



aboutfirst news

INCARNATION

December, 2020 First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls
Love First. Let's Gather, Grow, Go Together

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issue 242, December, 2020

First United Methodist Church
718 Clay Street
Cedar Falls, Iowa, 50613
aboutfirst.com

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Cover Image: Adobe Stock



Incarnation: Experience the Power of Christmas

His parents gave him the name Jesus. But the prophets, the shepherds, the wise men, and the angels addressed him by other names. They called him Lord, Messiah, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, and Word Made Flesh.

There is a reason that people flock to the church on Christmas Eve. It is when we acknowledge that hope was born that night over 2000 years ago. I mean...hope... doesn't that sound good to you? We need this message more than ever. The season of advent prepares our hearts to receive this Good News that has the power to change our lives. We will tap into that power this advent season and it will lead us into the New Year. There is POWER in the name of Jesus!!! This advent we will reclaim that power by examining all the names given to Jesus and why they weren't just significant in biblical times, but why they are absolutely current events today.

- November 29th- Presidents and Kings
- December 6th- Savior and Need for Saving
- December 13th- Emmanuel in the Midst of Pandemic
- December 20th- Light of the World/Word Made Flesh
- December 24th- Christmas Eve

Now more than ever, we invite you to reflect upon the significance of the Christ-child for our lives and the world today. Join us this advent season!

Be Bold, Be Strong,

Rev. Matt German

Join us for a Drive-In Live Nativity!

Capture the Christmas spirit this year by visiting a COVID-safe event with your family from the comfort and safety of your own car. We are hosting a Drive-In Live Nativity on Wednesday, Dec. 16 from 6 - 7 p.m. Experience the real meaning of the season with lights, music, live animals and a scene from the Christmas Story!

13th Month Generosity Challenge

When we think of God's generosity it seems to stir our own generosity. As we look to the coming year, might each of us consider making a generous and extra gift to our church in 2020?

Would you consider making a year-end donation of a thirteenth month of your families monthly giving? So, if you gave \$200 per month to the church, what about having the capacity to make a Christmas gift of \$200 over and beyond your December regular offering. Think of all the wonderful things we could accomplish in the coming year!

So there's the ask, add a 13th month to the calendar in 2020? We may not be able to do that literally, but we could figuratively. It certainly won't work for everyone, but it might for many. And imagine what great ministry we could do, what lives we could change with a 13th month.



UMW Inducts New Officers for 2021

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.

Our local Unit's Board met on November 9th in person at the church. An election of officers was held for the next year 2021.

President: Chris Werling

Vice President: was vacant the day of the election, but has since been filled by Jan Benson

Secretary: Pauline Harding

Treasurer: Harriett McMahill

Nominations Chair: Pauline Harding

The following positions on UMW's Board also were acknowledged:

Mission Coordinators:

Spiritual Growth: Marlys Simpson

Social Action: Donna Hoffman

Education & Interpretation: Stephanie Buchs

Membership Nurture: Ruth Tucker

Program Resources: Marlys Simpson

LCR's: Maxine Kehret, Gayle Bruene, and Donna Wede Circle Chair's:

Deborah: Sandy Simpson

Hearts & Hands: Karen Page

Joy: Stephanie Buchs

Mary: Lorna Ericson

More Than Moms: Nancy Fransdal

Bereavement Chair: Jan Benson

Memorials Chair: Ruth Tucker

Reading Program: Arlene Fleming

Cards: Marilyn Roudebush

Historian: Marlys Simpson

Yearbook: Ruth Tucker

Friends, we recognize the gifts of these persons to lead the United Methodist Women in 2021! Let us do all we can to assist and encourage them in the responsibilities to which they have been called. Please join me in the following blessing and prayer:

Gracious God, pour out your blessings upon these your servants who have been given particular ministries in your church. Grant them grace to give themselves wholeheartedly in your service. Let them share in the ministry of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Pastor Scott

Children's Advent Opportunities

We have 17 Advent calendars left. If you and your family would like one let Jenna Engel know. You can email her at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

Be sure to tune in on our church Facebook page at 9:30 for Advent Sunday School videos. Jenna and a special guest will be delivering the Christmas story as we make our way through this Advent season.

Girl Scout Cookie Sale News

Starting December 18, 2020 Girl Scouts will be taking orders in-person and online. Cookies will arrive the first week of February 2021. Troop 6581 (Linda Kennedy's girls) is planning a Drive-Thru Cookie Booth at FUMC the first weekend of Feb. (more details TBA). We will have the full line-up of cookies, including the Lemon-ups, Trefoils, Do-Si-Dos, Samoas, Tagalongs, Thin Mints, & S'mores - all @ \$5.00/box. The Toffee-tastic (gluten free) are \$6.00/box.

Any questions, feel free to contact Linda Kennedy - LK@CFU.NET

Pepper Jelly for Sale

There are over 40 jars of pepper jelly that was made this fall ready to be sold! We have several jar sizes: pint, half-pint, and very small jars. The price is what you wish to give - a free-will offering. After you order, the jelly can be picked up at church, at Karen's home, or it can be delivered to you. All profits will go to our local UMW to help make up for loss of income during the pandemic. If money remains after pledges are paid and expenses taken care of, it will go to the stated mission of United Methodist Women: to help women, children and youth.

To order contact Karen Page by phone: 319-230-7200 - call or text. E-mail at kp224@cfu.net. You can also drop a note at the church office and Lisa will see that the note gets to Karen.

Join the Facebook Group

We have created a Facebook group called **First Friends and Family** to allow everyone to interact and share the ways they are finding to Love First. This group was developed so we as a church family could stay connected while we are social distancing. Head over to our church Facebook page, select 'visit group'. You should find the button under the banner. Want to join? Click the member request button and we will be sure to add you, or send a note to Chris or Jenna and we'll connect you.



**Newcomers' Coffee
with the Pastors -
Dec. 20, 9:30 am**

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 20th on Zoom 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 Christmas With Music

The holiday season is a special time of the year where we gather with friends and family. Even though we are living in a time of chaos we find hope and peace in remembering the birth of Christ. As any other year, First United Methodist Church is celebrating Christmas with the music of the season. Join us on Facebook page and Youtube for:

Bells Concert: December 6, 7:pm

Hymns of Hope: December 13, 2:pm

Mission Ingathering 2020 - Covid Edition

Cedar Falls Site Report

The drive through process worked great. We collected items from 76 churches and had 23 people helping that morning. Most of the boxes were packaged securely and were able to be loaded directly into the trailer. We operated from under the canopy of the church. There were very few problems with remittance forms. We had room on the truck so we were able to collect several items that were not on our list but were items churches had for Midwest Mission. Each car was met with a smile and unloaded quickly. There was very little waiting. Chantel from Midwest Mission met each car with a smile and a thank you.

Total cash and checks =	\$28,093.17	(2019 - \$46,028.72)
Total in kind =	\$63,708.50	(2019 - \$81,808.50)
Total special activities =	\$ 0	(2019 - \$1,286.76)
Total =	\$91,801.67	(2019 - \$129,123.98)

I was pleasantly surprised by our accomplishments in the middle of this pandemic. We had wonderful weather. We were all done by noon. I will be anxious to hear how the shipment was received at Midwest Mission. Packing the in-kind boxes directly from cars to the trailer made the process WAY easier! If it worked okay for Midwest Mission, we may no longer need to repack EVERYTHING at the school, we could have all of our activities at the church.

Special thanks to Stephanie and Jim Buchs for providing and serving morning coffee and treats. Methodists can get lots of work done on a bit of sugar and caffeine!

Jan Benson

SUNDAY MORNING

- 8:30 **Traditional Worship Service** - join us on the livestream
- 9:30 **Gathering [Virtual] Space** - discussion and virtual fellowship
- 9:35 **Sunday School** - virtual Sunday School, join us online!
- 10:00 **Transformation Worship Service** - on the livestream

Children's Sunday School Online

Sunday School will be virtual this winter. You can join us on our Facebook page where we will go live at 9:35. During our time together we will have a mini-lesson and an activity. Supply packets will be available for you to pick up ahead of time. We hope that you will follow along with us on Sunday morning.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

your church night

Have your mid-week church night online for a quick and easy connection and spiritual pick-me-up. Tune in each Wednesday night at 6:30 on Facebook. Be sure to use the comments to tell us that you're watching, share some discussion, and to say "Hi" to your friends from First UMC.

Dec. 2: Haleigh, Lorrin and Jenna will be talking about Christmas Traditions. We will also be making ornaments. This will be live over Facebook.

Dec. 9: Haleigh, Lorrin and Jenna will be going live on Facebook.

Dec. 16: Live Nativity 6-7 pm at the church.

Dec. 23: Three youth boys will be reading the Night Before Christmas.

Dec. 30: Interview (still need a guest) Jenna will be talking about new year resolutions.

Fusion Tonight: from the Front Lines

Isolation hasn't been an option for everyone in this pandemic: public safety officers, teachers, healthcare workers, grocery store workers, and others have had no choice but to keep working in high-exposure jobs. Beginning in January, we'll hear stories from these front-line workers at our weekly worship talk show, Fusion Tonight.

Our fall season of Fusion Tonight has two more weeks remaining and we'll welcome two great guests: Becca Nims on December 9, and Rev. Steve Hansen on December 16. Fusion is broadcast Wednesday nights at 7:15 on Facebook & Youtube.





Attention Volunteers!

As the volunteer callers have been trying to contact people, they are finding several whose phones are disconnected, probably because they have switched to cell phones. Please remember to contact the church office if your phone number or address has changed.

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 over 30 that partner with Love INC..

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

Send a Card or Note

Many care facilities are not allowing visitors, even family. Send a card or a letter to our friends who are isolated right now. Phone calls and cards are also much appreciated for those who are staying home. Think of who sits around you in worship or in a group, and give them a call or a card. We still have updated photo directories at our Welcome Center. Pick one up Monday-Friday.

Doris Crandall, Jeaneene Kemmerer,
Marilyn Pape
Martin Suites
420 E. 11th St, Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Marlys Cook, Faye Rohwedder
Stanard Assisted Living
420 E. 11th St, Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Wanda Anderson, Marian Christiason,
Ruth Gooden, Mardy Hermann,
Homer Leymaster
Windhaven Assisted Living
5500 S. Main St, Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Gil Hewett, Joe Nelson, Lura Treloar,
Ellen Opsal
Deery Suites
5307 Caraway Lane,
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

LaVonne Neese, Irene Raub,
Dotty Rokes
Thalman Square
5500 S. Main St, Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Marilyn Geesaman, Virginia Van Tassel
Nation Cottage
5111 Caraway Lane,
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Vivian Hill, Rudy Grapp
New Aldaya Lifescapes
7517 University Ave,
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Martha Anderson, Darlene Jordan,
Perry Thurman
Pinnacle Care
1223 Prairie View Rd,
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Linda Rundall
Sunrise Hill Care & Rehab Center
909 6th St, Traer, IA 50675

Noreen Roth
Good Neighbor Society
105 McCarren Dr,
Manchester, IA 52057

Darlene Prashak
Country Meadow Place
17396 Kingbird Ave #306
Mason City, IA 50401

Grief Support Session Canceled

Due to the current COVID-19 conditions, we will NOT hold a group grief support session in December. We know the holidays will be especially difficult for those who grieve. If you would like some extra support, please call the church office at 266-1713 and you will be directed. Our thoughts and prayers are sent your way this Christmas. May the Lord bless you with peace and comfort.

December 22 - Crafters' Corner

Where: Gathering Place

When: 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Attention crafters! Join us on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00-8:00 in the Gathering Place. 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. Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

December 28- LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30pm - 6:00pm

Our monthly Blood Drive will be Monday, December 28 from 12:30-6:00. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill, and the need is great. Sign up to donate at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org.

Gathering [Virtual] Space

Where: Gathering Place

When: 9:30 Sunday's on Zoom

We miss you! We would love to see you in our Gathering [Virtual] Space. Here we will check in with one another, discuss the passage, and any take-aways you may have had from the sermon. Jenna Engel will be leading the discussion. Email jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com for the zoom link.

Fast Fellowship

Where: In your car, under the portico

When: TBD

Be sure to keep an eye out for Fast Fellowship. Where, you will get to see some familiar faces and hear some favorite memories.



Christmas Eve Service

Where: Facebook

When: Dec. 24, 3:00pm, 4:00pm, 7:00pm

We will celebrate virtually this year for our Christmas Eve Service! Join us on Facebook Christmas Eve at 4pm and 7pm. It will also stream on our YouTube Channel beginning Christmas Eve 3pm.

Give Through Our Website or Your Phone

Online giving is great for you, because you can do it any time, any place, and you don't need to carry cash to church. Recurring (automatic) giving is great for you, because you won't have to try to remember to write the check. Recurring giving is also great for the church because it provides a predictable income stream for budgeting and planning purposes.

Our secure online giving portal allows you to make one-time offerings, or to set up a recurring gift. Check it out today.

<http://aboutfirst.com/giving>

or, download the GivePlus app to your mobile device and give directly from your phone. Available for androids and i-people.

GIVE PLUS⁺
A VANCO COMPANY

Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

There is always a need for durable/sturdy fabric to make school bags and other stitching projects. The Stitches & Quilters also could use decent sized lengths of cotton quilting fabric for comfort quilts, baptism quilts, and quilts for foster kids, as well as school bags for Midwest Mission. 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.



QUILT FOR AUCTION

Here's a fun quilt that will be finished just in time for Christmas! Santas, elves, trees & gingerbread in your favorite green and red Christmas colors. At 48 x 56, this quilt makes a great wall hanging, or keep it on the couch for some extra snuggling. The December quilt auction opens Tuesday, December 1, and closes Tuesday, December 22. Handmade with love from our First UMC Quilters & Stitches.

These quilts can be yours in the December Quilt Auction. Auction is online only at aboutfirstcom. Available for bids December 1 - 22. Proceeds from quilt auction support the First UMC Mission of the Month.



Holiday Cheer!

With the holidays approaching we want to spread some cheer. With 2020 being challenging, we need you to help get this done! Please write a card, a letter, color or draw a picture. Drop them off in the office with Jenna. Think about the smiles and holiday happiness you will be bringing to someone who might be in need of personal connections during this time of their church family. She will then send them out to our members along with a sticker that has been designed by one of our youth, Tula Greuel.

Reaching Out

Christmas is an extra caring time of the year. We all look forward to and need pats on the back, smiles, hugs, or whatever says "You are cared about and appreciated". Straight A students get compliments and good athletes receive cheers. Even if we are not outstanding at anything, we need affirmation of our intrinsic worth --- a person created in God's image and loved by him. All of us need positive encouragement.

Stephen Ministers are trained to not only help people going through a tough time find strength to move on into better times, but also to help them feel appreciated--feel better about themselves.

As you go through the Advent season and close out 2020, we pray you feel appreciated, encouraged and know we are willing to support you in your tough times.

Thank you to our church family for your prayers for this important ministry throughout this year.

The FUMC Stephen Ministry Team



Miss A Sermon?

If you miss a Sunday message from Pastor 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.



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 FIRST
GATHER, GROW, GO
TOGETHER



ANGEL TREE

for Area Families

This year the First United Methodist Church is 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.

Due to COVID 19 and our shut down, we will be doing things a little differently. There will still be tags on a tree in the Gathering Place - near the front entrance. You may get one from the church without going to the office. This year, you will be able to adopt an entire family. You may want to do this on your own, with a group of friends or with a Sunday school class. We have families ranging from two to seven children. Contact Julie Fee to adopt a family or to get a tag without entering the church. (bjfee@cfu.net or 319-296-8963). I will mail or deliver the tags to you.

Here's how it works: once you have your tag, purchase the gift and return it to the church by Thursday, December 10. We'd appreciate it if you would wrap it, but you may bring it back unwrapped. Please be sure the tag is securely attached. If you'd prefer not to shop feel free to make a donation and volunteers will shop for you! (If you write a check please make it out to FUMC with Angel Tree in the memo.) We can also use \$25.00 Walmart gift cards to give to the families. 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



How to Worship Online

Option 1

Facebook Live Stream

Watch Sunday worship live, as it happens on our First UMC Facebook page.
facebook.com/firstumccfmedia/

Option 2

aboutfirst.com

The online worship page at aboutfirst.com has service videos and worship resources including: links to the teaching scripture passage, kids' video, online sign-in, and online offering.

Option 3

Youtube Channel

Go to aboutfirst.com and click the 'sermons' graphic for a link to our channel

First UMC is on Cable TV

We have an hour timeslot on public access cable TV in both Waterloo and Cedar Falls. Our program includes a Sunday School story for children, a devotion from a church staff member, and the teaching session from last Sunday's service.

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channels 18 and 95.5, Friday @ 8:00 pm, Sunday @ 9:00 am
Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 17, Sundays @ 11:am & 8:pm

Tune In To Evening Reflections

Every evening at 6:00, a church staffer or volunteer will be live on our Facebook page with a reflection for the day. Gather the family and tune in for a word of encouragement and something to think about. Feel free to share comments with others who are watching it's good to hear from each other!

Thank You's:

A big thank you to the church staff for the birthday card and lovely rose. A special thank you to Jane for delivering it.

Elaine Logue

Many thanks for the prayers, cards, and phone calls after my second hip replacement surgery. A church family helps with healing!

Carol Dick

Thanks to the church care team and to Jane for the lovely red birthday rose. It stayed fresh for a long time. We all eagerly await the day when we can be together again.

Love to all, Donna Mincks

Thank you to all of my church friends for the cards and calls. Big thanks to Jane for the beautiful rose for my birthday. Special thank you for all of the notes and going down memory lane with me.

Kay Masters

Sympathy to:

Donna Cuvelier on the death of her brother-in-law, Claude, in October.

Pat Powell on the death of her brother-in-law on October 27.

Family and friends of Gean Durbin. Gean died November 6.

Family and friends of Ruby Hockey. Ruby died November 12.

Trish Edler and her family on the death of her mother, Thelma Macheska.

Welcome to our church family:

Over the last several weeks those who are new or newer to First United Methodist church have gathered for a new members exploration class. We have examined some of the key doctrines of the United Methodist Church and the mission and vision of Cedar Falls First. These folks have declared that they are growing in Christ and want to claim Cedar Falls First as their spiritual home. Not only are the counting on you to help them on the journey, they have promised to help you on your journey of faith as well. Please welcome our Jeremy Grimm, Korin Dusthold, & Kristine Smith: our newest members to First United Methodist Church!

Congratulations to:

Chris and Kim Yockey on the birth of a baby girl. Mila Jo Yockey was born September 20.

Tim and Sami Steffensmeier on the birth of a baby boy. Johnny Lee Steffensmeier was born November 7.

Card shower for Donna Hoffman

Donna Hoffman will celebrate her 90th birthday on December 23! Send birthday cards and greetings to:

Donna Hoffman
6612 Ford Road,
Cedar Falls IA 50613.

Card shower for Dotty Rokes

Dotty Rokes is turning 90 on Dec 4th and her grandkids are wanting to secretly do a card shower for her.

Cards can be sent to:
Dotty Rokes
c/o Delonna Rokes
415 Winding Ridge Rd
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Poinsettia orders

Virus or not, Christmas is coming. Your purchase of a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one will bring some brightness to the season. Each poinsettia costs \$12. Deadline to order is December 17. You may come into the church and find an order form at the Welcome Center or in the office, or you can mail your check to the church and include a note clearly indicating who the poinsettia is in memory or honor of, and by whom.

Hospital reminder

Governmental 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.

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2021 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.



First United Methodist Church

718 Clay Street

Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Phone: 319.266.1713

Fax: 319.266.1715

Email: churchoffice@aboutfirst.com

www.aboutfirst.com

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aboutfirst news

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Worship

Sunday, 8:30 & 10:00 a.m. Livestream on Facebook & in-person

Sunday, noon Video and worship resources at aboutfirst.com

Daily, 6:00 p.m. Reflection and prayers, Facebook Live

Television

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channels 18 or 95.5: Friday @ 8:00 pm, Sunday @ 9:00 am

Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 1: Sundays @ 11:00am & 8:00 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
sam.barr@aboutfirst.com

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
lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Haleigh Derhammer, Middle School Youth
youth@aboutfirst.com

Carol Dick, Grief Support Coordinator
cdick@cfu.net

Jenna Engel, Christian Education Coordinator
jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

Katie Greuel,
Dir. Communications and Online Media
katie.greuel@aboutfirst.com

Bevan Lucas, Music Ministry Coordinator

Lorin Schofield, High School Youth
youth@aboutfirst.com

Doug Shaffer, Organist
musicman52151@gmail.com

Jane Wyckoff, Parish Visitor Coordinator