

February 2017
issue 197



ABOUT FIRST

First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa



Thoughts from Steve

How do you work in a word like Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious into a sermon? Well, I tried. You probably remember the song from the Mary Poppins movie? I was challenged by our Confirmation Class to weave 10 words or phrases into my sermon. These were words that they randomly selected off the top of their heads, and supercalifragilisticexpialidocious was one of them! It was tough enough for me to say, let alone find a way to fit that 33 letter word into a sentence.

The students did not choose simple words that would lead into a moving message on Sunday morning. Some of the words made them laugh spontaneously when they were thrown out for nomination. Here are the other nine: Confuzzled (a new word combining confused and puzzled), Discombobulated, Tissue, Snickerdoodle, X Box, Moose, Harambe (The Gorilla that was killed in the Cincinnati Zoo last spring to save the life of a 3 year boy), Socks and Sandals and Penicillin. Quite a conglomeration of words, wouldn't you say?

I worked all week figuring out a way to weave all 10 words into my sermon. It was a stretch sometimes, but I loved the challenge. In turn, I challenged them to attend worship. Nearly all the students made it. They sat in the front row with clipboards in hand and listening to every word to keep score. Believe it or not, I made it, and used every word. The class shouted "Bingo" when I was done! It was fun. They came to hear the "Word(s)" being preached that Sunday.

Why is it a challenge to invite people to come to church? That is a good question for all of us to ask ourselves as we seek to grow as a church. What keeps us from inviting a friend to join us for worship? Especially if we know our friend needs to hear a good "word" of encouragement and hope. Studies show that most people come to church because a friend has invited them. It is not the preacher, music or building that attracts people to church, it is a friend extending an invitation to come and join them for worship.

Last month, Brock Knoll talked very honestly about being under the care of Hospice at our Fusion Service. It was quiet, as everyone was listening to every word as he shared his story and witnessed his faith in Christ. It was truly a testimony of how his trust in God is helping him face death. During Brock's message he gave a nod to Karl Dance for inviting him to attend our church. Brock has found a home here, and we in turn have been blessed by his testimony of faith in Jesus.

I had 10 silly words to work with one Sunday morning, but my motive was to get some of our Confirmands to come to worship. I thought it was important, not just because I am the pastor, but because they need some help in maneuvering through the ups and downs of this life. It has to be tough being a 13 or 14 years old without knowing you have a loving friend in Jesus, who is there for you with guidance and support. At any age it can be a challenge. I invite you to offer 10 simple words to someone, "Would you like to join me for worship this Sunday?" that might make all the difference in the world to them.

In His Steps,

Pastor Steve



HALF TRUTHS

Half Truths Series to launch in February

Things that Christians say that the Bible does not. They are simple phrases. They sound Christian-like something you might find in the Bible. We've all heard these words. Maybe we've said them. Perhaps we have read them in a well-intended card given by a loved one. They capture some element of truth, yet they miss the point in important ways. I'm not suggesting that these statements are entirely untrue, merely that they are half true. Although, certainly some of these statements contain less truth than others.

In the month of February, we will search for the whole truth by comparing common Christian clichés to the message and ministry of Jesus. The clichés include:

- Everything happens for a reason.
- God helps those who help themselves
- God won't give you more than you can handle.
- God said it, I believe it, that settles it.

Here's why I think we need to dive deeper into these half-truths. I think they can hurt people. I think they can lead people to conclusions about God that are not only untrue, but they may push some people away from God. Some of these half truths are used to avoid careful thinking about complex issues. Some are used to justify our own biases or prejudices. Some, when spoken to others, can bring pain.

Yes, there is some truth to be found in the "truths" we will explore in the weeks to come. I invite you, though, to consider whether these truths are as Christian or as true as you may suppose. And, if I'm right, I hope you might think twice before you say them again. More than that, it is my hope that by examining these half truths, it will lead us all to greater truth that we find in Jesus Christ.

Be Bold, Be Strong,

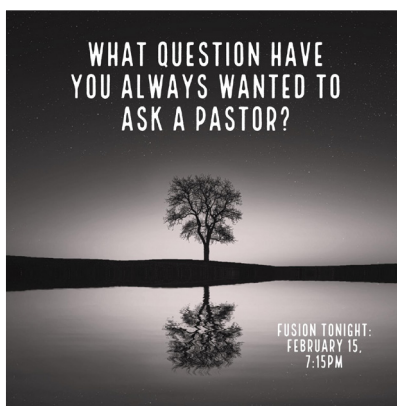
Rev. Matt German

Have You Ever Wondered . . . ?

Have you ever wanted to ask your pastor a question? Perhaps you have something that you struggle with spiritually and are looking for an answer. Or maybe you have always wanted to ask some basic question, but you were too afraid to ask.

Please join us at Fusion Tonight, Wednesday, February 15th, at 7:15pm. Pastor Steve will be our main speaker that evening answering questions that you have submitted for him.

In the meantime, please feel free to write a question and drop it off in the box at the Welcome Center. All questions will remain anonymous unless otherwise indicated.



Humble before God

While bowing our heads and folding our hands is one traditional position to prayer, kneeling is another. It's a physical reminder of the need to be humble and bend to God's will when we pray. As you pray over your requests and praises this month, try kneeling and become aware if your prayer time changes. (If you are unable to kneel because of physical constraint try leaning forward in your chair).

Sunday Morning Prayers: a group has been meeting in our chapel at 8:00 on Sunday mornings to pray for our church, and you are welcome to join us.

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

Here's an Idea!

We encourage you to check out the prayer bookmark sometime this month and bring a flower, send a card, or visit someone you know on the bookmark. Take a chance, even if you don't know them well. A word of encouragement from a church family member can mean so much!

Washington Chapel

February 5 - David Glenn-Burns
 February 12 - Emily from Washngtn Chpl
 February 19 - Chris Congdon
 February 26 - Mark Fransdal

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.

Now Hear This

Here's some help for those who find it difficult to hear in the sanctuary. We're equipped with a set of listening-assistance devices. They are little radios that pick up the pastor's microphones and amplify the signal for you. The radios plug into an earpiece, or you may bring your own headphones (standard mini-plug). Also, those with telephone-enabled hearing aids may request a wire "necklace" that transmits the signal directly into the hearing aid - no headphones necessary! If you'd like to try one of these devices, ask an usher and they will get one for you and show you how to use it.



Honey for your Honey

Valentine's Day is almost here! Are you looking for the perfect way to honor your honey? Relax... we have it covered. Give the gift of honeybees! Your choice of two honey themed gift bags to choose from to give to your own sweet honeybee. Gift bags cost \$25 or \$30, and \$20 of that will go to Heifer International to give honeybees, a hive, and training for a family who can use the income from honey sales to provide for their basic needs.

These gift bags will be available until Valentine's Day, either in the church office or in the Gathering Place on Sunday mornings. It's a sweet way to be a blessing to your own honey and for others in the world.

BlackHawks Hockey All-Faiths Night!

Come join us Saturday, February 25th, to cheer on our Black Hawks against Omaha for an All Faiths Night at Young Arena. The puck drops at 7:05 pm, and the cost of tickets are \$7.00 per person. Deadline for sign-up at the Welcome Center is Sunday, February 19th. This is Sock Toss Night. The Waterloo Black Hawks encourage all fans to bring a new pair of socks to the game. You can toss the socks onto the ice after the Hawks score their first goal! All socks collected will be donated to charity. This event is sponsored by the Fun and Fellowship committee. Questions, please contact Lesley Toma: lesley.toma@aboutfirst.com or (319) 266-1713. Please have payment to Lesley by Sunday, February 19th. Come join us for this great event!

Girl Scout Sunday

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

Girl Scout Sunday Cookie Booth

Sun. March 5 in the Gathering Place
Sydney Herzmann and Audrienne Kennedy from
Cadette Troop 6581 will be 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, the CF Police Dept., or the church media office.
SEE YOU THEN!

Any questions, please contact Linda Kennedy via email at: lk@cfu.net

Your Christmas Offering Update

Thank you for your generous donations to our Christmas missions. Your gifts of \$5,781 were shared among four mission opportunities that support our brothers and sisters in Christ of all ages, and all over the world to help them give their best to help others:

- \$650 was earmarked to complete a well at a secondary school in Nigeria
- \$1500 was given to House of Hope in Waterloo
- \$1500 was given to our own Community Meal program
- The rest will be sent to Banyam Theological Seminary in Nigeria for their needs which include support for the medical clinic staff, funds for the computer lab, and scholarships for students.

Our collective gifts can spread the comfort, peace, and hope of Christ in the darkness of our broken world.

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.

New Doors, New Life . . . No Debt!

