

June 2021 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>

I am writing this after our Sunday worship service celebrating Pentecost, the “birthday of the church.” As I am sure you know, Pentecost for Christians is the day we recall the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus’ disciples which transformed them into apostles: those sent by God into the world to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Today we also celebrated another birthday of sorts: at the beginning of the Pentecost worship service our Moderator Nick Oberender shared the news that the Cabinet had voted to fully reopen the church to the public after being closed in various phases since March 17th, 2020. So it is a post-pandemic birthday for us, although what is being given birth to in our post-pandemic church is far from clear.

Now I don’t have to tell you that every conceivable commentary and opinion has been voiced on what churches should or will be like on the far side of the virus shutdowns. Many believe a virtual format (livestreaming, posting to YouTube, etc.) must remain an option going forward if churches are to thrive or even survive. Many are recommending using this post-pandemic reset to do fresh thinking about which ministries are working and which aren’t, and to refocus on what we are doing that works well while exploring new possibilities for doing ministry. Meanwhile, many of us are yearning to pick up where we left off and return to “church as usual” because we have missed “being church” in all the ways we have been church for quite some time now. My suspicion is that all of this will sort itself out in time going forward, because I do believe that in spite of what we might believe-- or even hope--the pandemic has changed almost everything...including each of us, and also our church. So much like the birthday of the church at Pentecost, this new birthday of the post-pandemic church may well defy predictions and unfold in some unforeseen ways.

And yet like Pentecost of old, I hope we will not discount the power of the Holy Spirit to lead First Congregational in this post-pandemic period of discernment, recovery, and change. Each of us would do well to be open to where the Spirit may lead us, and not only as individuals, but also as a church! And just as the early Christians had to discern together what the will and the wisdom of the Spirit was trying to give birth to in their communities of faith, we must also do the same. So if you have new ideas to share, new ministries to take on, new studies to pursue...if you feel a tugging from the Spirit to do a new thing here at First Congregational...then tell us what you are dreaming! Tell us what you are passionate to try...tell us what you believe God is laying on your heart as part of our next steps as a post-pandemic church being “born again”—which is what the Holy Spirit is all about: new starts; new births; New Life! --Pastor Craig

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

M 8 am - 1 pm
T 9 am – 1 pm
W 8 am – 4:30 pm
Th 8 am – 4:30 pm
F 9 am – 1 pm

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
Office: **832-2232** Cell **297-4316**
Pastor’s email: **revcraigblaufuss@gmail.com**
Michele Omvig: Admin. Assist. **269-7210**
Church’s e-mail: **administrative.office@fcuccwc.org**
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr **839-5619**
Sunshine Duffy: 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**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

4 - Virginia Veach
8 – Connor Clements
9 - Stacy Wearda
9 – London Clements
13 - Dalene Schlitter
14 - Amanda Lahr
14 - Zachary Lahr
14 - Livia Oberender
15 - Alexis Byrne
18 -Chesney Fuller
19 - Wilma Reinsel
24 – Henry Elkin
26 - Lynn Jaycox
30 - Katie Holdgrafer

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

2 - Emily & Troy Stockdale
14 - Duane & Mary Vavroch
19 – Joe & Jennifer Gilbert



Summer shoes

- Avoid flip-flops that completely bend in half. a flip-flop should bend only slightly at the ball of the foot.
- Make sure that your feet don't extend beyond the edges.
- Toss out old, worn-out flip-flops.
- Take care of any sores or irritated skin between the toes.
- Wear sturdier shoes when doing a lot of walking, playing sports, walking in crowds, or working in the yard.
- Wear closed toe shoes when using a power lawnmower.

Thrift Sale Friday, June 11

Items can come to the church Wed., June 9th and Set-up will be Thursday, June 10th. We realize you may have collected much more than usual. Because of this, we are limiting what you bring to this Summer Thrift Sale.

- **Donations** from Church Members ONLY this time.
- **Clothing** –

- ✓ If items have stains, tears, holes, dirt, etc. on them - **THROW AWAY**
- ✓ Only **SUMMER** Clothes, hold winter clothes for next Fall if possible.
- ✓ Clean, Quality Shoes Only
- ✓ No hangers – recycle or throw away
- ✓ No recyclable shopping bags. Donate them to Food Pantry.

• **Household Items**

- ✓ No Vases – type from Flower Store – Recycle or Return to Flower Cart
- ✓ No Used Candles, old dirty votive cups – Recycle or throw away
- ✓ No plastic cups – Recycle or Throw Away

• **Decorations, knickknacks, Jewelry**

- ✓ Plastic Bag or rubber-band loose, similar items together, such as make-up, jewelry, cards, decorations with lots of pieces, etc.
- ✓ No Holiday decorations. Take Christmas trees to City Clean-up.

• **Furniture, Bikes, Exercise Equipment, Luggage, Large or Heavy items**

- ✓ Call Cindy – 515-297-0422 to arrange drop off or pick-up if necessary, as these items will go into the garage for the sale.
- **If you are able**, please distribute your items in marked areas on or below tables. We will try to have someone there to assist you.

By taking these measures, I hope to reduce items for a more manageable sale.

If you have items not fit for the Summer Thrift Sale, please consider, the City Clean-up/Drop Off at the Middle School. Hours are:

Friday, June 4th – noon – 4 pm

Saturday, June 5th – 8 am, - 2 pm

They have restrictions on items they accept, so please check The Trashman website/ Facebook or the list in Freeman Journal on May 19th. I'm sure City of Webster City will have info too.

