

March 2017
issue 198



ABOUTFIRST

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa



new doors
new life - no debt

Thoughts from Steve

It is hard to believe that eight years ago Janet and I were meeting with the Staff Parish Committee about moving to Cedar Falls. The invitation came as a total surprise to us because we were not on the “move list”. We were settled in at Nevada, and we had just completed a major building project. The biggest challenge was leaving our daughter Kim and son-in-law Josh. They were expecting our first grandchild in May, and lived just blocks from us. So we prayed a lot, because we believed, and still believe God has blessed us throughout our ministry. Both of us felt God’s call to move to Cedar Falls, and we have never looked back.

A couple of weeks after announcing our move to Cedar Falls, I ran into a good friend of mine in Ames. He was Father Ev Hermann who served as priest at St. Thomas Aquinas in Ames. Father Ev and I had become good friends over the years of crossing paths, sharing weddings, events at ISU, Hospital calling and meeting at the Irish Pub called Dublin Bay. Ev was every body’s best friend, and I was fortunate to be part of his circle of pastor friends outside of the church. We became close over the years.

In the hospital hallway, we shared almost simultaneously we were both moving to Cedar Falls. We laughed loud enough that a nurse asked us to go to the family room to talk when we found out he was moving to St. Pats, and I was moving to First. We were going to be neighbors! This was a “God moment” for me in preparing myself to move to Cedar Falls.

After arriving in Cedar Falls, I found myself in the midst of a Building Project that was in its 10th year. There were some obstacles that had to be jumped to make the Building Project a reality. One of the obstacles was purchasing the Sister’s House. St Pats owned the big white house on the north side of our block. It was necessary for us to buy it to move forward. The former priest and the sister had blocked the sale of the house for years.

After a few months of getting up to speed on the Building Project, I decided to go talk to my “old friend” Father Ev. With the building plans under my arm, I went over to St. Pats with the goal of demonstrating to Father Ev that we needed to purchase the Sister’s House. He could tell right away by looking at the plans that we needed the property to move ahead. He told me, “I will assure you that St. Pats will not stand in the way of your Building Project.” And so it was. This was another “God moment” for me in moving to Cedar Falls.

Those first couple of years with Father Ev as a neighbor were a Godsend for me in making the adjustment of moving to Cedar Falls. We planned several joint activities with the hope of St. Pats and First becoming close neighbors. There was a time not so long ago when the churches had picnics and choirs exchanged Sundays. Besides closing the deal on the Sister’s House, we accomplished one other thing - The Procession of the Cross on Good Friday.

The first year we had over 300 participate in the Good Friday walk with the cross. We were both moved by the turn out, and worshipping together on an important day. It even made the front page of the Courier! The next Good Friday, Father Ev was dying of cancer. His last words to me were “Walk for me.” He died shortly after Easter. I miss him.

We have shared many “God moments” in our Building Project. It has been a great journey to walk together. I hope you will generously support our campaign “New Doors, New Life . . . No Debt!”

In His Steps,
Pastor Steve



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Come to the Cross - Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ash Wednesday Communion & Worship -Wednesday, March 1, 7:00 p.m, Fellowship Hall

We invite you to "Come to the Cross" to renew your faith. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent when we remember Jesus' sacrifice of love on the Cross. For the six weeks leading to Easter we will be focusing on the Cross of Christ.

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be held in the Fellowship Hall this year. This will give us an opportunity to have the cross lifted high in the center of our room. As we sit around it, we will be reminded that the Cross is the center of our attention. Pastor Matt will be preaching. The service will include communion and the imposition of ashes. Communion reminds us what Christ endured out of love for us, with the breaking of his body and shedding of his blood. The imposition of ashes is an ancient ritual that dates back to the church's early beginnings. The sign of the cross with ashes will be offered on the forehead or hand to those attending. The ashes are made from the palms used from our last Palm Sunday service a year ago.

Ash Wednesday will be a meaningful way to begin your Lenten Journey of Faith. This journey passes through the Upper Room and Garden of Gethsemane, then leads to the cross and concludes with the celebration of our risen Lord on Easter.

Church Wide Lenten Study Begins March 8

The last several weeks have been hectic in our household. Viruses, ear aches, strep throat, and other forms of sickness have crept into our lives and held on strong. There was a solid week in February where I literally came to church to do the bare essentials I needed to do, and then went home to go to bed. It left Elizabeth by herself much of the time. Daily household tasks that are normally my responsibility began to literally pile up. Dishes backed up, dog droppings took over the yard, and our trash didn't make it to the curb that week. Because of this sickness, our house became a real mess. Thankfully, healing has come through the power of prayer and modern medicine. The piles are now smaller, and life is becoming much more manageable again.

This Lent Pastor Steve and I are excited to invite you to join us on a church-wide journey where we acknowledge the mess in our lives. The sickness that has infested our hearts is none other than sin. We are created in the image of God, but for many of us, sin has made that a distant memory. In this preaching and teaching series we will walk through the process of redemption. Honesty about our collective mess is important, but it can also be depressing unless we remind ourselves of the ultimate goal. The good news of the gospel is that by the Grace of Jesus Christ, found in the love and power of his death and resurrection, we can be RESTORED to the image of God in which we were created. This is the goal of the Lenten season.

Pastor Steve and I are going to be co-teaching a class on Wednesday nights around Pastor Tom Berlins book, "Restored: Finding Redemption In Our Mess". The class will be held for 6 consecutive weeks starting on March 8 through Holy Week. Books cost \$12 and participants are encouraged to sign up at the welcome center to reserve a spot and materials for the course. Pastor Steve and I will be going deeper on Sunday mornings as we will both be preaching this series for Lent.