Our Building Capital Campaign “Open Our Doors” is coming to an end. Many of us made three year commitments with the hope of paying off our mortgage. All of you need to be congratulated in that we have passed the half-way point, as we still owe \$649,591.81 on our mortgage. We still have a ways to go, but your generosity has made the difference in moving us closer to paying off the debt.

The Capital Campaign Team has selected Sunday, March 19 as our kick-off for our new campaign “New Doors, New Life . . .

No Debt! We will conclude with a celebration on Palm Sunday, April 9. You will be hearing more about our campaign in March. The Team is asking that everyone continue to pull together by contributing what you have been paying the past three years through March until we begin the new campaign. Our goal is to retire the debt. We need your financial support to meet this goal.



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--

2016 Receipts	\$829,755
2016 Expenses	\$817,778
December receipts	\$ 93,525
December expenses	\$ 71,210
Mortgage balance Jan 19--	\$649,591

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

Eat Pizza for LoveINC! Feb 6

Join us at Pizza Ranch Monday, February 6, 5:00-8:00 p.m., and support our local partner, Love INC! Volunteers and friends from Love INC will help bus tables, and in exchange, all tips and a percentage of the night's sales will be donated to Love INC.

February 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, February 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.

February 7 - Grief Support Session

He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds. - Psalm 147:3.

Our next group grief support session will be held in the church parlor on Tuesday, February 7th from 2:00 to 3:30 pm. This is offered for anyone who is experiencing a loss in life. There are many kinds of losses, each of which can carry with it many different emotions. In these sessions, participants will have an opportunity to share thoughts and feelings in a safe, non-threatening environment. No reservations are required.

February 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. Need more information?

February 18 - Wacky Winterfest

Lincoln Elementary's Wacky Winterfest is coming up Saturday, February 18 from 4-7pm. Winterfest is the largest Fundraiser for Lincoln School. With the funds raised they are able to approve many grant requests from school staff in addition to providing yearly stipends for all classroom teachers!

They are in need of many volunteers in order to make Winterfest a success! This is a great opportunity to give of an hour or two of your time to help our neighborhood school and Partner in Education.

Please take a moment to find a spot where you would enjoy serving! Sign up online at aboutfirst.com or contact Jana Bailey at janabailey@gmail.com with questions. They look forward to seeing you at WACKY WINTERFEST!

February 21 - LifeServe Blood Drive

We are hosting the next blood drive on TUESDAY, February 21 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.

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 **Love to Stay**
- Christian marriage study
- 6:00 - 7:30 **Tower Bells**
- weekly bell choir rehearsal. Want to play?
- 7:15 - 8:00 **FUSION Tonight**
- live talk show / worship
- 7:30 - 8:30 **Chancel Choir**
- for adults who love to sing

Every Thursday

Zumba with us on Thursdays at 5:30 pm in our Fellowship Hall! A free-will contribution of a couple of bucks is appreciated. Contact mary.friedrich@cfu.net if you have questions. Come and dance...it's never too late to join us on this fun fitness adventure!

Winter Weather Policies

Worship

This is Iowa and it is winter and weather happens. When winter weather gets bad the pastors will decide if changes should be made to the worship schedule.

Weekly Activities

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

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

Recurring Weekly:

Sunday

8:00 prayer in the chapel
 8:30 Transformation Worship
 8:30 Traditional Service, sanctuary
 9:30 Fellowship time, Gathering Place
 9:45 Sunday School for 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
 9:30-1:00 Quilters/Stitchers, 059
 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, 055

Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor
 5:15 AA, 055
 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 Marriage Class, library, ends Feb 15
 6:00-7:15 BLAST
 6:00 Youth Group, 3rd floor
 6:00-7:15 Men's group, 059
 6:15-7:30 Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary
 6:30 WOW AA, 055
 7:15 Fusion Tonight
 6:00 Tower Bells
 6:30 WOW AA, 055
 7:30 Chancel Choir

Thursday

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

Also Scheduled....

WEDNESDAY February 1

8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, 058
 7:15 FUSION - Sue Ney

THURSDAY February 2

6:30 Trustees, library

SUNDAY February 5

9:45 3rd grade family Bible class, parlor
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Dave G-B
 4:00-5:00 Webelos, Gathering Place
 No Evening Bell Choir Rehearsals

MONDAY February 6

9:30 UMW Board Meeting, library
 6:00-8:00 Eat at Pizza Ranch for Love INC
 6:30 Stephen Ministry Supervision
 6:30 Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY February 7

2:00-3:30 Grief Support, parlor
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scouts, parlor
 6:00-8:30 Food Bank Work Crew

WEDNESDAY February 8

8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, 058
 FUSION - Lesley Toma

THURSDAY February 9

1:00 UMW Unit meeting, Fellowship Hall
 5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall
 6:00 Girl Scouts, library
 6:30 SPRC, 057

FRIDAY February 10

3:30-5:30 Girl Scouts, library

SUNDAY February 12

Boy Scout Sunday
 9:45 New member class, chapel
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Emily from WC

MONDAY February 13

3:45-5:00 Lincoln Girl Scouts 6741, 055
 6:30-8:30 HOME Team, chapel
 6:30-7:30 Daisy Girl Scouts, Gath Place
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY February 14

1:30 Miriam Circle, library

WEDNESDAY February 15

9:30-11:30 MOMs group, library and gym
 8:45-11:15 Stephen Ministry Training, 058
 11:00 Pinnacle Care Chapel service
 7:15 FUSION#6 - Stump the Pastor

THURSDAY February 16

12:00 1st Friends Potluck, Gathering Place
 5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall
 6:00 Girl Scouts, library

FRIDAY February 17

12:00-9:00 Girl Scouts, GP and library

SATURDAY February 18

FROGs set up Transformation Chairs

SUNDAY February 19

9:45 3rd grade family Bible class, parlor
 9:45 New member class, chapel
 10:30 Washington Chapel - Chris Congdon

MONDAY February 20

Newsletter deadline
 10:00 Deborah Circle, parlor
 5:45 Met Chorale Board
 6:30 Ad Council, library
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY February 21

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place
 4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
 5:30 Capital Campaign meeting, 057
 6:00-7:30 Girl Scouts, parlor

WEDNESDAY February 22

2:00 Windermere communion service
 7:15 FUSION - Chris and Lisa Tag Team

THURSDAY February 23

1:30 Joy Circle, parlor
 5:30-6:30 Zumba, Fellowship Hall
 6:00 Girl Scouts, library
 6:00-8:00 Girl Scouts, Gathering Place

FRIDAY February 24

3:30-5:30 Girl Scouts, library

SATURDAY February 25

7:05 Black Hawks Hockey! Bring Sox

SUNDAY February 26

10:30 Washington Chapel - Mark Fransdal
 2:00-4:30 Ministry Market at Kimball Ave

MONDAY February 27

3:45-5:00 Lincoln Girl Scouts 6741, 055
 7:00 Endowment comm, library
 7:00-9:00 Met Chorale, sanctuary

TUESDAY February 28

Noon newsletter labeling, Gather place
 1:30 Miriam Circle, library

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.

3rd Grade Bible Class is under way!

We are happy to have 10 families participating. This is a 5 week course with the final class being on March 5th. We will also be having the Bible Ceremony during the 11:00 Service. This is a great thing to witness as we ask the congregation to help lead these children as they continue growing in their faith.



photos are still frames from video shot by Matthew Edler

BLAST:

We started the winter/spring semester off with a few furry guests and a community service project. The Cedar Bend Humane Society was the guest of the night. They brought a black kitten and beagle puppy. The kids and some adults had a great time meeting these two. The kids got to hear all about what the Humane Society does. Then we made safe peanut butter treats for all of the animals.

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. It is time to think about a trip of this nature. Of course it all will depend on the political climate before we commit to taking a trip to the Middle East. It takes time to plan such a trip, and we make a commitment to make sure everyone going is well prepared to experience the Holy Land.

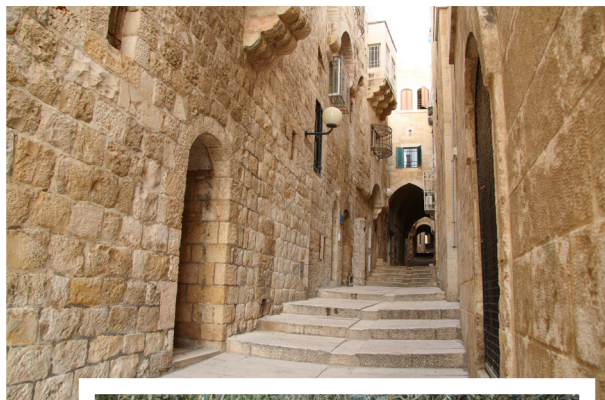
This is a trip of a lifetime. We will visit significant sites of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho, Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. We will be walking where Jesus walked! Our trips to the Holy Land will make a dramatic difference in your faith.

