of the Bell ringing campaign. The balance has yet to be assigned to relief providers or other programming. Mike Slininger intends to lead the bell ringing campaign next year. VBS dates for various churches were announced: Asbury UMC will be July 11-15 from 1-3 pm; Faith UMC will be July 25-29 from 5-8 pm; St. Paul Lutheran will be June 13-17 in the am; Trinity ELCA will be "sometime in July", from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. He reported from the Community Book Study that Kathy Getting of Power Up Youth is inviting concerned community members together to discuss issues around raising today's kids by hosting a community book read of Artificial Maturity: Helping Kids Meet the Challenge of Becoming Authentic Adults by Dr. Tim Elmore. Kendall Young Library will check out the 25 copies to anyone with a library card starting February 23rd. The book discussion takes place on April 4th at 6:30 pm at the KYL meeting room. Wade Weber, ISU Extension Youth Development Specialist, will guide the conversation.

Christian Ed Board: Met on February 17 with the following in attendance: Pastor Craig, Vicki Blaufuss, Leah Maass, Jane Klaver, Curt McCoskey, Wil Groves, and Mary Van Diest. Meeting was started with a prayer by Pastor Craig.

Old Business:

The following church members willing to do substitute teaching are: Wil Groves and Sharon Perry. Leah stated she was not in need of birthday postcards or stamps.

The chair and cabinet representative will remain the same. Mary Van Diest volunteered to be the alternate cabinet representative.

It was agreed to continue to meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:15 pm.

New Business:

Easter "Son-Rise" service was okayed by the Worship Board. It was recommended that the youth of the church take part in this service. We will decide what they will be doing at the next meeting.

Breakfast will again be offered per the Christian Ed Board. Each member will bring the following:

Leah Maass-----French toast
Vicki Blaufuss----- 2 casseroles and 2 breakfast rolls
Curt McCoskey----- milk and orange juice
Jane Klaver-----1 casserole and something else
Wil Groves-----1 casserole
Mary Van Diest----- fruit
Pastor Craig----- empty tomb rolls done on KLAB Wednesday before Easter.

It will be decided at the next meeting if an old fashioned Easter egg hunt will be offered or some other activity.

It was also decided to allow 3rd graders to also light candles.

Leah Maass will obtain the birthdays, addresses, age and year in school of Shelby and Haley Brim.

Next meeting will be March 9th at 7:15 pm.

Other Business: The board decided to change the procedure regarding treats after the children's message during the church service. Kids may now pick them up following the service, rather than at the children's message. Pastor Craig will explain the change to the kids next Sunday. Items to be planned next meeting will be: Last day of KLAB will be May 4th, 2016. Graduation Sunday on May 15th, 2016. Wil Groves will check with the graduates' parents to see if this date will work for them.

On May 15th, 2016 we will also celebrate Participation Sunday. Youth will be recognized for attending Sunday School and KLAB. The youth that will receive a Bible are Shelby Brim (adult bible) and Haley Brim (children's bible.)

We will also discuss monthly summer activities for youth. Leah Maass and Wil Groves will see what programs are available. Submitted by Vicki Blaufuss.

Board of Trustees: Met on February 14th with Tom Riemenschneider, Bruce Perry Tracy Wehrhan, Holly Riemenschneider, Joyce Gelhaus and Pastor Craig in attendance. Absent was Gretchen Bruner. Old Business: Tom and Joyce met with Ray Kinnetz to go over signage for church. He brought a sample of a sign that was to look like wood on metal which Tom and Joyce did not care for. They will meet again with Ray before the February 25th meeting when he will bring additional samples. They reviewed the list for the church directory sign. Joyce received a catalog from Trinity Lutheran which has the bulletin boards like Trinity has. She and Pastor Craig reviewed what was available and ordered a 4' x 5' for the wall by the pastor's study and a 33" x 4' for the wall by the church office for the signup sheets. These were approved. New Business: Discussed new table and chairs for fellowship hall, and benches to be placed by the elevator. Joyce, Tom and Holly looked at Redekers and Pastor Craig in Des Moines for possibilities. After discussion, it was decided to go with the oval table with six chairs from Redekers and also one bench to put adjacent to the elevator. We will ask Redekers for a quote and if it is favorable, will ask the Memorial Fund for funds. Tom and Tracy will check on the copper pipes for the women's bathroom sink.

Met on February 25th with Tom Riemenschneider, Tracy Wehrhan, Holly Riemenschneider, Joyce Gelhaus and Pastor Craig in attendance. Absent were Gretchen Bruner and Bruce Perry. Opening prayer was given by Pastor Craig. Minutes of January 29th and February 14th meetings were approved. Old Business: Tom talked with Scott Jaycox about doing the cabinet, putting up the sheet rock in the basement and replacing the wood pieces. He will do this as soon as he can. Kolleen Taylor would like the top of the cabinet. Tom picked up the new bench and it is now in place in the lobby. The table from Redekers will be here in 10-12 weeks since the table has to be built. The plan is to put the old table and chairs on silent auction on April 3rd. If it is not sold, it will be go on the spring thrift sale. Holly will send thank you notes to Memorial Fund for contributing the funds for these pieces of furniture. The paper towel holders, toilet paper holders, soap holders and canisters have been installed. Holly is checking on a mirror at home to possibly be installed on the west wall of the women's restroom. The main level changing table will be moved from the unisex restroom to the women's restroom on the north wall. The changing table in the bridal restroom will be moved to the redone restroom. The damaged door on the women's restroom should be under warranty. We will check with Wayne Schlotfeldt on this. We have not heard from Wayne after questioning his billing. We looked at sample signage from Ray Kinnitz. We

