

aboutfirst news

June, 2020 First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls

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



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issue 236, June 2020

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

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

Where Do We Find God?

I don't know how many preachers you hang out with, I suspect not many. I, on the other hand, do time with preachers. When preachers get together and talk preaching, and during the conversation a good idea comes up you will hear one of them say, "Now that will preach."

Trinity Sunday (June 7, 2020) is the one time in the church year we are given a doctrine to preach by the lectionary readings. But, you will be hard-pressed to find a preacher who says, "Trinity Sunday, now that will preach."

To understand the doctrine of the Trinity, it helps us to ask and answer the question, "Where do we find God?"

It's also a good question for us during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because as individuals we struggle with unknown futures, where do we find God?

Read Psalm 8 (seriously, take the time to read it). Psalm 8 answers our question with a Creator God who is relational, and when we are overwhelmed by our daily struggles, when we get weary, Psalm 8 reminds us how God conceives of us as human beings crowned with glory and honor. When we are startled or overwhelmed Psalm 8 assures us that God makes things work in harmony and that harmony can be found in this overwhelming world.

When I was a child. I remember praying beyond the stars. All my prayers were focused toward the night sky. My mother taught me to pray the Lord's Prayer. And I heard clearly the beginning line Our Father who art in heaven...and I understood then that God was in heaven above. So I would drift off to sleep knowing God was in the sky above. I even moved my bed at one point to the window so I could get a decent view of the night sky after prayer. My prayers were beyond. I had this sense of awe, a sense of wonder.

God is a mystery that is utterly beyond our limited human comprehension and containment. All images of God are inadequate; all of our thoughts are too small. Any attempt to make God fit our values and our projects renders God into little more than an idol that we have made with our hands.

There is a need for a balance in our view of where God is found. God is beyond us, but also near us. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, "God is the beyond in our midst." May we come to know all that God offers.

Pastor Scott

CONGRATULATIONS!

**DALTON FORREST
BLACKFORD**

CEDAR FALLS
HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO ATTEND THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN IOWA TO
STUDY FAMILY
SERVICES AND SCHOOL
COUNSELING



**JAKE
BURGETT**

HUDSON HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO ATTEND
HAWKEYE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE AND THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN IOWA TO
STUDY PSYCHOLOGY



Dalton Forrest Blackford
Son of Randy and Karla Blackford
Cedar Falls High School

Jake Burgett
Son of Monica (Rotsaert) Peterson and
Scott Burgett
Hudson High School

**MADISON
GONNERMAN**

CEDAR FALLS
HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO ATTEND
MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY, MANKATO
TO STUDY BIOMEDICAL
SCIENCES AND PRE-MED



**ETHAN KEELE
KOBER**

CEDAR FALLS
HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO ATTEND
LUTHER COLLEGE TO
STUDY ENGLISH AND
CREATIVE WRITING



Madison Gonnerman
Daughter of Phil and Steph Gonnerman
Cedar Falls High School

Ethan Keele Kober
Son of Scott and Karen Keele Kober
Cedar Falls High School

Benson James Redfern
Son of Don and Lorelei Redfern
Cedar Falls High School

Jake Burgett
Son of Monica Peterson and Scott
Burgett
Hudson High School

**BENSON JAMES
REDFERN**

CEDAR FALLS
HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO JOIN THE
CLASS OF 2024 OF THE
UNITED STATES
MILITARY ACADEMY AT
WEST POINT



**MARISSA
ULRICH**

DENVER HIGH SCHOOL

PLANS TO ATTEND THE
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
TO STUDY BUSINESS



Marissa Ulrich
Daughter of Dave and Dee Ulrich
Denver High School

4 Worship

How to Worship Online

Even though we are maintaining physical distance, we are still a family of faith, and we still have good news to share. Here are three options for online worship with First UMC CF.

option #1 Facebook Live Stream

8:30 Sunday service time, and any time thereafter.

If you have a Facebook account, search Facebook for “Cedar Falls First United Methodist Church”, and at 8:30 on Sunday morning, a live video stream will start. You can watch in real-time and share comments with others who are watching. The video will remain available on Facebook forever.

