



December 2017  
issue 207

# ABOUT FIRST

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa





## Thoughts from Steve

My grandchildren like to curl up on my lap to have me read a story that has been read to them hundreds of times. They love the way I “dramatize” the stories and change my voice for each character. I must admit that it is a very special time for me as well. They know all the characters, and know what each is going to say. They know the story so well they can pretend to read by looking at the pictures. My grandchildren like what is familiar. They can tell the story by heart.

Our children have made sure our grandchildren have learned the Christmas story. We can tell, because they also know this extraordinary story by heart. This time of the year, I will read the “old, old story” to them, and they will almost recite with me word for word. For me, it brings to life the “old, old story” of Jesus birth as a new generation becomes familiar with this extraordinary event that changed the world.

Perhaps the “old, old story” never grows old, but when I have been telling it for years, it becomes increasingly difficult to find ways to challenge the congregation to hear it with new ears and see it with fresh eyes. You know all the characters by heart, but your familiarity with the story may prevent you from asking yourself, “What does this mean for me?”

There is an old proverb that says, “Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born, if he is not born in thee, thy soul is still forlorn.” My greatest desire in preaching is to bring the Word to life on Sunday morning. It is in the opening passages of the gospel of John that inspires me to seek to find new ways to tell the “old, old story.” John shares his version of the Christmas story in this way: “The Word became flesh and made his home among us.” This is called the Incarnation in theological terms that reflects God coming to our world to live among us in taking the human form of Jesus.

My prayer is that Christmas becomes more to you than hearing the “old, old story”, singing a few familiar Christmas carols and lighting a candle. My wish is that in revisiting these tried and true traditions is an opportunity to once again welcome Jesus to make a home in your heart. At Christmas, this becomes a life changing moment for all of us when we celebrate Jesus making his home among us.

Every Christmas Eve I have a conversion moment in singing “Silent Night” while holding a burning candle. It is in that moment I can look at the faces of our congregation all reflecting a warm glow of the candles and see hope, peace, joy and love. I see families reunited, and children I’ve baptized who have returned home from College. I see a grandparent lovingly surrounded by their children and grandchildren because there is someone very special missing from their family. I see couples I’ve married standing with their first bundle of joy. I wish you could see what I see every Christmas. I work 365 days a year so I can have the “best seat in the house.” It never gets old!

In this season of preparation, may all of us rediscover the promise of the “old, old story” that “the Word became flesh and made his home among us.”

Have a blessed Christmas - *Steve and Janet*



## The Old, Old Story

In both our Traditional worship services and our Transformation Worship, Pastor Steve and Pastor Matt will lead us through this time of anticipation with sermon series intended to focus us on the significance of the coming of the messiah, and it all leads us to Christmas Eve worship where we will once again sing the songs, light the candles and tell the old, old story of the miraculous birth of the baby who carried God’s spirit into the world, so that we could come to know him better.



### Pastor Steve's Advent Series

Jesus has been known by many names: Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Son of God, Son of Man. Each of those names reveals something important about Christ and about God's wishes for us.

Each week in the advent season, Pastor Steve will dig into one of these names which will help us to understand why the coming of Christ was so necessary for God's people. Join us in Traditional worship services on Sunday morning for these messages from Pastor Steve.



### Pastor Matt's Advent Series

Perhaps the greatest miracle story in the Bible is the incarnation of God in human form. God Almighty willingly chose to become God Incarnate in the form of Jesus. This is amazing, because if God had not come to meet us here on the ground, then God might have always remained a complete mystery to us. Join us in Transformation Worship through the season of Advent as Pastor Matt leads us through the lessons of God becoming man and living as a perfect model for us.

### Christmas Eve Morning – Sweater Sunday:

We will have one service at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. The theme for the service will be “Just Another Day in Bethlehem” as we ponder what it would have been like in this village the day Jesus was born. Remember Joseph and Mary did not arrive until that evening, and there was no place for them to stay but in a tiny stable shared with animals. We invite you to come in your new Christmas sweater or favorite “old” sweater as we share in a day filled with the joy of Christmas. There will be no Sunday School. Come and celebrate Christ's birthday!

### Christmas Eve Candlelight

For many of us, Christmas really becomes Christmas when they are holding a lighted candle and singing, “Silent Night”. We offer three candlelight services on Christmas Eve. All services will include familiar carols and the wonderful scriptures telling of Christ's birth. Each service will be similar, and yet, each will have something different to make it special. We encourage you to invite your family and friends as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

#### 5:00 p.m. Candlelight

This service will be held in Fellowship Hall as members of our Transformation Praise Team will lead us in joyously welcoming Christ's birth. A special time for children will also be a part of this service.

#### 7:00 p.m. Candlelight

This service will be held in the Sanctuary with familiar carols and special music. The service will be filled with special music. A special time for children will also be a part of this service.

#### 11:00 p.m. Candlelight

There must be something magical about coming to the church late at night on Christmas Eve. Maybe it is to recall the excitement of the shepherds arriving at the manger to see the new born King? Or could it be the quietness of the hour after all the noise is over? We will sing the familiar carols and hear once again the wonderful story of Christ's birth through scripture. Again this year, we are including Communion in this service to celebrate the coming of the Son of God in the baby Jesus.



### New Year's Eve Sunday – December 31, 2017

As with Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve falls on Sunday. We will have one combined service at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. You are welcome to wear your new Christmas sweater or your old favorite!

### Share your musical talent

Limber-up those vocal cords, blow the dust off that old horn in the back of the closet, and start practicing. We'd love to hear your gift of music in our Traditional worship services. The music calendar for 2018 will be available shortly for you to sign up to sing or play. Watch for information in your Sunday bulletins or contact Doug Shaffer at 319-610-4249 [musicman52151@gmail.com](mailto:musicman52151@gmail.com)



### You Sound Good in Purple

Laboratory tests confirm that people who wear purple robes sound great when they sing together - even when only a few of them have good voices. If you love to sing, we'd love to add your voice to the choir. We rehearse on Wednesday nights, and sing most Sunday mornings. You're welcome to come when you can, and we'll hook you up with a robe that's just your size.

### Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2018 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.

## Christmas Poinsettia

Your purchase in memory or honor of someone will be acknowledged using the Poinsettia Order Envelope at the Welcome Center. Our goal this year is to have 100 Poinsettias!

We'd like for Christmas to be truly a season of beauty as we celebrate Christ's birth. Again this year, we would like to encourage you to leave your Poinsettias through Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve is like an Open House for our church - we open our doors to the community to come and celebrate, so we want to look our best!

## Christmas Offering Supports

Our Rainbow Task Force (mission team) has selected the projects for this year's Christmas offering. Your special gift will be shared among three agencies to help them give their best to help others:

- Eye of the Needle in Waterloo, Iowa
- Iowa Justice for Our Neighbors
- Self-Help International.

Look for more details in the Christmas letter in your mailbox in mid-December, and use the special offering envelope to support these ministries. You may place your gift in the Sunday offering plate or send it to the church office at any time. We will not be taking an offering during our Christmas Eve services, but there will be offering plates set at the entrances of our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall to receive your gift for missions.

## Hanging of the Greens

- Saturday, December 2 beginning at 9:00 a.m.

The past few years there is new excitement in sharing in the old tradition of the "Hanging of the Greens"! More and more people are making it part of their Christmas Tradition. On Saturday, December 2 from 9:00 to noon, we will dress the church up for Christmas. The trees will already be set up thanks to our secret elves, so we can begin decorating right away. This will be a great time for young and old to gather and learn how the familiar symbols and colors of this beautiful season point to a Savior being born in Bethlehem. We invite you to join the Worship Committee in helping prepare our hearts and church for a meaningful celebration of Christmas.

## Christmas Bell Concert - An Annual Tradition

For many people, the Christmas season really begins when they've heard the bells play their favorite carols. Our bell choirs annual Christmast concert will be held Sunday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m. There is no charge to attend and everyone is welcome. If you feel led to leave a gift in return, the bell choirs would gladly use it for new music and bell maintenance.



## Steve's Stocking

*And they hung their stockings . . .*

Children are a precious gift from God. We support many ministries that help children receive the necessities such as food, clothing and medicine. One of the ministries we support is the Inner City Parish in Des Moines. I will be hanging my Christmas Stocking outside my office door to collect stocking stuffers such as small toys, hot wheels, puzzles, crayons and color books for the children. These toys are used as incentives for their tutoring program.

## Christmas Caroling - Sunday, December 17

Join the mighty throng of carolers and well-wishers in brightening the lives of many of our homebound, and nursing home residents on Sunday, December 17 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. It is one of the most heartwarming things we can do in helping spread the joy of Christmas. For some families, caroling has become a family tradition as a way to add more meaning to their celebration of Christmas. We are hoping for several carloads so we can split up and visit more people.

## Thank You ... It Took All of Us!

The Ingathering is never really over as the planning is beginning for next year's event but before we move past the one we just finished we have a few parting words. A huge THANK YOU to one and all who helped in any way. Whether you donated funds for sending kits or purchased a kit, sewed a quilt, prepared the lunch, greeted visitors, ushered, set up racks, packed kits...you get the picture. It requires lots of hours and many volunteers to pull this thing off! Thank you, also, for sharing your church with others. It's a great place and you are a group of welcoming people.

Kris Rash and Jan Benson



## Worship Tech Improvements

In the past month we have seen and heard big improvements in the technical systems in our worship spaces.

**Sanctuary:** our recovery from the lightning strike last June took a big step forward when our main audio speaker array returned from a factory re-build and our new projector was installed. It looks and sounds great in the sanctuary again.

**Fellowship Hall:** A new digital sound board and in-ear monitors for the band have greatly improved our ability to control the sound in Fellowship Hall. Still in progress are improvements to the lighting controls and a stage monitor (video) for sermon notes and song lyrics.

Thank you to everyone for your work on these two projects: Pastor Steve, Pastor Matt, and John Bentley who helped re-hang the sanctuary speakers and projector, Steve Aries who has been instrumental in the design and installation of Fellowship Hall equipment and Tony John for assisting Steve A with the configuration of the new soundboard.

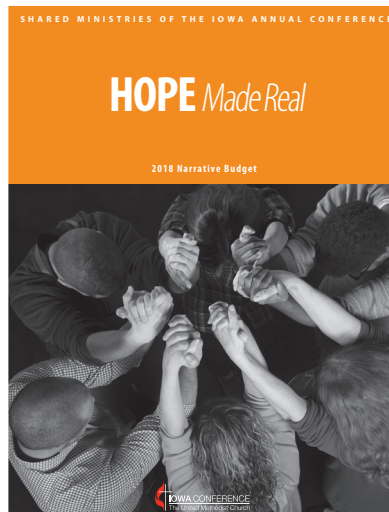


## Apportionments: A Big Part of Our Budget

If you take a look at our church budget, you'll notice a large item named "apportionments". Apportionments are the monies we pay to support the structure of the larger United Methodist Church - the UMC beyond our local Cedar Falls First church.

Apportionments, like everything else, seem to cost more every year, and you may wonder how our church's share is computed and what exactly we are paying for. To help answer questions like that, we will be hosting our Iowa Conference treasurer, Maggie Biggs, on Sunday, January 14.

We are one of the top ten churches in the Iowa Conference, and so Treasurer Biggs will visit us personally to lead this discussion. All interested people are invited to hear her presentation, and ask questions. Questions may be submitted anonymously to the church office, and we will pass them on to Ms. Biggs, or you may ask her directly when she is here. This visit by Treasurer Biggs is an exciting opportunity to learn more of the scope of the United Methodist Church. Do your homework before she comes: take a look at the "Hope Made Real" Narrative Budget publication from the Communications Office of the Iowa Conference. It contains numbers, statistics, graphics, and real-world stories of how our apportionment dollars support our church and make a difference in the lives of others around the world. Get the Narrative budget here: <https://www.iaumc.org/narrativebudget>



## Finance Update

**- Still time to get Pledge Cards in.**

Over the past few years our needs have increased while during the same period of time our giving has leveled off. In spite of the fact that we are a growing church, our giving has not kept pace with our growing needs and activities.

The Finance Committee has worked with the committees of the church to lower our 2018 budget 2% from this year. This includes not replacing our Family Ministry Coordinator.

Your estimate of giving cards do make a difference as the Finance Committee seeks to make sure that we can meet the financial needs of our church in 2018.

Remember: "When We Share - Miracles Happen!" Every gift is important and your response has never been more important for us to continue growing as a church. If you have not returned your pledge card, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Your pledges are kept in the strictest confidence, only you and the Finance Manager will know the amount. (not even pastors know!) If there are any questions about your pledge or giving, please contact our Financial Manager Debbie Dance at 266-1713.

Please continue to pray for the church. Together we continue to make miracles happen through our faithful witness in Jesus Christ

## Year End Giving Deadline

Thank you for your generous support of Christ and his ministry by your faithful giving this past year. There is still time to fulfill your giving goal or to make a year-end gift for the 2017 tax year. Please note that if you intend to hand-deliver your gift, it needs to be here by noon, Friday, December 29, or dropped in the offering plate on Sunday the 31st.. If you plan to mail your gift, it must be postmarked by December 30.

# events

## December 3 - World's Window @ First UMC

**Where:** chapel and Gathering Place

**When:** until noon

World's Window will be at our church with all kinds of fair trade items to sell. World's Window's mission is to market handcrafted items made by fair-trade artisans from economically depressed countries. By choosing fair trade products, you are not only accessing high quality products, but you are also making a difference in the lives of people who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed. There is sure to be something just right for your loved ones this Christmas.

## December 5 - Grief Support Session

**Where:** Church Parlor

**When:** 2:00 to 3:30 pm

The holidays are especially difficult if you are grieving a loss. Our First UMC Grief Support Team wants you to know that you are in our thoughts and prayers this Christmas season. You are invited to our next group grief support session. Please call the church office with questions or for some individual support.

## December 5 - Food Bank Work Crew

**Where:** Northeast Iowa Food Bank

**When:** 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Here's a fun and easy way to help the food insecure in our community...join us at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank on Tuesday, December 5. 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. Often we fill grocery bags with kid friendly good for the Backpack program. Sometimes we get selected for other much needed jobs. It's always a good time and a great bunch of people. You can carpool with Lisa or get yourself to the Food Bank at 1605 Lafayette Street in Waterloo. 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)

## December 12 - Crafter's Corner

**Where:** Church Parlor

**When:** 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Attention crafters! Join us on Tuesday, December 12 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. We are starting to crochet hats & scarves for those in need, so anyone wanting to learn to crochet or knit is welcome!

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.

## December 16 - Paul Klotz 90th Birthday!

**Where:** Gathering Place

**When:** 2:00-4:30

He's still ticking! (Just like those watches he sells at the rummage sale) Join Paul's 4 daughters and their families in the Gathering Place for a birthday open house to celebrate this milestone.

## December 21 - 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.

## December 26- LifeServe Blood Drive

**Where:** Gathering Place

**When:** 12:30 - 6:00pm

We are hosting the next blood drive on Tuesday, December 26 from 12:30-6:00 - a Tuesday this month. 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!

## Winter Weather Policies

### Worship

It is our goal and our intention to provide at least one worship opportunity every week, but this is Iowa, and it is winter, and weather happens. When winter weather gets bad the pastors will decide if changes should be made to the worship schedule.

### Weekly Activities

Cedar Falls Schools will be our guide. If Cedar Falls Schools have cancelled classes or dismissed early then church activities will also be cancelled for the evening.

Cancellations will be broadcast on both KWWL Channel 7 and KCRG Television Channel 9 and posted online at [www.aboutfirst.com](http://www.aboutfirst.com). We also ask that you use your best judgement and do not venture out into dangerous weather.



**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 some adults  
 10:00 Frederika UMC worship  
 10:30 Washington Chapel Worship  
 11:00 Traditional Service, sanctuary  
 6:30 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary  
 7:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall

**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  
 6:30-8:00 men's group  
 7:00-9:00 AA, 055

**Wednesday**

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor  
 5:15 AA, 055  
 \*5:15-6:00 Filling Station, Gathering Place  
 \*6:00-7:15 More than Moms, parlor  
 6:00-7:00 The Quest -Beth Moore, chapel  
 \*6:00-7:15 BLAST  
 \*6:00 Youth Group, 3rd floor  
 \*6:00-7:15 Man Thing, library  
 6:15-7:30 Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary  
 6:30 WOW AA, 055  
 \*7:15 FUSION Tonight  
 7:30-8:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal, choir rm

\*last one until after New Year

**Thursday**

5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall

**Also Scheduled....**

**SATURDAY December 2**

9:00 Hanging of the Greens

**SUNDAY December 3**

We celebrate Second Sunday of Advent  
 8:00-noon World's Window  
 10:00 Padma Templeton at Frederika  
 6:00-7:30 Disciple Bible Study, last of series

**MONDAY December 4**

6:00 Pack 44 Blue & Gold Banquet, Fellowship Hall  
 6:30 Stephen Ministry Christmas potluck

**TUESDAY December 5**

2:00-3:30 Grief Support, parlor  
 6:00 Food Bank Work Crew  
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scouts, Gathering Place

**WEDNESDAY December 6**

last CrazyFunBusy Wed. until New Year  
 6:00-7:00 The Quest - last class of series

**THURSDAY December 7**

6:30 Trustees, 057

**SATURDAY December 9**

6:00am - 10:30am Santa Snow Shuffle  
 10:30 Christmas program rehearsal  
 eventing - Youth go to Newsboys concert

**SUNDAY December 10**

We celebrate Third Sunday of Advent  
 Deadline for Veterans tree gifts  
 9:45 Kids Christmas Program - sanctuary  
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scouts 1871, chapel  
 7:00 Christmas Bell Concert, sanctuary  
 7:00-8:00 Troop 44 Boy Scouts

**MONDAY December 11**

9:30 UMW Board Meeting, library  
 10:00 FirstKids worship

**TUESDAY December 12**

1:30 Miriam Circle, library  
 6:00-8:00 Crafter's Corner, parlor  
 6:30-7:45 Girl Scouts, chapel

**WEDNESDAY December 13**

2:00 Stanard Care communion service

**THURSDAY December 14**

11:30 UMW Christmas lunch, Fellow Hall  
 12:30 UMW program in sanctuary  
 4:00 Girl Scouts, library

**FRIDAY December 15**

Deadline to return Angel Tree gifts (noon)  
 Boy Scout lock in tonight

**SATURDAY December 16**

2:00-4:30 Paul Klotz 90th Open House

**SUNDAY December 17**

We celebrate Fourth Sunday of Advent  
 Neighbor Helping Neighbor offering  
 10:30 Chris Werling at Frederika  
 2:00- 4:00 Caroling  
 7:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall

**MONDAY December 18**

10:00 FirstKids worship

**WEDNESDAY December 20**

Newsletter deadline  
 Angel Tree pick-up  
 11:00 Pinnacle Care Chapel Service

**THURSDAY December 21**

12:00-2:00 First Friends Potluck, Gather Pla  
 6:30-7:45 Girl Scouts, parlor  
 7:00 TRansformation Band

**SUNDAY December 24**

Christmas Eve  
 10:00a one morning worship, sanctuary  
 5:00p Transformation Candlelight worship  
 7:00p Christmas Eve Candlelight, sanctuary  
 11:00p Christmas Eve Candlelight, sanctuary

**MONDAY December 25**

Christmas Day, church office closed

**TUESDAY December 26**

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place  
 NO Community Meal tonight

**WEDNESDAY December 27**

2:00 Windermere communion service

**FRIDAY December 29**

noon newsletter mailing crew

**SUNDAY December 31**

10:00 one combined worship service

# Learn & Grow

## Sunday School

### Classes for Everyone

Preschool through 6th grade rooms are down stairs. 7th-12th room is on the 3rd floor. If you are new to the church or have a three year old and would like to get them involved with Sunday School please contact Jenna Engel.

## 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

Our newest Sunday morning group for adults. We gather to share our lives and discuss God's presence in the world today. Room 055

DAVE RAMSEY'S  
**FINANCIAL** *Peace*  
UNIVERSITY

*This changes*  
**EVERYTHING!**  
Your money. Your story. Your life.

Learn God's ways of handling money with Dave Ramsey's *Financial Peace University!* The average turnaround is \$8,000 in just the first three months!

## Financial Peace University

Join us for Financial Peace University classes beginning Sunday, January 14th and ending March 11. The classes will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. There will be free child care provided for those who have little ones. There is a kit that you will need to purchase for the class - one kit per family. The cost of the kit is \$100. Please sign up at the Welcome Center. The deadline to enroll (and to have a kit ordered) is Sunday, December 31. If you have any questions or concerns please talk to the class facilitators, Shane and Tabitha Waltz.

## Perspectives on the World Christian Movement

Change your vision of the world! See the world like Jesus does. Dive into God's word and the story of his work on the earth. Learn to live your life with eternal significance and purpose. Register for Perspectives on the World Christian Movement. Candeo Church, Monday evenings, Jan 15-April 30, 6:00-8:45 pm. \$225 if registered before December 15th. First UMC and Threehouse students qualify for additional scholarship help, too (see Lisa in the church office). Register at [perspectives.org](http://perspectives.org). For more information, email [cfperspectives@gmail.com](mailto:cfperspectives@gmail.com)

**God has a "world-sized" role for every Christian in His global purpose.** Whether people go to distant countries or stay at home is a secondary issue. The primary issue is what most people are hungry to discover: vision to live a life of purpose. Discovering that vision makes this course valuable, and perhaps crucial, for any Christian.

## What is Perspectives?

Perspectives is a fifteen week course designed around four vantage points or "perspectives" - Biblical, Historical, Cultural and Strategic. Each one highlights different aspects of God's global purpose. The

Biblical and Historical sections reveal why our confidence is based on the historic fact of God's relentless work from the dawn of history until this day.

The Cultural and Strategic sections underscore that we are in the midst of a costly, but very "do-able" task, confirming the Biblical and Historical hope.

**MADE FOR MORE**  
USE WHAT'S IN YOU TO BLESS  
THE WORLD AROUND YOU  
FIND A CLASS NEAR YOU



## Ethics - A One-Day Class That You Can Take

The School for Lay Ministry Commission is excited to offer some Extended Learning Opportunities at Cornell College in Mt Vernon this fall. Classes are open to all clergy, laity or anyone interested. Classes are held on a Saturday from 9:00-5:00, and tuition is \$75

The next class is Saturday, January 13. Ethics will be taught by Steve Streff, a lay person from St. Paul's UMC in Cedar Rapids.

Additional details and the registration form is posted on the [www.iaumc.org](http://www.iaumc.org) website (click on the "ministries" tab at the top and look for School for Lay Ministry). If you are interested in attending and need assistance or have questions, please contact Barb Mann at [barb.mann@iaumc.org](mailto:barb.mann@iaumc.org) or 515-974-8905 (or see Lisa in the church office)

## Disciple Bible Study - New Testament 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. We enjoyed sharing in the Old Testament study this fall, we had a great group of folks! Starting Sunday, January 14 we will begin 12 week study of the 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 6:00 beginning on Sunday, January 14 starting with the New Testament. Sign up for the class is at the Welcome Center. Cost for each study book is \$15.00. For more information contact Pastor Steve or Janet.



## 3rd Grade Family Bible Class

We are so excited to start the Family Bible class, which will be a five week course that will meet from 9:45 a.m. - 10:45. This will be held in the Parlor. In the class you and your child will learn how to use the Bible together.

## Sunday School Notes:

1. Children Christmas Program is on Dec. 10th. Our younger children will be performing classic Christmas songs. While, our 5th-6th graders will be taking us through the story of Jesus' birth.

2. We will not be having Children's Sunday school on Dec. 24th & Dec. 31st. Sunday School will start again on Jan. 7.

3. The Nursery will be open for the 10:00 am service on December 24th. The nursery will not be staffed on December 31st. The room will be open for parents to use.

*Building Faith:  
Pastor Steve teaches the  
FirstKids preschoolers  
and 2-year-olds all about  
Thanksgiving.  
Every Monday the kids at First  
kids hear a bible story and  
learn a new song from Pastor  
Steve.*



## Wee Care Could Use a Boost

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. Wipes, rash cream, teething gel, pacifiers, 8 oz & 4 oz bottles, receiving blankets, and sippy cups are always in demand. Donations of diapers size 2-5 are always appreciated (Aldis has good ones at a reasonable price). We have a designated shopper who finds good deals on these items, so monetary donations are put to good use. Put Wee Care on the memo line of your check to First UMC.

## 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.

## Our Advent Mission Focus Heifer International

Check out the Heifer International display in the Gathering Place for opportunities to give a gift that keeps on giving for generations to come. We'll be taking orders for chicks, goats, cows, pigs, water buffalo, and other animals until the New Year. And, best of all, you don't have to take them home, feed them, clean up after them, or even wrap them! Get a llama for your mama, a chick for your chick, a kid for your kid, a bunny for your honey, or a goat for your old goat.



The Fill the Ark Giving Calendar is perfect for the four weeks of Advent. Fill the Ark is a daily missions-giving program that spans four weeks. It offers real-life solutions to world hunger and shows that one person, one family or one congregation can make a difference in today's world. As you or your family fills a Giving Bank with money you've saved, you'll learn how your gifts can share God's love and end hunger and poverty around the world. And maybe you'll have some fun, too. What a great way to count down the days until Christmas. Pick up a Giving Calendar and a bank at the Heifer display in the Gathering Place.

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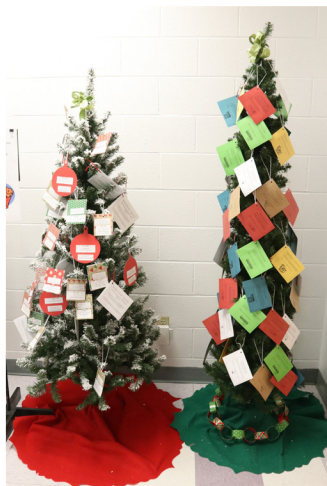


## Angel Trees- WOW! Tags are almost gone

This year we partnered with Lincoln School, North Cedar School and House of Hope to share a little Christmas love to some families in our own community. The school guidance counselors and staff at House of Hope provided us with a wish list for about 20 families. The tags were placed on the tree in mid November and were quickly selected by church members. If you have a tag from this tree, please return the gift to the church by Friday, December 15.

In addition, Benson Redfern coordinated a tree to assist a local veteran and family this Christmas. Those tags were also quickly taken by generous church members. If you have a tag with a flag on it, please return the wrapped gifts by December 10.

If you missed out on getting a tag from those two trees, you may choose a tag to support one of our other ministries such as WeeCare, Bibles for our sisters in Mitchellville, books for kid at Lincoln School, the NE Iowa Food Bank, or House of Hope. This tree will be up through Christmas.



## 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.

## 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.



## Thankfulness Leads To Hope

The Thanksgiving holiday may be over, but it is important to give thanks in all circumstances, all year long. Recent hurricanes and wild fires have caused unbelievable damage. Barbara was a person who lost her home and almost everything in it a few years ago in a wild fire in California. She was able to salvage three boxes of photographs and her grandfather's cuckoo clock. But she tried her best to be thankful and participated in a worship service held for that purpose. She was truly thankful that no one in her family was hurt.

On the day before the worship service, as Barbara searched through her home's ashes, she discovered a sundial her husband had given her. The following message was engraved on it, "Grow old along with me. The best is yet to be." Barbara thought to herself, "That says it all doesn't it? We have a lot to be thankful for and we will have a future."

We can only guess that it was easier for Barbara to be thankful because there were people around her to give encouragement and help keep the whole situation in perspective. The same is true with us when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances. We are fortunate here at FUMC that we have a Stephen Ministry program, as well as other care giving ministries. Stephen Ministers are trained to help bring a healthy perspective to difficult situations. If you would like to have a Stephen Minister help you walk through some present situation, or if such a time comes, please do not hesitate to call the church office at 266-1713. Your conversation will be kept in strict confidence.

## Neighbor Helping Neighbor Special Offering

On December 17 we will be taking a "Neighbor Helping Neighbor" offering. Funds collected are used in Iowa to help other Iowans who have unmet needs due to economic hardship.

## 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

## Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2018 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.


## Got extra fabric? Bring it in!


There is always a need for fabric to make the UMCOR school bags and other stitching projects. The Quilters & Stitchers are looking for durable material for school bags, fleece, and quilting materials for various other uses. There is a designated bin for your fabric donations in the church collection site on the main level in the little hall across from the drinking fountain.


## Your Gifts of Love to the World.


This year our bishop, Laurie Haller, encouraged Iowa United Methodists to become difference makers in the world. Making a difference can be a small, personal act, or it can be a huge, global effort, and you, First UMC of Cedar Falls, are difference-making rock stars. Here is a list of some of the gifts that we have given the world this year.




 Church members donated enough money to provide 160 Church World Service Blankets to those in crisis.

 Our Wee Care ministry through Love INC provided diapers and other baby care supplies with 133 appointments with families in the Cedar Valley.


 Sent over 100 Bibles to our sisters in Christ at the Women at the Well UMC in the women's prison in Mitchellville. We also support this church behind the razor wire with monthly financial help, and a group joined the W@W for a worship service this summer. We have two Reentry teams that walk alongside and support ex-offenders who have been released to the metro area.


 We provided new books to all Kindergarten through 3rd grade students at Lincoln Elementary School, our Partner in Education. Many church members also partner with Lincoln School students and teachers by giving time each week as Reading Buddies for students in grades K-3.

 Donated \$1400 to the Back to School Project to provide local students with new school supplies for the school year. Some church members volunteered time as well.


 A family from our church traveled to Chatham Illinois to group to help in the warehouse at Midwest Mission Distribution Center

 We supported the BTS/CF FirstUMC pulpit swap with John Pena and Steve Williams, and collected medical supplies and \$1000 for the medical clinic on campus.


 Sent a multi-generational work crew to Henderson Settlement Work Camp in Kentucky. Some of the work campers painted a food pantry on site and helped with other on-site ministries, and the rest worked off site at homes in the economically depressed area in Appalachia.


 Delivered a truckload of personal care items such as tissues, soaps and shampoo for the NE Iowa Food Bank in July. We also collected and donated over 1,030 jars of peanut butter for the NE Iowa Food Bank during the summer months (crunchy won). Collected over \$900 and 122 lbs of food for the NE Iowa Food Bank Thanksgiving Meal promotion. A group from First UMC donates their time by helping at the Food Bank at least one evening a month.





 We supported Heifer International all year with various promotions to support our less-fortunate neighbors all over the world, including:


- bees and beehives (early winter)
- chicks and rabbits (Lent)
- milk producing animals (summer)
- sending girls to school (fall)
- wool producing animals (November)
- alternate gift giving (December)


 We raised over \$1230 for CROP Hunger Walk, and a group of church members joined a walk to raise awareness of the hungry in our community and around the world. A group of volunteers also helped at a local “Feed My Starving Children” food packing event.


 Church members purchased and donated building supplies and paint for the new House of Hope home. Nearly \$5,500 was sent to House of Hope throughout 2017.

 In 2017 our church assembled \$11,220 worth of UMCOR kits for our annual Ingathering Mission Party: 174 Health kits, 12 sewing kits, 636 school kits, 28 layettes, and 90 baby jackets. Proceeds from 24 First UMC quilts and table runners came up to \$1865.

 We provided Christmas gift help to families in our local area- about 20 families from Lincoln and North Cedar Elementary School in Cedar Falls were blessed, as well as a family at House of Hope in Waterloo.

 First UMC hosts the weekly free Community Meal to approximately 175-200 guests every Tuesday. Our church members plan, prepare, serve and clean up the meal once a month.

 The quilters and stitchers have made and distributed 52 quilts for foster kids and 27 comfort quilts in 2017. In addition, this group has made and presented about a dozen quilts to infants through youth who were baptized in our church. And they sewed over 600 cloth bags for school supplies for UMCOR.

 We host a monthly Community Blood Drive through LifeServe. Members of our church provide delicious cookies and act as canteen hosts to thank the donors.

 We continue to provide missionary support to Larry and Jane Kies at Africa University in Zimbabwe. This is a decades long tradition of First UMC.

This is a list of just the outreach efforts that we are tracking for our annual church reports. There are other individuals and groups within the church who are reaching out in other ways on their own. It is important to realize that on the other end of every mission dollar that we contribute, or every hour of our time that we donate, there is a human being whose life is impacted in a positive way because of our efforts. As we embrace our call to be generous and compassionate, we live closer to the Christian ideal, and truly become difference makers.

## 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)



## United Methodist Women News

**Vision Statement of United Methodist Women:** We are “turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.”

### October Program: Family & Children’s Council

On October 12th, the United Methodist Women met for their Unit Meeting. The guest speaker was Marilyn Teig, a F.U. M.C. member who has volunteered for the Family & Children’s Council for the past 20 years. She spoke about the organization’s goal to strengthen families and prevent child abuse through education. She mentioned several programs that the Family & Children’s Council provides to parents of young children. These teach parents how to be better parents and how to care for their children while providing a safe environment in their homes.

When asked what we could do to help support their mission Marilyn suggested donations of our time in the Parent to Parent program. Also needed were tangible items like baby gates, diapers, wet wipes, clean clothing (especially sizes 4-6), and gently used children’s books. These items can be taken to the Family & Children’s Council Office at 2051 Kimball Ave., Waterloo.

Mary Circle members provided the table grace, refreshments, Response moments, devotions, and decorated the Worship Center. The Annual Memorial Service was provided by Lorna Ericson. We remembered Joyce Borglum, Veda Rasmussen, and Martha Nation.

Our next meeting will be the Christmas Luncheon on December 14th. Lincoln School’s 5th & 6th grade choir will provide Christmas music. Installation of next year’s officers will also be held.

## UMW Calendar

- Dec. 6** – More than Moms,  
6:00 p.m. to 7:10 p.m., Parlor
- Dec. 11** – Board Meeting,  
9:30 a.m., Library
- Dec. 12** – Miriam Circle, 1:30 p.m., Library
- Dec. 12** – Hearts and Hands,  
5:30 p.m., Gathering Place
- Dec. 14** – Unit Meeting, Christmas Lunch  
11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

## New Men’s Group Launched

There are lots of groups for women in our church, but only a couple for fellas. A new group has now come together with a focus on fellowship and brotherhood, doing the kinds of things that we like to do together. A variety of different activities are planned for this winter and more will come as the weather gets warmer: ice fishing, attending sports events, a road trip. Men, keep watching these newsletters and Sunday bulletins for upcoming events and get to know the other church fellas a little better.

In this picture, Pastor Matt, Tim Burton, Sam Fransdal, Dean Hoover, Curtie Rechkemmer, and Mike Cole are all smiles at the group’s first outing - a pheasant hunt. Reports from the field indicate that no pheasants were ever actually in danger, but a good time in the great outdoors was had by all.





## Thank You's

Thanks to Jane Wyckoff for delivering the beautiful rose for my birthday! It is such a joy to be remembered by the church in this way. Thanks, also, for the staff card which everyone had signed. That was special!

*Marlene Baumhoyer*

Thank you so much for the beautiful rose that Jane Wyckoff delivered for my birthday. I always enjoy Jane's visit and the cards from the Congregational Care Team. It's nice to be remembered.

*Marilyn Roudeshush*

Thank you for the lovely yellow rose and Jane's visit.

*Winnie Clayton*

Thank you for the beautiful yellow rose that Jane Wyckoff delivered for my 80th birthday.

I would also like to thank the church and Pastor Steve & Janet and everyone who attended my 80th birthday party my daughters and wife had for me in the Gathering Place on October 29. It was a great time. A big thanks.

*Isu Tiller*

It is always appreciated and special to be remembered on my birthday. This year Jane Wyckoff appeared at my door with a lovely yellow rose and a visit. Also, I received lovely cards from the staff and the Congregational Care Team, too. A big thank you to all.

*Elaine Logue*

Many thanks to the church staff for cards, and the beautiful rose that Jane delivered on my November 13th birthday. I am home, trying to get stronger, and Bill has been blessed with hopeful cancer reports. Thanks for all the church has done for us this past year. God is so Good!

*Donna Mincks*

I received my 2nd rose from Jane this past month. I thanked her and gave her a big hug. I think it is so nice for someone to be that thoughtful and caring for folks. Thank you so much, Jane.

*Bud Stock*

Thank you for the rose and all the cards for my birthday. They were all appreciated.

*George Wagner*

It's my privilege that I became a part of this amazing Church that loves to praise God and worship him every Sunday. I am very thankful for all your love, care and contribution through Indian Dinner on 28th October, and I received \$1380 from the congregation. it's really very helpful for me, Please Keep me in your prayers. Thank you for all your support till now.

*Varina Timothy*

We talked to one of our gals this morning who recently had an appointment at First United. She said she usually feels worse about herself and her circumstances after she has left an appointment for assistance. She said that when she attended her appointment at First United Methodist it was the first time she has felt better when she left than when she arrived. She said she could feel the presence of God in the interaction. Thank you for providing such warm, compassionate and generous service to our neighbors. We appreciate you and can't do this important work without you!

*Erin Tink, Love INC*

## Sympathy to:

- Bob Peterson and his family on the death of his sister on October 23.
- Family and friends of Chuck Koch. Chuck passed away October 27.
- Bruce Scheer and his family on the death of his father, Don, on November 1.
- Jerry Bernard and the Bernard family on the death of Jerry's brother, Melvin (Bud), on November 1.

## Welcome:

- Grayson Aaron Timmins was baptized on October 29. His parents are Wade and Caitlin Timmins, and grandparents are Gary and Jennifer Clark.
- Katharine (Kate) June Zimmerman was born October 24. She is the daughter of Kaleb and Linsey Zimmerman, and big brothers Henry and John have decided that they should keep her.
- Calix Wilding was born November 20. He is the son of Lucas and Kelsey Wilding. Welcoming him home was big sister Colby.

## Financial Update-

October receipts:	\$83,876
October expenses:	\$75,918
YTD Receipts:	\$692,268
YTD Expenses:	\$684,994
Mortgage balance as of October 26:	\$497,600.

## 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, Debbie Dance for details. 319-266-1713 or email [debbie.dance@aboutfirst.com](mailto:debbie.dance@aboutfirst.com).

## Attendance- week ending

	11/5	11/12	11/19	11/26
Transformation	118	86	108	67
Traditional 8:30	144	113	154	128
Traditional 11:00	110	76	106	112
FUSION	25	17	20	x

# First United Methodist Church

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aboutFirst (USPS 671-710)  
is published monthly by  
First United Methodist Church  
718 Clay Street  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613.  
Periodical postage paid at  
Cedar Falls, IA. **POSTMASTER**  
Send changes to:  
aboutFirst  
718 Clay Street  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613



**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](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)

## Staff (in alphabetical order)

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Dee Behr, Parish Visitor  
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John Bentley, Head Custodian

Ted Bonebrake, Chancel Choir director  
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Emily Terpstra, Custodian

January newsletter deadline is December 20.

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