Thank You for your help and if you have questions call 515-297-0422.

SUMMER THRIFT SALE – JUNE 11TH

WORKER SIGN-UP for Thursday & Friday
Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall or Call Cindy -- 297-0422

The following shifts are available to work. This involves everyone in the church.

SET-UP, Thursday, June 10 Come anytime
9 am – 8 pm. The more the merrier!

SALE, Friday, June 11th

9 am – 12 noon

12 noon – 3 pm

3 pm – 6 pm

Clean-up – 6 pm after sale

Thank You!!!!

Cindy Henning - Thrift Sale Chair

Scholarships

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

Drive-Through “Brownie Sundae Friday” on June 18

Last year was such a success that you are invited to our second drive-through “Brownie Sundae Friday” on Friday, June 18, 6:30-8 p.m. Simply pull up in your vehicle to the West Entrance of the church. Tell the attendant how many Brownie Sundaes you would like, and the attendant will bring your prepared Brownie Sundaes to your vehicle. The bowls, spoons, napkins – all are made of compostable material. A large jar will be used to receive your free-will donation. To keep things simple, all sundaes will be alike: a large brownie topped with a generous amount of store-bought vanilla ice-cream, then topped with chocolate syrup. For those who are gluten intolerant or don't like chocolate, you can enjoy a bowl of vanilla ice cream without the brownie or topping. Proceeds from the event will be sent to the Enhance Hamilton County Foundation for their Food Pantry Challenge. They will match what we raise dollar-for-dollar and then donate the funds to our local food pantries.

Clean Up Webster City Rescheduled!!

We got rained out of our last attempt, but Mission Board would like to invite you all to help with our clean-up day. We will be meeting out

by McDonald's in the KMart parking lot on Tuesday, June 22 at 5 pm to clean up as much as we can. Audrey Burnett will have gloves, bags, and bottles of water for all.

Adult Education Zoom Classes

We are finished with our zoom classes for the summer. A big thank you to everyone who tried this new format for learning and sharing. We will reconvene in person in the fall.

Walk to the Pickle Jar!

Well, folks, the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life will be virtual in 2021 – just like in 2020. We wish that meant that cancer took a break, too, but that's not the case. Although we won't be striding around the park in Stanhope or the high school track in Webster City, we can get some steps in by marching past the table in Fellowship Hall and dropping some money into the Pickle Jar marked “Relay for Life.” We'll set it out June 27. If you write a check, please write “Relay for Life” on the memo line. Cancer survivors thank you – and so do we! – ***The Mission Board and Joyce Gelhaus***

Tri-Conference Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Iowa Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences of the UCC will be held June 25-26 via Zoom. First Congregational is entitled to 2 voting delegates; if anyone is interested in representing the congregation at this meeting please speak with Pastor Craig. Registration to attend the meeting is required.

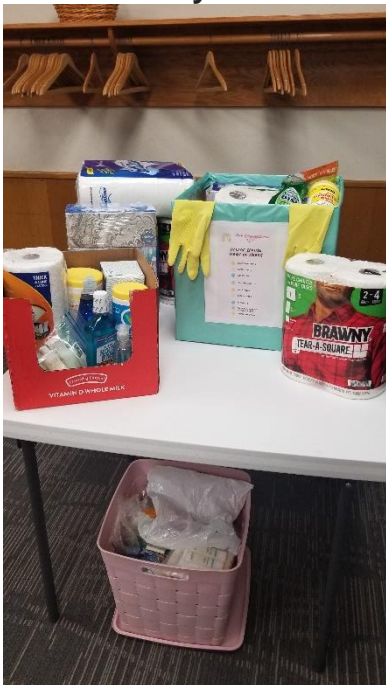
SAVE THE DATE—BRIGGS WOODS YOUTH DAY! WEDNESDAY, JULY 7

We are planning a day for fun at Briggs Woods from 10 am-4 pm on Wednesday, July 7. We will use the Shelter #2 as our base camp, and we will hike, play games, swim, enjoy a dunk tank, have a learning project and a service project, EAT...and finally get together again as a church group after a year of being apart! We are looking forward to seeing you all there—more information will be sent out later in June! – Pastor Craig and the Christian Ed Board

Summer Youth Program

ACE is hosting a weekly summer program for kids ages 4-18. Call 832-4153 to sign up.

Some of the Spring cleaning supplies collected for the Domestic / Sexual Assault Outreach Center in Fort Dodge. The Mission Board organized the collection drive for the month of May.



On Sunday May 16, we honored Jake Lahr, Kaelyn Butz, and Kaleb Sterler as our 2021 graduates! Jake and Kaelyn graduated from Webster City High School, and Kaleb graduated from Iowa Central College. Congratulations!



Treasurer's Report

INCOME	April	YEAR TO DATE
Pledges and Offerings	\$26,475.00	\$63,052.31
Other Income	0.00	.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$26,475.00	\$63,052.31
EXPENSES		
Outreach and Mission	1,416.67	\$5,666.64
Pastoral Services	7,283.92	28,791.03
Maintenance and Repairs	1,580.27	8,128.87
Church Office	2,881.99	11,457.67
Music Ministry	946.24	4,021.52
Christian Education	29.10	29.10
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	14.33	180.09
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$14,152.52	\$58,274.92

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Address Service Requested

God is still speaking
to everyone in the home of:

