

aboutfirst news

December, 2019 First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



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



ARE WE THERE, YET?
ADVENT TEACHING 2019



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

Are We There Yet?

The season of Advent is a highlight of any congregation's life. It is a time of joy, color, light, and anticipation. And it is a time of worship. This is a season that calls us to fall to our knees in worship of the awesome God. Advent is the season where we remember that God chose to put on flesh and dwell among us. God reached down from incomprehensible heights to touch the life we live. And God chose to be born in the humblest of ways, in a manger, in a barn, or a cave, or on the side of the road. The Creator God Almighty crying in the prickly hay, fodder for animals. There is no proper response, other than worship.

At the same time, Advent is a reminder that there is more to come, that we are on a journey toward a new reality, a new way of being. Advent, from the Latin "venio" – coming and "ad" – to, is more about what is next than what was before. It is less a remembrance of the first coming and more an anticipation of the completion of the promised kingdom. Yet, the seeds of the return and reign of Christ were planted in the first coming, which is why the power of Christmas is so strong. Our constant struggle is to pay attention to the need of the church to anticipate the return of Christ and the fulfillment of the promised kingdom, when our congregation is longing to celebrate Christmas and all the beauty and tradition and sentiment of that season—especially since our culture has been pushing Christmas on us for months now. So, how do we live in the balance? How do we anticipate what is to come, even as we celebrate the traditions and the excitement and the wonder that is Christmas?

The pastors invite you to join us on a journey this Christmas.

Journeying together this Advent+ season will be the whole family of God, the ones who occupy the seats beside you as you gather together for this shared experience. Present and not present, these are the ones who occupy your minds and hearts as you seek this new place, this new way of being together. Invariably, when you travel together, some are more anxious than others. Some may prefer to stay where they are. Others are so hopeful of what is to come that they may begin to overwhelm the rest. Some just want the journey to be over. Others are content to enjoy the ride. Journeys impact us in different ways. But even with the best of intentions and the joy of community, it won't be long before someone says, "Are we there yet?"



This season, let that question not be a whine from an uncomfortable back seat or an impatient traveler; let it be a plea for God to break into our reality and bring us the glorious fulfillment of the promise; let it be a hope that God remains in charge, despite the trouble we see in the landscape through which we travel; let it be a call to work and worship in this season of light.

Are We There Yet?

Be Bold, Be Strong,
Pastor Matt German

Newcomers' Coffee with the Pastors -Dec 1

If you are new or newer to First United Methodist Church, our pastors want to get to know you! Come have a coffee with the pastors on Sunday, December 1, 10 at 9:45 in the chapel to hear about what is happening at First United Methodist Church and how you can begin to take next steps in getting connected. We look forward to seeing you there!

Celebrate the Christmas Season

Kid's Christmas Program

Christmas Program: Mark your calendar for our Children's Christmas Program on Sunday, Dec 8th. This year our program will be incorporated into the first half of the 11:00 church service. Be sure to come and see our children share the Christmas story! They are working hard and will be excited to share the morning with you.



2 Chances to Hear the Bells at Christmas

Bell Choir Concert - A Christmas Tradition

when: Sunday, December 8, 3:00p.m.

where: FirstUMC CF sanctuary

For some of us, the Christmas season doesn't really start until they've heard the bells. For more than forty years our First UMC bell choirs have been blessing the community with a concert of Christmas music. The concert is free - it is our bell choirs' gift to you. The concert will feature works performed by our two full choirs, a small group, and a solo ringer. Come enjoy some Christmas classics, and some tunes you may not know as well, all played on our 5-octave set of Schulmerich English handbells. Everyone is welcome and invited: bring your friends and neighbors.

Holidays in Bronze 20th Anniversary Concert

Tuesday, December 17th 7:00 pm

It has been 20 years since our bell choir directors Aaron Hansen and Nancy Standafer recorded their first CD of bell music, "Holidays in Bronze". To celebrate this milestone, Aaron and Nancy invite you to share an evening with them, and enjoy a live performance of music from the CD. Come and hear some Holiday music right before Christmas!



Miss A Sermon?

If you miss a Sunday message from Pator Scott or Pastor Matt, you'll find it on our youtube channel.

Go to our website at aboutfirst.com and scroll down to the "sermons" graphic, which will link you to all of our sermons and public videos.