would like a dark color with raised letters for the signs by the rooms and restrooms and wish to have them a uniform size of 6" x 9". Locations for the signs were discussed-church office, pastor's office, family restrooms-3, classroom 1,2,3,4, main floor, women's restroom, east chapel and flag sign. The church directory style was selected with wood around the outside. Joyce will get a bid from Ray and Tom will get one from Larry Herren for these signs. After we receive these bids, we will see where we are with the finances before proceeding. New business: The projector and the video system are now running okay after last Sunday's power outage. There was a question needing two back up cooling units and battery backups. Pastor Craig mailed them to verify the need. Vic is getting an estimate for matching the wainscoting in the west fellowship hall to the east side. (estimate for the wainscot and labor is \$6,500). The lock to bridal restroom does not work. There was a question on the carpet bill. It was clarified after finding the estimate included the pastor's office carpet. Next meeting is March 24, 2016.

Mission Board: Met on February 11 and welcomed new members Audrey Burtnett, Alyssa Kenville and Marjorie Groves. The officers will be-Gayle Olson as chairman, Marjorie Groves as secretary and Lorraine McCoskey as the cabinet representative. Unfinished business: Karen will take the \$328.00 collected from Souper Bowl to the UDMO. Discussed the possibility of Prison Ministry. Pastor Craig will talk to the sheriff about doing a service on the Sundays that we do the nursing home services. One church in town is already doing this. KAH collected \$188 from the pickle jar. Twenty-four people worked for one hour to pack the lunches. New business: members will be in charge of the following—Lorraine-Beacon of Hope meal in March—Marjorie-OGHS on Palm Sunday—Lorraine-NIN in October—Karen-Christmas Fund in December—Audrey-Strengthen the Church in May. It was decided to again participate in the D/SAOC cake auction. Various themes were discussed with a decision to be made at the March meeting. The next meeting will be March 10th at 5:15 pm. Submitted by Lorraine McCoskey.

Worship Board: Met February 11th with Pastor Craig, Gretchen McGlynn, Verna Bierle and Holly Riemenschneider in attendance. The communion schedule: March 6th-Holly and _____, Maundy Thursday, March 24th will be intinction and will need two people, Easter Service will need 6 people as communion will be served as seated in the pews. Gretchen will text people as dates come up to find people to fill these slots. The board will serve fellowship coffee on March 13th. Holly reported items brought up at the last Cabinet meeting. The main one is a Task Force that is being formed to look at revisions to the church constitution. The following positions were filled: chairperson-Gretchen McGlynn, secretary-Cindy Henning, cabinet representative-Holly Riemenschneider, securing pulpit supply ministers-Linda Lahr, purchasing/preparing communion elements-Verna Bierle. The next meeting is March 10th at 7:00 pm.

Finance Board: Met on February 21st with Dale Olson, Arden Schlitter, Nate Lahr, Tracy Wehrhan (member/treasurer) and Luverne Bierle-financial secretary. Officers elected were: chairman-Duane Vavroch, secretary-Tracy Wehrhan, cabinet representative-Dale Olson. The Special Funds Committee for 2016 will be Luverne Bierle, Linda Lahr and Tracy Wehrhan. A discussion was held on the lack of audits for several years. It was agreed that the 2015 audit will be done by Barb Wolland and assisted by Dalene Schlitter. Barb has agreed to do this for no charge. The board agreed to get a \$100.00 gift card for this service. Fees for an independent audit will have to be added into the budget for next year. A discussion on the Clifford Doty Memorial Fund was held. The fund owes the building fund money for the purchase of the organ peddle board. This was to be paid from interest received on the funds CD. Interest payments do not currently meet expenditures for the organ and piano maintenance. The board agreed to forgive this loan. Tracy gave the Treasurer's report: a—Dow Chemical bond was sold and Host Hotels purchased in December; b---The Clifford Doty CD comes due on March 6, 2016. The special funds committee will discuss investment options; c---Discussed several liabilities listed on the balance sheet that have been there for several years It was agreed to transfer these balances to the alternative giving account and use for supplies for the church. Also, we combined the two chancel committee's liability accounts, d---discussed the transfer of 2015 designated money from the general fund to each funds checking account. Money will be transferred to the Memorial Fund, AGAPE Fund, Bess Lyon Memorial Fund and the Endowment Fund, e---discussed our bond balances. Tracy has found a discrepancy in the amounts listed

on the asset sheet and the actual purchase amount of the bonds. He investigated how to solve the problem and found that the best way is to leave the balances as they are entered and take the differences as a gain/loss when the bonds are sold.

Dalene moved and Holly seconded to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Next meeting: April 12, 2016 at 7:00 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:

