

June 2019 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>

"I have called you friends, for I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father."—John 15:15

Do you have many friends? Just about everyone knows Vicki and I have 4 furry friends at home, and there is a reason they are called a human's best friend! Whenever I leave they seem sorry to see me go, and when I come home they ALWAYS greet me at the door with wagging tails and big dog smiles. When Vicki or I are feeling down they sense our mood and try to comfort us, or at least stay with us in solidarity. When we go somewhere—even to the landfill—they are game to ride along, for the single biggest pleasure of their life is our company. Now that's a friend!

Did you have a best friend when you were young? Bob and Steve Green were my best friends growing up. We rode bikes together, played ball together, built models together and listened to KISS albums together, detassled together, and camped out in the back yard together. We were inseparable—the original band of brothers.

Do you have a lifelong friend? A resident of Southfield once shared with me that he had such a friend. They grew up on neighboring farms, and all through their adult lives they coffeed together, dined out and socialized together...and when Bill had a stroke and had to go to Southfield because of his disability, his friend was there to regularly visit him and keep their friendship alive. Now that's a friend!

Dr. Tim Keller once said the marks of a true friend are the 4 C's: Constancy, Carefulness, Candor, and Counsel. Do you have a friend like that? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all did?

I have such a friend....let me tell you about him.

My friend was brought up in a poor household, and yet he has always been rich in spirit.

He has an instinct about how to be a good friend, for it comes naturally to him.

He has always helped those in need, and he always seeks out the lonely ones, the ones who are left out, in order to befriend them. He always welcomes everyone into his circle--even those "unwelcomed" by others.

He has always been willing to share what he has with his friends.

He has a reputation for sometimes being blunt (candor), and sometimes he can be uncomfortably honest in his advice (counsel), but even when he's being candid and honest you know he is doing it because he cares about you and wants to help you (carefulness).

But it is his constancy that is the most remarkable thing about his friendship, for although he knows you warts and all, he still loves you and wants to be your friend! And even toward those who have betrayed him he holds no malice, for he stands constant in his offer of forgiveness and friendship. Now that's a friend!

And what does a friend want from me besides my friendship? He wants me to follow his lead and extend my circle of friendship as he does: beyond my circle of birth, beyond my circle of like-mindedness, beyond my circle of proximity, beyond my circle of comfort, beyond my circle of "mutuality." For my friend knows what makes my life—and every human life-- a heaven or a hell is *how far we are willing to extend our gift of friendship to others*.

I don't have to tell you that in this polarized, mistrustful and frightened world we stand more and more isolated and alienated from one another, causing our friendships and our peace to suffer because of this. But when I become too withdrawn and forlorn my friend reminds me that we were created for one another, and He assures me that much strength and peace are to be found in our forged bonds of friendship that are grounded in the fruits of love.

As the summer months begin there will be plenty of opportunities for each of us to meet new people and make new friends! And so my prayer is simple:

May we all take to heart the importance and the blessings of having a friend like Jesus,
And may we all strive to be such a friend to others! --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

May 5 58 May 12 55
May 19 56 May 26 44

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316
Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@wmtel.net
Michele Omvig: Admin. Assist. 269-7210
Church's e-mail: administrative.office@fcuccwc.org
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr 839-5619
Sunshine Garth: Choir Director 835-7626
Melissa Hindt: Organist 712-351-1074
Curt/Lorraine McCoskey: Cust's. 832-5341
Tracy Wehrhan: Church Treasurer 297-0370
Dale Olson: Financial Secretary 839-5619



The 7 basic life skills every child needs.

- Focus and self-control.- Paying attention, remembering rules, being flexible in thinking, and exercising self-control.
- Perspective taking - Figuring out what others think and feel and being able to consider others viewpoints.
- Communicating - Deciding what to say, how best to say it, and how others may interpret it.
- Making connections - Determining what's the same, what's different, and sorting things into categories.
- Critical thinking - Continually looking for accurate and reliable knowledge to direct beliefs, decisions, and actions.
- Taking on challenges - Trying new and difficult things instead of avoiding them or simply getting through them.
- Self-directed, engaged learning - Learning on their own without any prompting from adults.

4 - Virginia Veach
9 - Stacy Wearda
13 - Dalene Schlitter
13 - Sandi Weieneth
14 - Amanda Lahr
14 - Zachary Lahr
14 - Livia Oberender
15 - Alexis Byrne
16 - A.J. Weieneth
18 -Chesney Fuller
19 - Wilma Reinsel
24 – Henry Elkin
24 – Charlie Yoders
26 - Lynn Jaycox
30 - Katie Holdgrafer



2 - Emily & Troy Stockdale
14 - Duane & Mary Vavroch
19 – Joe & Jennifer Gilbert
26 - Howard & Barb Stearns

Ice Cream Social

This year the social will be on June 12, 5:30-7:30 pm at First Congregational. Sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall.