Hanging of the Greens

Everyone is invited to be part of First United Methodist Church's Annual Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 7 at 9 a.m. Bring your family and friends for church decorating fun. We will be done by noon or earlier. If you listen closely you might hear a Christmas song or two being sung.

It's Christmas Tree Time!

It is that time of the year again to turn the Gathering Place into a Christmas Tree forest. You are welcome (and encouraged!) to bring a tree and decorate it. The display will be in our Gathering Space during the month of December. For questions talk to Emily, one of our amazing church custodians.

Poinsettia Orders

Your purchase in memory or honor of someone will be acknowledged using the Poinsettia Order Envelope at the Welcome Center. Each poinsettia costs \$12. 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. Deadline to order is December 18 to get the information in the Sunday morning bulletin insert on December 22. Again this year, we would like to encourage you to leave your Poinsettias through Christmas Eve.

4 Worship Page

Advent Dates:

Dec 7 - Hanging of the Greens, 9:00am

Dec 8 - Kids' Christmas Program,
11:00 worship

Dec 8 - Christmas Bell Concert,
3:00 in the sanctuary

Dec 15 - Christmas Cantata, sanctuary

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Services:

We offer three candlelight services on Christmas Eve. We encourage you to invite your family and friends as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

4:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

9:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

New Year Sunday

Sunday December 29, we will have one combined service at 10:00 in the sanctuary.

Usher Team Opening

Join the usher team at 11:00

We are in need of an usher to join the 11:00 usher team for the months of September/January/May. Please contact Marilyn Teig.



Seven Lessons and Carols Christmas Cantata

It's the most wonderful time of the year to worship the Lord with singing. On the third Sunday of Advent, our Chancel Choir will be presenting Seven Lessons and Carols. In the spoken word of scripture, and sung word of carols, we'll re-live the teachings of creation, the fall of man and the birth of Christ. The Christmas Cantata will be presented in our Traditional Worship services on Sunday, December 15. Please join us for this special celebration of the Advent season.

Three Ten Connect

Here's an easy way to welcome our guests in Sunday worship: **3 • 10 • Connect.**

It's simple: in the **first three minutes** after a worship service has ended, look around in a **ten-foot radius** and see if there's someone you don't know. If so, stick out your hand and say "hi". Make a little conversation. Ask them if they have any questions about our church, and if so, volunteer to introduce them to a pastor, a staff person, or someone you know to have the answer. Then, be sure to say that you, personally, are glad that they are here, and that you hope to see them again. It's that easy. **3 • 10 • Connect.**

First UMC Live Online

The whole world - including you - can watch our Sunday sermons live, online at our First UMC facebook page. The video stream for Transformation worship starts around 8:55, and the Traditional worship stream starts around 10:25. Please, if you can't make it in-person, consider watching on Facebook!



Also, be aware that this means there are live cameras in our worship spaces. Our cameras are usually positioned to show only the morning's speaker, but it is possible that the congregation may also appear in the livestream. If, for any reason you wish to ensure that you do not appear on-camera, please ask our camera operator for a safe place to sit.

The Warmth of a Family

November 22 was National Adoption Day, and at the Black Hawk County Courthouse, 26 children and youth were legally adopted into 17 families. It's an annual event which recognizes the love and acceptance of adoptive parents, and celebrates that the children have found a permanent place in a forever family. Many adoptive children have led lives of uncertainty, and formal adoption brings a sense of stability and belonging. It's a milestone in their lives.

Our First UMC Quilters and Stitchers were there. In one of the quietest, but most moving, missions of our church, the Quilters gave each of the 26 kids a hand-made quilt. For some of them, it may be one of just a few things that they can call their own. When you consider the time and effort it takes to make a quilt, it is a very special gift, indeed.



Earlier in the week, new First UMC member Pamela Jones visited our Quilters and Stitchers and helped to choose the quilts for the kids. Pamela is an Adoption Specialist with Four Oaks, the agency sponsoring the local Adoption Day. Pam then took the quilts and included them in the gift bags that were given to every child.

Our prayers and congratulations are with all of the new families.

New Stephen Minister Class Underway



Stephen Ministers are trained Christian caregivers who walk alongside those who are struggling with the situations that life sometimes presents. The hallmarks of a Stephen Minister are faith, confidentiality, and listening. They are a vital piece of our congregational care effort. This fall, we began a new Stephen Ministry training session. Participants in this class are Laura Bruess, Mary Schlicher, Jane Wyckoff, Deb Yankey, Terry Rogers, Jim Reidy, and (not pictured) Martha Kroese.

Angel Tree for Area Families

This year we are again partnering with North Cedar and Lincoln Schools to share a little Christmas love to some families in our own community. The school guidance counselors have provided us with a wish list for families from each school. The Angel Tree and wish list tags are now on display by the sanctuary.

Here's how it works: select a tag, purchase the gift, and return the gift to the church by Wed, December 11. We'd appreciate it if you would wrap it, but you may bring it back unwrapped. Just be sure the tag is securely attached. If you'd prefer not to shop feel free to make a donation and we'll shop for you! (If you write a check please make it out to FUMC with Angel Tree in the memo.) Julie Fee is the contact for the Angel Tree ministries this year. Feel free to direct your questions to her at bjfee@cfu.net or 296-8963.

World's Window Coming December 8

World's Window will be at our church on Sunday, December 8 with all kinds of fair trade items to sell. They will have lovely items for display and sale all morning in the chapel and the Gathering Place. Their mission is to market handcrafted items made by fair trade artisans from economically depressed countries around the world. 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. World's Window will bring many kinds of items including unique Nativity scenes to sell Sunday morning, December 8. There is sure to be something just right for your loved ones this Christmas.



LOVE FIRST BY THE NUMBERS

16,000

That's a low-end estimate of how many cups of coffee we serve in a year of Sundays, and each cup represents a shared conversation or a connection between people

450

volunteer hours reading with kids at Lincoln Elementary School

7200

free community meals served. We host the meal every week, and our partner churches help prepare and serve.

WANT MORE NUMBERS?

Watch the video at

<https://vimeo.com/374413506>

Reduce Your Taxes With A Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA

Did you know that you can reduce your taxes by making a gift directly from your IRA to our church? An IRA gift is a simple and easy way for you to use your IRA to support your favorite ministry.

If you are age 70 ½ or older, you are likely familiar with the IRA required minimum distributions. Each year the IRS requires you to withdraw a certain amount from your IRA whether you need the funds, or not. And, you pay income tax on every distribution you take. For many IRA account holders, the taxes can be a significant and undesirable annual burden.

Many people are discovering that they can make a big difference to help their church with an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution. The IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution provides several benefits. It allows you to transfer up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA directly to charitable organizations. You do not include the distribution in your taxable income, nor are you allowed to deduct the amount as a charitable contribution. You can count the gift as part of your required minimum distribution, which lowers your income and your taxes. This method of charitable giving is especially beneficial for those who do not itemize their tax deductions

How to make an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution

To make an IRA charitable gift, simply contact your IRA custodian and request that an amount be transferred to the First United Methodist Church of Cedar Falls, Iowa. Also, please contact Sue Chizek, the Church's Finance Manager and alert her that a gift is coming from your IRA.

Can I use this same method to make a gift to the Church's Endowment Fund?

Yes. You can use the Qualified Charitable Distribution to make a gift to the Endowment Fund. For an added benefit, consider designating First UMC as a beneficiary of your IRA. Please contact your financial and tax professionals to see how a Qualified Charitable Distribution may benefit you.

What Are Apportionments?

If you pay attention to church finances, you know that "apportionments" are 17% of our budget. Apportionments are the dollars that we send on to the larger United Methodist organization to cover "our share" of things like:

- Iowa Conference Office
- Board of Ordained Ministry, ensures the integrity of our clergy
- Board of Global Ministries, our structure for worldwide missions
- Board of Higher Education, educates and empowers clergy and laity for ministry
- UMCOR, our humanitarian relief organization
- UM Communications, provides for the sharing of resources, news and stories

Dec 3 - Grief Support Session

Where: church parlor

When: 2:00-3:30 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 holiday season. Our next group grief support session will be held on Tuesday, December 3rd from 2:00 to 3:30 pm in the church parlor. Please call Carol through the church office for more information. If you would like some individual support, please call at anytime.

Dec 6 - Parent's Night Out

Where: Gathering Place

When: 6:00-8:00 pm

Pajamas and Pancakes! Drop the kids off with us so that you can have a couple of hours for Christmas shopping, date night, or whatever. Kids can come in super-comfy clothes and we'll feed them pancakes and have some fun. Sponsored by Senior Girl Scout Troop 6581. Event is open to children up to age 12. Send registration form with \$10.00 to:

Linda Kennedy, 943 Parkway Ct., Cedar Falls

Questions: Contact Linda via email at: LK@cfu.net

Dec 17 - Crafters' Corner

Where: church parlor

When: 6:00-8:00pm

Attention crafters! Join us on Tuesday, November 26 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 volunteer your time and talent to make sleep mats for the homeless, handmade essentials for those in need, or prayer shawls. Thank you to all who have donated craft items - we are well stocked and need to use up what we have. Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

Dec 19 - First Friends Potluck

Where: Gathering Place

When: noon - 2:00

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.

Dec 23 - LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30 - 6:00

Donors, cookie bakers, and hosts are needed. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill. Sign up to donate at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org.

Use the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center to let Lisa know if you can donate cookies or chat and serve cookies to the donors for an hour or so.

Would you like to help coordinate these blood drives? Let the church office know. It's pretty easy to find people to provide cookies and to host - often as easy as an email to some of the faithful who almost always plan on it.

Winter Weather Policies

Worship

This is Iowa and winter 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 rest of the day and evening.

Cancellations will be broadcast on both KWWL Channel 7 and KCRG Channel 9 and posted online at aboutfirst.com. We'll also try to get the word out on facebook and twitter. We also ask that you use your best judgement and do not venture out if it is dangerous to do so.

Boy Scout Can Drives

Our chartered Boy Scout Troop is planning monthly can drives to raise money for troop activities. The plan is to collect cans the last Saturday of each month from 9:00-noon in the north parking lot of our church. Save your cans to support the scout programs of our church.

8 Calendar

Recurring Weekly:

Sunday

8:00 prayer in the chapel
8:30 Transformation Worship
8:30 Traditional Service, sanctuary
9:30 Fellowship time, Gathering Place
9:45 Sunday School for All Ages
11:00 Traditional Service
6:30 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary

Tuesday

9:30 Quilters/Stitchers, 059
4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
6:30-8:00 Tuesday Night Fellas, 059
7:00-9:00 AA, 055

Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor
5:15 AA, 055
6:30 WOW AA, 055
7:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal, choir room

Also Scheduled....

SUNDAY December 1

Communion at all services
First Sunday of Advent
9:45 Coffee with the pastor, chapel
9:45 Sunday School for all ages
3:00-5:00 Cub Scouts-Tim Burton, library
6:00-7:30 GS Troop 1871, chapel
6:00 Bear Den, library
7:00 Pack 44 parent meeting, library
7:00-8:00 Troop 44, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY December 2

Stephen Ministry Potluck - Gathering Place

TUESDAY December 3

9:00-noon Quilters/Stitchers, 060
2:00-3:30 Grief support, parlor
6:30 In Mission Together, library

WEDNESDAY December 4

last CrazyFunBusy Wednesday - fall semester
5:00-6:00 Filling Station. Gathering Place
6:00-7:15 More than Moms, parlor
6:00-7:00 BLAST Fellowship Hall
6:00 Youth Group, 3rd floor
6:15-7:30 Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary

THURSDAY December 5

10:00-12:00 Renovare group, chapel
2:00 clergy group, library
5:30 Grief support dinner, parlor
6:30 Trustees, library
7:00 Transformation Band, Fellowship Hall

FRIDAY December 6

5:00-8:00 Parents' Night Out childcare

SATURDAY December 7

9:00 Decorate the church for Christmas
10:30 Cantata rehearsal, sanctuary

SUNDAY December 8

Advent 2
World's Window is here this morning
11:00 Children's Christmas Program, sanct
3:00 Bell Concert, sanctuary
7:00-8:00 Troop 44, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY December 9

9:30-11:00 UMW Board meeting, library
5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, 058
NO HOME Team, chapel

TUESDAY December 10

6:30 Finance Meeting, library

WEDNESDAY December 11

Angel Tree gifts are due today
2:00 communion service at Stanard Care
6:00 Nomination committee, library
7:30-8:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal, sanct

THURSDAY December 12

11:30- 3:00 UMW Christmas lunch

FRIDAY December 13

5:30-7:00 Daisy Troop 4029, library

SATURDAY December 14

8:00 FROSTY 5K - gym
10:30 Cantata rehearsal, sanctuary

SUNDAY December 15

Advent 3
7 lessons and carols at Traditional services
6:00-7:30 GS Troop 1871, chapel
6:30 Christmas Bells rehearsal, sanctuary
7:00-8:00 Troop 44, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY December 16

5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, 058

TUESDAY December 17

5:30 Worship Committee, library
6:30-8:30 Crafter's corner, parlor
7:00-8:00 AA, 055
7:00 Holidays in Bronze 20th Anniversary
Concert, sanctuary

WEDNESDAY December 18

Deadline to order poinsettia
11:00 service at Pinnacle Care
5:15 AA, 055
6:30 WOW AA, 055
7:30-8:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal, sanct

THURSDAY December 19

10:00-12:00 Renovare group, chapel
noon-3:00 First Friends potluck, Gather Plac

FRIDAY December 20

Newsletter deadline

SUNDAY December 22

Advent 4
6:30 Christmas Bells rehearsal, sanctuary
7:00-8:00 Troop 44, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY December 23

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place
NO Stephen Ministry

TUESDAY December 24

Christmas Eve services
4:30, 7:00 & 9:00pm

WEDNESDAY December 25

Christmas Day - office is closed

SUNDAY December 29

10:00 one worship service, only

MONDAY December 30

NO Stephen Ministry

WEDNESDAY January 1

New Years Day - office is closed

Veda Rasmussen Bequest Funds A Multitude of Missions

In June of 2018, the local UMW membership received a very generous bequest of \$41,018.52 from the estate of Veda Rasmussen, a former UMW member. Our UMW unit celebrates Veda's legacy of generosity by being good stewards of this resource. Some of the money has been invested, so that it may grow into a larger mission fund. Other monies have been contributed to organizations which are doing the work of Christ in accordance to the UMW Purpose: "The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a Community of women whose Purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."

The following is an accounting of mission gifts to date:

First UMC icemaker for kitchen	June 2018	2,455.65
First UMC 4 refrigerator shelves for kitchen	June 2018	481.50
Retrieving Freedom Service Dogs, Waverly	October 2018	1,000.00
Jubilee Project, Inc., Sneedsville, TN	October 2018	1,000.00
Kaden's Kloset, Aplington, IA	October 2018	1,000.00
Family & Children's Council, Waterloo	October 2018	1,000.00
Love Inc.,	May 2019	1,000.00
House of Hope, Waterloo	May 2019	1,000.00
Boys & Girls Club, Waterloo	May 2019	1,000.00
Africa University, kitchen construction, Zimbabwe	May 2019	1,000.00
The Job Foundation - Cedar Falls	May 2019	1,000.00
Mitchelville Women's Prison - Bibles	May 2019	1,000.00
UMCOR - Midwest Disaster	May 2019	1,000.00
Iowa United Methodist Church disaster response	May 2019	1,000.00

October Meeting Featured Veterans Programming

Chiquita Loveless serves as the Director for Military and Veteran Student Services at UNI including 13 women and 287 male veterans and dependents. Yolando Loveless, her husband of 34 years, currently serves as the Executive Director of the Black Hawk County VA. Chiquita has served in the U.S. Navy for more than 23 years. She was the first African American to serve on a ship. Both Chiquita and Yolando served in the US Navy Order of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

They are passionate about helping veterans and take great pride in being veterans. Their future goals are breathtaking. They want to see more veterans participate in church worship and to keep praying; continue Operation Christmas (similar to our Angel Tree program); provide for nursing homes (last year our quilters donated 13 quilts that were shared in local nursing homes); and to share love. They are blessed with a new 3500 square foot facility and deciding how to utilize the space.

Chiquita and Yolando have spent their lives serving others. We all walked away from the meeting remembering how much our veterans have given for our freedom and are forever grateful.



December UMW Dates

Dec. 04 - More than Moms, 6:00 p.m.,

Dec. 09 - Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m.,

Dec. 12 - Unit Meeting,

Christmas Luncheon,

11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

save the date

The UMW is preparing to have Mandy Sullivan come share her spiritual ministry with an amazing afternoon covering the subject FAITH OVER FEAR. Accomplish God's best for yourself and learn how to overcome stress, anxiety, and fear. Save the Date April 4, 2020 from 12:30 to 4:00. More information about this exciting event will be coming soon.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Bible Study is taking a break for the winter months.

10 Kids & Education

LOVE FIRST
GATHER, GROW, GO
TOGETHER

LOVE FIRST
BY THE NUMBERS

15

youth confirmed this year

150+

scout meetings held here in 2019

500

we bought a book for every single kid at Lincoln School last year, and also supplied the classroom libraries

WANT MORE NUMBERS?

Watch the video at

<https://vimeo.com/374413506>

Third Grade Bible Class:

Starting in January we will begin the 3rd Grade Family Bible class, which will be a five week course that will meet from 9:45 a.m. – 10:45, you and your child learn how to use the Bible together. Our first class will be Sunday January 5th and we will meet every other Sunday until March 1st. If you have question please contact Jenna Engel at Jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

Jr/Sr High Youth & BLAST Kids Collaborate

B.L.A.S.T. is the name of our Wednesday night program for elementary-aged kids. It stands for Bible Learning And Service Together.

In November, we hit the “Service” and “Together” aspects when our Jr/Sr High Youth groups worked with the BLAST kids to make toys for the dogs and cats at the Humane Society Shelter. It’s a project that drew different groups of young people together, and did something nice for our fuzzy buddies.



Feathers, some fabric scraps, and our young people working together. Figg approves the project.





Explore God’s Heart for the World

Experience God’s heart for all people and encounter the momentum of the World Christian Movement. Perspectives on the World Christian Movement will open your eyes with fresh understanding of God’s unchanging purposes and why they’re so relevant to your life.

Perspectives is a 15 week course for believers from all walks of life. Hear how God continues to work throughout the world. Learn more about God’s kingdom and His glory. Find out what your part is in this exciting movement. Perspectives will help you learn how to live for God’s Kingdom

This year the class will be hosted at Nazareth Lutheran Church on Monday evenings, Jan 20-May 5, 6:00-9:00pm. Register by December 15 for a discounted cost of \$225. First UMC is also offering \$100 scholarships. Register at perspectives.org. For more information, email CFPerspectives@gmail.com or call Maureen Hanson at (319) 988-4492

Locate Yourself in a GPS Group

Whether you’re just starting to explore the faith, or you’re a long-time Christian, we want to help you on your journey to know, love and serve God. In these GPS groups you will Gather, Pray, Support.

Gather

The first component of small groups is fellowship. In your GPS groups, you will enjoy conversation on experience of worship, study on scripture, and laughter with one another.

Pray

Pray is vital to the health of a small group. It is one of the main ways we draw closer to God and one another. Therefore, you will spend extended time in prayer as a group.

Support

A crucial part of the early Methodist movement was to “watch over one another in love,” to support and encourage one another in their lives with God.

GPS Groups are structured to enable Gathering, Praying and Support with and for each other. If you are interested in being a part of a GPS group, give your contact information to Pastor Scott.



Resources for Study Groups

We have some exciting news for our small group leaders and Sunday school teachers. We have a subscription to United Methodist Resource Center. This resource center has an easy to use online catalog. If you are in leading a Sunday school class, small group or want to find a study to do on your own please be sure to check it out at www.igrc.org/UMRC.

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 Jenna Engel. We’ll help you get the materials, reserve meeting space, get your group on the church calendar, and we’ll even publicize your study.

12 Christmas Eve Mission Offering

Cedar Valley Angels - Love Box Program

Our Christmas Eve mission focus is a new one for First UMC: Cedar Valley Angels. CVA is an organization which provides support to the children and families in the foster-care system.

The Need:

Children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care due to neglect, abandonment, or because they are the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. When children are removed from the home, they are confused and upset, and they need the temporary protection and nurturing that a foster family can provide.

But placing a child in foster care is not the end of the story. Foster families often find their resources stretched further than they expected, and the demands of parenting a foster child often stress other family relationships. Consider:

- Nationally, 50% of the homeless population spent time in foster care
- only about 50% of those who age-out of the foster system will graduate high school

It is clear that both the foster kids and the foster families can use some additional support.



