

**April 2022 Newsletter**  
**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
**1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595**  
**515-832-2232**  
**<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>**

*“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here: he has risen! –Luke 24:5*

Luke Timothy Johnson of Emory University once said something that really impressed me. He said “one of the worst things that happened to the resurrection was that it became Easter...an event to be preached on in the past, rather than an event in the present that must be responded to. I find it regrettable, because it has enabled us to forget the radical edge of what is really being proclaimed by the resurrection, which is not about celebration of the past, but about transformation in the present.” It was a surprising statement to hear, but it continues to speak to me every year when Easter draws near.

As Christians, one of our greatest temptations is to containerize and reduce “Resurrection Power” to an ancient tale about Easter Sunday—to focus on it exclusively as a “Holy-Day,” and in doing so defuse its “Holy-Power.” We both glory and argue about the details of that mysterious day as we wonder if Jesus was raised in body or in spirit, and if the story is historically true or an ancient myth or metaphor. It seems to me that as Christians our greatest concern should be to find something transformational in the story of the resurrection, something that matters so much that it captures our imaginations and our hearts, and reorients our thinking, our living, and our hope.

So what might that be? What could we find in the story of the resurrection that has the power to transform our lives today? Could it be the promise that we are not alone in our lives, even when the way seems dark, foreboding, and lonely? Could it be the promise that there is no event in life that cannot be redeemed--even if we cannot understand, or imagine, how that could be possible? Could it be the promise that ultimately the powers of hope, love, and forgiveness are the greatest powers of all and the very essence of the Resurrection Power that not only raised Jesus from the dead, but also has the power to raise us out of every “tomb” we find ourselves in?

To orient our lives around such promises is to find a new source of hope and power for our lives. But will we choose to believe in those promises and that power? Or will we choose to live our lives believing that the Resurrection Power revealed in Jesus is just an old story; a one-time event locked in history that we bring out to admire once a year-- like our Easter baskets? Can we take the Easter story into our hearts and lives...and choose to believe that Resurrection Power is a miracle that can change our lives as well?

I needn't tell you that these days we are sorely in need of the miracle of Resurrection Power! We are finally emerging on the far side (maybe) of a devastating pandemic that has now killed nearly one million Americans and left us questioning not only the goodness of life but also the motivation and behaviors of so many whom we thought we knew and understood. We are experiencing weather anomalies that seem to be exacerbating due to climate change, and we wonder what the future will hold for our kids and grandkids. We are now living in a country locked in political dysfunction and mutual suspicion, filled with smoke-screens of dis-information which cause us to doubt and question what once seemed self-evident truths. Now our nightly news is filled with images of war, and even the Oscars bear witness the effects of rage and the desire to lash out that is filling so many hearts and minds. Suicides and drug overdoses bear tragic witness to the futility and despair that so many are now feeling about life and about themselves. In short, as in Jesus' day our times are crying out with a need for hope, for help and for change! And the promise of Easter, the promise that there is a Transcendent Power that knows us and wants to help us work toward a new and better life, a new and better way...that is indeed the Good News of Easter and the Resurrection Power we can embrace and share!

Friends, Resurrection Power is God's greatest gift to us; it is our birthright as God's children. And so we are an Easter people not because of a date on a calendar, or because of the details of an ancient story...but because of a power that promises to bring New Life into every tomb in our lives, as it did in Jesus' life. This year may Easter speak to us with new hope and with a new power, so that we may share in Christ's resurrection and find new meaning and purpose for our lives, and for the world! May it be so! Happy Easter! -- 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](mailto:revcraigblaufuss@gmail.com)  
**Michele Omgig**: Admin. Assist. 269-7210  
Church's e-mail: [administrative.office@fcuccwc.org](mailto: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:

2 - Karin Yungclas  
4 - Sherry Leksell  
9 - Wil Groves  
9 - Lynn Leksell  
13 - Karla Krebs  
15 - Lorraine McCoskey  
16 - Jacob Lahr  
17 - Alaina Imhoff  
18 - Shelby Brim  
19 - Christy Fiala  
19 - Arden Schlitter  
21 - Joe Gilbert  
25 - Hailey Marie Brim

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

4 - Alan & Karin Yungclas  
28 - James & Gretchen McGlynn

### Shalom Circle Continues

The Shalom Circle continues to meet weekly, and you are invited to join us for a quiet evening of music, meditation, prayer and conversation that generally lasts about an hour. If you would like to know the next date of the Shalom Circle, please speak with Pastor Craig.

### Worship Opportunities in April

#### April 3, Holy Communion

We will mark the first Sunday of April by serving communion in a new way. Please come to the front of the sanctuary to take a piece of bread (or a gluten-free wafer) from Pastor Craig, then take a small glass of either grape juice or white wine which will be offered by our communion stewards. After you have communed you may return to your seat; Pastor Craig and the communion stewards will bring the elements to your seat if you cannot come forward.

#### Palm Sunday April 10

April 10 is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. Join us in worship as we celebrate the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem and prepare to journey with Jesus to the cross.

#### Maundy Thursday Evening Service April 14, 7 p.m.

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

#### Easter Activities Sunday, April 17

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 9:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, provided by the Christian Education board. There will be special prizes given out for children and adults! At 10:00 a.m. we will gather in the sanctuary for our Easter Worship service, which will include the sacrament of Holy Communion. There will be no coffee after worship that day.



How to prevent a pain in the neck

To keep your neck nicely in line with the spine (where it wants to be) and relatively pain-free:

- Keep your reading materials at eye level as much as possible. This will keep your neck in a neutral, relaxed position, with your ears directly above your shoulders.
- Keep your upper back, neck and head in a straight line when you're partially reclined, as in watching TV or reading in bed.
- Don't cradle the phone between your ear and shoulder. If you need to be on the phone for long stretches, get a head-set that frees up your hands.
- Make sure you are looking at your computer monitor screen straight on. Adjust your computer, your glasses, or your chair if needed.
- Keep your neck and spine in one long, straight line when you sleep.
- Don't carry a heavy purse or shoulder bag on one shoulder. Try using a backpack-style bag instead



### **THRIFT SALE**

**Sat., April 23, 2022**

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

**Wed. April 20** - Drop Off Donations.

NO - large items or furniture, but you can send a picture of item and your name, phone #, and price. It will be posted on a board for people to see and call you.

### **Remember items should be clean, complete, and in good repair.**

**Contact** Cindy Henning at 297-0422 or [jbhfam@mchsi.com](mailto:jbhfam@mchsi.com) with questions.

Thank you for your donations and help making this fundraiser a success.

Cindy Henning

### **Theologian in Residence**

Registration is now open for the 2022

Theologian in Residence weekend April 23-24, 2022, "The Faith of Prophets: Lessons for the Climate Crisis" featuring Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt, Minister of Environmental Justice for the national United Church of Christ. Like last year, this will be a Zoom event. To register, go to the Ames UCC homepage ([amesucc.org](http://amesucc.org)) and click on the top tab for the Theologian in Residence events, then scroll down to the registration section. Please note that this year *TWO SEPARATE* registrations are required, one for the national webinar Saturday morning and the other for the remaining events. All events are free and open to the public.

### **Ukraine**

The United Church of Christ is appealing for support for refugees who have fled Ukraine to neighboring countries and for elderly and other vulnerable people who are displaced within Ukraine and unable to leave. As a member of the ACT Alliance, UCC support is being targeted to people most in need through humanitarian relief partners with a history of working in the region.

For example, Hungarian Interchurch Aid has been working along the Hungary-Ukraine border for years. It is focusing its war relief in Ukraine to two border cities. In a 10-day span early in the conflict, it trucked 278 metric tons of food and non-food items into Ukraine for relief efforts there.

"It's a rapidly changing situation. The number of people needing help will grow. We just heard of a place near Romania that needs help. We'll go there," they said.

Aid also is being extended through Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, the relief agency of the Reformed Church in Hungary. The UCC's long-term relationship with the Reformed Church in Hungary is held through Europe and the Middle East Office of Global Ministries.

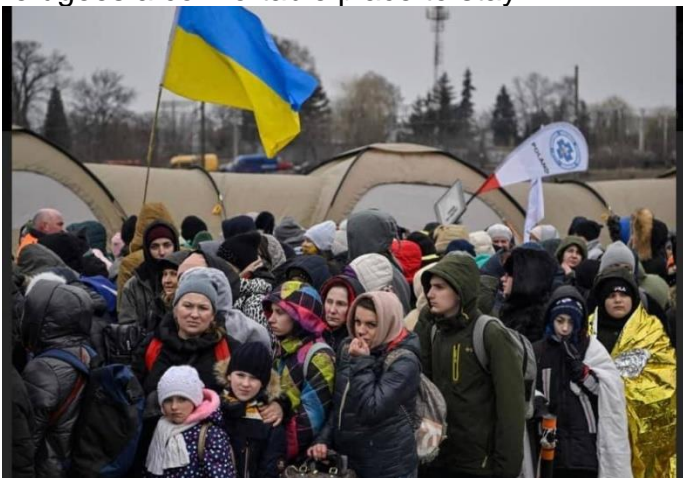
Gifts made to UCC Ukraine Relief Fund will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people. It also will help refugees and asylum seekers from African, Middle Eastern, and other countries who had sought refuge in Ukraine and now are twice displaced, as well as citizens of more than 125 other countries living in Ukraine.

The mission board will be taking in a money offering through April 24th for this emergency appeal. Please write "Emergency Ukrainian Appeal" in the subject line of your check.

### Ukraine Refugees

Steve Mather and Cami Mather have been operating a camp for children in Romania for twenty-two years and they are making arrangements to house some of the refugees. Steve and Cami are Donna Ryherd's cousins. In 2014 Joyce Gelhaus, Karl Heimberger, Dan and Donna Ryherd volunteered at the camp. Steve has also visited First Congregational UCC several times. They will open the camp to refugees for 12 weeks from April 1st to June 24th. Once the refugees start arriving in April, we are anticipating a need of \$40 per month per person to cover food, propane, toiletries and transportation. Please begin talking with your church or small group about sponsoring refugees for 3 months.

Refugees are filling up spare rooms and churches quickly all over Romania. By April, the situation will likely be much worse. With your help we can use the camp to offer refugees a comfortable place to stay.



### Thanks

Thank you for coming to the Homecoming Spring Celebration. It was a great success and

the selection of food was amazing! It is wonderful that we can gather together again as a Church family and get back to "Normal". The Evangelism Board would like to thank those who helped with the setup and cleanup. We greatly appreciated all you did to help. Patty & Ginnie

### Spring Homecoming Celebration

Our Spring Homecoming Celebration was a wonderful opportunity to worship, eat, and give thanks together as a family of faith! 50 worshippers gathered to hear a hope-filled message reminding us that our church is part of the ongoing story of Jesus and the Christian faith-- a story that is in its 2,025th year. Following our worship service we adjourned to Fellowship Hall for our first shared meal as a church in over 2 years, passed the "Happy Dollar" bucket around to benefit our Agape Fund, and then enjoyed a drawing for door prizes. The food was delicious, the fellowship was warm, and many hands pitched in to clean up after the meal. We want to thank Patty Gescheidler for organizing the event and Ginnie Veach for helping behind the scenes to make this a special day!





### Kitchen Cleaning

Members of Plymouth Circle met March 29 to do their part in cleaning the kitchen. Thank you, ladies!



### Treasurer's Report

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
Pledges and Offerings	\$11,640.00	\$26,192.00
Other Income	0.00	.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$11,640.00</b>	<b>\$26,192.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Outreach and Mission	1,416.67	\$2,833.30
Pastoral Services	8,386.70	16,433.20
Maintenance and Repairs	2,147.87	4,178.07
Church Office	2,766.87	6,018.03
Music Ministry	471.20	736.25
Christian Education	0.00	0.00
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	148.42	413.51
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$15,337.73</b>	<b>\$30,612.36</b>

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Webster City, Iowa

Cabinet Meeting held on March 8, 2022

## Members Present:

Moderator:	Joyce Gelhaus	Pastor:	Craig Blaufuss
Vice Moderator:	Wil Groves	Trustees:	
Finance Sec.:	Dale Olson	Women's Fellowship:	Joyce Gelhaus
Finance :	Tracy Wehrhan	Mission:	Stephanie Hill
Staff/Parish:	Cindy Henning	Worship:	
Christian Ed:	Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism:	Patty Gescheidler
Treasurer:	Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk:	Stephanie Hill

The meeting was called to order at 7:06pm by the Moderator in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a prayer. Tracy Wehrhan moved that the December Cabinet meeting minutes be approved. Vicki Blaufuss seconded. The motion passed.

### **Board and Committee Summaries:**

**Treasurer's Report:** Offerings for February were \$11,040 and expenses were \$14,241.13. Year-to-date offerings are behind expenses by about \$4,000. Checking balance is about \$2,000.00 and \$29,000 in the interest accounts. Tracy Wehrhan moved and Cindy Henning seconded a motion that the report be put to audit. The motion passed. **Finance:** Tracy discussed bond issues. Work on the scholarships will be in May. **Christian Education:** There are 10 KLAB kids studying the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son – so attendance is good. There will be no KLAB during spring break. **Evangelism:** Plans for a potluck as a Homecoming Celebration are in the works. This will be the first meal we have shared as a congregation in 2 years. **Worship:** We will continue using the disposable cups for communion until April, then move to a modified intinction. There will be no pew communion except perhaps on special occasions. We will move away from the common wine/juice cups. Coffee after service begins again. Maundy Thursday will happen this year. When Melissa Hindt is unable to play for our service, we can contact Josi Greenley. It was decided to keep the service start time at 10am year-round. Saturday services are still being discussed. Whether we can use the lot is also something to discuss with the new owner. With the renewal of Fellowship after service comes the Agape Fund collection. **Mission:** Meets on Thursday. Beacon of Hope meal will be served on March 9 by the confirmands. The students will cook the meal and serve. However, if they cannot serve because of COVID 19, they will postpone the meal until April. For Our Church's Wider Mission: The 4 special collections of the church were agreed to as follows: One Great Hour of Sharing on March 27 – Karin Yungclas; Strengthen the Church on June 5 – Gayle Olson; Neighbors in Need on October 2 - Stephanie Hill; Christmas Fund on Christmas Eve – Andrea Mosbach. Each person will get information into the bulletin and the newsletter. T-shirt totes: there are bags of shirts to get to ACE. We also need to find out what their need is. We may not do this again until summer or fall. It may be possible to use t-shirts for the backpack program. Food Pantry: The Food Pantry in Des Moines sent Gayle Olson an invitation for a 1-hour tour of the site. Those wishing to volunteer at the food pantry here could go down on April 27 at 5:00. Afghan refugees: Donna Ryherd brought to our attention that the Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids needs supplies and support to assist Afghan refugees. Discussion followed without conclusion. Teacher Appreciation Day: We will partner with Asbury. Gayle and Sherry will work on this for spring break. **Staff Parish:** The members selected officers-Cindy Henning will be chair; Mary Van Diest will be secretary; Holly Riemenschneider will be cabinet rep. and resolved to meet every other month. Each member will meet one on one with a staff person. They will talk about the choir director situation when all members can be present. **Trustees:** Randy Chalfant completed replacing all copper pipes with Pex. There are still a few issues like the water fountain and a drain in the basement that need work. Shawn Moran is working on the old Orff room. And a few bathroom repairs are needed. **Women's Fellowship:** A Thrift Sale is planned for this spring on April 23. Sign-up sheets will be out. Since we no longer have the garage available for furniture, photos should be taken of these large items and given to Cindy for the bulletin board. And since we can now use the kitchen, the circles are reminded to do their portion of the clean-up. A dessert buffet is planned for May 25 for all church women. All proceeds from Women's Fellowship will be distributed then. Cindy Henning will be treasurer and Joyce Gelhaus will continue as chair until May. **Pastor's Cabinet Report:** The confirmands may not be ready to be confirmed by Easter. Pastor Craig will speak to the parents about this. The Ministerial Association is doing better now since vacancies in several

churches are now filled with new pastors. Ecumenical Human Needs is co-coordinated by Sharon Perry and Robin Streigle. They are considering an increase in the amount given to families in need. Nursing Home services are starting again beginning on March 30. There are only 6 pastors in the rotation now. The Stephen Ministry met in February and will meet in April to continue learning to implement their training to assist folks. Shalom Circle will begin again this spring. Pastor Craig will send out an email to gauge interest. Rev. Brigit Stevens resigned as executive Conference Minister of the UCC Tri-Conference. A replacement is being sought. Read the entire Board and Committee Reports below.

#### **New Business:**

- A. Constitution Committee: Al Yungclas, Dale Olson, Patty Gescheidler, Luverne Bierle and Carol Crystal have volunteered. They will send a request to all boards and committees to review their part of the constitution. They anticipate completing this about the same time as the budget is done.
- B. Getting church members to come back: For the moment, we will see how things go.
- C. Opening the church for outside entities. Tracy Wehrhan made a motion that allows outside entities to use our church again. Wil seconded that motion. The motion passed.

#### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**WORSHIP BOARD** Worship Board met via a conference call. The topic at hand was to talk about Covid protocols and possibly update them. Due to the current surge in the virus and Craig testing positive for it the conversation focused on what to do with in person services. The decision was made to go to our virtual email service for Jan.9 and 16. Worship Board will conference call again on Monday Jan. 17 at 3:00 to look at the current situation and make a decision as to how to best move forward. Stay safe and Happy New Year! Respectfully submitted Gayle Olson.

JANUARY 17, 2022 Worship Board met via phone conference call again on Jan.17. Don opened the meeting with the main agenda item being returning to in person worship. Craig reported we are the only church in WC that has been remote. Gayle suggested we go back to in person services with masks being required and social distancing recommended starting Sunday January 23, 2022. After some discussion it was decided that this is the recommendation we would make. Don will contact Moderator Nick letting him know our recommendation. Craig shared that he and Curt and Dylan McCoskey have taken down and stored all Christmas decorations. A HUGE thank you to the 3 of them for taking care of this! Gayle will talk with Michele about the video and music bill that worship pays and find out if we need to include that in our budget in the fall. Next meeting will be held when it is felt Covid protocols need to be looked at again. It is assumed that this will be after the annual meeting and at that time board responsibilities will be divided among the members. Respectfully submitted Gayle Olson.

FEBRUARY 10, 2022 at 3:30 pm by conference call. New officers are CoChairs: Don and Gretchen; Secretary: Marjorie; Cabinet Representative: Curt; Communion: Jane if she is willing. We will meet in early March to discuss protocols. Our church now is the only church in Webster City requiring masks. Ash Wednesday is March 2, with a gathering in the sanctuary at 7 p.m. Pastor Craig will prepare everything. We will use the individual enclosed cups for communion. Communion also will be served on Sunday, March 6. We will wait until all of us are available before setting a regular meeting date. The Worship Board will meet by phone on Thursday, March 3, 3:30 p.m., to discuss protocols.

**Women's Fellowship Board** Pastor's Report - Holly Riemenschneider continues to heal and recover at home, Sunshine Duffy has resigned her choir director position, Midge Tudor is in Ames hospital suffering from a fall on Monday. Card report - Shirley has sent cards to Riemenschneider's, Cindy Henning, and Kay Harfst. Business Women's Lenten luncheon - will be 1 gathering on Tues. April 5 at 12:00 at Church of Christ. Reservations can be made by signing up at the church. Please do this by April 1. Thrift Sale - there will be a Spring sale!! It will be a 1 day sale on Saturday April 23 from 8a.m. - 2 p.m. Charge will continue to be \$5.00/bag. Items may be brought to the church starting on Wed. April 20. Furniture will be handled differently as we no longer have use of the garage. If you have furniture you will need to take a photo of it and Cindy will post it on a board along with your contact info at the sale. Cindy will get sign-up sheets to inclement chairs. Circle members please be thinking of organizations that we could gift funds to this Spring. Kitchen Cleaning - since we are opening up the church circles are being asked to check the program book and clean their part of the kitchen by the end of March. May meeting - our 'celebration' gathering will be a dessert buffet on May 25 at 7p.m. Each circle is asked to provide 3 desserts for this. We will gift our funds to chosen organizations and ask them to share briefly about their program. Circle chairs be sure and get your report to Cindy. 2022-2024 officers Verna has agreed to continue as treasurer. Cindy - continue as secretary????? Chair/co-chairs are needed - please consider serving in this role! Next meeting - Wednesday April 6 10:00 a.m. Gayle Olson - 'pretend' secretary

**Mission Board** This being the first meeting of the new year duties were dispersed. Sherry Leksell continues as the chair. Gayle Olson agreed to be the cabinet representative and Stephanie Hill will be recording secretary. Beacon of Hope meal: will be served in March by the confirmands on March 9<sup>th</sup>. The students will cook the meal and serve. However, if they cannot serve because of COVID 19, they will postpone the meal until April.

Our Church's Wider Mission: The 4 special collections of the church were agreed to as follows:

One Great Hour of Sharing on March 27<sup>th</sup> – Karin Yungclas; Strengthen the Church on June 5<sup>th</sup> – Gayle Olson; Neighbors in Need on October 2<sup>nd</sup> - Stephanie Hill; Christmas Fund on Christmas Eve – Andrea Mosbach

T-shirt totes: there are bags of shirts to get to ACE. We also need to find out what their need is. We may not do this again until summer or fall. It may be possible to use t-shirts for the backpack program.

Food Pantry: The Food Pantry in Des Moines sent Gayle an invitation for a 1-hour tour of the site. There are 3 dates – February 25, April 27 and June. Those wishing to volunteer at the food pantry here could go down. We decided on April 27 at 5:00. Afghan refugees: Donna Ryherd brought to our attention that the Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids needs supplies and support to assist Afghan refugees.

Discussion followed without conclusion. Teacher Appreciation Day: We will partner with Asbury. Gayle and Sherry will work on this for spring break. Respectfully submitted: Stephanie Hill

**Pastor's Cabinet Report** Worship: We were amazed by the attendance at our Christmas Eve candlelight service! But after missing last years' service entirely due to covid, I am not surprised. On December 26 Don Bruner led a service in my absence with a video sermon being offered...and then covid struck our family, and Vicki and I were in isolation from January 1 until January 11. Church was cancelled on short notice on January 2, and then the Worship Board met by conference call and suspended worship services on January 9 and 16. We resumed gathering on January 23, and we hope to continue meeting weekly! We used prerecorded music on January 30 due to Melissa's absence. Lent is just around the corner—Ash Wednesday is March 2! Annual Meeting: We managed to have our Annual meeting in person this year following the worship service on January 23. We did not have a quorum, but we proceeded without one after a motion was made and approved to suspend the requirement for one. The nominees for our board and committee positions were elected, and Joyce Gelhaus is our new incoming Moderator. Thanks to outgoing Moderator Nick Oberender for leading us through another challenging year! We now need to get our new boards and committees organized and meeting in 2022. Christian Education: KLAB held 2 December classes and then went into recess until January 26 due to Christmas break, then due to our covid infections and THEN due to absences among the kids! KLAB is currently studying "love" and is learning about the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. There will be a Valentine's Day party on February 16. Confirmation classes continue after a long break from December 15 - January 19. We have finished studying the Prophets. Confirmation class will also spearhead, cook and serve a Beacon of Hope meal in February—we hope! Adult Ed resumed on January 23, and we have discussed the "hallowing" of God's name and now we are discussing "The Voice of God." WCMA: Due to covid we met via zoom on January 19. A subcommittee of Ann McLaughlin, Joe Pierson, and Sharon Perry still plan to meet to discuss whether we need to increase the cap on our yearly benevolence to EHN applicants; currently it is \$400/yearly maximum per applicant and family. We were recently awarded a \$9,000 grant from the Morrison Trust, which has given us a sizable amount of money to work with! In 2021 EHN disbursed \$9,719.28 in assistance to 34 applicants and their families. Our current balances are: Churches and individual donations, \$8,920.51; Morrison Trust, \$17,085.68; for a grand total of \$26,006.19. Robin Streigle will now be trained to be an intake coordinator for the EHN, to work with Sharon Perry. With 2 coordinators we have redundancy in case one of the coordinators is unavailable. We are also going to appoint a backup treasurer for July McLaughlin, our current EHN treasurer. Kelli Glasgow was voted on to be the newly called pastor of Trinity ELCA on January 30 --he was elected! Care centers are discouraging visits due to covid. We will meet at Asbury on February 23. UCC Tri-Conference: Rev. Brigit Stevens surprised us all with the announcement of her resignation as our executive Conference Minister! She will remain in her position until July 31. The Tri-Conference is assembling a search committee to select the next executive to replace her. We want to thank Brigit for her service to the Tri-Conference and the Iowa Conference! Stephen Ministry: After postponing our meeting in January we are rescheduling for Thursday, February 24. We will enjoy a soup supper and



discuss Stephen Ministry plans. Water Leaks: Randy Chalfant is now in the building replacing all of our copper water lines with PEX. Vacant Lot update: The garage has been emptied of its contents and the keys have been passed to the new owners. No more garage for our storage! The breakdown of my ministry since December 9: Worship services led:7; Christian Ed:7; Meetings:6; Visitation :12 Vacation Dec 25-Jan 1.

**Pastor's Cabinet Report Worship:** Ash Wednesday was observed on March 2 in our sanctuary—the first service in quite a while where masking was optional! We will continue to observe sensible precautions even as covid retreats—if you are ill, please stay at home! We shared the sacrament of Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday and then March 6<sup>th</sup>, which was the first Sunday of Lent. Following the March 6<sup>th</sup> service we enjoyed our first post-worship coffee and fellowship since the end of October! Melissa Hindt has given me a list of dates she will be unavailable to play for us during worship; the Worship Board is working on filling those vacancies. We will hold Maundy Thursday Worship in the sanctuary at 7 p.m. I have resumed a monthly Gospel Hour at Southfield on Tuesday mornings. We have recruited 2 new projectionists for worship: Dylan McCoskey and Jane Klaver.

**Christian Education:** KLAB enjoyed a Valentine's Day party on February 16<sup>th</sup> with the Confirmands participating as well. The attendance at KLAB is now up to 9 students-- thanks to some evangelizing by KLAB kids. We continue to appreciate all the donated treats for snack time. The KLAB students have been studying some parables and miracles of Jesus, and they are now studying Lent. The Confirmation class will spearhead, cook and serve a Beacon of Hope meal on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The menu selected was walking tacos. They have been studying the life and teachings of Jesus. Adult Ed continues to meet Sunday mornings at 9 a.m., and we just finished a discussion of the sacraments of the church.

**WCMA:** Our last meeting was in-person at Asbury UMC with 9 attendees—a record! The group voted to increase our Ecumenical Human Needs assistance from \$400 yearly to up to \$700 yearly, noting that rent in the area is now higher than ever. Joe Pierson is now the back up treasurer for July McLaughlin, our current EHN treasurer. We also voted to resume care center Sunday services at Southfield and Windsor Manor. Crestview currently does not want to return to holding them yet. I am putting that schedule together—we have 6 pastors willing to resume those services. We will meet next at Good Shepherd on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**UCC Tri-Conference:** Rev. Kendy Miller will hold a zoom meeting with me Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup>, for a check-in and to discuss our church and Conference matters. She indicated she will be wanting to hold a Zoom meeting with our church leadership in the future as well.

**Stephen Ministry:** 8 Stephen Ministers met Thursday, February 24 for a soup supper and check-ins regarding what has been happening in our lives. We plan to meet again in a month to discuss how we can use our Stephen Ministry training in new ways.

**Shalom Circle** will finally re-convene on Friday, March 11, at 7 pm in the East Chapel.

**The breakdown of my ministry since February 1:**

**Worship services led:7; Christian Ed:10; Meetings:5; Visitation :7**

**Vacation Dec 25-Jan 1**

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:

