

August 2017  
issue 203



# ABOUT FIRST

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa

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**Worship on the Green**  
**August 27, 10:00am**

Again, Janet and I want to thank you for the opportunity to go to Nigeria. This trip would not have been possible without the initial efforts of Mark Fransdal and Chris Congdon beginning our relationship with Banyan Theological Seminary. Our goal with the "Pulpit Swap" with John and Titi Pena was to build on our relationship with B.T.S. I believe it was a great success to have the Penas as our guests for two weeks to get to know as many of our members as possible. They report back with great appreciation on how warmly they were welcomed at worship and many people's homes. Thank you!

Our Trip to Nigeria was full of many "God Moments" that we look forward to sharing with you. We are grateful for the help Harry and Titus who helped us throughout our trip. Harry is the Nigerian Chair of the Iowa Nigeria Partnership, and Titus is the Maintenance Supervisor at B.T.S., plus is finishing up his Seminary work to become ordained. Both of them saw to our needs from transportation to lodging while we were there.

One of our favorite memories is the day we were both paid with chickens. Early in the day, Janet was given a chicken from Salaminkala for her work at the clinic. She had a long day, and it is very evident that when someone from the USA comes to a clinic in rural Nigeria everyone from every surrounding village comes to see them for medical attention. They were lined up before Janet arrived, and when she left a villager gave her the gift of a chicken. It is considered a very special gift!

That evening I preached at the Banyan Village United Methodist Church. The village is down the road from B.T.S., and gave the land for the original school. The service was packed, and every musical group played before I had the opportunity to preach. They are raising money to replace their roof, and had reached 500 bags of rice pledged to "raise the roof." It was an exciting service, and they had a lot to celebrate! I was given TWO chickens for preaching that night. As Harry and Titus drove us back to campus with the chickens in hand, I named them "Harry and Titus".

The next night, we had fresh chicken for supper. Janet asked "Whose chicken is this?" And simultaneously, Harry and Titus said, "Yours Janet! You didn't expect us to kill Harry and Titus!" We all laughed except Janet, and I think it was only the third time I have ever seen her cry! As far as I know, Harry and Titus are still alive and well at B.T.S.!

I want to report that our Clinic that was built by the financial support of our church, and painted by our 2015 Mission Team of David Neill, Mark, Chris, Janet and I is up and running. Janet worked 4 days at the clinic, and she was impressed with the dedicated staff. It was great to see the clinic being used by the residents of B.T.S. and the area villagers. The clinic has made use of the hospital beds, and birthing bed, plus the medical equipment we have helped to stock clinic. There are still a few things they need, and they are always needing medicine to combat the diseases the residents are constantly fighting such malaria and typhoid.

The Computer Lab that we helped build could use new computers. They are still making the most of the "second hand ones" we sent to help them get started. Blessing is still teaching at the computer lab. With technology getting cheaper every day, I think we would be better off sending them money to buy new computers than sending our out of date models.

Water is a big issue at B.T.S., and really became a BIG problem when the 500+ Pastors arrived for the Pastor's Retreat. I'd like for us to see that we start raising money for a new well for the campus. Everyone that was tested while Janet was in the clinic all tested positive for Typhoid, and this includes many young children. Most of their illnesses are related to drinking the contaminated water.

I hope that we will continue supporting the efforts of Banyan Theological Seminary with our prayers and financial support. They are raising up pastors for a church that is growing like "wild fire" in Nigeria. As I taught at the Seminary, and visited with those who attended the Pastor's Retreat, your gifts are making a difference. Thank you for all you are doing in the name of Jesus Christ!

Nagode, (Thank you in Hausa)

Pastor Steve and Janet



# Worship on the Green

## August 27, 10:00am

### Food, Faith & Fun!

Once again this year we'll set up the tents and take worship outside to the lawn. We'll have music from our Transformation Praise Team, lunch from the Boy Scouts, and a whole bunch of fun as we praise God from the midst of his creation.

Bring your lawn chair and enjoy the open air.

### Sing With Us

Dr. Ted Bonebrake will be joining the staff at First United Methodist Church as our new choir director this fall. Dr. Bonebrake is a family physician in Cedar Falls. Before going to medical school, he earned his undergraduate degree in music composition at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He has served as a choir director at First United Methodist Church in Creston, Iowa, and at St. John Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls. Ted, his wife, Amy, and their sons, Kelby and Jacob joined our congregation in 2016.

Ted is excited about the opportunity to serve at our church. "I believe that music, like medicine, is a form of ministry. It is also a great way to bring people together, and I am looking forward to working with our choir," he said. One of his goals as choir director is to recruit new members, and expand the role of the choir in our worship services. "We will be doing a lot of new things, which I think will be very enjoyable for both the singers and the congregation."

The choir practices every Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m., beginning on August 16. If you are interested in joining, you can just show up. For new members, Ted says, "You can come as often as you are able, and don't need to commit to be there every Wednesday or every Sunday. The only requirement is that you must love to sing." If you have any questions regarding the choir, you can email Ted at [tbonebrake@hotmail.com](mailto:tbonebrake@hotmail.com), or call the church office.

### Bell Ringers Needed!

Ring in a bell choir is a fun way to participate in the worship of our church and hang out with some great people. If you read music, we'll teach you the rest. If you don't read music, we can teach you that, too.

Chapel Ringers is currently in need of 5-6 ringers. The choir rehearses on Sunday nights from 7:30-8:30pm. Chapel Ringers plays in church services 2-3 times a semester. Contact Aaron Hansen at [hansena72@gmail.com](mailto:hansena72@gmail.com) if you might be interested!

### Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2017 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.

### Rural Life Offering - August 13

You may contribute to the Rural Life offering by using the special offering envelopes in your bulletin on August 13. The Rural Life offering reminds us of the rural heritage of The United Methodist Church. This offering is used to celebrate and support rural life and rural ministry in Iowa.

## Volunteers Help Make Worship Special

I cannot imagine coming into church on a Sunday morning without being greeted at the door and again greeted into worship and again greeted by an usher and following worship being greeted with coffee and treats while I chat with my church family in our Gathering Space. Some may say that it is a bit much but for me it is just right!

I thank all of our volunteers for your service during worship. Greeters, Welcome Center Hosts, Ushers and Fellowship Treat Providers are all important in creating a worship experience that is welcoming to new visitors and all of us regulars too. We couldn't do it without you volunteers.

I hope you all plan to continue in the areas that you serve but I know that circumstances change and you may not be able to serve again this fall. Please give it some thought and if you don't plan to continue let me know. It would be great if you could recommend someone to replace you but if you can't I will reach out to the congregation.

Most of our Sunday volunteers serve one Sunday a month and of course we have some over-achievers that fill many spots. If you are like me and love the warm welcoming we get on Sunday mornings, now may be the right time for you to join our group of volunteers. Please let me know where you would like to serve and I will put you on our list.

Again, on the behalf of our church, I thank all of our Sunday morning volunteers.

Jan Benson  
jbenson@cfu.net

## Embracing the Ministry of Interruption

After serving 5 years full time in parish ministry, I often think back of my years in seminary. I recall new faith discoveries, lifelong friends that I made, and the great wisdom of my professors. During my Baccalaureate service, the Rev. Dr. Les Longden spoke of how new seminary graduates need to embrace the ministry of interruption. I thought this was a strange concept to bestow on a group of new pastors. We were expecting something profound encompassing the responsibility of the pastorate, or the power of the spoken word, or even how we participate in the works of the Spirit. We did not receive such advice in the last sermon we heard as seminary students. Rather, we were encouraged to embrace a ministry full of interruptions.


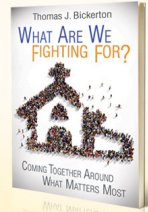
Jesus had a mission the 33 years that he walked the earth. That mission was always getting to Jerusalem where eventually he would be beaten, tortured, spit on, and hung on a cross. His eyes were always fixed toward Jerusalem because the cross was his destiny. However, we find along the way, Jesus is stopped by those needing healing and seeking council on questions such as, what is truth? Or, how do I receive eternal life? Or, what does it mean to love my neighbor? In Jesus' journey to the cross, he was always getting interrupted.

I find myself stopping and reflecting on Dr. Longden's wise words of embracing a ministry of interruption. Like Jesus, the church needs to keep its eyes fixed on the mission, which is making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. But also like Jesus, we the church need to be prepared for the interruptions along the way. Jesus never viewed getting interrupted as a burden or a distraction, but as an opportunity for impacting ministry. So this week as you head to your work places, spend time with your families, or enjoy the last few weeks off from school, be prepared to be interrupted. The question you will have to ask yourself is this: "Is the interruption a distraction, or is this an opportunity?"

Jesus is calling us to find opportunity in the interruptions of our lives to do his kingdom work. Let us embrace the ministry of interruption so that those who know God's love as a stranger may come to find in us generous and gentle friends.

Be Bold, Be Strong,  
Rev. Matt German

Come together around what matters most.



**DISCIPLE**  
**FAST TRACK**

Fast Track is an adaptation of the original, bestselling *Disciple Bible Study: Becoming Disciples through Bible Study*. It is ideal for busy people who want to fit a comprehensive Bible study into their schedule.

look for information on these two pastor-led studies on the learn & grow pages!

## Our New Bus is Here!

The Church has taken delivery of a brand new bus. This new vehicle is a much-needed replacement to our older bus which served us well, but was often in need of repair.

The new bus is quite similar to our previous vehicle but with one great improvement: the new bus has a wheel chair lift and is capable of transporting two wheel chairs and 12 seated passengers. This vehicle was purchased with funds from the sale of the Greenhill property, so no general Church funds were used.

The old vehicle was traded in towards the purchase of the new bus and the Trustees will be looking at selling the 15 passenger van in the future. If you have a moment please thank Mark Jansen for all his time spent in researching and acquiring our new bus and please spread the word to all those that have wanted to attend worship and other functions at the Church but have been unable to do so due to lack of transport. The new bus entered service on Sunday, July 30. We now have a vehicle that is capable of transporting all who wish to be in God's house.



## Our New Ministry Partnership

Through our Washington Chapel relationship and Fusion Tonight, we have developed a pool of lay persons who have become experienced in worship leadership. Our team is no longer needed at Washington Chapel, and our District Superintendent, Jackie Bradford, has now matched us with the Frederika UMC congregation. We now have the opportunity to serve with our brothers and sisters in the Frederika United Methodist Church, by providing preaching and worship leadership three to four times a month. It is a great opportunity for us to share our gifts with another congregation, to work with them in ministry, and to learn from them as well.



Earlier in July, our team traveled to Frederika to meet their church leaders and tour the church. We found it to be a nice church in a quiet community that is mostly traditional in their approach to worship, but open to new styles and ideas, too. This is an exciting opportunity for our lay speaking team, and is a perfect example of how our Iowa United Methodist Churches can work together to make each other stronger. Please keep our team in your prayers and if you're curious about what it takes to be a part of this ministry, talk to Padma or Chris or Lisa Congdon.

## New Financial Manager has been hired

The Staff Parish Relations Committee announces that Debbie Dance will be our new Church Financial Manager. Debbie will begin transitioning on August 7 by working alongside Deb Bernard to learn the responsibilities of the position. Please welcome Debbie to our Staff. The SPRC would also like for the church to thank Deb Bernard for her years of service and her patience as a taskforce made up of SPRC and Finance Committee members led by Susan Whitson sought out her replacement. Deb had originally requested to retire on May 10. Thank you Deb Bernard!

## Threehouse Block Party

Let's show our support for our local campus ministry. Threehouse (The UNI Wesley Foundation) welcomes us to their Eighteenth Annual Block Party on Sunday, August 27 from 5:00-7:00. Delicious food and activities including games and live music will make it quite the party. Everyone is invited to come and to eat and visit with the students.

**We have offered to provide hamburger buns, chips, and homemade pies to make the party a success.** Donations of cash can be helpful for purchasing charcoal and other picnic supplies, too. Sign up on the Threehouse clipboard on the Welcome Center.

If you want to know more about this important campus ministry, contact them at 266-4071 or email [wesley@cfu.net](mailto:wesley@cfu.net).

New to the festivities this year will be their 1st Neighborhood Clean-Up project from 2:00-4:00. Everyone is welcome! They will be working together with residents and homeowners in the area to pick up trash, rake and trim lawns, pull weeds and plant flowers. Gather at the corner of 25th at Olive Street at 2:00 to help make a difference in our community and to inspire connections with the neighbors of Threehouse.

## events

### August 1 - Grief Support Session

Come join the fun and help us recycle cards to send to First UMC friends or to sell. Our next session will be Tuesday, July 11th from 1:00 to 5:00 in the Gathering Place. Bring a friend, a snack to share if you'd like and stay for Community Meals. We train you! If you haven't purchased cards yet, check out the card rack just outside the church office. The cards cost only \$.50 each and they are beautiful! This quarter's profits will go towards postage for the Ingathering.

### August 1 - Food Bank Work Crew

Join us at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank on Monday, August 1. 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](mailto:lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com)

### August 8 - Crafter's Corner

Attention crafters! The first few Crafters' Corner have been a great success, and we will plan to meet again on Tuesday, August 8 from 6:00-8:00 in the parlor. This is a laid back and hands-on group for all skill levels. Bring your own craft project to work on or give your time and talent to make sleep mats for the homeless, handmade gifts for those in need, or prayer shawls for those in need. Donations are always greatly appreciated! We need clean used plastic grocery bags, yarn, and crochet hooks. You may leave your crafting donations in the bin in the little hallway across from the drinking fountain on the main level of the church. Thank you to all who have donated craft items so far. Please contact Crystal Wilken at [crystalwilken@gmail.com](mailto:crystalwilken@gmail.com) with any questions.

### August 17 - First Friends Potluck

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. Need more information? Phone Arlene Fleming at 266-3322.

### August 28 - Live Serve Blood Drive

We are hosting the next blood drive on Monday, August 28 from 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](http://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.

### Every Thursday - Zumba

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](mailto:mary.friedrich@cfu.net) if you have questions. Come and dance...it's never too late to join us on this fun fitness adventure!



## Huge Rummage Sale

Thursday, Aug 3, 5:00 - 8:00pm

Friday, Aug 4, 8:00 - 4:00

Saturday 8:00-1:00

- Housewares
- clothing
- books
- electronics
- artwork
- handcrafts

If we don't have it, you don't need it. Shop early and shop often - proceeds go to our missions and ministries.

Got time to help? We can use you any time, and especially during clean-up at 1:00 Saturday! It doesn't take long when we have lots of help.

## Recurring Weekly:

### Sunday

8:00 prayer in the chapel  
 8:30 Transformation Worship  
 8:30 Traditional Service, sanctuary  
 9:30 Fellowship time, Gathering Place  
 9:30 Frederika UMC worship  
 10:00 Traditional Service, sanctuary  
 10:30 Washington Chapel Worship

### Tuesday

7:00 Men's Breakfast  
 9:30 Quilters/Stitchers, 059  
 9:30-10:30 Tuesday Bible Study, chapel  
 4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall  
 6:30 Transformation Band, Fellowship Hall  
 6:30-8:00 men's group  
 7:00-9:00 AA, 055

### Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor  
 5:15 AA, 055  
 6:30 WOW AA, 055

### Thursday

5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall  
 7:00 Transformation Band, Fellowship Hall

## Also Scheduled....

### TUESDAY August 1

Rummage work all day  
 NO Community Meal tonight!  
 2:00-3:30 Grief Support, parlor

### WEDNESDAY August 2

Rummage work all day  
 9:00 Women Connected by Prayer-Panera

### THURSDAY August 3

5:00-8:00 Rummage Sale  
 5:15 Youth go to Buck's Baseball  
 No Zumba tonight  
 No Band Rehearsal