3 Great Loves

There has been quite a bit of press lately talking about cutting down on single use plastic. Is that something you have been trying to do or do you need some ideas for ways that can be done? Check out the 3 Great Loves board for an idea for how to do that when doing your grocery shopping, but in the meantime you might try the following:

Take your own refillable cup or mug when you go for coffee in the morning.

When you go out to eat and you order a cold drink tell the server you don't need a straw. If you really like using a straw consider buying a metal straw and taking it with you.

Summer Hours

June 2 we will switch to summer hours. We will meet to worship together at 9:30.

First Saturday Service of the Season!

Join us at 5 pm Saturday, June 15th for the first of three Saturday evening worship services scheduled for the summer months! The Worship Board has recruited a gospel singing group "3 Longs and A Short" to share their gift of song with us throughout the service. Be sure to attend and hear the Good News shared in song!

Scholarships

The Finance Board will be receiving scholarship applications until June 15th. Applications are available from the church office.

Summer Lunch

Once again our church will help kick off the Summer Lunch program the week of June 17. Sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall.

Summer Music

Worship Board would like a special musical offering at each of our summer services. Instrumental, vocal, solo, duet, etc. Please contact Donna for dates and to sign-up. *"Music acts like a magic key, to which the most tightly closed heart opens". - Maria Augusta von Trapp*

Relay for Life

Is June 19 at Stanhope Park 6:00 -9:00, sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall. Quilted items are up for auction in Fellowship Hall.

Care Center Services

June 9 First Congregational will lead Care Center services beginning at 1:15 pm at Windsor Manor, 2:00 pm at Crestview and 2:45 at Southfield. You are encouraged to help at any and all of these services.

Thanks

I want to say Thank You to everyone for the cards, emails, and prayers to support me in my recent surgery. You are a great church family. Joyce

Agape Means Love

To keep the Agape Fund healthy, we plan to pass the "Happy Dollars Bucket" the last Sunday of every month, during coffee fellowship time, encouraging folks to put a dollar in the bucket in honor of anything that makes them happy. The Agape Fund at our church was

established many years ago to assist persons who face an unusual or unexpected financial crisis. We'd like to keep the Agape Fund big enough to help. Thank you! You make us happy. – **The Mission Board**

Driver Needed – for Books!

We are collecting children's books to give away at the summer lunch program at the Webster City Middle School. Kolleen Taylor, head librarian for the Bertha Bartlett Memorial Library in Story City, will have some to give us after Scandinavia Days ends. She's estimating four to six boxes would be ready to come to Webster City after June 9. Could you give the books a ride? They can be taken directly to the middle school. Please call or text Kolleen (515-835-0069) if you can help. Thanks! – **The Mission Board**

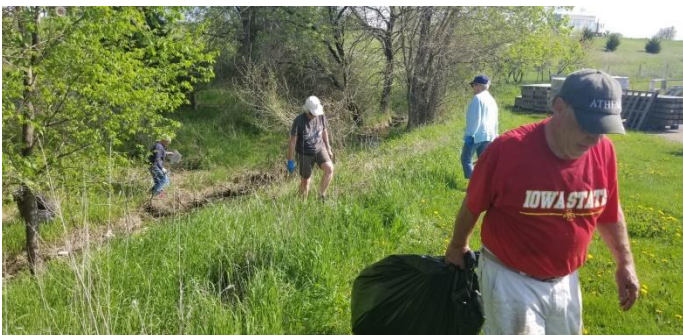
Senior Recognition and Christian Education Sunday, May 5





May Clean-up

Thursday May 16 7 church members gathered at the parking lot of the old Kmart and spent some time cleaning up the green area east of that parking lot and on south to the area east of Bomgaars. 12 garbage bags later, the area looked better and lots of plastic bags, an old tire, a cell phone, and styrofoam had been removed. A big thank you to those who helped with this project!!



3 adults and 7 youth attended our annual KLAB overnight lock in on May 24-25. Everyone survived!



Treasurer's Report

INCOME	April	YEAR TO DATE
Pledges and Offerings	\$9,698.00	\$52,737.68
Other Income	.00	.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,698.00	\$52,737.68
EXPENSES		
Outreach and Mission	0.00	\$3,166.60
Pastoral Services	7,579.94	31,022.67
Maintenance and Repairs	1,982.92	10,340.81
Church Office	2,893.39	11,596.68
Music Ministry	1,083.16	3,554.51
Christian Education	245.71	269.51
Local Ministry	.00	.00
Misc. Expenses	79.88	905.59
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$13,865.00	\$60,856.37

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Webster City, Iowa
Cabinet Meeting held on May 14, 2019

Members Present:

Moderator:	Nate Lahr	Pastor: Rev. Craig Blaufuss
Vice Moderator:	Gretchen McGlynn	Trustees: Joyce Gelhaus
Finance Sec.:		Women's Fellowship: Holly Riemenschneider
Finance:	Tracy Wehrhan	Mission: Audrey Burtnett
Staff/Parish:	Stephanie Hill	Worship: Gretchen McGlynn
Christian Ed:	Karinne Tudor	Evangelism:
Treasurer:	Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk: Stephanie Hill

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by the Moderator, Nate Lahr. Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a devotional 'Make a Joyful Noise' and a prayer. The minutes of the April cabinet meeting were read. Laurie Epps moved and Gretchen McGlynn seconded that the minutes be approved as read. The motion passed.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS: **Christian Education:** The discussion of whether to keep doing Sunday school continues. It was suggested that a 'one room school house' be tried instead of trying to divide into grades. No decision made yet. **Evangelism:** The Evangelism Board met and officers were selected. Kay Harfst is chair. Ushers need reminded to hand out welcome packets to visitors. Plans for a Summer Potluck on July 20 will include a cooking contest. **Finance:** This board met late April and officers were selected. **Mission:** The clean-up of the Brewer Creek Trail around the hospital was held April 19th and was successful. The next clean-up will be the gulley by Bomgaars on May 16th at 4 pm. The Backpack packing on April 23rd at Trinity was also well attended. Relay for Life is set for June 19th in Stanhope from 6 to 9pm. A sign-up sheet is out. The Ice Cream Social will be held June 12th at UCC. Also the Beacon of Hope meal will be served on May 28th. **Staff/Parish:** We have no issues so far this year therefore nothing to report. **Trustees:** The paper towel dispenser has been fixed or ordered. The Freeman Journal newspaper has been stopped. The Pentecostal church on Division and Seneca has asked and received permission to hold Sunday services in our sanctuary from 12:30 – 4:30pm for the next 6 weeks while their building undergoes repairs. They have insurance and will pay \$75.00 a week. **Worship Board:** For Sundays that Pastor Craig is absent, video services will be used. Worship Board will serve coffee after worship on May 19th. **Women's Fellowship:** There will be no May dinner this year. Instead, a evening Dessert

Event will be held on May 15th at which time the distribution of funds will be revealed. Some recipients are ACE - \$500.00; Tri-Conference Disaster Relief Fund-\$500.00; Kendall Young Library - \$500.00; Almost Home-\$300.00. Others are the Agape fund, swim passes, Crime Stoppers et al.

Pastor's Report: The School Lunch program needs more servers to volunteer than in prior years because only 1 cook was hired this year. Sign-up sheets are out. **Treasurer:** April offerings were down and expenses were up. The breakdown for the first 1/3 of the year shows everything is under budget. Tracy Wehrhan moved to put the report to audit. Dale Olson seconded. The report was put to audit.

PENDING BUSINESS:

A delegate is need for the Tri-Conference annual meeting with Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota to be held June 14-16 in Omaha. The church will pay the \$135.00 registration fee. An email from Nate Lahr, the moderator requesting a volunteer will be sent.

Next meeting is June 11 at 7:00pm.

Adjourned at 7:39pm.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Hill, church clerk.

Worship Board Worship board is serving coffee Sunday, May 19th. Working on special music for Saturday evening service and Sunday summer worship service. Finalize plans for communion May 5th. Suggestions were discussed for Mother's Day and Father's Day recognition.

Finance Board Duane volunteered to be chairman and Tracy volunteered to be secretary.

Tracy and Dale gave financial report concerning income and expenses. Scholarships were discussed. Michele has already put the announcement in the bulletin and will be in the next two newsletters. Applications are due to the Finance Board on June 15. The tentative date to hand out scholarships is set for Saturday, July 20th if this is agreeable with Pastor Craig and the Worship Board. Distribution of the AGAPE fund was discussed. With the future of the Evangelism board in question, the Finance board agreed to manage disbursements for this fund. The applicant is to make their request to the Pastor and the Pastor will forward the request to all finance board members via email. The email is to include the applicant's name, amount requested and what the monies are to be used for. Once the Pastor receives a positive response from three(3) of the board members, the request will be granted.

Christian Education Old business was a discussion of Confirmation and Easter activities. The Confirmation service went well. There will be no Confirmation class next year. There has been interest in this year's confirmands to take a mission trip within the United States for 2020, including working to finance it with itinerary yet undecided. Easter egg activities included approximately 20 children and Pastor Craig handed out 19 chocolate crosses after the service. On May 5 there will be both Graduation and Promotion. In addition to the cake, plates, napkins and nuts already purchased, Laurie will get juice and Jane will purchase bananas, apples and cuties. Pastor Craig would like rosters and pictures from Sunday School and KLAB for Promotion Sunday. He and Vickie will be responsible for the gifts presented. New business included a review of upcoming events in KLAB (Dairy Queen and lock-in) and a possible continuation of pen pal letters with Crestview over the summer, perhaps one Sunday a month. Following that, there was a discussion of the future of KLAB and Sunday School. Various views were expressed including: difficulty in recruiting teachers and students, numbers of students fluctuate- not allowing teachers to plan (or to plan and no one is there), classes during church are not fair for the teachers, lack of students past 7th or 8th grade, liability in offering rides to students, family classes of Sunday School. It was decided to try a "one room schoolhouse" approach with Laurie Epps being the main teacher for all levels and Jill and Karinne helping out. A cycle of teachers will be used to have one class room where older students can help the younger ones. KLAB will focus on a theme of "giving back", picking up trash, helping others, pen pals. Youth fellowship will be their goal since formal lessons after a full day at school are very difficult.

Evangelism Board We reviewed the constitutional responsibilities of the Evangelism Board to familiarize new members with board requirements. Kay agreed to be chair after Carol accepted the Cabinet representative post. Leah will act as recording secretary. Wilma will hopefully continue sending cards. It was brought up that ushers need to be reminded to recognize visitors and offer them

Welcome Packets. Kay will line up ushers for June, July, and August. Carol will find ushers for September and October. Leah will be in charge of ushers for November and December. As recognition of our roles to evangelize, we will host a Summer Potluck following the July 20 Saturday Service. BE ADVISED: there will be a creative cooking contest (reminiscent of years past) included in the evening's events!!! Kay then challenged this board to come up with ideas as to how we evangelize by our next meeting.

Women's Fellowship Holly reported on the format for next year's Lenten luncheons when they will be rotated between 5 different churches in the community with the host church also doing the program. The schedule, at this time, looks like the following: 1. Asbury, 2. Faith Methodist, 3. St. Thomas, 4. Trinity Lutheran, 5. Church of Christ. We will not have any responsibilities unless 1 of the aforementioned churches is unable to serve. A new roaster oven was picked up at the Thrift Sale. Thrift Sale went well - good comments were heard about the sign listing all of the organizations that have benefitted from these funds. Wilma said some customers gave extra when they realized so many local organizations got the benefit! Thank you Cindy!!! Care Center Birthday parties - Thurs. May 2 - Southfield 1:30 and Crestview 2:15. Don Bruner will lead some singing. May baskets will be shared. Women's Fellowship May Celebration - Wed. May 15 7:00 at the church. 2 desserts from each circle are needed. Disbursements of our funds will be announced.

New Business: Cindy and Holly will serve on the committee to decide how to disburse our funds. Marjorie Groves will be asked to join them. (She has been contacted and has agreed to do this.) It has been suggested that a paper towel dispenser as well as a soap dispenser be placed by the small hand sink in the kitchen. Trustees have been contacted. We were reminded that it is great to see so many using the recycle bin in the kitchen but we need to make sure all items placed there are clean. Clean tin foil can be recycled as can containers that cupcakes have been in as long as they are clean! Sheets for Circle members to fill out if they want to make any changes in their info, as well as the sheets for listing hostesses and programs for Circles will be available for Circle Chairs to pick up on Sunday May 5. May Baskets for Care Centers were filled. Thank you to Leah for the caramel corn, to Cindy for the May baskets and Shirley for the boxes to transport them. Not sure who to thank for the jelly beans

Mission Board On April 28, coffee fellowship time participants gave \$77 in Happy Dollars for the Agape Fund. Our next collection will be May 26. According to the revised constitution, the pastor and Finance Board determine when and how much will be given from the Agape Fund. The bank does not require a minimum balance any more. We packed Backpacks for hungry children's weekend use April 23 at Trinity. Is there an environmentally friendly type of bag that could be used to send the food home with the children? Our Good Friday service project of picking up trash along Brewer Creek and hospital hill went well, although it lasted only about an hour because of a church member's birthday club celebration. Our next clean-up event will be May 16, along the gully by Bomgaar's. We invite the congregation to meet at the parking lot at 4 p.m. On June 9, we will host coffee time and Pickle Jar for the Relay for Life. Joyce Gelhaus is our church's Relay captain. The Relay is June 19 in Stanhope. On April 28, Pastor Craig, Marjorie and others unloaded in the church garage 7 or 8 boxes of children's books left from the library book sale. The books will be given away at the Summer Lunch Program. Gayle and Lorraine made baked goodies and Curt McCoskey delivered them to thank the city street crew for the hard work and long hours clearing snow this past winter. A picture of workers holding our church thank-you sign was on Facebook April 25. Next, we will thank the 29 or so county road workers. Karin and Audrey have planned a menu for the Beacon of Hope meal for May 28. The Ice Cream Social will be June 12 at our church. Karin and Audrey have met with a representative from Faith United Methodist, our co-host. Money donated will be divided between the Willson Brewer renovation landscaping/caboose and the Free Clinic. The next Mission Board meeting will be June 5, 1 p.m.

Pastor's Report On Palm Sunday (April 14) we confirmed Brandon Lahr, Chesney Fuller, Shelby Brim and Madison Babington during worship. We did hold our Maundy Thursday service (April 18) in the East Chapel, and Easter Sunday (April 21) we enjoyed a light breakfast beginning at 9:15 am, a scripture verse Easter Egg Hunt at 9:30 am, and a traditional worship service with pew communion

beginning at 10:30am. On May 5th we recognized our seniors Jackson Leman, Kayla Nelson, Dylan McCoskey and Katie Short, and we honored our Sunday school and KLAB students, teachers and helpers. Thank you Christian Education Board for all your work this past month! Our summer worship hours begin June 2, beginning at 9:30 a.m. On April 28 we baptized Addilyn Kepler into the Body of Christ. Addilyn is the daughter of Justin and Kara Kepler. We are engaging in various weekly topics, and will finish holding class on Sunday, May 19th. We currently have 2 Stephen Ministers matched with care receivers. We did not meet in May due to absences; we will meet June 6 for our next monthly meeting. We continue to recruit help for the Summer Lunch program—please sign up! We finished the backpack program with slightly over \$6000 in the bank, so we are positioned well financially to resume in the fall. I officiated at the graveside committal of Al Maxon on May 4—the date of Al and Jan’s wedding anniversary. We will hold our KLAB lock in at the church on Friday, May 24, beginning at 7 pm, and ending Saturday May 25 at 87 am. Confirmants are invited, too! We are also planning summer activities for our KLAB kids in June and July. We had no delegates representing FCUCC at this meeting, nor was I in attendance. There was a presentation by UCC Global Ministries partner Kearstin Bailey, who was a Global Missions Intern over the past two years in Greece. Tri State Annual Meeting Iowa-Nebraska-South Dakota United Church of Christ will be held June 14, 3 p.m. - June 16, 10:30 a.m. at the Tri-Faith Initiative, Omaha, NE. The cost is \$135 (includes Friday reception & dinner, Friday Awards Luncheon, Saturday Banquet) We will need a delegate(s) to attend this meeting, as it replaces the Iowa Conference annual meeting. I am electing not to attend as I will be attending General Synod the following week. I have been selected to be a voting delegate representing our Tri-Conference at the UCC General Synod which will be held in Milwaukee, WI. General Synod is the national decision-making body for the denomination, responsible for giving general direction to the evangelistic, missionary, and justice programs of the UCC. General Synods convene every 2 years; this one runs from June 21-June 25. Since I have never attended a General Synod I am looking forward to learning more about our justice and mission commitments and seeing our deliberative processes firsthand! I have requested July 22- 29 and October 21-28 as weeks of vacation. I will be attending the Mental Health Awareness Day hosted by Trinity ELCA on Friday, May 17th.

Worship Board Father’s Day (June 16): Saturday service is June 15, we will put together little baggies of a mix for the Dad’s. Communion Servers for June 2: Gretchen will send out an e-mail as it’s closer to get those spots filled. Pastor Craig will be gone June 23, July 28 and October 27; we will have video service on these Sundays. Worship Board is serving Fellowship Coffee on May 19. Gretchen plans to pick up the flowers for Mother’s Day service. Continuing to work on special music for summertime Saturday and Sunday services. Discussing serving Root Beer floats after the August Saturday service and plans to separate the gluten-free wafers from the bread cubes.

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:

