

aboutfirst news

April, 2019 First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Love First. Let's Gather, Grow, Go Together



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issue 222, April, 2019

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Announcements and editorial content for publication may be submitted to the First UMC media office by the 20th of each preceding month. Email to: chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

The Resurrection...it's for the whole family!

I used to have in my imagination that a pastor and their family have it all together. I used to think that their households had no blemishes on the white picket fence...family dinner was prepared at 5pm every night... and there were never any disagreements or disappointments. But then something happened. I became a pastor. I realized that behind the scenes, a pastor's life and family looks just like everyone else's. I will give you some examples of some conversations from our home the past few months with my 5 year old daughter Addisyn, and my wife Liz.

Addi: "Dad there's a monster in my room, can I sleep in here?"

Matt: *3 am and half-awake* "Look, it's you he's after, why make him my problem too?"

...

*cell phone alarm goes off at 10:30pm

Matt: What is that?

Liz: My alarm.

Matt: You do realize you set an alarm to go to sleep?

Liz: Yes, I realize it's an oxymoron

Matt:.....What did you call me?

Liz:.....*rolls eyes *shakes head*

...

Matt: Guess what I'm making for dinner. Your favorite...steak!

Addi: And cookies?

Matt: You always take my steak. It's your favorite.

Addi: I also like to take your cookies.

Matt: Withdrawn your honor.

...

*Climbing over ice boulders in the truck

Addisyn: "Ahhhh! Jesus is getting dizzy in my heart!"

Our family has a good time with one another. Love is shared, but so are disagreements. I imagine it is not much different in your house. No family is perfect, including ours. But one thing we all agree on is this....Jesus is Lord of our household. It is his love that binds us together and covers our shortcomings. We have committed to Joshua 24:15 where it states, "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

We have made this commitment to God and to one another because the resurrection of Jesus has changed us individually and collectively as a family. I want to invite your entire household to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with us this Easter on April 21st at 8:30am or 11:00am. The resurrection has the power to change your family because it demonstrates to us that no matter what happens, in the end, love wins. When Jesus is the center of your family, his love can conquer all family imperfections. From our family to yours, Happy Easter!

Be Bold, Be Strong,

Pastor Matt, Elizabeth, and Addisyn



Maundy Thursday Living Last Supper

Thursday, April 18, 7:00pm, in the sanctuary

This time of drama and worship has become a First UMC tradition. The men of our church will re-enact the scene in the upper room, where Jesus serves the Passover meal to his disciples, and predicts his betrayal and arrest to come.

This year, in keeping with our Lenten look at Simon Peter, the drama will feature a look at a possible confrontation between Peter and Judas. Holy Communion will be served, and as always, all are welcome and invited.

Procession of the Cross

Good Friday, April 19, noon

Again this year, we will be meeting at Overman Park at noon to begin our procession. We will start with worship and then process through downtown to our church. Along the route we will pause several times for prayer and scripture to remember what Jesus did for us on Golgotha. The event is sponsored by the Cedar Falls Ministerial Association. We invite you to join us.

Good Friday Worship

Good Friday, April 19, 7:00pm

Good Friday is the darkest day on the Christian calendar - the day Jesus was crucified. It was a culmination of horrible events that involved treachery, violence and a misunderstanding of who they were killing. On this night we look deeply into ourselves and ask "was I there?". We ask if the way we live our lives today honors our commitment to Christ, or serves to separate us further from his spirit.

Easter Sunday Celebrations!

Easter Sunday, April 21

Easter Celebrations at 8:30 and 11:00 - all our services will be joyful celebrations of Christ's Resurrection! Brass and Bells will lead us in the Traditional Services at 8:30 and 11:00. The Praise Band will lead us in the Contemporary Service at 8:30. Music will fill the services as we proclaim Christ has risen!

Easter Morning Fun

Make some noise! We invite kids of all ages to the bell tower to pull the rope and ring the big bell after the 8:30 & 11:00 worship celebrations.

Egg Hunt. There will be no kids' Sunday School Easter morning. Instead, children are invited to meet in Fellowship Hall for an Easter Egg hunt. Eggs will be hidden all around the church.



Your Last Sermon

Last fall, we asked some of the best preachers in the Iowa Conference what they would say if they knew they were preaching their last sermon. It was a thought-provoking question that caused them to distill their years of ministry into a fifteen minute presentation. And, then we invited those pastors to come to Cedar Falls and preach that sermon. It was a powerful series.

This spring, the Last Sermon series continues in our Wednesday night worship talk show, Fusion Tonight. We've invited **Pastors Phil Rogers, Alex Bruening, Susan Higdon and Keith Pitts** to give us their most important 15 minutes. We expect it to be powerful again.

You are welcome to join us for the live show on Wednesday nights, 7:15, upstairs in the theater. Fusion Tonight is fun and it is serious and we guarantee you'll go home encouraged to be Christ for one another.

4 Home Page



Why Sign In?

In every Sunday worship experience, you are invited to sign-in on the attendance pad. Have you ever wondered why we do this? It is more important than you may realize.

First, it lets us know that you were here. We DO track this in the church office. If you don't sign-in, you were not here.

In our weekly church staff meetings, we review reports of new visitors who have signed-in. We look to see who else may have been sitting near them and greeted them. This information helps us to refine our hospitality and outreach efforts.

When visitors in our worship services see our members signing-in, they are more likely to do so, as well, and that provides our pastors with information to follow up with them later in the week.

If you see a visitor sitting nearby (or perhaps a longtime member whose name you don't remember) the sign-in pad gives you a place to look so that you may greet that person by name.

Finally, we also look at reports of regular attenders who are uncharacteristically absent. Many times we know why this is, but sometimes an absence is unexplained, and may trigger a call from a pastor or parish visitor.

We are a family of faith. Knowing our people is the core of our operation as a church community. By signing-in every Sunday, you help us to have good information to work with, so thanks for doing so!

3 Minutes + Ten Feet = Your Outreach Field

3 • 10 • Connect

"Welcoming". Every church says it is. Every church thinks it is. But, what does that look like on a Sunday morning? To many of us longtime members of First UMC, "welcoming" means greeting people on our way to worship, and it means having a cup of coffee with our friends at fellowship time. It's comfortable, it's relaxed and it's familiar. I feel welcome here; therefore, everyone else probably does too, right?

But let's think for a minute about a first-time attender. Maybe they're new in town and shopping for a church. They've already checked us out online and are now doing so in-person. Or, maybe they're someone from the neighborhood who is just curious about

what happens inside that white stone building. However they have come to visit us, we want to welcome them in a way that is appropriate and comfortable. We want them to go home with the understanding that we would love to see them again next week.

**LOVE FIRST
GATHER, GROW, GO
TOGETHER**

Generally, visitors want to gather as much information as they can without calling too much attention to themselves. They probably don't come early, they probably don't stick around long after the service, but they're alert to what is going on around them - looking to see that there's a place for them to fit. We can all help them with that.

3 • 10 • Connect is a welcoming concept that involves all of us in a way that maximizes our natural friendliness and minimizes our vulnerability when talking to people we don't know. It's simple: in the **first three minutes** that a worship service has ended, look around you in a **ten-foot radius** and see if there's someone you don't know. If so, stick out your hand and say "hi". Ask them if they have any questions about our church, and if so, volunteer to introduce them to a pastor, a staff person, or someone you know to have the answer. Then, be sure to say that you, personally, are glad that they are here, and that you hope to see them again. It's that easy. **3 • 10 • Connect.** Start this Sunday.



We hope we don't see this again for a while! The first order of business for the First UMC Sportsmen's annual Spring Fever Road Trip was to free the church bus from the six inches of ice it was frozen into. 45 minutes later we were on the road for our hunting/fishing/camping shopping trip & BBQ feast. Fellas - watch for it next year!

Securing Your Legacy & Ensuring Our Future

Did you know that giving to the Church's Endowment Committee is easy and you can give in a variety of ways.

While you are living –

Cash - The easiest way is to give an outright gift of cash while you are living. Just write a check to the church and specify it is to go to the Endowment Committee.

Publicly traded securities – Transfers of stock, mutual funds or bonds may be made directly from your brokerage account to the Church's brokerage account. You may benefit from special income tax benefits by gifting publicly traded securities that have appreciated in value. To inquire about transferring securities, please contact our Finance Manager.

Retirement plan distributions – If you are over the age of 70 1/2, you may realize a significant income tax advantage by using your retirement plan distributions to make a gift to the Endowment Committee.

Deferred giving –

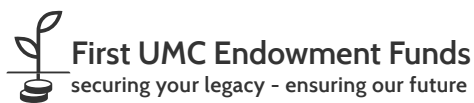
Beneficiary designations – You can make a deferred gift to the Church by designating the Church as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement plan. There are several ways to give through life insurance and retirement plans, some of which may have benefits to the donors.

Bequest in your will – These are gifts which are granted through your will or trust at the time of your death. The gift can be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your estate.

A gift to the Church without restrictions is the most useful gift we can receive, because this allows the Endowment Committee flexibility in applying the gift to our most pressing needs. You also have the right to specify how the funds will be used. If you wish to do this, we urge you to consult with us before you execute the gift or your will, to make certain the conditions are ones we are able to meet.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact a member of the Endowment Committee.

As always, we urge you to consult your professional advisors.



A child is transported inside an empty refrigerator during floods after Cyclone Idai, in Buzi, outside Beira, Mozambique. Photo by Siphwe Sibeko, REUTERS

Cyclone Idai: UMCOR Responds

Perhaps you have heard in the news of the massive cyclone (hurricane) which slammed into Africa on March 14.

Our UMC relief agency is already in action, working with partners to provide humanitarian assistance.

UMCOR has allocated three \$10,000 grants for immediate, emergency short-term funding to meet basic human needs in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Those needs include water transportation and storage for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene, along with temporary shelter.

Cyclone Idai made landfall near the city of Beira, and over the next week left a path of destruction in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

“People in the affected areas have no potable water, so we need water purifiers, we need mosquito nets, we need medicine, we need school supplies, we need everything – including funds that will enable us purchase those items that we cannot bring from our own home,” the Rev. Jacob Jenhuro said.

You may contribute to UMCOR through First UMC in Cedar Falls.



Flood buckets ready to ship out of UMCOR's Sager Brown depot in Baldwin, Louisiana.

Small Town - Big Reach

Baldwin, Louisiana is a small town in southern Louisiana with big connections to people in crisis. It's the home of the Sager Brown UMCOR depot.

Over the spring break week, some members of Cedar Falls First UMC who were traveling in the area stopped in for a visit.

In addition to extensive local ministries, the Baldwin depot hosts thousands of volunteers who receive, verify, and ship millions of dollars of relief supplies to people hard-hit by disasters in North America.

While we were there, volunteer crews from Michigan and Minnesota worked on school kits and hygiene kits.

Also, as the Upper Midwest, Great Plains, and Mississippi Valley were all dealing with massive flooding from heavy rains and snowmelt, UMCOR had tens of thousands of cleanup kits (flood buckets) staged for shipping.

The United Methodist Church puts its love in action by being present wherever people are in need.



Update from our Finance Team

On behalf of the Finance Committee I would like to first thank everyone for your continued generosity plus take this time to review 2018 and take a look at 2019.

As you might remember 2018 presented us with some significant challenges. We started off with a budget of \$874,374 and pledges totaling only \$629,545. Those serving on the Finance Committee and other leaders from the church initiated several plans; one was the "From the Heart Campaign". You were asked to reevaluate your giving and the response was outstanding, pledges increased another \$60,000 raising the total to \$693,000. At the same time the campaign was going on we were the benefactors of two very generous gifts. These gifts plus your generosity put us in a very good financial situation. We finished the year paying all bills and 100% of our apportionments and closed the year with a \$36,261 surplus.

We also made significant progress in paying off the mortgage. We started 2018 with a balance of \$453,935. Building fund proceeds were \$156,860 allowing us to achieve a significant milestone by getting the mortgage balance under \$300,000. We finished the year with a balance of \$297,075.

Between the monies contributed to the general budget \$872,362 and those for the mortgage \$156,860 total contributions broke the Million Dollar mark \$1,025,222. The success of 2018 is a testament to the efforts of the staff, committee heads and all members of FUMC.

Let's take a quick look at 2019

Our current budget is \$ 843,154 a reduction of \$31,220. Pledges and gifts totaled \$650,068 a \$42,932 reduction from 2018. This year will once again take some extra effort by everyone but we feel confident that with the plans and ideas laid out that we will once again have another successful year.

The current building fund campaign winds up at the end of this year. We would love to be able to make significant progress on further reducing the balance or even paying it off in full by 12/31/2019. Wouldn't it be great if we could celebrate and burn the mortgage this year? January and February have been two very difficult months. The weather has really disrupted attendance and the effects show up in the finances. We have used much of the surplus from 2018 but are confident that the upcoming months will be kind to us.

You can help take the guesswork out of our financial planning by signing up for automatic giving. It is a simple process that makes an automatic payment from your checking account to the church every month. We'll help you get it set up - it's easy! - just contact the church financial office.

Also remember that we now are able to use the Venmo and Shazam Boltz mobile apps for giving. Download the app onto your Android or Apple device, and send payments to contributions@aboutfirst.com.

Your church finance team aims for responsible, prayerful, and transparent stewardship of your contributions. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

Jim Noelting
Chair, Finance Committee

Worship:

Prayer Team

Everyone is invited to join the prayer team any Sunday morning as we lift up worship in the chapel at 8:00 a.m. Contact one of the prayer team members if you have any questions: Jim Larson, Genny Van Dorn, Debbie Dance and Jan Hoover.

Sunday Morning Hospitality

How many people does it take to make a Sunday morning happen at First UMC? A lot! We have greeters, Welcome Center hosts, refreshment servers, ushers, chair-setter-uppers, communion stewards, bus drivers, musicians, Sunday School teachers, camera, sound and tech operators and more. Everything happens because someone makes it happen. How can you help? Contact Jenna Engel to fill one of these slots!

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2019 is at the Welcome Center. Sign up now to recognize a special date or to honor a loved one with flowers for the altar. Have the flowers delivered to the church on Friday, please.

Outreach & Missions:

Community Meal

This is a great ministry of feeding and fellowship and you can be a part of it. Once a month - the fourth Tuesday - we plan, prepare, and serve the meal. Meals are served from 4:30-6:00, and the prep work begins early afternoon. If you would like to help with meal preparation or serving, contact Stephanie Buchs. We can use donations of desserts, too. We welcome new faces. There are opportunities for everyone.

Remember, while our team only serves on the fourth Tuesday, other churches are here cooking and serving every other Tuesday of the month. You're always welcome to come and eat - the community meal is completely free and open to everyone.

Food Bank Work Night

A crew from our church helps at the Food Bank the first Tuesday of each month. Expect to be there from 6:00 to no later than 8:00pm. They love to see the Methodists come to work. Would you like to be on the reminder email or do you want to know more? Contact Lisa in the church office. lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Ongoing Wish Lists

For those who like to shop, we have an opportunity for you! There are several in-church groups that can always use supplies to support their ministries. For your convenience, we have compiled the wish lists for Wee Care, UMCOR School Kits, FirstKids Daycare & Preschool, and Sunday School all on one sheet. And, we have also compiled a list of items that you may have at home that could be repurposed for another use by Lincoln School, our Cardmakers, and River Hills School.

Pick up the Wish Lists sheet on the literature rack outside the church office, or at the donation collection site in the little hallway near the drinking fountain on the main level of the church.

Some people might think of these ministry opportunities as the “little things”, but little isn't the right word.

These are the needs of the church that are on-going in our weekly and monthly cycles of ministry.

These are the support roles that need to be filled and the easy contributions that we all can make to enhance the worship experience for others and to ensure that our ministries are well-equipped and well-staffed.

How can you help?

8 Events

April 2 - Food Bank Work Crew

A crew from our church helps at the Food Bank the first Tuesday of each month. Expect to be there from 6:00 to no later than 8:00pm. Would you like to be included in the reminder email or would you like to carpool to get there? Contact Lisa in the church office. lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

April 2 - Grief Support Session

When: 2:00-3:30pm

Where: church parlor

If you have suffered a loss lately, you know the pain, loneliness, and stress this can bring. Sometimes it helps to meet with others during this difficult time. The First UMC Grief Support Team offers a monthly support session. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 2nd from 2:00 to 3:30 in the church parlor. New participants are always welcome. Please call the church office at 266-1713 with questions.

April 18 - First Friends Potluck

Where: Gathering Place

When: noon - 2:00pm

Everyone is welcome! Spend some time enjoying good food, card games, dominos, cribbage, etc. Fellowship is an important part of the gathering. Check us out! Come and get better acquainted with others in the church. Couples and singles are welcome. Bring a dish to share and your own table service. We meet on the third Thursday of every month from noon until 2 pm in the Gathering Place.

April 22 - LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30-6:00

Donors, cookie bakers, and hosts are needed. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill. Sign up to donate at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org. Use the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center to let Lisa know if you can donate cookies or chat and serve cookies to the donors for an hour or so.

Also, LifeServe is looking for a volunteer to make calls to remind people to donate blood at the monthly drives hosted by our church. A call list of donors would be provided. Contact Lisa in the church office if you are interested in doing this.

April 23 - Crafter's Corner

Where: Parlor

When: 6:00-8:00

Attention crafters! This is a laid back and hands-on group for all skill levels. Bring your own craft project to work on or volunteer your time and talent to make sleep mats for the homeless, handmade essentials for those in need, or prayer shawls. Thank you to all who have donated craft items - we are well stocked and need to use up what we have. But, donations of good full size scissors or craft store gift cards to buy good scissors would be appreciated. Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

M T **W** T F

Your CrazyFunBusy Church Night!

- 5:15 - 6:00 **The Filling Station**
- a meal for everyone. Eat & go on to
- 6:00 - 7:10 **Jr / Sr High Youth**
- fun & connections for 7th - 12th graders
- 6:00 - 7:15 **BLAST! (for kids)**
- Bible Learning And Service Together
- 6:00 - 7:15 **More Than Moms**
- helps for the real life of womanhood
- 6:00-7:00 **Men's Study - 33**
- developing as authentic Christian men
- 6:15 - 7:30 **Tower Bells**
- weekly bell choir rehearsal. Want to play?
- 7:15 - 8:00 **FUSION Tonight**
- live talk show / worship
- 7:30 - 8:30 **Chancel Choir**
- for adults who love to sing

CrazyFunBusy Wednesday Nights end April 24.

We've had a fun spring season with all of our Wednesday night activities.

BLAST will wrap up April 24th. We will end the year by making May Baskets for a few of our members. The kids always want to bring a smile to someone. A HUGE thank you to everyone who helped with BLAST on Wednesday nights. Having you with us every Wednesday night made the nights a great experience.

Filling Station will wrap up on April 24th. Thank you to everyone who helped cook, serve, provide desserts and donate food. We would not be able to have this if it were not for all of your help!

Enjoy the summer off, and watch the church calendar and announcements for our fall kick-off dates and we'll get CrazyFunBusy all over again next September.

Coming in May:

Mark your calendars: Fun and Fellowship is hosting a special night in celebration of Mother's Day. There will be a light supper, crafts and a screening of a family friendly movie. Watch for the date and time in the May calendar.

Zumba Every Thursday!

You can always Zumba with us on Thursdays at 5:30 pm in our Fellowship Hall! A free-will contribution of a couple of bucks is appreciated. Contact mary.friedrich@cfu.net if you have questions. Come and dance...it's never too late to join us on this fun fitness adventure!

Recurring Weekly:

Sunday

8:00 prayer in the chapel
 8:30 Transformation Worship
 8:30 Traditional Service, sanctuary
 9:30 Fellowship time, Gathering Place
 9:45 Sunday School for all ages
 11:00 Traditional Service, sanctuary
 6:30 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary
 7:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday

9:30 Quilters/Stitchers, O59
 4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
 6:30-8:00 Tuesday Night Fellas
 7:00-9:00 AA, O55

Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor
 5:15 AA, O55
 5:15 - 6:00 The Filling Station*
 6:00-7:00 Simon Peter Study
 6:00 - 7:10 Jr / Sr High Youth*
 6:00 - 7:15 BLAST! (for kids) *
 6:00 - 7:15 More Than Moms*
 6:00-7:00 Men's Study group*
 6:15 - 7:30 Tower Bells
 6:30 WOW AA, O55
 7:15 - 8:00 FUSION Tonight *
 7:30 - 8:30 Chancel Choir

* ends April 24

Thursday

5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall

Also Scheduled....

TUESDAY April 2

2:00-3:30 Grief support, parlor
 6:30 Nominations, library

WEDNESDAY April 3

10:00-11:30 May Breakfast planning
 7:15 FUSION - Alex Bruening

THURSDAY April 4

1:30-3:00 Renovare Group, chapel
 6:15-8:00 Cadette Girl Scouts, parlor
 6:30 Trustees, library

FRIDAY April 5

youth game night

SATURDAY April 6

8:00-1:00 Stephen Ministry workshop

SUNDAY April 7

5th Sunday in Lent
 Communion at all services
 Chris Werling at Frederika UMC
 Padma Templeton at New Hope Parish
 Mark Fransdal at Parkersburg UMC
 4:00 Cub Scouts, chapel
 6:00-7:30 Confirmation, third floor
 6:00-7:00 Disciple's Path, parlor

MONDAY April 8

9:30-11:00 UMW Board meeting, library
 6:00 HOME Team, chapel
 6:30 Farmer's Market meeting, G Place

TUESDAY April 9

6:30 Finance Committee, library

WEDNESDAY April 10

2:00 communion service at Stanard Care
 7:15 FUSION #12- Susan Higdon

THURSDAY April 11

1:00 UMW Unit meeting, Fellow Hall

FRIDAY April 12

9:30-11:30 MOMs group, library/nursery

SUNDAY April 14

6th Sunday in Lent - Palm Sunday
 Roberta Robbins at New Hope Parish
 6:00-7:00 Disciple's Path, parlor
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scout Troop1874, chapel

MONDAY April 15

10:00 Deborah Circle, parlor

TUESDAY April 16

6:30 Ad Council, library

WEDNESDAY April 17

Deadline to order Easter lilies
 11:00 service at Pinnacle Care
 7:15 FUSION Tonight

THURSDAY April 18

Maundy Thursday
 Noon-3:00 First Friends potluck, Gather Plac
 1:30-3:00 Renovare Group, chapel
 5:30 NO Zumba
 7:00 Maundy Thursday Living Last Supper

FRIDAY April 19

Good Friday
 noon Procession of the Cross, Overman Park
 7:00 Good Friday worship

SATURDAY April 20

newsletter deadline

EASTER SUNDAY April 21

Padma Templeton at Frederika UMC
 Roberta Robbins is at New Hope Parish
 8:30 Easter Celebration, sanctuary
 8:30 Easter Celebration, Fellowship Hall
 9:45 Kids' Easter Egg Hunt
 11:00 Easter Celebration, sanctuary
 Easter egg hunt between services
 Lily insert in bulletin

MONDAY April 22

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive. Gathering Place
 6:30 Cub Scout pack meeting, Fell. Hall

TUESDAY April 23

6:30-8:30 Crafter's corner, parlor

WEDNESDAY April 24

Last CrazyFunBusy Wednesday of season
 1:00 Windhaven Communion Service
 7:15 FUSION #14 - Keith Pitts

THURSDAY April 25

9:30 Mary Circle, parlor
 1:30 Joy Circle, parlor
 1:30-3:00 Renovare Group, chapel
 6:15-8:00 Cadette Girl Scouts, parlor

SATURDAY April 27

9:00-noon Troop 44 can drive - north lot

SUNDAY April 28

New Member Sunday
 Girl Scouts have a bake sale
 Gayle Wilcox is at Frederika UMC
 Lisa Congdon is at New Hope Parish
 4:00 Cub Scouts, chapel
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scout Troop1874, chapel

MONDAY April 29

6:30 Worship Committee, library

TUESDAY April 30

Noon Newsletter mailing crew



Experience Passover Seder

Our Christian sacrament of Holy Communion goes back to Jesus' instructions to his disciples at the Last Supper, which itself was a celebration of the Jewish Passover meal.

The Passover Seder meal celebrates the history and the hope of the Israelite people. It was practiced in Jesus' time and continues to be practiced today.

You are invited to learn the Seder story from Rabbi Rebecca Kushner.

The Seder plate holds symbolic foods which tell the story of the Israelites' bondage in ancient Egypt and how the Prophet Moses, guided by Hashem (the Almighty), took the Jewish people from slavery to freedom. Learn the Seder Story, which explains the beautiful holiday of Passover, at Sons of Jacob Synagogue, **411 E Mitchell Ave, Waterloo, IA 50702 on Sunday, April 7, 4 to 6 pm.** This is a free, family-friendly, event.

Rabbi Kushner will explain the Seder plate and Passover while participants sample symbolic foods. There are several enjoyable activities for visiting children: a Passover coloring book designed just for this event, singing, and the opportunity to act in an impromptu play, The Ten Plagues. The play will be cast and directed by Samantha (Sam) Mensinger, a museum educator who has a strong, community theater background. Light refreshments including coconut macaroons, a traditional Passover sweet, will be served.

Your Day with Bishop Laurie

The leader of our Iowa Conference of the UMC is Bishop Laurie Haller. To most of us rank & file Methodists, the Bishop is a distant force who occasionally sends us a new pastor. But Bishop Laurie is much more than that - she's the spiritual leader of the United Methodist Church in Iowa, and you have the opportunity to spend a day with her.

Laity Day with Bishop Laurie, Saturday, April 6, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

- worship with Bishop Laurie
- presentation and discussion: the aftermath of General Conference 2019
- presentation and discussion: looking forward from GC2019
- mission focus: practicing Love with Women at the Well

Please consider joining other lay people from across Iowa for a stimulating Laity Day with Bishop Laurie on Saturday, April 6! It's at Collegiate UMC in Ames with registration and refreshments beginning at 9:00. The bookstore will be open and display tables ready to explore. The program begins at 9:45 in the Sanctuary. Bishop Laurie's sermon, which will be part of Morning Worship, is titled "The Same But Different." She will also participate in a discussion of GC19 and an afternoon Q and A.



The current situation in the United Methodist church will be explored in a morning session, "The UMC: Taking Stock and Looking Forward." Compare the purposes of GC19 with what actually happened, learn what we do and don't know and most importantly, what do future scenarios look like? Hear from delegation chair Phil Carver, members of Iowa's GC delegation, and Bishop Laurie. There will be opportunities to discuss feelings and ideas with other lay people.

The Missional Focus at Laity Day this year is titled "Practicing Love with Women at the Well" led by Rev. Lee Roorda Schott, the pastor of Women at the Well. Rev. Schott will lead us to consider how we "get to" to practice love through this United Methodist congregation inside the women's prison at Mitchellville:

- as we learn about the circumstances and humanity of these women who are incarcerated
- as we discover through them what it looks like to love well, inside the prison and in our own churches
- as we live out this love through relationships, reentry, and our support for this mission congregation

Again this year, there will be short "Information for Leaders" sessions about School for Lay Ministry and the work of the volunteer UM Advocacy Team. The day will close with a Communion Service celebrated by Bishop Laurie. Although there is no fee (just a free will offering), pre-registration will be appreciated to help planning for materials and lunch. Register now using this link or by calling Barb Mann at 515-974-8905.

<https://iaumc-reg.brapp.com/2019LaityDaywithBishopLaurieRegistration>



Make Your Summer Camp Plans Now at iaumc.org/camps

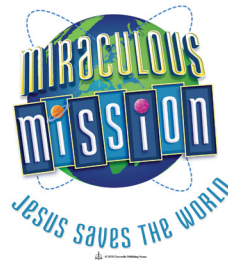
The Iowa UMC has three camps: Pictured Rocks, Okobiji, and Wesley Woods. All three have exciting summer camp options for kids and youth: Boats, horses, go-carts, hiking, fishing, nature, learning, exploring, new friends, and, of course, a bunch of Jesus make summer camp an experience our kids will remember for a lifetime. Camp information is available at iaumc.org/camps.

We want every kid to go to camp, and we can help with scholarship funds for camping fees. If you have contributed to this fund, thank you - it makes it possible for a kid to have the summer of a lifetime. Talk to Jenna Engel for more info regarding camp scholarships.

Miraculous Mission This Summer at First UMC

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 9th -12th

At Miraculous Mission Vacation Bible School, your children will look into the Bible, God's Holy Word, and discover God's miraculous missions to save you, me, and the whole world! The Bible accounts of God's mission for us to share how God made the universe; His promise of a Savior to Abram; the birth of Jesus, our Savior; Jesus' death, resurrection; and ascension!



We are looking for volunteers if you would like to become a part of Vacation Bible School, please contact Jenna Engel.

Pre-registration is suggested. Forms are available at the Welcome Center, or on the church website at aboutfirst.com. Please return completed forms to Jenna Engel. You can drop off in office or mail forms to Jenna Engel, First United Methodist Church, 718 Clay Street Cedar Falls Iowa, 50613. Cost: \$15.00 suggested for one participant or for families \$20.00. Contribution is voluntary, and is not a requirement to attend. Make checks payable to First United Methodist Church and mark "VBS". Please complete one registration form for each child.

Adult Sunday School

Everyone is welcome - you do not need to be a member of First UMC to attend.

CCF (Christ Centered Families)

This class will focus on strengthening our families and developing our young children into strong Christians. Room: 057

Growing Christians

Our studies generally vary during the year from Bible studies, applying Biblical principles and the gifts that God puts into our lives. Room 056, Kris Rash

Open Door

Where friends meet to study God's word and apply it's principles to on-going spiritual development. Meet in the Library. Contact Sue Mutchler or Margery Andrew

Kaleidoscope

This group is for anyone willing to tackle any topic! Room 058 Gil Hewett

Seekers

The Seekers present several small studies/discussions each year (no homework) to help grow our faith in Jesus Christ. Room: 060

Pathfinders

We gather to share our lives and discuss God's presence in the world today. Room 055

April Mission Focus Midwest Mission Distribution Center

Midwest Mission Distribution Center is located in Chatham, Illinois (just south of Springfield). The center's function is to enable immediate and effective responses to disasters, especially in the Upper Midwest. It is a facility to receive, hold, process, and maintain a ready supply of material goods for emergency response and critical ongoing needs.

Several First UMC members will be volunteering at Midwest Mission Distribution Center in May. They don't know what their tasks will be until they get there, but they could pack kits, sort items, or sew school bags, hospital gowns, and quilts. Maybe they will box up goods, help with mailings, build crates and desks, repair bicycles and sewing machines, help unload items, fill shipping containers, organize materials, or do whatever the needs are at any given time. We know there are tasks for all skills and abilities and that whatever they do will be helpful.

MMDC is part of the United Methodist Committee On Relief Supply Network, and often gives UMCOR supplies to respond to disasters both within the United States and abroad as they see fit. It is one of seven centers in the UMCOR Relief Supply Network – and the closest one to Iowa. MMDC makes, collects, and stores many disaster relief supplies such as cleaning buckets, personal dignity kits or health kits, layettes, and school kits or school bags. In addition, they make school desks to ship overseas, and restore and send bicycles and sewing machines to places that rely on them for transportation and income.

This ministry is sustained by volunteers who receive, sort, pack, and ship the goods. The center functions in concert with the needs of UMCOR for goods prepared by volunteers.

Donations are particularly important to a non-profit organization like MMDC. MMDC has no indebtedness, and works off of the monetary donations and supplies that are received. MMDC works hard to find the lowest deals through suppliers and can often get supplies three times cheaper than in a local store. Be assured that your offering will go directly to Midwest Mission – all participants of the mission/work trip are paying their own way. Offering envelopes are available at the display in the Gathering Place.

Be a Blessing to Someone Through Love INC

People in need will often approach a church for assistance. Unfortunately, many churches are not equipped to meet the variety of needs that are presented. Love INC works like this: when someone approaches a member church for assistance, they are referred to Love INC. Love INC then conducts an interview to fully determine the need, and which church is best able to assist. Love In The Name of Christ (Love INC) pools the strengths of area churches and agencies to reach out to those in need – our church is one of 29.

You can be a blessing to someone today by volunteering with Love INC as a Clearinghouse or Community volunteer. If you're interested in serving with Love INC, fill out a volunteer form found at loveincv.org or call 266-1264. They'll get back to you in the next couple of days.



Bibles for Our Sisters in Mitchellville

A very tangible way we can help our sisters behind the razor wire is to provide Bibles for them. We have an opportunity to order new Bibles to be sent to the women's prison directly from Cokesbury. They are given to the ladies in Bible Studies and to keep for their own use. We have sent dozens of Bibles in past years and they are so appreciated. The Common English Bible for is an easy to read Bible. This is the Bible that Lisa in the church office has been using, and it's sturdy and feels nice and is easy to use.

These Bibles normally sell for over \$20, but Cokesbury has made special arrangements for friends of the Women at the Well UMC to order them for only \$10. Use the special "Bibles for our Sisters" envelope at the display at the Welcome Center. You can take a look at the type of Bible that your \$10 will provide, too.



Jan and Lisa look pretty proud of this desk they made in the Midwest Mission woodshop. It will be packed and shipped to a school in need.

A Stephen Minister is . . .



Stephen Ministry is grounded in Jesus' command to love one another. Through one-to-one caring relationships, those who are hurting receive the love and care they need to support them. Everyone goes through difficult times, and having someone to care, to listen, and to share God's love can help us get through the confusion, stress, or loneliness we may be experiencing.

A Stephen Minister is:

- A child of God who walks beside a person who is hurting
- A caring, Christian friend who takes the time to really listen
- A lay person who has received 50 hours of training to provide Christian care

A Stephen Minister is not:

- A counselor or therapist
- A problem-solver
- A casual visitor

Stephen Ministers help those who are:

- Hospitalized
- Terminally ill
- Bereaved
- In a job crisis
- Disabled
- Home bound
- Lonely
- New church members
- In a spiritual crisis
- Looking for a caring, Christian friend

A new training class will begin this fall. If you have an interest in making the commitment, please prayerfully consider this opportunity. More information will be available in the future.

Hospital Reminder

Government regulations prohibit health care facilities (this includes hospitals, assisted living and nursing homes) from sharing information about their patients and residents, so if you want your church family to know you need our love and prayers, please call the church office.

email Prayer Chain

If you would like to be on the church "eprayer" list, please let the church office know by emailing Lisa at lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com. We send out prayer requests by email as they come in, and also include prayer requests noted on the attendance slips. Remember, to ensure privacy, please make sure to get permission from the party that you feel needs prayers.

Golden Cross offering- April 14

The Golden Cross offering supports many important health and healing ministries conducted by Iowa United Methodist Churches such as free medical and dental clinics. The fund also provides small grants to churches that need to create handicapped accessible ramps and facilities. These are just a few examples of the important ministries that are enabled by your generous support. Please consider a contribution to the Golden Cross offering on April 14.

Easter Lilies

If you would like to purchase a lily in honor or in memory of a loved one, please use the special envelope available at the Welcome Center or in the church office. Cost for each lily is \$10. Checks can be made out to FUMC. The deadline to get your information in the Easter insert is Wednesday, April 17.

14 United Methodist Women

Methodist Women's History: Mary McLeod Bethune

In this year that we celebrate the 150th anniversary of UMW, here is a story of a humble woman with a big dream.

Mary McLeod Bethune was an African-American woman, a pioneer of women's leadership, and a devoted Methodist who opened doors of education by founding a school that continues today.

Mary McLeod Bethune was born in 1875 on a South Carolina cotton farm. In 1904, she started a school with just five girls, which was financed by baking and selling sweet potato pies.

Mary, herself, went to college and her school for girls grew quickly. In 1931,



the Methodist Church helped the merger with the Cookman Institute for boys to form Bethune-Cookman College.

Mary Bethune traveled extensively, was a delegate to four Methodist General Conferences, advised five U.S. presidents, and was the only black woman present at the founding of the United Nations in 1945. Back on campus, she was "Mama Bethune." The icon passed away in 1955, leaving a last will and testament full of wisdom and love.

"If I have a legacy to leave my people, it is my philosophy of living and serving. I think I have spent my life well. I pray now that my philosophy may be helpful to those who share my vision of a world of Peace, Progress, Brotherhood, and Love."
- Mary McLeod Bethune 1875-1955
(source: *United Methodist News Service*)

Purpose: The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative supportive fellowship, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.



March Program: Love Inc. of the Cedar Valley

On March 14th, the United Methodist Women met for their Unit Meeting. The guest speaker was Erin Tink, Executive Director for Love Inc. of the Cedar Valley. Erin explained what Love Inc. stands for (Love In the Name of Christ). It is a network of local churches, united in the purpose of showing Christ's love in our community, coming together as a powerful force for transformation not only to individuals and families but to the entire community.

Love INC of the Cedar Valley currently partners with 29 churches. First United Methodist is one of those partners with the Wee Care Ministry. Love Inc. has been around for 40 years and has over 130 affiliates nationwide. As Erin aptly stated, "We don't exist unless partner churches exist."

Love Inc.'s "Clearinghouse" is staffed with volunteers and handles requests for baby essentials, bus passes & gas cards, assistance with finances, food boxes & essentials, furniture/appliances, home repair, and kitchen essentials.

Love INC also operates a "Begin Now Ministry" which is a classroom environment for participants to build skills necessary to gain a greater level of stability in their lives.

Mary Circle members provided the refreshments, the Response moment, table grace, devotions, and worship center.

The next Unit meeting will be held on April 11, 2019 and the guest speaker will be Jennifer Brost, Founder and Executive Director of The Job Foundation.

2019 Mission U: Learning Together for Transformation of the World

The United Methodist Women (UMW) Mission u summer and fall events are wonderful mission education opportunities to study current issues impacting society. Whether you are young or old, laity or clergy, a UMW member or not, a first timer or attend every year, you are invited. All participate in the Spiritual Growth Study - "Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship". Also, attendees may choose to attend either the special anniversary study "Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission", or the social issue study "What About Our Money? A Faith Response".

WHEN: July 21-23 Summer Mission u (Sunday afternoon through Tuesday afternoon)
October 18-20. Fall Mission u (Friday afternoon through Sunday afternoon)

WHERE: Iowa Valley Continuing Education Center, 3702 S. Center Street, Marshalltown

You may obtain a copy of the brochure and registration form at the counter on the Welcome Center in the Gathering Place. If you have any questions please contact Chris Werling (contact info is on the brochure)

Thank You

Jane, thank you for my birthday rose. It was beautiful. You went above and beyond to deliver it on such a cold day.

Marlene Thurman

Thank you for the beautiful pink rose for Carol's February birthday and the red rose for Carl's March birthday. We enjoy Jane's visit. Thank you for the cards from the church staff, too.

Carl & Carol Ellison

Thank you for the birthday cards from the Congregational Care Team and the staff. The visit with Jane when delivering the pink rose was so special. You'd be surprised at how happy this little tradition of our church always makes me.

Shirley Johnson

Thank you for the quilt, red rose, and cards for Clyde. It helps so much. We love Carol's visits always, too.

God bless,

The Bergers

Please accept our deepest thanks for the gifts your congregation made to Heifer International recently! Joy to the World, Milk Menagerie, fish, llamas and more - oh my!

Your congregation's generosity will provide training, livestock, empowerment and more - enabling families in need to raise themselves beyond hunger and poverty to a place of health, dignity, and resilience.

Heifer is so grateful for your partnership in our mission to end poverty and hunger. You are proof that communities of driven, empathetic people can change the world!

In peace,

Liz Ellis

Heifer International

Sympathy to:

- Family and friends of Erma Colvin. Erma died February 25.
- Family and friends of Ruth Hovelson. Ruth passed away March 9.
- Family and friends of Elden Aswegan. Elden passed away March 11.

Mobile Giving Options Are Now Available

First UMC Cedar Falls is now able to accept financial contributions through the mobile giving apps Venmo and Shazam Bolt\$. Both apps are available for Android and Apple devices. The apps are free to download, and after you link your bank account, transactions are handled much like debit card payments. Don't carry cash or a checkbook? No worries - just use your phone!

Send contributions to contributions@aboutfirst.com



Thank You Debbie Dance

For the past two years, Debbie Dance has filled our First UMC Finance Manager position. She was a blessing to us all and a joy to have as a member of the staff. Debbie resigned this position effective March 19, and has been very gracious in assisting us in this time of transition in the position. When you see Debbie around the church, be sure to say thanks, and wish her the best in her new full-time position with NAIFA.

Welcome Susan Chisek

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce the hiring of Susan Chisek our new Finance Manager. Susan has a strong background both in finance and bookkeeping. She is a member of our neighboring church, St. Pat's, and has served on their finance committee. We welcome her to our church staff!

Lenten Giving Challenge

Along with prayer, fasting, meditation and study, giving is a spiritual discipline that you can explore this Lenten season. We encourage you or your family to take the Lenten Giving Challenge. Pick up a challenge envelope at the Welcome Center and choose one of two ways to participate:

- Take the 50-cent challenge. Start with a 50 cent offering on Ash Wednesday, and every day give 50 cents more than the previous day. (Sundays don't count)
- Take the challenge of giving 10% of your weekly income each Sunday from March 3 through April 21.

Financial Update as of March 24

YTD Budget received:	\$172,615
YTD Budget needs:	\$194,574
YTD Budget deficit:	\$21,959
Mortgage balance:	\$277,660

Consider Automatic Giving

You'll never need to remember to write a check again! It is quick and easy to set up. Contact our Financial Manager for details. 319-266-1713..

Attendance- week ending

	3/3	3/10	3/17	3/24
Transformation	79	58	45	81
Traditional 8:30	119	71	109	107
Traditional 11:00	105	101	81	81
FUSION	19	x	23	x
Ash Wednesday		110		

First United Methodist Church

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First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Sunday, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Traditional services
Sunday, 8:30 a.m. Transformation Worship

Van rides are available for the 11:00 Sunday service.
Child care is provided in the nursery for infants and babies for Sunday Services.

Spreading the Word

If you miss a Sunday, or want to hear a message again, find us on the local Public Access cable television channels. If you are unable to receive the television broadcast, weekly dvds are also available, or find the video links for sermons at www.aboutfirst.com

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channel 95.5, Friday @ 8:00 pm, Sunday @ 9:00 am
Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 17, Sundays @ 11:00am & 9:00 pm

Our Pastors

Scott Kober, Lead Pastor, scott.kober@aboutfirst.com
Matt German, Associate Pastor, matt.german@aboutfirst.com

Staff (in alphabetical order)

Sam Barr, Transformation Music Coordinator

Dee Behr, Parish Visitor
dee.behr@aboutfirst.com

John Bentley, Head Custodian

Ted Bonebrake, Chancel Choir director
tbonebrake@hotmail.com

Chris Congdon, Media Coordinator
chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Lisa Congdon, Office Ministry Coordinator
lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Jordan Derhammer, Youth Co-Coordinator
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Carol Dick, Parish/Grief Support Coordinator
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Jenna Engel, Christian Education Coordinator
jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

Lorri Schofield, Youth Co-Coordinator

Doug Shaffer, Organist
musicman52151@gmail.com

Emily Terpstra, Custodian

Jane Wyckoff, Parish Visitor