I love the season of Lent. In the days before Easter, Christians are willing to do hard work. Pastors encourage their flocks to hunker down and take a hard look at their lives. In this 6 week journey, you will not only see God enable you to change and clean up your mess, but you can be fully transformed, learning to love God and others the way Jesus did.

Be Bold, Be Strong,

Rev. Matt German

Washington Chapel

March 5 - Rev. Jaymee Glenn-Burns

March 12 - Jon Cooper

March 19 - Karl Dance

March 26 - Pat Cole

Our sister church, Washington Chapel, is just north of Cedar Falls at 7035 W Bennington Rd (the corner of Ford and W Bennington Rd). Services begin at 10:30 every Sunday morning, and they are a friendly group of people. You're invited to worship with them, and hear some of our First UMC lay-speakers.



Law & Order Coming to Fusion Next Month

Our best season of Fusion continues this month with two weeks of *Stump the Pastor*, and on March 29, Jan Benson will share the story of how a mother deals with a child who redirects their life in an unexpected direction.

March 8, Stump Pastor Steve
 March 15, spring break, no Fusion
 March 22, Stump Pastor Matt
 March 29, Jan Benson

April starts a four-week powerful finale to our spring Fusion season. *Law & Order 360*. There are people who see us at our worst in the court and justice systems, and yet, those people are often able to hold onto their faith in the face of daily exposure to sin and dysfunction. Messages in this Fusion series will be brought to us by an attorney, a journalist, an ex-offender, and a parole officer. Watch for the video trailer on our facebook feed later this month.

Prayers for Lent

Lent is a time for reflecting on where God will guide us as we can choose to give-up or add something to each day.

The following is a simple prayer to add into your day.

*Jesus stand beside me.
Guide and direct my life.
Teach me what I need to know.
Help me with my work.
Let me serve you and others.
In Jesus name. Amen*
- by Marjorie Holmes

The following are scriptures you can read and pray when seeking God's guidance.

James 1:5, Psalm 32:8, Psalm 119:105, Psalm 25:4-5, Psalm 31:3, Proverbs 2:6, Proverbs 3:4-5, Proverbs 4:11, Isaiah 48:17, John 16:13, John 14:23-24, Jeremiah 29:11,

If you have questions about our prayer team, please talk to Jim Larson, Genny Van Dorn, Debbie Dance or Jan Hoover.

Girl Scout Sunday is March 5

Girl Scouts of all ages are invited to honor Girl Scout Sunday and the long-standing support of First United Methodist Church on Sunday, March 5. This is a week ahead of the actual GS Sunday date, but that falls during Spring Break in our area.

Please wear your uniform, vest, sash or GS pins that day, we'd love to have you at the entrances to greet people as they enter worship. Please arrive 15-20 minutes prior to the start of the service.

Any questions, feel free to contact Linda Kennedy via email at: lk@cfu.net

Leading by Sharing our Story

Today as I am in my office working on newsletter articles, sermon preparations, emails, and phone calls, I am reminded of an experience I had a few years ago. Our former Bishop, Julius Trimble wanted to meet with me personally because I was soon to be ordained and he likes to get to know the pastors in the conference personally. It was a wonderful time of sharing, dreaming, and praying together with him and the 7 other pastors that were being ordained that year. While he had many wise things to bestow upon us, his conversation keep coming back to a message of encouragement and he also emphasized that the church needs good leadership.

After concluding my time with Bishop Trimble, I made my way to the district office in Hiawatha to take part in the district ministry team that supports the District staff, much like a staff/parish relations committee functions in the local church. We were introduced to Rev. Kikboko Kiboko, who had been assigned as the new District Superintendent for the East Central District starting July 1, 2015. Rev. Kikboko also had a message of encouragement, and said something very prophetic, much like what Bishop Trimble had said. He said, "Today's church does not need pastors who will simply provide churches with what they want. The church needs leaders."

I would have to agree. I believe that the church is beyond the days of providing good ministry "programs" and simply expecting people to come to the church. The model "If you build it they will come" has been dead for a long time. We live in a day and age of pluralism where Christianity is not mainstream anymore. The worldwide church is in need of good leadership that is willing to take the Gospel to new places, to meet new people, and proclaim the one who says, "I make all things new."

The question that I am left with is this: How far am I willing to go to share the Gospel? How far are you willing to go to share the Gospel? Perhaps that is simply over coffee or at the water cooler at work. Perhaps that means sitting down with your children and asking them, "How is it with their soul?" Perhaps that means inviting someone you know to worship with you. How far are we willing to go? The church needs good leadership. Are you willing to step forward in that kind of faith?

I am reminded of Isaiah 6:8—"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you this day, and may his Spirit send you out to witness the Good News.

Be Bold, Be Strong,

Rev. Matt German

Mission Study Day

On March 11 our church will host a Mission Study Day sponsored by the Northeast District of United Methodist Women. Registration begins at 8:30 with coffee and refreshments. All persons are invited and encouraged to come and hear the speaker for the day, Dr. Martin St. Clair, when he will speak on Climate Justice, A Call to Hope and Action. Dr. St. Clair is a professor at Coe College and is an expert on this topic. He will explore the Science of climate change, the church's response to this change referring to the United Methodist Social Principles from the Book of Discipline, and steps to Sustainability. Please join us to learn more about this important issue. There is no charge to attend.



“New Doors, New Life . . . No Debt”

We took a major leap of faith in moving forward with our Building Project. It required much from this congregation in the way of the investment of time, energy and money. Evidence of the impact can be seen throughout our building. The new Entrance and Gathering Place has made a difference in the atmosphere on Sunday mornings! Our new Nursery and renovated Children’s area has made a statement to young families that the future of our church is important. Sunday mornings are like a reunion filled with welcome smiles and the excitement of welcoming new faces. The building has become a new tool for us to grow!

We would not be in this fortunate place if it had not been for the congregation’s courageous leap of faith to move forward and build for the future. It truly was a statement of faith in God’s faithfulness as shown through the years; it also showed we had faith in ourselves to move ahead and do it! It is a dream realized!

Beginning on Sunday, March 19 we will be kicking off our campaign to retire the debt. We began with a mortgage balance of \$1,461,000, and already we have passed several milestones including the \$1,000,000 Mark and the Halfway Point! Thank you for your generous support. The campaign will be very simple: our goal is to retire the debt by the end of 2019. You will be receiving a packet on Sunday, March 26 with a pledge card that will be the key to closing another chapter in our history, and beginning a new chapter filled with a future filled with hope and faith. God is doing many good things through the First United Methodist Church in Cedar Falls!

THE BIG APRIL EFFORT

A member of our First UMC family has very generously offered to cover our mortgage interest in the month of April. That means every additional dollar we pay toward our mortgage in the month of April will go directly to reducing our principle mortgage amount. This is a great opportunity to take another big bite out of our outstanding debt. If you can help with a special contribution to the building fund during the month of April, please bring drop your contribution in the Sunday offering plate, or bring to the church office before April 23.



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Hang Out With A Younger Crowd

Our youth group has grown crowded with young men – that’s a great thing! Each week after our whole-group gathering, we break into small discussion groups, and we need some adult men who can sit in with the young guys to help facilitate discussions and keep them on-track. So what are you doing on Wednesday nights this spring semester – do you have about an hour to invest in our next generation? It’s a win-win for everyone: your wisdom and experience might rub off on them, and their coolness might rub off on you. Can you help? Talk to our youth ministries coordinator, Becca Nims. rebecca.nims@aboutfirst.com.

News From “The Connection”

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

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

For Iowa UMC news:

iaumc.org

For global UMC news:

umc.org

Financial Update--

January Receipts	\$78,625
January Expenses	\$75,770
Mortgage balance Jan 31--	\$644,874

Consider Automatic Giving

You’ll never need to remember to write a check again! It is quick and easy to set up. Contact our Financial Manager, Deb Bernard for details. 319-266-1713 or emailed deb.bernard@aboutfirst.com

events

March 5 - Girl Scout Cookies

Sydney Herzmann and Audrienne Kennedy from Cadette Troop 6581 will be selling cookies in the Gathering Place from 8 am to 12:15 p.m. Our Council changed bakers this year. Your old favorites, have a different name but taste the same. There are some new choices, including a gluten-free cookie. Already bought cookies? Need more? Want to help, without the calories; consider buying a box or two, and having them donated to our local Food Bank or the CF Police Dept. SEE YOU THEN! Questions? Contact Linda Kennedy via email at: lk@cfu.net

March 7 - Food Bank Work Crew

Here's a fun and easy way to help the food insecure in our community.....

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, March 7 to help at the Food Bank at 1605 Lafayette Street in Waterloo. Often we fill grocery bags with kid friendly food for the Backpack program. Sometimes we get selected for other much needed jobs. It's always a good time and a great bunch of people. You can carpool with Lisa or get yourself to the Food Bank and come into the Volunteer Entrance. The Methodists and friends will be there from 6:00 to no later than 8:00pm.

March 7 - Grief Support Session

The First UMC Grief Support Team offers monthly group support sessions. This month's group meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 7th from 2:00 to 3:30 pm in the church parlor. Anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one is welcome.

March 12 - Daylight Saving Time

Set your clocks ahead one hour!

March 14 - Card-Making Party

Come join the fun at our next Congregational Care Team card making party!
When: Tuesday, March 14th
Time: 1:00 to 5:00 pm
Where: The Gathering Place

No experience is required. Stay for Community Meals if you'd like and enjoy the time of fellowship. Bring a snack to share if you care to. This quarter's profits from the sale of cards on our card rack will go towards books at Lincoln School for "Change a Child's Story." Last quarter \$173.46 was sent to UMCOR. Last year \$689.79 was raised for four deserving agencies. We appreciate your support of this ministry!

March 16 - First Friends Potluck

Everyone is welcome! Spend some time enjoying good food, card games, dominos, cribbage, etc. Fellowship is an important part of the gathering. Check us out! Come and get better acquainted with others in the church. Couples and singles are welcome. Bring a dish to share and your own table service. We meet on the third Thursday of every month from noon until 2 pm in the Gathering Place

March 27 - LifeServe Blood Drive

We are hosting the next blood drive on Monday, March 27 from 12:30-6:00. Donors, cookie bakers, and hosts are needed. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill. Sign up to donate at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org. 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.



How much fun is Wednesday night at First UMC? Ask Brock and his younger friends!

Wednesday Night is Your Church Night!

- 5:15 - 6:00 **The Filling Station**
- a meal for everyone. Eat & go on to
- 5:15 - 6:00 **Children's Choir**
- musical fun for kids who like to sing
- 6:00 - 7:10 **Jr / Sr High Youth**
- fun & connections for 7th - 12th graders
- 6:00 - 7:15 **BLAST! (for kids)**
- Bible Learning And Service Together
- 6:00 - 7:15 **More Than Moms**
- helps for the real life of womanhood
- 6:00 - 7:15 **Restored Study**
- weekly sessions for Lent
- 6:00 - 7:30 **Tower Bells**
- weekly bell choir rehearsal. Want to play?
- 7:15 - 8:00 **FUSION Tonight**
- live talk show / worship

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
 10:30 Washington Chapel Worship
 11:00 Traditional Service, sanctuary
 6:00 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary
 7:30 Chapel Ringers rehearsal, sanctuary

Tuesday

7:00 Men's Breakfast
 9:30 Quilters/Stitchers, O59
 4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
 6:30 Transformation Band, Fellowship Hall
 6:30-8:00 men's group
 7:00-9:00 AA, O55

Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor
 5:15 AA, O55
 5:15-6:00 Filling Station, Gathering Place *
 5:15-5:45 children's choir, choir room *
 6:00-7:15 More than Moms, parlor *
 6:00-7:15 Restored Study, library (begins Mar 8)
 6:00-7:15 BLAST *
 6:00 Youth Group, 3rd floor *
 6:15-7:30 Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary *
 6:30 WOW AA, O55
 7:15 Fusion Tonight *
 6:00 Tower Bells *
 6:30 WOW AA, O55
 7:30 Chancel Choir

* will not meet Wed, March 15

Thursday

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

Also Scheduled....

WEDNESDAY March 1

8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, O58
 7:00 Ash Wednesday Worship
 7:15 No FUSION tonight

THURSDAY March 2

6:00 Girl Scouts, library
 6:30 Trustees, O57

SUNDAY March 5

9:45 3rd grade family Bible class, parlor
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Jaymee G-B
 5:00-6:30 Confirmation, library

MONDAY March 6

9:30 UMW Board Meeting, library
 6:30 Stephen Ministry Supervision
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY March 7

2:00-3:30 Grief Support, parlor
 6:00-8:30 Food Bank Work Crew

WEDNESDAY March 8

8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, O58
 7:15 FUSION - Pastor Matt

THURSDAY March 9

1:00 UMW Unit meeting, Fellowship Hall
 6:00 Girl Scouts, library
 6:30 SPRC, O57

FRIDAY March 10

3:30-5:30 Girl Scouts, library

SATURDAY March 11

9:00-2:00 UMW Mission Study
 set your clocks ahead one hour

SUNDAY March 12

Spring Break begins
 Daylight saving time begins
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Jon Cooper
 No Sunday night bell choirs

MONDAY March 13

5:30 FirstKids Board mtg, O56
 6:30-8:30 HOME Team, chapel
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY March 14

1:00-5:00 Cardmaking, Gathering Place
 1:30 Miriam Circle, library

WEDNESDAY March 15

9:30-11:30 MOMs group, library and gym
 8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, O58
 11:00 Pinnacle Care Chapel service
 7:15 No Fusion

THURSDAY March 16

12:00 1st Friends Potluck, Gathering Place

SUNDAY March 19

Youth can/bottle drive
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Karl Dance

MONDAY March 20

Newsletter deadline
 10:00 Deborah Circle, parlor
 3:45-5:00 Girl Scouts 6741, O55
 5:45 Met Chorale Board
 6:30 Worship Committee, library
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

WEDNESDAY March 22

8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, O58
 2:00 Windermere communion service
 7:15 FUSION#9 - Steve - preaching on fly

THURSDAY March 23

9:30-11:30 Mary Circle, parlor
 1:30 Joy Circle, parlor
 6:00 Girl Scouts, library

FRIDAY March 24

3:30-5:30 Girl Scouts, library

SUNDAY March 26

UMCOR Sunday
 New Doors Packet Pick up
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Pat Cole
 5:00-6:30 Confirmation, library

MONDAY March 27

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place
 3:45-5:00 Lincoln Girl Scouts 6741, O55
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY March 28

1:30 Miriam Circle, library
 6:30-7:30 Daisy Girl Scouts, Gathering Place

WEDNESDAY March 29

7:15 FUSION#10 - Jan Benson

THURSDAY March 30

6:00 Girl Scouts, library

FRIDAY March 31

Noon newsletter labeling, Gather place

Learn & Grow

Adult Sunday School

Everyone is welcome - you do not need to be a member of First UMC to attend.

Living Word

Will spend time each week sharing and caring for each other then move on to study different books of the Bible. Room 057 Contact: Terri Grover

CCF (Christ Centered Families)

This class will focus on strengthening our families and developing our young children into strong Christians. Room: 055, Kevin & Lori Price

Growing Christians

Our studies generally vary during the year from Bible studies, applying Biblical principles and the gifts that God puts into our lives. Room 056, Kris Rash

Open Door

Our discussions are based on videos that help us better understand the Bible and its influence on our lives. 061 Contact: Sue Mutchler & Pauline Harding

Kaleidoscope

This group is for anyone willing to tackle any topic! Room 058 Gil Hewett

Seekers

The Seekers present several small studies/discussions each year (no homework) to help grow our faith in Jesus Christ. Room: 060 Contact: Debbie Dance.

The Flock

The Flock welcomes all young adults (college & beyond) for fun, fellowship and study as we look at how the world around us influences our lives as Christians. Third Floor Café, contact Lesley Toma

F.R.O.G.

This class studies biblical themes and seeks concrete ways to put those lessons into action. Library: Contact Mark Schlatter.

New Adult Sunday School Class Starting

Are you an adult? Are you looking for a spot to join on Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour? Look no more!

On March 5th at 9:45am, please join us in Scott Hall for a new Sunday School class. All are welcome, and please bring along your ideas, persuasions and opinions. Hope to see you there!

Famine Meal Kicked off Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday: For the Filling Station on Ash Wednesday Padma Templeton kicked off Lent with presenting a famine meal. A huge THANK YOU to Padma it was a great experience! Ash Wednesday Pastor Steve held a children's service for the Preschool-6th during the BLAST hour. Pastor Steve taught the group the meaning behind the ashes.

Note These Dates:

March 12th: Due to spring break we will not have children's Sunday school.

March 15th: Due to spring break there will be NO BLAST, Filling Station, Moms, or Fusion.

UMC Camps - Your Summer Adventure!

There are three United Methodist camps in Iowa, all in beautiful natural surroundings. Methodist Camps have everything you need for your summer adventure: horses, climbing, swimming, hiking, great food, campfires, and we're pretty sure that God will show up, too. Check out all of the opportunities online at www.iaumc.org/camps. Summer will be here before we now it! If you would like a printed copy of the camp catalog, see Jenna Engel.

Camperships

First UMC encourages all kids to go to camp, but we understand it can be a financial burden for families. First UMC maintains a fund to assist families who would like to send their kids to a Methodist camp. A great gift that you can give to the kids of our church is to contribute to this campership fund. Keep your eye out for Camper Contribution envelopes in the Gathering Space. The envelopes will have a dollar amount that you can donate. The amount will start at \$1.00 and go up to \$100.00. Your donations will help get children to camp this summer. If you or your family would like to apply for campership assistance, Jenna Engel will be happy to help you.



Vacation Bible School: Save the Dates!

Mark your calendars for **June 18th- 22nd** for Hero Central VBS! Discover Your Strength in God! We will take an adventure alongside a few favorite Bible heroes and discover the qualities that make us truly heroic in God!

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

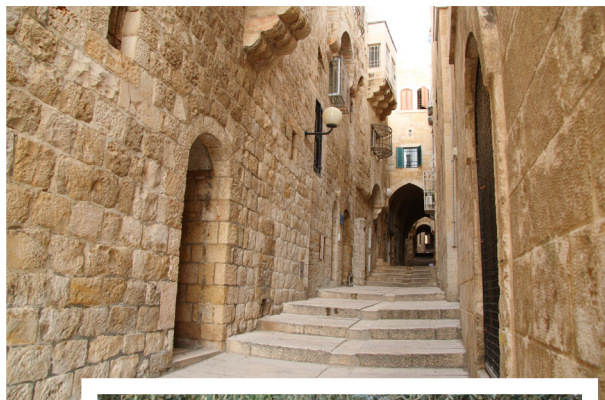
Janet and I are planning a trip to the Holy Lands during Spring Break in 2018 leaving March 6 and returning on March 15. This is a trip of a lifetime. We will visit significant sites such as Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho, Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. We will be walking where Jesus walked! Our trips to the Holy Land have made a dramatic difference in our faith.

The first time we traveled to the Holy Land, we were overwhelmed by all we saw and experienced.

We will provide a Bible Study and orientation meetings that will help prepare you for our tour. We will provide the itinerary and discuss the importance of each site we will visit. You will have a “heads up” on each site: Where does it fall in the Bible? What significant events took place here? What should I look for while I am here?

Information about this trip is located at the Welcome Center or contact one of us if you are interested in joining us. We will be having an information meeting after Easter.

- Pastor Steve



More Than Moms

Attention Ladies: Do you need a break and one hour just to yourself? Please join us every Wednesday night from 6pm to 7pm in the Parlor for fun, fellowship, study and peace. This Spring, we will be making crafts, studying Scripture, going on a few field trips and just relaxing. All are welcome, and please bring a friend! (child care provided.)

“More than Moms” is a perfect description for the women of the group as individuals and as a collective body, since many come that don't have kids!

Invite a friend . . . all are welcome!

Any questions, please contact Lesley Toma at (319) 266-1713 or lesleytoma@aboutfirst.com



Women Connected by Prayer to be Restored

The Wednesday morning women's group will be participating in the Lenten study Restored - the same one that Pastor Steve and Pastor Matt will be focusing on during Lent. If the morning time works well for you, we meet in the church parlor at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays through Lent.

Come Check Out the Flock!

If you are looking for a place to “land” during the 9:45am hour on Sunday mornings, come to the 3rd floor small group room and check out The Flock! This ragtag bunch of millennials and beyond discuss current events and dive into the Word with various studies. We don't steer clear of controversial topics, but we always end the hour with great love and prayer.

Questions: Lesley.toma@aboutfirst.com.

CrazyFunBusy Wednesday

Wednesday night is Church Night for everyone. We'll nourish your body beginning at 5:15 and we'll nourish your spirit with fellowship, learning and worship until Fusion concludes at 8:00. See the events page of this newsletter for the full schedule.

B.L.A.S.T (for kids!)

This semester our BLAST kids are using First by Mike Slaughter to learn how to evaluate priorities. The group will find ways to create a culture and lifestyle of faithful living, giving and how to make a meaningful contribution to the world by putting God first. If you would like to get involved with B.L.A.S.T please contact Jenna Engel jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com.

March Mission Focus Henderson Settlement Work Camp

Henderson Settlement is one of four mission institutions of the Red Bird Missionary Conference in Kentucky. Their mission is to spread the good news of Jesus Christ through service to the community by meeting basic needs in Appalachia.

Pop Can Drive

Our youth have some great opportunities coming up this summer at Summer Games University and a work trip to Henderson, KY. To help offset the cost of these opportunities, the youth will be collecting pop cans during the Sunday School hour March 19th, April 23rd and June 4th. Pop cans can also be delivered to the church at other times. Please contact our youth ministries coordinator Becca Nims rebecca.nims@aboutfirst.com before bringing your cans.

In 1925, Methodist minister Hiram Frakes came to the Laurel Fork Valley in Southeastern Kentucky with a dream of educational, economic and spiritual reform for the community. Local families donated 123 acres of land and Frakes started a school for the area children. That was the beginning of Henderson Settlement. Today it consists of 1,600 acres and provides multiple programs and activities for the community.



Henderson Settlement is located in a part of Appalachia that continues to be challenged with issues related to poverty and lack of opportunity. There are serious challenges for children, youth, women seniors and families to be able to live, much less thrive, in the area. There are issues around education, community development, economic development and health, among others. These are issues that affect communities all over Appalachia, and Henderson Settlement provides opportunities for groups to partner with them to ease the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Christ in Appalachia.

Many of the 2,800 volunteers that come through Henderson each year are dispatched to repair dilapidated homes within a 20-mile radius of Frakes. Other volunteers are put to work on campus in the garden, the thrift store, or other campus buildings. We have 10 spaces reserved for work campers at Henderson Settlement in the Appalachian mountains of Kentucky for the week of June 25-July 1. Becca Nims and Lisa Congdon are working together to plan this multi-generational work trip opportunity. We will find out in late February/early March what sort of project our group will be working on.

Cost for food and lodging while on site is \$230, plus some travel and sightseeing expenses. Our half payment is due on March 24, or \$115 per participant. Your contributions will be used to support Henderson Settlement work projects and programs, and also to underwrite travel costs. Use the special offering envelopes at the display in the Welcome Center.

We also encourage you to support the youth and others in additional fundraising opportunities (such as can and bottle drives) coming up between now and June.



Letting Go Gracefully

One of the most difficult realities faced by most parents is the gradual “letting go” of their children. For one mother, Tracinda Foxe, that “letting go” came much too early in her baby’s life and was much too literal. In December of 2005, her apartment building in the Bronx caught on fire. Standing at the window of her third floor apartment she was forced to contemplate the unthinkable. Firefighters below were surrounded by a crowd of on-lookers. They called out to Tracinda to let her baby fall into their net. Seeing no other viable options, she finally let go of her baby. She and her baby both survived the fire.

In the course of living, we sometimes find ourselves in situations similar to Tracinda. Serious illness, loss of some kind, the weight of life, etc. can make holding on to life as it was in the past impossible. Letting go and moving into a different future can seem next to impossible but the only viable option. Encouragement and support from somebody can make all the difference. Stephen Ministers are trained to do that. They don’t try to give answers or to fix things, as much as help you “let go” and walk with you from the past, through the difficult present, and into a changed but more secure future.

If you are interested in having someone walk with you, please call the church



Hospital reminder

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

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2017 is at the Welcome Center. Sign up now to recognize a special date or to honor a loved one with flowers for the altar. Have the flowers delivered to the church on Friday, please.

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.

Global Church to Focus on “Abundant Health”

Following the success of Imagine No Malaria, Global Ministries is inviting United Methodists and their congregations to unite once again around a new health focus, *Abundant Health: Our Promise to Children*.

“We want to see children survive and thrive and communities transformed because of this work,” Dr. Olusimbo Ige said. “We also want to see the church come together around this the same way the church came together around Imagine No Malaria. We hope Abundant Health will be a rallying point for the church, something we can all agree on.” Ige is executive director of the Global Health Unit for the General Board of Global Ministries.

Just as John Wesley emphasized “body and spirit and mind, that’s the kind of wholeness we want to reach with this campaign,” Kemper said. Goals for the campaign:

Reach 1 million children
Involve 10,000 churches
Promote Health / Implement Strategies

At www.umcabundanthealth.org, congregations can find ideas for how to get involved. Ige hopes those suggestions will be a springboard to encourage churches to be creative in new approaches to Abundant Health.

read more

The above was taken from an article by Emily Snell, in the January / February issue of *the Interpreter*. Read the whole article at www.interpretermagazine.org/topics/our-promise-to-children-driving-abundant-health-focus

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.

Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

Along with the supplies to fill the school kits, there is also a need for fabric to make the school bags and other stitching projects. The Quilters & Stitchers are looking for durable material for school bags, 3+ yards of cotton material for sewing kits, and flannel, fleece, and quilting materials for various other uses. There is a designated bin for your fabric donations in the church collection site on the main level in the little hall across from the drinking fountain.

Wee Care

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

UMCOR Sunday- March 26

When disaster strikes around the globe—Haiti's 2010 earthquake or Typhoon Haiyan in 2013—so many watching the drama unfold on our living room televisions feel entirely helpless. How could any one person make a difference in the wake of such widespread devastation? As responders around the globe scramble to help survivors, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, UMCOR, is prepared to act.

That's because your generous giving to UMCOR Sunday (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing) is what allows UMCOR to act as the arms and legs of Christ's church, moving toward the most vulnerable in their darkest days. Convinced that all people have God-given worth and dignity—without regard to race, religion or gender—together we are assisting those impacted by crisis or chronic need.

Because you give, the United Methodist Church's compassionate response to human suffering continues today:

When tornadoes ripped through Oklahoma, we responded

When children in Zimbabwe lost parents to AIDS, we responded

When a massive tsunami devastated lives in Japan, we responded

And when the next mass crisis occurs, we will be prepared to respond

Not "they."

We.

When we meet the needs of those who suffer we actually minister to Jesus, who said:

"I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me." (Mt. 25:35-36, CEB)

As we respond, we recognize Jesus in those who are reeling in the wake of disaster.

Empty Bowls event for the Food Bank

The NE Iowa Food Banks biggest event of the year, Empty Bowls, will be happening on Friday, March 31st from 6:00PM - 9:30PM. They will be celebrating this event with delicious soups from the minds of brilliant local chefs and you will receive a symbolic bowl. In addition, they will be holding live and silent auctions that include over 65 items ranging from handcrafted artwork, jewelry, sports memorabilia, mini vacations and Chicago Cubs game package. To make this event more exciting, they will also be revealing a big announcement! You can buy tickets by calling the Food Bank at 319-235-0507.



Heifer rabbits & chicks

During the season of Lent you have an opportunity to donate to Heifer International by providing chicks and rabbits to impoverished families from Armenia to Zambia. Use the offering envelopes by the hopping animal display in the church office to give the gift of hope and opportunity for an entire community.

\$10 will add a chick to the display

\$20 will add a rabbit to the display

\$50 adds a rabbit and three chicks to the display

Midwest Mission Distribution Center May 29- June 3

Here's a Go & Serve opportunity that is an easy drive from Cedar Falls - just far enough away to feel like a "trip". We have four spaces (2 rooms) reserved in the dorm at Midwest Mission Distribution Center in Chatham Illinois. MMDC is a United Methodist warehouse/depot for disaster, relief and mission supplies, which relies on volunteer teams to do most of the work. Types of work are varied and may be tailored to fit volunteer's abilities. There are kits to assemble, warehouse work to be done, and woodworking and mechanical tasks, as well. Cost per person is about \$140 for dorm and material fees, plus travel, sightseeing, and food costs. See Lisa in the church office for more details about this mission opportunity.

Reentry Team Training

Are you interested in helping women recently released from prison begin their new journey with support and confidence? More reentry teams are needed in the Waterloo metro area. Training will happen on Saturday, March 11 from noon-4:00 at Kimball Avenue UMC, 1207 Kimball Ave in Waterloo. Lunch will be provided. Trainees will learn the role of a team, what to do and what not to do. Stages of the relationship and responsibilities along the journey will be presented; support will be established and shared. Come and join with others who are ready to serve God by encouraging and nurturing women reentering the community. Our FUMC teams can always use another member to join them in this adventure! If you plan to come or have questions, contact Brenda Hobson at wellreentry@iaumc.org or 515-313-6916.

Rummage Sale 2017 update

Spring cleaning is just around the corner. It's time to sort through our stuff and decide what can be given away, and where to take these treasures. Our church Rummage Sale has been an option for years, but this year we do not yet have a Rummage Sale coordinator. John and Kelly Roy did a great job last year, but have since moved out of the area. Without a coordinator to organize the sale and all that goes with it, we will not have a sale in 2017. If you have always wanted to mastermind an event like this, please let the church office know by April 15. If a coordinator is not in place by then, we will forego the sale this summer and you may donate your treasures to other organizations.

FirstUMC TV

First UMC is on TV. We can't promise beautiful videography like a BBC nature documentary, but we can promise a great message of faith. Our weekly TV broadcasts contain the sermons from the traditional and Transformation services, and reruns are rare!

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channel 95.5, Friday @ 8:00 pm, and Sunday @ 9:00 am

Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 17, Sundays @ 11:00am and Sundays at 9:00 pm

Miss a broadcast? Let us know in the FirstUMC media office, and we'll get a recording into your hands. Chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Find FirstUMC on youtube

Your church has a youtube channel. You can find sermons, Fusion shows, some of our stewardship videos and more. Go to youtube.com, and search for "cedar falls first united methodist church".



Community Meal

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

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

Food Bank-every month

Our crew helps at the Food Bank the first Tuesday of each month, from 6:00 to 8:00pm. We're their "A" Team - they love to see the Methodists come to work. Would you like to be on the reminder email or do you want to know more? Contact Lisa in the church office. lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Go

Do you have an idea for a church mission for work, learning or evangelism?

Contact Lisa Congdon in the church office and share your ideas. There may be ways that the church can help you realize your mission vision.

United Methodist Women News

VISION STATEMENT OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: We are “turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.”

On February 9, 2017, the United Methodist Women held their Unit meeting. Marlys Pals and Maxine Fitkin presented the program on Prayer and Self-Denial. As a part of this presentation, an offering was collected, which will be used to help fund programs that support women and children's health.

Women @ First

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 UMW program for March 9 is entitled “How the War on Drugs Harms Women,” which will be presented by Pam Hays from the Board of Directors of the Iowa Justice Action Network. This meeting will start at 1:00 P.M. Anyone interested in hearing the presentation is welcome to attend.

Upcoming UMW events include:

- International Bell Ringing Day for Women's Rights on March 8, 2017. Our church bells will be rung at 12:00 Noon by Ellen Opsal and Donna Hoffman.
- Mission Study Day on March 11, 2017, which will be held at First United Methodist Church in Cedar Falls from 9:00 to about noon.
- Day Apart on April 8, 2017, to be held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Waverly, IA.

UMW events in March –

Mar. 6 – Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Library
Mar. 9 – Unit Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Mar. 11 – NE District Mission Study, FUMC, Cedar Falls
Mar. 14 – Miriam Circle, 1:30 p.m., Library
Mar. 20 – Deborah Circle, 10:00 a.m., Parlor
Mar. 23 – Mary Circle, 9:30 a.m., Parlor
Mar. 23 – Joy Circle, 1:30 p.m., Parlor
Mar. 28 – Miriam Circle, 1:30 p.m., Library

Fellas @ First

Men's Tuesday Breakfast

Men's Breakfast Fellowship meets at the Cedar Falls Family Restaurant in North Cedar, Tuesday mornings at 7:00. The devotional is rotated among attendees. We usually finish before eight o'clock. Start your Tuesdays with us. Contact: Tim Houts and Steve Williams.

Tuesday Night Fellas

Informal. Friendly. Our studies are intended to help us figure out how to bring out the best in ourselves and draw us closer to God and each other. Hang out with us in the man-cave (room 059) on Tuesday nights from 6:30 - 8:00. All men of any age are welcome and invited. We usually have a video study going. Don't worry - we don't assign homework.

Hearts & Hands

The Hearts and Hands group will not be meeting this year on a set day each month, rather we may choose a project or activity and get together then.

For example, this past month, Pastor Matt asked us to help with a “Sweetheart Dessert” night as part of this Wednesday night marriage class. We provided 3 different desserts, sparkling water and decorated tables for two with candles, flowers, and white tablecloths.

Other projects that might be considered for the coming year include –

- 1) Help at the NE Iowa food bank
- 2) help with Community Meals
- 3) help sort donated clothing at Kaden's Kloset
- 4) have a knitting/needle work night
- 5) make “baskets of love” for shut-ins
- 6) volunteer at Love, Inc.
- 7) support W@W and attend a worship service
- 8) TRADITION; make pepper jelly to sell at the Ingathering
- 9) volunteer to help with a funeral
- 10) sign up to read at Lincoln School
- 11) Go on a mission trip such as Midwest Mission in Illinois, others

If our group can be of help, let us know. For example, we have helped with cleaning at church, made dress-up clothes for First Kids and made Christmas cookies with the youth. Contact person: Karen Page

Thank yous

Thank you to Jane for delivering the beautiful rose for my birthday. That is such a special gesture our church does and it is so very much appreciated!

Donna Couvelier

Thank you to the church and Jane for the lovely rose for my 81st birthday.

Jane Marsh

Thank you for the very nice and inspirational service we attended in November with my brother and wife. Your welcome desk gave me a glass and a cup as visitor gifts. Thank you for such a pleasant experience.

Linda and Roger

Once again, thanks to Jane for delivering one of the beautiful roses to me for my birthday at the end of January. I have just moved into Windhaven (Apt. 24) and things are a real mess. I do have a path in my living area so anyone is welcome at any time.

Doris Crandall

It is wonderful to be 101 years old. You know God has been special to you. The nice birthday wish from the staff of my church in Iowa adds so much. God has been so good. God is good every day! Your wishes are such a treat.

Your appreciative member of God's Club,

Dick Mohler

Thank you for the beautiful rose delivered to me from the Congregational Care Team for my birthday in February.

Nola Kelly

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thanks for the rose that Jane delivered to me in cold weather in January. Your cards meant a lot and the rose was beautiful and lasted for over a week.

Shirley Mae Patchin

I love flowers and the beautiful rose Jane Wyckoff delivered for my birthday was a special treat for me. May God Bless her for all the years she had dedicated to making birthdays special to members.

Shirley Fogleman

Thank you for the beautiful rose Jane brought me for my 92nd birthday. Also, thanks for the card from the staff.

Dorothy Wested

We wish to express our deepest gratitude for all the cookies and help the members of First UMC extended to the Joint Volunteers (JVs) of Arc of Cedar Valley 27th annual Cookie Walk. We truly could not have reached our goal the last several years without your support. Special thanks to the Bernard family for organizing and delivering all those wonderful cookies.

The monies raised will be used for extra activities, special needs, the North Star Play and special parties the participants of North Star and EPI would not receive form elsewhere. We are fortunate to receive first hand all the "thank yous" and "we love yous" from our people. We send those on to you

This year, due to inclement weather, we had several dozen cookies left over. These we packaged and delivered to the Cedar Fall and Waterloo fire stations and police stations. Your good cookies were well received by these groups.

May God Bless all of you.

The JV's of Arc of Cedar Valley

We continue to be amazed by the support of our Reading Buddies! With your help, we continue to change the story for our children. Over the past year, we have increased the number of reading buddies serving students in grades Kinder through 3rd grade. In addition to the financial support, our students truly look forward to the chance to read with their buddies. The support of our neighbors has been a true blessing to our students and staff! Thank you!

Your Neighbors at Lincoln School

Sympathy to:

- Family and friends of Joyce Kloster. Joyce passed away February 7.
- Nancy Standafer and her family on the loss of her mother, Virginia Zink, on February 21.

Martha Anderson has Moved

Long time member Martha Anderson has moved to Champaign, Illinois to be near son Steve Anderson. She sent this message... "So long - it's been good to know you! May God bless you!" To send her mail:

Martha Anderson
% Villa West
Apartment 305
4114 West Springfield Ave.
Champaign, IL 61822

Attendance- week ending

	2/5	2/12	2/19	2/26
FUSION (Wed)	31	x	33	14
Transformation	112	118	111	113
Traditional 8:30	112	127	120	114
Traditional 11:00	109	142	162	137

First United Methodist Church

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

Van rides are available for the 10:00 Sunday service.
Child care is provided in the nursery for infants and babies for Sunday Services.

Spreading the Word

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

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

Our Pastors

Steve Williams, Senior Pastor, steve.williams@aboutfirst.com
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

Deb Bernard, Financial Manager
deb.bernard@aboutfirst.com

Chris Congdon, Media Coordinator
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Lisa Congdon, Office Ministry Coordinator
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Jenna Engel, Christian Education Coordinator
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Bryan Houts, Chancel Choir Director
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Flo Mobley, Parish Visitor

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Emily Terpstra, Custodian

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April newsletter deadline is March 20.

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