### FRIDAY August 4

8:00-4:00 Rummage Sale

### SATURDAY August 5

8:00-1:00 Rummage Sale  
 1:00-3:00 Rummage Clean up

### SUNDAY August 6

Chris Congdon at Frederika/ communion

### MONDAY August 7

9:00 Reading buddies meet w Mr Bryant  
 6:30 Stephen Ministry Supervision

### TUESDAY August 8

6:00-8:00 Crafter's Corner, parlor  
 No Band

### WEDNESDAY August 9

2:00 Stanard Care communion service

### THURSDAY August 10

2:30 UMW planning, parlor  
 6:30 Rummage Sale eval meeting, chapel

### SUNDAY August 13

Rural Life offering  
 FREDERIKA folks give message at Frederika

### MONDAY August 14

6:00 HOME Team, chapel

### TUESDAY August 15

5:30-8:30 Boy Scouts, Gathering Place  
 6:15-7:15 Education Team, parlor

### WEDNESDAY August 16

11:00 Pinnacle Care Chapel service  
 9:30-11:30 MOMs group, library and gym  
 6:00 Rainbow Task Force, library  
 7:30-8:30 Chancel Choir, choir room

### THURSDAY August 17

12:00 1st Friends Potluck, Gathering Place  
 5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall

### SUNDAY August 20

September Newsletter deadline  
 Karl Dance at Frederika

### MONDAY August 21

6:30 Ad Council, library

### WEDNESDAY August 23

2:00 Windermere communion service  
 7:30-8:30 Chancel Choir, choir room

### THURSDAY August 24

First Day of CF schools

### SUNDAY August 27

10:00 Worship on the Green  
 2:00-4 Threehouse neighborhood clean up  
 5:00-7:00 Threehouse Block Party  
 Mark Fransdal at Frederika

### MONDAY August 28

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place  
 6:00-8:00 CRUSH, 058  
 6:30 Endowment Committee, library  
 7:00 Pack 44 Committee meeting, parlor

### WEDNESDAY August 30

2:00 Windermere communion service  
 7:30-8:30 No Chancel Choir

### THURSDAY August 31

noon newsletter mailing crew



## WEDNESDAY, September 6 ANNUAL FALL KICKOFF PICNIC

- burgers and dogs on the grill
- face paint
- balloon animals
- dunk tank

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW  
 AND INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!  
 THE FUN STARTS AT 5:30**

## Quick & Easy Daily Devotion

Check out the literature rack across from the office for the latest "Upper Room" daily devotional booklet. Each page includes a passage to look up in your Bible, a short verse to supplement that passage, and a brief story or meditation written by people from around the world. The daily devotion ends with a suggested prayer. It's a great resource to get into God's word and put it into practice every day. Each booklet covers two months, and at \$1.25 the price can't be beat.

## Question, Answer, Study, Lead

One way to challenge yourself and explore new areas of faith is to lead a short-term study group. We would love to fill our calendar with six to eight week bible studies and small groups. Short-term studies offer a chance to dig into issues without a long-term obligation. It's not as hard as you might think to be a leader. We have resources available for book and/or video-based studies on all kinds of Christian topics. If you have interest in pursuing a study, contact Jan Hoover. We'll help you get the materials, reserve meeting space, get your group on the church calendar, and we'll even publicize your study.

## Tuesday Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Bible Study resumed mid-April after taking a break in the snowy months. This group meets in the chapel at 9:30 on Tuesday mornings. Bring your Bible - whichever one you prefer - and be prepared to read through and discuss the Bible.

No homework or study guide is required, just read along with this group of women and offer your insight. Shirley Bolin is the contact for this group.

## Plan Now for a Fall Faith Renewal

This three-day retreat will take you away from the distractions of life and allow you to refocus on your faith. You'll be immersed in a Christian community, and will be encouraged to find ways to live out your faith in your home church. This is the **Walk to Emmaus**. During your "walk" you'll be amply fed, comfortably housed, and you'll have plenty of time for a good night's sleep. Guided activities and scheduled break times allow opportunities to enjoy the natural environment of the retreat location near Lake McBride.



How far? This walk is symbolic, not an actual physical challenge. Facilities and activities are fully accessible to pilgrims of all abilities. The name, **Walk to Emmaus** refers to Luke 24:13-35 where Jesus walks with two travelers who do not recognize the risen Christ in their midst until he breaks bread with them. In this weekend, you'll learn to see Christ in the world around you, and will be inspired to be an instrument of His love.

The Walk to Emmaus is an experience for adults, and there is a similar youth experience called Chrysalis. If you have interest in learning more about the **Walk to Emmaus** or Chrysalis, contact the church office, and we can arrange for you to meet someone who has already been - there are many in our congregation. Check out this video at [www.vimeo.com/8697255](http://www.vimeo.com/8697255).

### Upcoming retreats:

October 20-23 men Solon, IA

November 3-6 women Solon, IA

## Holy Land Trip - Walk Where Jesus Walked - Spring Break 2018

Pastor Steve and Janet are planning a trip to the Holy Land during Spring Break in 2018 leaving March 6 and returning on March 15. This is a trip of a lifetime. We will visit significant sites such as Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho, Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. We will be walking where Jesus walked!

Going to the Holy Land has made a dramatic difference in traveler's faith and reading the Bible.

There are some individuals looking for roommates to share this experience. If you are interested in going, please contact Pastor Steve or Janet.







## If You're Ready...

- to step forward in a bold, new way for the cause of Christ
- to unlock your potential as a servant in the United Methodist Church
- to explore the many ways that you can assist pastors and other empowered laity
- to commit yourself to pursue your personal ministry at a higher level

You may be a great candidate for the Iowa Annual Conference's School for Lay Ministry (SLM). SLM is designed to grow Iowa churches by providing a supplemental source of leadership. Some of the ways that SLM graduates serve are: volunteer management, Christian education, care-giving, youth programming, outreach, and the SLM is the pathway to becoming a Certified Lay Minister.

## School for Lay Ministry

### Words From the Dean

Have you ever felt a call to do something more for your local church congregation? Then, according to John Rothlisberger, the School for Lay Ministry (SLM) might be up your alley.

"The most important piece (of SLM) is the goal that we would strengthen the understanding and skills of the laity within the church," he said. "The need is great, and it's more than just filling the pulpit on a Sunday morning"

Rothlisberger is the dean of the SLM at Simpson College. SLM training is a three-year process consisting of four weekends throughout the year. There are three locations for SLM: Simpson College (Indianola), Morningside College (Sioux City) and Cornell (Mount Vernon). There is a total of 12 classes per year based on a broad array of topics. Classes are taught by college professors, conference staff, field outreach ministers or seminary professors.

"The goal is to see as broad a picture of the United Methodist Church, its traditions, faith, its doctrine and polity and theological variations," said Rothlisberger. "The purpose of the program is for laity to get a big picture of the whole thing. The people that participate in it are probably looking to know more about what God is directing them to do in their lives"

While the goal of SLM is to strengthen the local church with laity involvement, he did say that sometimes, God's path for us can take us even farther.

"We don't control what God does with your life," said Rothlisberger. "But many people do feel a call to go beyond (lay ministry)." Rothlisberger reassures those interested in SLM not to be afraid. The opportunities for lay ministers in the church far outweigh the negatives.

Classes start this fall. Want to know more? Talk to Karl Dance, Chris Congdon, Jim Reidy, Lisa Congdon, Padma Templeton, Sue Ney, Christine Werling-Witkoske, Shane Waltz, Jon Cooper, Rus DeBonis, and of course John Rothlisberger.

Students devote four weekends a year for three years to this program. Classes are held at the Cornell, Simpson and Morningside colleges on Friday evening through Sunday morning. There are reading assignments, lecture sessions, group discussions and activities. It's not for everyone - you have to be serious about this - but if you are, you will end up having one of the most enlightening experiences in your Christian life. Weekend courses will dig into worship, congregational care, Christian ethics, theological perspectives, missions, social concerns, church history, doctrine and polity and strategizing for growth. You will emerge equipped and inspired to see your life as a ministry and to share it openly in ways that suit your strengths and skills. In our congregation, Karl Dance, Jan Hoover, Jim Reidy, Chris Congdon, Lisa Congdon, Padma Templeton, Sue Ney, Chris Werling-Witkoske are graduates of the program. Shane Waltz, Jon Cooper and Rus DeBonis are current students. Ask any of them about their experience, or talk to one of our pastors about the application process. More information can be found at [www.iaumc.org](http://www.iaumc.org).

## “What Are We Fighting For?”

### Study co-taught by Pastor Matt and Pastor Steve

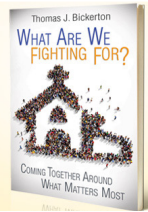
With all the issues facing The United Methodist Church today, there are plenty of theories and opinions about what we should do. The “elephant” in the room is Human Sexuality, and has been a challenge to come to any resolutions. It is a very divisive subject, and different folks in our congregation have dramatic ally difference opinions. Both is us feel we can move forward together. What are we fighting for? This question not only points us to the futility of our disunity but also compels us to consider what we are fighting for—what deserves our greatest intensity and effort as we seek to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

We will be offering a study by Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton titled, “What Are We Fighting For? Coming Together Around What Matters Most” beginning Wednesdays for 6 weeks starting September 13 at 6:00 p.m. during B.L.A.S.T. The study offers a way to move beyond all the discord to a hope-filled future by exploring how we can come together around what matters most so that the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes a vibrant part of our lives and witness.

Bickerton says, “That fights, feuds, and uncertainties can distract us, leaving us ineffective and mired in mediocrity and decline; but focusing on what matters most causes our ministries to flourish and the church to become a relevant and vital presence in the community and world.” The study offers an approach for working together in the midst of disagreements.

The cost of the book for the study is \$12.00. We are limiting the class to 24 because of the size of the room. If we exceed 24, we will look at offering the class at another time. We are encouraging Sunday School Classes and Study Groups to participate. Sign up is at the Welcome Center. Contact either pastor or Jenna for more information.

Come together around what matters most.



## Filling Station:

The Filling Station will be starting back up on Wednesday, September 13th. The filling station is great time for us to reconnect half way through the week while enjoying supper together. We are looking for volunteers to help serve food, drinks and clean up. The reason the filling station runs so smoothly is because of the amazing people that help behind the scenes. If you are interested in helping please let Jenna Engel know. Her email is [jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com](mailto:jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com).

## B.L.A.S.T:

B.L.A.S.T will be starting back up on Wednesday, September 13th. I am very happy to say that our group is growing. Since we have a large group Wednesday night we will need two more adult volunteers so we can stay in ratio. If you are interested in helping or leading a group please let Jenna Engel know. Her email is [jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com](mailto:jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com)

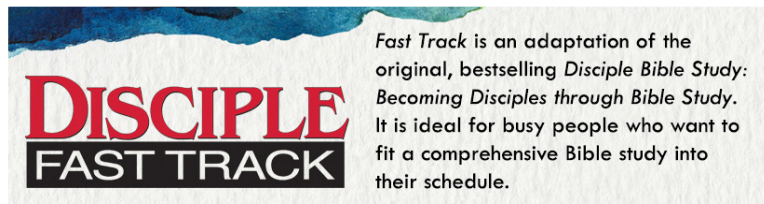
## Disciple Bible Study –

### new Fast Track Series being taught by Pastor Steve and Janet

We have taught the Disciple Bible Study for 20 years, and believe it is one of the most in-depth studies provided by our Denomination. We enjoyed the opportunity to grow in faith with the class, and the friendships that developed after spending 36 weeks of study have become some of our closest friends. Disciple Studies required a lot of time for preparation and study. Many times the weekly class would last 3 hours long!

The new Fast Track Disciple Series is designed for busy lives. The study is divided into two 12 week long studies. The first 12 weeks will be Old Testament, and the second 12 weeks will be New Testament. You read a manageable 3-5 chapters of the Bible daily in preparation for the weekly 75 minute class. It uses the same format as Disciple with renown Biblical Scholars sharing about our weekly readings.

We will meet Sunday evenings at 6:30 beginning on Sunday, September 10 starting with the Old Testament. Sign up for the class is at the Welcome Center. Cost for each study book is \$15.00. We will begin the second study on the New Testament in January. For more information contact Pastor Steve or Janet.



## Our August Mission of the month is Women at the Well

Did you know the church is in prison? Women at the Well is our sister and partner church, a United Methodist congregation within the walls of the women's correctional institution in Mitchellville, Iowa.

This is a church that serves a specific, sometimes transient population with very special spiritual needs. Check out the display in the Gathering Place for more information about this very unusual ministry.



### How can you support the Women at the Well?

- You can give anytime by putting "Women at the Well" on the memo line of your check to FUMC. There are also special offering envelopes at the display in the Gathering Place.
- Another 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 prison directly from Cokesbury. These Bibles cost about \$10 each and will be given to the ladies in Bible Studies and to keep for their own use. Use the special "Bibles for our Sisters" envelope at the display in the Gathering Place.
- Cards of encouragement are always appreciated. You can mail them to the Women at the Well congregation using this address:  
Women at the Well UMC  
PO Box 33  
Mitchellville IA 50169-0033
- And yet another way you can support this ministry is to be a part of a Reentry Team to support and guide women who are released from prison. See Lisa in the church office and she will get you in touch with the Reentry Coordinator at W@W.



### Becoming connected to Women at the Well UMC:

- Come to their Facebook page, Women at the Well UMC, and "like" them there, to receive prayer requests and updates on their ministry.
- Follow them on Twitter, @WomenatWellUMC!
- Sign up for their e-newsletter. You can do this at their web page at [womenatthewellumc.org](http://womenatthewellumc.org).

### 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 Jan Benson. 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.

### 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.

# reaching out

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## Look for Diaper Deals

Grateful parents of wee ones come to our church every Tuesday afternoon to pick up a supply of much needed baby goods. This gap ministry through LoveINC helps struggling families stretch their dollars. Diapers of all sizes are always appreciated, along with wipes, baby wash, baby lotion, 8 oz bottles and sippy cups. If you see a good deal on end-of-season baby clothes feel free to bring them in. We have a place to store them until the appropriate season.

## Where Does The Card Money Go?

The cards that are sold on the card rack are hand-made by a group of skilled artisans and every quarter the money raised is contributed to a good cause. During the months of April, May, and June \$220.87 was collected for the N.E. Iowa Food Bank. Our thanks go to the volunteers who donate old cards, those who recycle the old cards and make new ones, and to all who purchase the cards from the card rack outside the church office. You may purchase one or more cards from the card rack for just \$.50 each. Money may be placed in the metal box attached to the rack. This quarter, money is being donated to Ingathering for postage. We invite you to come next time we have a card making session.

## Relay Recap

Thank you to all who supported FUMC Cancer Crushers again this year. We raised \$1,602 for Relay For Life of Black Hawk County. Your support helps the American Cancer Society continue the mission of saving lives, celebrating lives and leading the fight in a world without cancer! After much prayerful consideration, Cindi Knox has decided to step down as captain of the FUMC Cancer Crushers. Please contact her if you are interested in taking over that position.

## School Supplies are On Sale Now - Help fill UMCOR Kits

Back to School supplies are filling the stores, and the sales are fantastic! The First Stitches have been busy all year sewing school bags, and have an excellent start. We hope to fill 600 again this year. You can help by keeping your eyes open for good deals on school supplies and bringing them to Welcome Center. This is what is needed to fill each school bag:

- 3 – 8 ½ x 11 spiral or top-bound notebooks, 70-80 pgs each (wide OR college ruled)
- 1 – pencil sharpener (hand held – at least 1” long)
- 6 – unsharpened pencils with erasers (plain)
- 1 – box 24 crayons (ONLY 24 count, please)
- 1 – pair BLUNT scissors (rounded tip, no plastic scissors)
- 1 – 2 inch or larger eraser
- 1 – 30 centimeter ruler (hard or flexible)

In particular need right now are crayons and notebooks, so watch for the sales and buy a shopping cart full!

## Cedar Valley Back to School Project – July and August

Here's an opportunity to support our local community. The Back to School Project is a volunteer run organization that collects and distributes new school supplies to kindergarten through middle school students in our own metro area. The Back to School Project has been helping thousands of local kids since 1994. Check out their website at [btscedarvalley.org](http://btscedarvalley.org). This is a 100% volunteer run project, and you can help! Here's how:

Packing and distribution is August 14-18 in the gym at Lou Henry Elementary in Waterloo (312 Rachel St). Drop in anytime between 9:00am and 7:00pm Monday-Wednesday, August 14-16 to help pack the backpacks. If you want to help with distribution on Thursday or Friday (August 17 or 18), contact Ruth Orth at 240-7470 and let her know which shifts you want (11-1, 2-3, 5-6)

## Planning ahead for Lincoln Reading Buddies

Our Partner In Education, Lincoln Elementary School, has appreciated the great group of Reading Buddies who read with K-3rd grade students throughout the school year. Principal Ralph Bryant is looking forward to another year of this partnership. Anyone who has been a Reading Buddy or is interested in doing it this school year is encouraged to meet with Ralph at our church on Monday, August 7 at 9:00 AM. He will talk about the impact we have had on student literacy, and we will begin planning for the 2017-2018 school year.

## Another way to help our Lincoln Teachers

We are looking for about 12-15 people to help sort and organize math curriculum worksheets for some Lincoln teachers. This is a job that requires some standing, and it's good to have an eye for detail and a penchant for organizing. We will start this on Monday, August 7 at about 10:00am, and will plan to work until noon or early afternoon. If needed, we can continue the job the next morning. It's a big help for our Partner in Education teachers. See Lisa if you want to help with this.

## Peanut Butter drive

This summer (June, July, August) we have been collecting jars of peanut butter for the NE Iowa Food Bank. Peanut butter is an excellent source of protein, and kids love it. We have set a lofty goal of 1,000 jars to collect over summer school break! Bring the peanut butter to the church office now through the end of August. At print time we are about halfway to our goal.

Once again, we will sort the jars by crunchy or creamy variety, and you can vote for your favorite by the type you donate!

If you are not a shopper or really don't have an opinion about crunchy or creamy, we are also taking monetary donations for the Food Bank. They have amazing buying power and each \$1 you donate can help provide a meal for four hungry people. Use the offering envelopes near the peanut butter display, or make your check to FUMC with "Food Bank" on the memo.



**Goal: 1,000 Jars By September 1. It's time for the final push!**

**As of July 30: Crunchy = 246 vs. Creamy = 235**

## Heifer Milk Menagerie

Our summer Heifer International project is to collect \$1,000 for a Milk Menagerie. Check out the display in the church office window, and help us fill the milk bottles. Each filled milk bottle represents \$20, and 50 filled bottles will complete our goal.

The Milk Menagerie represents a quality-breed heifer, two goats, and a water buffalo – four milk-producing animals that provide hardworking families with the start-up capital to provide a better life for their children. Each animal will produce gallon after gallon of wonderful, life-sustaining milk that can be turned into cheese and yogurt to sell for additional income. Plus, each animal's offspring will multiply the blessings even further by Passing on the Gift.

Check out the display in the church office window for more information about our current Heifer International project and to note our progress on this goal. Offering envelopes are available near the office, or simply make your check out to FUMC with Heifer on the memo.



All of us need positive affirmation and encouragement. Straight-A students get compliments. Good athletes receive cheers. Even if we are not great at anything, we need affirmation of our intrinsic worth---a person created in God's image and loved by him. We all need pats on the back, smiles, hugs, or whatever says to us, "You are appreciated!"

Stephen Ministers are people who are trained to not only help people going through a tough time find the strength to move on into better times, but also to help them feel appreciated---feel better about themselves. And, like all of us, Stephen Ministers also need affirmation.

If you know one of our current Stephen Ministers or Stephen Leaders, let them know that they are appreciated for the ministry work they do. You will never know who they care for, but that doesn't mean you can't give them the affirmation they deserve.

## Hospital reminder

Please call us, or have a family member or friend call us, if you are hospitalized. The hospitals are not able to contact us to give us this information. We want to support you and your family when illness or surgeries happen, but cannot do so if we are unaware.

### UMW notes:

No Board meetings in August. All meetings will resume in September

### 2017 Mission U (formerly SOCM):

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, Living as a Covenant Community. Also, attendees may choose to attend either the geographic study Missionary Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the U.S. or the social issue study Climate Justice: Call to Hope and Action.

**WHEN:** October 20-22. Fall Mission u, including Spanish, Korean, Children's, and Youth studies (register by September 20).

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

You may obtain a copy of the brochure and registration form at the counter on the back of the Welcome Center in the Gathering Place.

If you have any questions please contact Chris Werling-Witkoske (cdwwitkoske@hotmail.com or phone 319-594-2404).



### Thank You For Your Support of Nigerian Medical Clinics

I would like to thank everyone for your support of the medical clinic in Nigeria. We were able to give much needed items to three different clinics in Nigeria in the region of the Seminary. The fetoscope, blood pressure cuff, stethoscope, medications, bandages, and lab tests were very appreciated and will truly impact many people in need. Our primary support of BTS clinic affected individuals with severe burns, broken bones, malaria, typhoid, wounds, infections, and expectant spouses of seminary students in the short week I was there. My hope is that we can continue to support the clinic which serves the students at the seminary and the people in surrounding villages. The impact we have been able to make is one way we truly become Christ together in the world. We just heard from John Pena that the boy with the parasite infection is improving; watch for more information on him to follow!

Janet Williams

## Thank You

Thank you for the lovely red rose Jane Wyckoff delivered for my birthday. It is so nice to be remembered on special days and her visits are a great bonus. Thank you so much.

*Joy Sires*

Thank you to Jane for delivering the beautiful white rose in a purple vase for my 83rd birthday. I enjoyed the good visit and feel so blessed to be part of such a caring church.

*Lorna Ericson*

Thanks to so many members of our congregation who furnished us with so many wonderful meals during the time of Irv's heart surgery. The visits, cards, etc were welcomed. Most of all the prayers were so appreciated. It was so comforting to have Pastor Steve with us during the long surgery.

*Irv & Donna Tiller*

Thank you all for the birthday cards and the beautiful delivered rose. I'm grateful for all your friendships.  
Sincerely, Jim McCutcheon

A great big thank you is sent to the Congregational Care Team and to Jane Wyckoff for delivery of a rose for my 93rd birthday. The rose is beautiful! I am sorry I missed Jane that day.

*Marian Christiason*

I would like to thank Jane for stopping to see me and delivering the lovely rose. I'm sorry I missed you. Also thanks to Flo and the care team for the lovely birthday cards. It's nice to be remembered by such a caring church.

God bless all,

*Jim Schwab*

It is always nice to be remembered on my birthday with a beautiful rose and Jane's visit. Jane is a "ray of sunshine" in the day and always makes everyone feel special.

Thank you and God Bless.

*Loretta Dykes*

## Sympathy to:

- The family and friends of Art Guillermo. Art and Cora were members of First UMC prior to moving to Fairfield. They were active in mission work in Alaska. Cora's address is:  
1703 A Linden Dr  
Fairfield IA 52556

- Family and friends of Norm Mutchler. Norm passed away July 18. His service was held Saturday, July 22.

## News From "The Connection"

Does First UMC give you a feeling that you're connected to something big? That's by design. "Connectional" is a word we use to describe the structure of the global United Methodist Church. Each local church is connected to every other local church through a network of districts, jurisdictions and conferences. It's a structure that allows churches to function locally, while still being "connected" to the ideas and resources of a global faith community. It is the connectional nature of our United Methodist Church that makes our relationship with Banyam Seminary possible, and has led to real friendships between congregations across town and around the world.

If you'd like to know more about how the United Methodist Church is working around our state, our nation and the world, check the news updates on the following websites. We think you'll be encouraged and inspired to know that you're a member of an organization that promotes the Gospel, justice and works for the peace of Christ worldwide.

For Iowa UMC news:

[iaumc.org](http://iaumc.org)

For global UMC news:

[umc.org](http://umc.org)

## Financial Update--

June Receipts	\$ 54,475
June Expenses	\$ 60,893
YTD Receipts	\$ 429,460
YTD Expenses	\$ 411,913
Mortgage as of July 25 -	\$ 512,893

## 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, Deb Bernard for details. 319-266-1713 or emailed [deb.bernard@aboutfirst](mailto:deb.bernard@aboutfirst).

## Attendance- week ending

	7/2	7/9	7/16	7/23
Combined	220	-	-	-
Transformation -		84	86	58
Traditional 8:30 -		121	113	128
Traditional 10:00	-	95	84	103

## First United Methodist Church

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**Sunday, 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.** Traditional services

**Sunday, 8:30 a.m.** Transformation Worship

Van rides are available for the 10:00 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](http://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

Steve Williams, Senior Pastor, [steve.williams@aboutfirst.com](mailto:steve.williams@aboutfirst.com)

Matt German, Associate Pastor, [matt.german@aboutfirst.com](mailto:matt.german@aboutfirst.com)

August newsletter deadline is July 20.

### Staff (in alphabetical order)

Sam Barr, Transformation Music Coordinator

Dee Behr, Parish Visitor  
[dee.behr@aboutfirst.com](mailto:dee.behr@aboutfirst.com)

John Bentley, Head Custodian

Deb Bernard, Financial Manager  
[deb.bernard@aboutfirst.com](mailto:deb.bernard@aboutfirst.com)

Chris Congdon, Media Coordinator  
[chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com](mailto:chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com)

Lisa Congdon, Office Ministry Coordinator  
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Bryan Houts, Chancel Choir Director  
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Flo Mobley, Parish Visitor

Rebecca Nims, Youth Ministry Coordinator  
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Doug Shaffer, Organist  
[musicman52151@gmail.com](mailto:musicman52151@gmail.com)  
610-4249

Emily Terpstra, Custodian

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