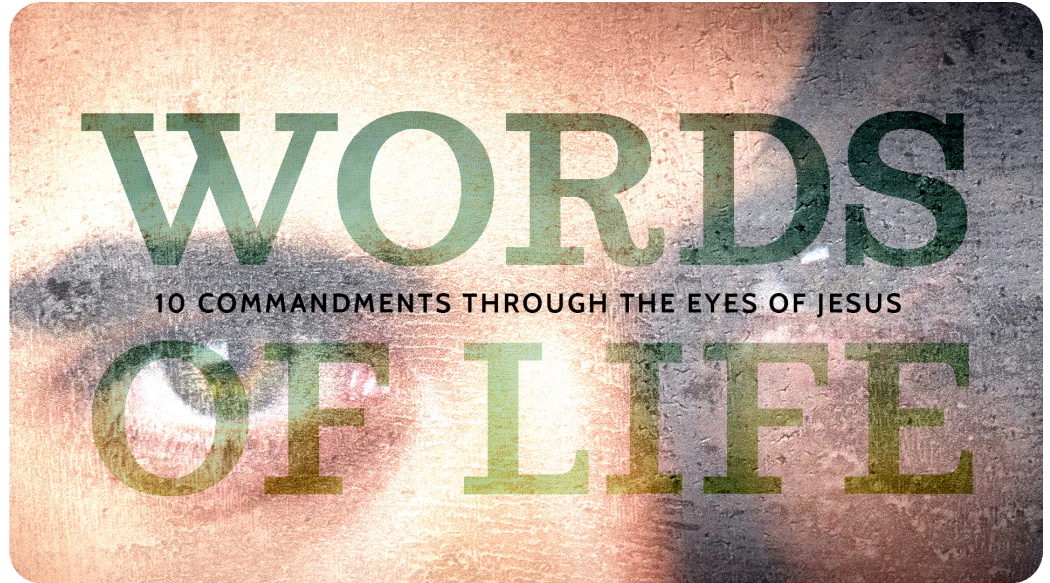
facebook.com/firstumccfmedia/

option #2 aboutfirst.com

by noon Sunday, and any time after. Go to our church website, aboutfirst.com. Just below our church name near the top of your screen, (or in the menu on a mobile device), you'll see the words “worship online”. Point your mouse at those words, and choose a worship date. You'll find that week's worship video, and links to the teaching scripture passage, kids' Sunday School video, and online offering.

option #3 Youtube Channel

by noon Sunday, and any time after. Go to our church website aboutfirst.com and scroll down until you see the “sermons” graphic. Click it, and you will be taken to our Youtube channel which archives all of our sermons for the past several years.



Words of Life

The Ten Commandments Through the Eyes of Jesus

Nearly everyone has heard of the 10 commandments. Most of us learned these in Sunday School as children. They even can be found in plaques and stone in some of our courthouses. These guiding commands have become deeply interwoven with the fabric of society.

It appears to be a list of “thou shalt not’s” found in The Bible. Jesus saw these commandments not as onerous burdens, but as guardrails to help us experience a good and beautiful life. Every “thou shall not” points to a life-giving “thou shalt.” These ancient words were given by a loving God who longs to protect us from harm while pointing toward a deeply meaningful and joyful life.

We want to invite you to join us for worship beginning Sunday June 14th for a new sermon series entitled, “Words of Life–The Ten Commandments Through the Eyes of Jesus.” We will be spending some time on the foundational law of the Old Testament and discuss how Jesus lived this out in his ministry. While non-religious people do not affirm Jesus’ divinity, most find that his ethics are compelling. The ethics of Jesus are based upon the Jewish law primarily lived out through these Ten Commandments. They have been guiding ethics for civilization for hundreds of years.

Though many of us are familiar with these commandments, few of us have heard them through the direct teaching of Christ. This series will take you deep into the life and ethics of Jesus. You just may find it applicable to you today...In fact...I’m counting on it.

Be Bold, Be Strong,
Pastor Matt

Getting Back Together

Our church leaders are listening very closely to Iowa Public Health officials, and to recommendations from our Iowa UMC Conference headquarters on how and when to re-open our church as we continue to work through this COVID-19 pandemic.

A task force has been recruited to help plan our re-opening, and will rely heavily upon information published by Iowa Bishop Laurie Haller's office. There is no one, single plan that fits every church. Small churches will probably be able to open earlier, and larger churches (that's us) which draw larger crowds will have to be much more careful.

Our pastors and our administrative council have targeted **Sunday, July 5** as a date for in-person worship to resume in some form. The Re-Opening Task Force will be working with our worship committee to design worship services which allow us to gather, and still remain safe. Nothing is decided yet, but expect:

- to be asked to wear a mask
- to observe social distancing
- to not have refreshments in the Gathering Place
- changes in how we sing, pray, and offer gifts together
- infection-control measures *may* require us to not use air-conditioning

It is possible that we will limit the number of people who may attend. We ask everyone to make good decisions for themselves based upon their own vulnerability to infection. Live-streamed worship will remain available, and we strongly advise people to stay home and watch online as this pandemic continues to play-out.

An informational forum will be held June 24 for all First UMC members to learn more about our re-opening plans. Watch for more information regarding this forum.

Give Through Website or Your Phone

Give Online: We have implemented the Vanco GivePlus portal to allow online giving through our aboutfirst.com website. Vanco provides secure transaction services to thousands of churches in the USA, including many in our community. It's safe and easy. You'll find it on the giving pages at aboutfirst.com. Try it now.

GivePlus Mobile App: This is secure and easy! Want to be able to give to First UMC with four taps of your thumb? Download the GivePlus app onto your mobile devices. You'll have options for one-time gifts, recurring gifts, general offerings and mission projects. Set up an account, or use your phone camera to scan your debit/credit card. GivePlus app is available for both androids and iphone.



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!

Cancellation News

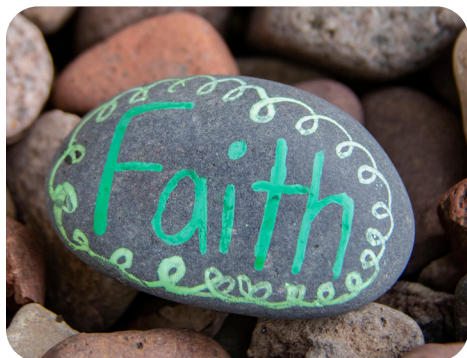
The COVID-19 pandemic is changing many of the events that have been planned for this summer

- Iowa UMW Mission U has been canceled (summer & fall sessions)
- First UMC Rummage Sale has been canceled

Church Office Hours

In an effort to protect our staff, through the month of June, church office hours will remain 8:00 - noon, Monday - Friday.

6 Reaching In & Out



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, Gean Durbin, Jeaneene Kemmerer
Martin Suites
420 E. 11th St, Cedar Falls IA 50613

Marlys Cook, Ruby Hockey,
Richard Hunt, Marilyn Pape
Stanard Assisted Living
420 E. 11th St, Cedar Falls IA 50613

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

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

list continued on next page . . .

LifeServe Blood Drive June 22

Our monthly Blood Drive will be Monday, June 22 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.

A Message From Lifeserve's CEO

These unprecedented times call for extraordinary measures from all of us. Over the past several weeks, our organization has taken significant steps to ensure the safety and adequacy of the blood supply as well as the health of our donors, team members, and volunteers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

We have seen significant showing of donor support over the past few weeks which is keeping our blood supply stable. As the pandemic presses on, we must continue to seek blood donations for the coming days, weeks, and months to ensure that our blood supply remains steady. We are requiring all blood donors to schedule appointments and are not accepting walk-in donations. We are asking our blood donors to pre-screen their temperatures before coming to our blood drive locations to ensure their health and acceptability as a blood donor and to protect our team members.

Blood Drive Frequently Asked Questions

How are we keeping donors safe from COVID-19?

We have doubled (maybe even tripled!) our disinfecting and sanitizing routines. We're also practicing social distancing as recommended by the CDC. That's why it's important for donors to schedule an appointment – we are not accepting walk-in donors so we can ensure a safe environment for donors and our team members. Additionally, LifeServe Blood Center has implemented additional donor screening questions and is monitoring the health of every LifeServe team member.

Are you cleaning everything?

Yes! We have team members dedicated to disinfecting donor chairs, snack areas, equipment, doorknobs, counters, and other high traffic areas. We routinely clean at blood drives, but have doubled our efforts.

How do we know donors are healthy?

Our regular screening process will catch an unwell donor, but to put in an extra line of defense, we have added additional screening questions and procedures regarding donor travel and exposure to COVID-19. We follow all guidelines and criteria for blood donor suitability from the FDA and CDC.

Additionally, we're asking that donors check their temperature before coming to their appointment. Only donors with temperatures under 99.5 will be allowed to donate. If your temperature is higher than 99.5, please cancel your appointment and reschedule for a later date.

How do we know LifeServe team members are healthy?

The health of our team members is extremely important, and another critical asset to ensure the health of our blood donors. LifeServe team members are required to take their temperature before reporting to work. Team members with a fever are required to stay home until they have been fever free (without the use of medication to reduce fever) for 72 hours.



Adopt a Shut-in Church Member

You may have seen news broadcasts about families “adopting” a senior student in the last month for support as he/she graduates. Maybe this would be a good time to “adopt” a church member living in a long-term care facility. Due to the ongoing concerns of COVID-19, facilities will probably be restricting in person visits for quite sometime. If you as an individual or family would like to support someone who is especially isolated right now with a flower, gift basket, cards or phone call, please call Carol at 277-0711 and we will get you started. Thanks for caring!

Support for Those Who Grieve

The loss of a loved one is difficult at any time, but can be magnified by ten right now. Funerals and visitations can be so comforting, but are limited to small groups. Perhaps family cannot visit as they would have before. How can we, as a church family help? Here are a few suggestions:

- Phone someone and listen to his/her story.
- Avoid sharing too much of your own concerns, just listen.
- Send a card, not only a sympathy card, but a follow-up card to let the person know you are still available.
- Offer to bring a meal or treat and make arrangements to drop it off at the door.
- Don't forget those whose loss occurred awhile ago. Grief does not end after a few weeks or months.

Pray for and with your friends. God cares and so should we

FUMC Grief Support Sessions

Due to the COVID-19 guidelines, we will still need to wait to hold our grief support session until later. In the meantime, if you are grieving a loss, please know that your church family cares. You may call the church office at 266-1713 to speak with a pastor or call Carol at 277-0711 for some extra support. You are in the thoughts and prayers of your church family.

... list continued from previous page

LaVonne Neese, Irene Raub,
Dotty Rokes, Ellen Opsal
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, Thelma Macheska, Darlene
Prashak
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

Betty O'Brien
Friendship Village- Lakeview Lodge
312 Southbrook Dr, Waterloo IA 50701

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

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



Vacation Bible School: It Will Happen This Year!

Vacation Bible School!

We will have Vacation Bible School. It will look different this year. Jenna is in the process of putting together a virtual VBS. In the next coming weeks you will see information with an RSVP from Jenna. If you respond, you will receive a packet of materials for each participating child. The RSVP will help Jenna know how many packets to prepare.

More information about the upcoming VBS will be posted onto our Facebook page.

Last Day of Sunday School

Through this spring semester, Jenna has been preparing weekly video Sunday School lessons, which we have posted on our website and YouTube channel. The last day for video Sunday School was May 31.

Have a great summer vacation, and watch for Jenna to show up on Facebook to stay connected with the kiddos and parents.



Backyard Adventures - Summer Camp 2020

Iowa's United Methodist summer camps are closed this year for COVID-19 safety, but that doesn't mean you can't have a great time. Join Iowa UMC camps for virtual camping this summer. :

Backyard Camp is a virtual camping experience for ages 6-15. The dates and camps are:

- June 8th-12th S'Mores Camp Goodness
- June 15th-19th A Taste of Camp
- June 22nd-26th Wild Backyard
- July 6th-10th Farm and Ranch
- July 13th-17th Lego Master

Don't let Summer pass by without joining us virtually for some amazing activities, faith building and fun!

To ensure everyone who wants to is able to participate, you will have a variety options of paying for your virtual camp experience. If you are unable to participate online, you will still have enough information and instruction to be a successful camper!

To register for Backyard Camp, please visit <http://www.iaumc.org/camps> and click on the registration link towards the top of the page. Or call Shannon, the camp registrar, at 515-974-8946 for assistance.



Broadcasting “the Game”

When a TV network or production company comes to Cedar Falls to broadcast a UNI Panther game from the Dome, they roll-in in a big way. They bring trucks for satellite uplinks. They bring trucks full of equipment, and they bring a truck with a mobile broadcast control room. They lay miles of cable. They have microphones, audio mixers, cameras, lights, and a crew to operate all of it. It's a big deal.



Now think about this . . . we do all the same things here at First UMC Cedar Falls, every Sunday morning. Yes, we work on a somewhat smaller scale than ESPN does, but all of those same functions that the big networks have to perform to broadcast the big game, are things that we have to do here, to for our church livestream, our TV show, and our recordings that we post on YouTube.

Through this pandemic shutdown we have improved our livestream production, and when we resume in-person worship, we intend to continue the livestreams as well. So a new opportunity has opened for First UMC friends to become “producers” of our live, Sunday morning broadcasts. We will need four people who will be willing to be trained on some pretty cool equipment for the purpose of sending our message out for the whole world to see.

Once trained, you'll be on-duty about half of the Sundays, and can choose your preference of 8:30 Transformation or 11:00 Traditional worship.

You'll learn to

- set up and shut down the systems
- start and stop the livestream
- pre-roll and post-roll intros and extros
- send graphics and videos to viewers
- live-switch between appropriate video sources

You'll get the lofty title of “Livestream Producer”, and you'll work in a friendly environment where forgiveness is the order of the day.