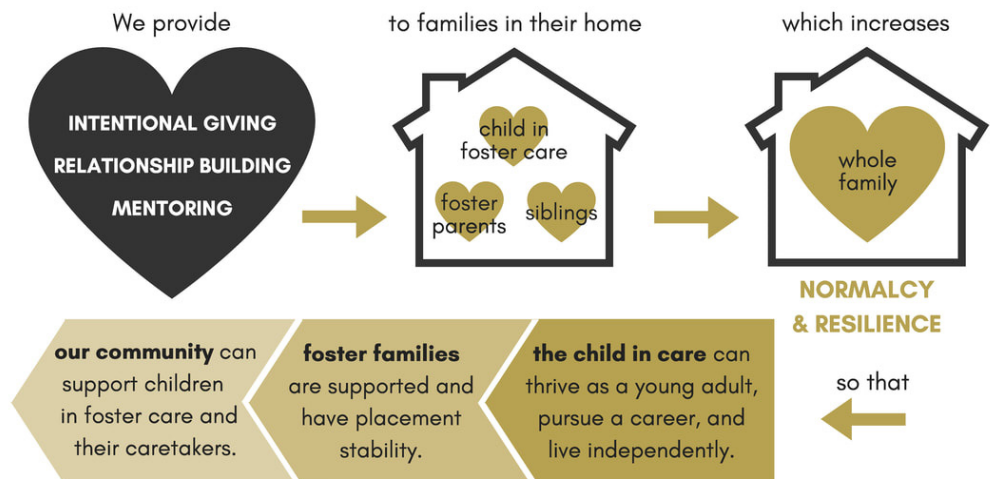
The Solution:

We know that trauma can be healed in the context of healthy, supportive relationships. Cedar Valley Angels' Love Box program provides foster families with community and holistic support so that they can continue to do the important and meaningful work of being a foster parent. This December, we're directing our mission efforts to the CVA's Love Box program, and we encourage you to give generously. Love Box support includes: enrichment activities, encouraging notes, gift cards, household supplies, groceries, clothing, mentorship, and a supportive community.

We also encourage you to consider becoming a Love Box volunteer. Volunteers make up a Love Box group, which will be matched with a local foster family based on compatibility and scope of needs. Being a Love Box volunteer is a one-year commitment to be present in the life of a foster family. When our families are matched with committed volunteers who show up monthly, parents feel more supported and children gain a greater sense of belonging and self-confidence.

We encourage you to become involved, and to explore more at cedarvalleyangels.org.

LOVE BOX PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL



Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

There is always a need for fabric to make school bags and other stitching projects. The Quilters & Stitchers are looking for durable/sturdy material for school bags. They also could use decent sized lengths of cotton quilting fabric for comfort quilts, baptism quilts, quilts for foster kids, and of course - for the beautiful items they make for the quilt auction each November. There is a designated bin for your quality fabric donation in the church collection site on the main level of the church in the little hall across from the drinking fountain.

email Prayer Chain

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

Hospital Reminder

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

SoDA Volunteers

Would you be interested in becoming a Social Determinants Advocate (SoDA) Volunteer? A SoDA is a specially trained volunteer who works in a clinic or doctor's office to help patients who have identified some needs or barriers to staying healthy. Issues commonly identified are ability to afford medications, lack of transportation, of access to healthy food or services. The Social Determinants Advocates assist patients to navigate the system and connect with services that can help them. You don't have to have a healthcare background but it can help to have some familiarity with the health system. Martha Kroese currently works as a SoDA and can share her experience if you are interested. You would receive 15-18 hours of training, much of which focuses on community resources. Generally, the SoDAs are scheduled in the clinic once a week for about 3-4 hours at time. Please contact Rus DeBonis if you would like more information at 319-226-2022 or ruselle.debonis@allencollege.edu

Be a Blessing to Someone - Love INC

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

You can be a blessing to someone today by volunteering with Love INC as a Clearinghouse or Community volunteer. If you're interested in serving with Love INC, fill out a volunteer form found at loveinccv.org or call 266-1264.

Help the Wee Ones

Help the Wee Ones

Donate to our Wee Care closet. 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 in our own community 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.

News From "The Connection"

Does First UMC give you a feeling that you're connected to something big? The United Methodist Church is a global faith community.

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

For global UMC news: umc.org

14 How To Help

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

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

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

How can you help?

Worship:

Prayer Team

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

Sunday Morning Hospitality

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

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2020 is at the Welcome Center. Sign up now to recognize a special date or to honor a loved one with flowers for the altar. Have the flowers delivered to the church on Friday, please.

Outreach & Missions:

Community Meal

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

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

Note: no community meal December 24

Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

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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.

Thank You

Thank you for the cards from the church staff. And for the red roses delivered to Donna and I for our 81st birthdays by Jane Wyckoff. What a joy to have her pay us a visit.

In God's love,
Donna and Irv Tiller

I received my 4th rose from Jane on the 3rd of November. It was a beautiful thing, Yellow with purple trimmings around it? Do these colors ring a bell with anyone?

I want to thank Jane for the rose, and the staff of First UMC for the card.

Bud Stock.

Greetings Church Family,

I am home now and on my way to a full recovery. I still have a ways to go but with your support I will make it. The good wishes and prayers from so many of you through phone calls, emails, texts, flowers, and gifts were sometimes a bit overwhelming. Many of the folks at New Aldaya commented on the number of cards and they just kept coming. It is a bit humbling to feel the love and prayers from a congregation so in tune to its members. I am so blessed to be a member of Cedar Falls First. Sincere appreciation goes out to each and every one of you.

Stephanie Buchs

Congregational Care Team Thanks

We want to take this opportunity to thank all those in our church family who have been caring for others in one way or another during the past year. We have individuals in areas of grief support, Stephen Ministry, affirmation, nursing home visitation, 80+ birthday roses, and those who bake. We thank all the volunteers who have so lovingly given many hours for these ministries. We also thank all members who quietly care for others in their own ways. You are showing others the face of Christ each time you send a card, say a prayer, visit someone who is home bound, or extend a helping hand. May God bless you this Christmas season!

Sympathy to:

- Laura Wilson and her family on the death of her father.
- Hope Timmerman and her family on the death of her grandmother.
- Larry Petersen and his family on the loss of his nephew.
- Christine Belz and her family on the loss of her brother on October 16, and on the loss of her husband, Carl, on November 14.
- Family and friends of Gloria Hanson. Gloria passed away November 9.

Baptism

We welcomed Griffin Joseph Powers into our family of faith. Griffin was baptized on November 17. His parents are Bill and Amy Powers.

Welcome New Members

Pam Jones

Bill Jones

Elizabeth Jones

Phoenix Jones

Karen Nelson

Gary Nelson

Lorraine Parker

Ramona Lewis

Dan Ciha

Kay Ciha

Jeremy Zehr

Financial Update

as of Nov 24

YTD Received:	\$676,798
YTD Budget Needs:	\$762,081
End of Year Budget Needs	\$843,154
Mortgage Balance	\$51,263

Mobile Giving Options Available

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

Consider Automatic Giving

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

Attendance- week ending

	11/3	11/10	11/17	11/24
Fusion (Wednesday)	x	16	13	8
Transformation	79	72	75	89
Traditional 8:30	140	151	155	113
Traditional 11:00	104	99	88	112

First United Methodist Church

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First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



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

Bus rides are available for the 11:00 Sunday service. Our bus is wheelchair-accessible.
Child care is provided in the nursery for infants and babies for Sunday Services.

Spreading the Word

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

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

Our Pastors

Scott Kober, Lead Pastor, scott.kober@aboutfirst.com

Matt German, Associate Pastor, matt.german@aboutfirst.com

Staff (in alphabetical order)

Sam Barr, Transformation Music Coordinator

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

John Bentley, Head Custodian

Susan Chizek, Finance Manager
susan.chizek@aboutfirst.com

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

Lisa Congdon, Office Ministry Coordinator
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Haleigh Derhammer, Middle School Youth
youth@aboutfirst.com

Carol Dick, Parish/Grief Support Coordinator
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Jenna Engel, Christian Education Coordinator
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Bevan Lucas, Music Ministry Coordinator

Lorin Schofield, High School Youth
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Doug Shaffer, Organist
musicman52151@gmail.com

Emily Terpstra, Custodian

Jane Wyckoff, Parish Visitor