Your pay is learning new (and possibly marketable) skills, and the satisfaction of enabling others to worship with us from wherever they are in the world.

Interested in learning more? Chris Congdon in the media office would love to talk to you. chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Join the Facebook Group

We have created a new 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.

Q

Can the daily 6pm devotions be seen anywhere other than Facebook.

A

The short answer is “not right now” - here's why. When we began these nightly devotions, we needed a streaming platform that was:

- A)** easy for our staff members to connect to from their homes,
- B)** accessible to a lot of our members and
- C)** low-cost.

Facebook hits all three of these. Every staff member who is producing an evening devotion already has a Facebook account. Nearly 700 people are already followers of our First UMC Facebook page. Facebook is free - it doesn't cost the church anything to send out these livestream devotions, and it doesn't cost you, the viewer, to watch it. For these reasons, we chose Facebook as our streaming service.

Sending these live devotions simultaneously to Facebook and a second or third streaming platform is possible, but will require a purchase of new streaming equipment and/or a paid subscription to a streaming service. We are pleased with the popularity of the 6:00pm devotions, and, frankly, we didn't expect to still be doing them as June begins! So, now we are looking into how to economically livestream to the non-Facebook crowd, but for the moment, Facebook remains our platform for the 6:00pm devotions.

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

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.



These Rocks Rock!

The painted friendship rocks appearing in this issue of AboutFirst have been showing up in the church's border gardens. The anonymous rock painter is bringing smiles and cheer to people at First UMC. Whoever you are, THANK YOU!

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. They'll get back to you in the next couple of days.

Thank You

Thank you to the Congregational Care Team for the lovely red rose and to Jane for bringing it to me. A birthday visit from Jane is special.

Dorothy Addington

To our church family,
We have been blessed with your caring and thoughtfulness. We have received an Easter lily, face masks, phone calls, thinking of you notes, and colorful pictures by young people. There is no way we can thank you enough.

God bless you all,

Al & Kay Messerschmidt

Thank you for the lovely notes you sent to me and for thinking of me in my time of illness.

God bless you all,

Dee Voorhees

Thank you for Jane's January visit with Bill's red rose. For the many kind words and cards from the church. And for the Easter gifts of two masks, plus the lovely butterfly. Such a great idea. We thank you for all of these.

Blessings to all,

Bill and Donna Mincks

I would like to thank my church family for all the cards and memorial gifts in memory of my wife, Ruth.

Jim Peterson

Thank you for the beautiful red rose for my birthday. It is always a pleasure to see Jane Wyckoff and a chance to visit with her.

Jerry Fogleman

Thank you so much for Ike's birthday card. We both appreciate everyone for signing it, and we would also like to thank Jane for the beautiful red rose she delivered. Ike is now 87 and Aileen is 86 and we are thankful for every day above ground.

With love,

Ike & Aileen Anderson

On behalf of our people with handicaps who receive services from North Star and PPI we thank you for the masks from the group who made them. They were very colorful and appreciated. Hopefully the residents will soon be able to join in community activities again. God Bless to you sewers.

JV's Arc of Cedar Valley

Sympathy to:

- Family and friends of Ruth Peterson. Ruth died April 29.
- Family and friends of Margaret Willoughby. Margaret died May 1.
- Roberta Robbins on the death of her mother, Melba Davilla, on May 9.
- Family and friends of Dr. Russell Nielsen. Russ died May 12.
- Karen Nelson and her family on the death of her mother, Betty Lou Dirks, on May 12.
- Family and friends of Beverly Rapp. Beverly died May 13.
- Sue Chizek and her family on the death of her father on May 22. Sue is the Finance Manager of our church. Cards may be sent to the church.

Do We Know How To Reach You?

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.

Visitation of Loved Ones

Because of the COVID-19 virus, our lives have been changed for an undetermined amount of time. As of this writing, nursing homes have been placed on lock-down and assisted living facilities are restricted to family only. Your parish visiting team will be stopping personal one-to-one visits and communion to all of our members. We strongly recommend that you also do not visit anyone at this time for your safety and theirs. Do keep in contact by phone, e-mail, or greeting card. This will be a particularly lonely time for anyone without family around.

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 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.

First United Methodist Church

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aboutfirst news

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Online Worship

Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Sunday, noon

Daily, 6:00pm

Livestream on Facebook

video and worship resources at aboutfirst.com
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 17, 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)

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sam.barr@aboutfirst.com

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dee.behr@aboutfirst.com

John Bentley, Head Custodian

Susan Chizek, Finance Manager
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musicman52151@gmail.com

Emily Terpstra, Custodian

Jane Wyckoff, Parish Visitor