Janet and I would love to share this trip with our friends at First Church. A trip to the Holy Land is a wonderful opportunity to

grow in your faith and see the places you have read about in the Bible. The cost is approximately \$3,500 includes roundtrip airfare from Cedar Rapids, Deluxe Motor Coaches, First Class Hotels, Guided Sightseeing, Entrance Fees to sites visited, Breakfast and Dinner daily. The trip is 10 days including travel days.

If you are interested in learning more about this trip, please contact me at

steve.williams@aboutfirst.com. We have travel brochures available, and can talk with you about safety and security concerns in traveling to Israel. We will be scheduling an informational meeting in the spring.



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

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!)

Bible Learning And Serving Together. Please join us Wednesday nights. BLAST is for students turning 5 this school year -6th grades. This semester we will dive into Mike Slaughter “First” study. This study will show how to reassess priorities. By creating 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 be involved with this Ministry please contact Jenna Engel at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

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.

Good news! We were approved for a grant through the NE District Office to supplement our WeeCare ministry in 2017. We can still use your support, but it's good to know that additional funds will be available to help next year.

February Mission Focus Love INC Wee Care

Wee Care is First UMC's way of showing that we care about the little ones in our community. We've supported and hosted this ministry since July of 2011, and it is one of the most heavily used gap ministries with Love In the Name of Christ.

How does Wee Care work?

It begins with a call to the Love INC Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse volunteer assesses the need and sets up an appointment for the parent to come to our church to pick up the items. Most of the families who are helped by our Wee Care ministry are single parent households who are struggling to get by on their small income and keep up with their baby's needs. There is a cap on how many appointments they can have in a given year, and once the child reaches 24 months of age they are no longer eligible for Wee Care assistance.

The Love INC Clearinghouse has an easy-to-use online system for providing a list of requested baby items and for getting appointment and contact information to the Wee Care volunteers from First UMC. On Tuesday, the weekly volunteer retrieves the list of needs and packs up the items from the special storage area for our Wee Care items at the church. The appointments are set from noon until 2:00 on Tuesday afternoons, and the baby items are picked up at the Welcome Center. The Wee Care volunteer is welcome to offer a word of support or encouragement to the parent, and to pray for the wee ones. A struggling parent can always use a kind word.

So, how can you help?

Pick up a shopping list at the display in the Gathering Place. Baby supplies for our Love INC Wee Care ministry are always appreciated. Baby wash, baby lotion, diapers in all sizes, pacifiers, teething gel, diaper rash ointment, burp cloths, receiving blankets, bottles (4 and 8 oz) and sippy cups can always be used. Seasonal clothing is also helpful to have on hand, and parents are grateful for the cute new clothes or warm jackets. Of course, 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. We cannot accept baby powder or any baby foods (or formula or pedialyte).

You may bring baby supplies to the church anytime, but this month the best place to leave them is in the basket by the display in the Gathering Place. If you are not a shopper, you can make a monetary donation and we will purchase the supplies most needed. Checks can be made to FUMC, with "Wee Care" on the memo line. Thank you for your ongoing support of our WeeCare ministry to support mothers with small children who could use a little help.





For 15 Years She Had No Electricity

In 1992, hurricane Andrew struck the home of an elderly woman, Norena. She received an insurance settlement. A contractor was hired and work began. However, when the money ran out, so did the contractor, leaving an unfinished home with no electrical power. For 15 years, Norena lived with no lights, no heat in the colder months and no air conditioning in the hot months. During that time there were no hot showers. For 15 years Norena j got by with a single oil lamp and a single gas burner stove. The neighbors didn't seem to notice, and Norena didn't say anything about the situation-----she did not ask for help.

Then, acting on a tip, the mayor of Miami-Dade got involved. It only took a few hours of volunteer work by electrical contractor Kent Crook to return power to the house. CBS news reported that when the electricity was turned back on, Norena commented, "I am going to wait until the water is hot and then take my first bubble bath in 15 years."

Isn't it true that we often take the same approach as Norena when we find ourselves facing some difficult situations concerning our health, employment status, loss of a loved one, etc.? We sometimes don't want to ask for help, or don't know who to ask, and try to just get by on our own. Stephen Ministry here at FUMC is one source of help when there is a need to have a caring person come along side and give help/support through difficult circumstances. If you would like to have a Stephen Minister help you walk on through some present situation, or if such a time comes, please do not hesitate to ask for help! Contact the church office at 266-1713 to explore the possibilities open to you. Your conversation is kept confidential.

Change a Child's Story

Thank you for your continued support of "Change a Child's Story". Remember, your generous donations are doubled, and funds are used to provide books for students and teachers at Lincoln Elementary School. We have about 25 faithful Reading Buddies who spend time each week reading with students. It's one-on-one time with some delightful young folk, and everyone benefits from it. Let Lisa know if you want to join in on the fun.

You Can Be A Reading Buddy, Too

Our First UMC Reading Buddies are going to Lincoln School, and both the students and the grown-ups are having a good time. Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students are given opportunities to read with an adult volunteer from our church. About 35 times each week someone from our congregation is at our neighborhood school to support the students and teachers to promote literacy and learning.

If you are interested in being a Reading Buddy, sign up on the clipboard at the Change a Child Story display or talk to Lisa in the church office. It's not too late to join, and we promise that you will find it a blessing.

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.

February 19 Disability Awareness offering

These funds are retained 100% by the Iowa Annual conference to provide educational opportunities, and to provide grants to local churches which will assist in removing architectural and attitudinal barriers to accessibility. We celebrate the gifts and graces of persons with disabilities and consider how we can better serve all people with Christ's love and care. Offering envelopes will be provided in your bulletin – contribute as you feel led.

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.

Dorothy Height Stamp Debuts Feb 1.

from *United Methodist News Service*

It's a physically small form of recognition, but a hugely selective one. Not many people get their face on a U.S. Postal Service stamp.

Dorothy Height, a United Methodist who loomed large in civil rights and women's rights history, will soon join that group. A commemorative "forever" stamp honoring her goes on sale Feb. 1.

The image, already shared by the Postal Service, shows Height near the end of her long life, dressed to the nines in lavender, her favorite color. She's wearing one of her trademark broad-rim hats.

Derry Noyes designed the stamp, choosing artist Thomas Blackshear II to do the gouache and acrylics on board portrait. In Noyes' view, Blackshear came through in a big way.

"We know Dorothy Height as a strong leader in civil rights and women's rights," she said. "But what people might not know about her is what Thomas captured, her warmth and grace late into life."

A post office too

Height, who died in 2010 at age 98, held key positions with both the YWCA and the National Council of Negro Women. She led the latter for more than 40 years.

A longtime member of St. Mark's United Methodist Church in New York, Height helped organize the National Council of Churches women's caucus. She also founded the Black Family Reunion Celebration.

Her work included fighting segregation in the 1950s and helping black citizens register to vote in the South in the 1960s. Through the years, she focused on addressing poverty, and on expanding opportunity for women and strengthening families.

Ceremony for Height Stamp

A first-day-of-issue ceremony for the Dorothy Height stamp will occur Feb. 1 at 11 a.m. in Cramton Auditorium at Howard University, 2455 Sixth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. Admission is free, but space is limited. Tickets may be obtained at the Cramton Auditorium box office, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

She was on the stage when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. Four decades later, she was still traveling widely as a social justice and human rights advocate. Near the beginning of her career, she helped Eleanor Roosevelt organize the 1938 World Youth Congress.

Height, who said she never expected to live long enough to see an African-American elected president, was a special guest at President Obama's 2009 inauguration.

Though not as well-known as King and other civil rights leaders, Height was much honored as an older woman, including with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Soon after her death, Congress passed a bill, signed into law by President Obama, naming a Washington, D.C., post office after her.



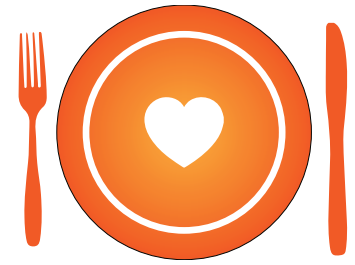
Midwest Mission Distribution Center May 29- June 3

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.



Henderson Settlement- June 25-July 1

We have 10 spaces reserved for work campers at Henderson Settlement in the Appalachian mountains of Kentucky. If you've heard of our previous trips to Red Bird Mission, this trip will be very similar, in fact, it's even in the same neighborhood. Becca Nims and Lisa Congdon are working together for this multi-generational work trip opportunity. We will find out in mid to late February what sort of project our group will be working on - it could be anything from garden or greenhouse work to painting to light or heavy construction. Whatever the task, everyone is trainable to be able to contribute. Henderson Settlement is a United Methodist-affiliated mission located in some of the most beautiful, but poverty stricken counties in the United States. You'll meet and help some wonderful people in the setting of the Kentucky Appalachian Mountains. Cost for food and lodging while on site is \$230, plus some travel and sightseeing expenses. See Lisa in the church office for more details about this mission opportunity.



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.

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.

UMW Schedule

UMW events in February –
Feb. 6 – Board Meeting, 9:30 Library
Feb. 9 – Unit Meeting, 1:00, Flwshp Hall
Feb. 14 – Miriam Circle, 1:30 Library
Feb. 20 – Deborah Circle, 10:00, Parlor
Feb. 23 – Mary Circle – 9:30, Windermere
Feb. 23 – Joy Circle, 1:30, Parlor
Feb. 28 – Miriam Circle, 1:30, 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.

UMW is a Missions Powerhouse Supporting Shesler Hall

When it comes to putting faith in action and reaching out to address social issues, very few organizations can top the United Methodist Women. One of our UMW's great causes is to support Shesler Hall - a Sioux City home for women in need providing housing, meals and a full range of comprehensive services, at a modest fee.

The purpose of Shesler Hall is to assist homeless women to gain stability by providing holistic wellness and life skills to transition to permanent housing. Shesler Hall provides women of all ages the opportunity to experience personal and social growth while residing in a supportive Christian home. Most of Shesler clients have suffered some form of abuse - emotional, physical or sexual - and recovery from substance abuse is common. Some are homeless. For whatever reason, our residents are unable to function on their own at this time and need the support of a community living environment.

Programs

The Emergency Shelter Program serves homeless or near homeless women. These residents may stay for up to thirty days or longer at no cost, depending upon their situation.

The Transitional Housing Program offers these services for a period of two years or less to women who have a medical diagnosis of chronic mental illness and are preparing to live on their own.



The Long-Term Housing Program gives a home to women with special needs for an indefinite period of time. These residents have truly made Shesler Hall their home.

Shesler Hall itself is a lovely, stately building. Each resident lives in a completely furnished room with bed and bedding, a dresser, nightstand, desk and desk chair. Two meals a day are served. Each evening a hot supper is prepared, with residents helping with the cooking and setting the table. Just before dinner we gather in the dining room to share announcements, the concerns of the days, kudos for those who have made special accomplishments, and a passage is read for evening devotions.

Medication supervision is provided by the Shesler Hall staff for any of our clients who require prescription drugs - and nearly all do. For many this is the first and most important step and one that is key to progress or failure.

Staff is available for counseling and supervision, giving residents the security and structure that has been missing from their lives. The sense of safety that comes from staff presence is extremely important to those who have mental health issues.

The Life Skills program is one of the most important things Shesler does to help our residents develop the tools needed to live as independently as possible. Under the direction of our Life Skills Coordinator, the ladies are taught cooking, cleaning, and other skills most of us take for granted.

Perhaps the single most important thing that Shesler has to offer - and the most difficult to quantify - is that this is a loving home and not simply a house. We live here as a "family" and like any family, we have our disagreements, we have our individual duties and chores, but we are always guided by respect for one another.

Thank yous

The best thing about Jane bringing our birthday roses is she will stay and visit a bit. She comes for Don in October and again for me in December. And we are so glad to see her. Also we had a surprise when we rode the bus to Church on Dec. 18. We didn't expect them to shovel around our front door where the snow had blown back overnight. Lots of great folks at our Church.

Thanks to you all

Marilyn and Don Geesaman

Thank you for the beautiful Red Rose that Jane delivered for my birthday on a very cold day. Also thanks to the staff for the signed birthday card. They both brightened up my day.

George Cable

On behalf of our crafters and the Red Bird Mission staff, thank you for partnering with us to host a successful Appalachian Craft Fair. While we manage to sell a good amount of crafts on in our shop on the Queendale Campus of Red Bird Mission, Craft Fairs held around the country are vital to providing additional income to many of our crafters. The total sales from your site was \$4,234 and we appreciated the additional generous donation to offset the travel expenses. Thank you for your support of those living in difficult economic conditions in southeastern Kentucky.

Yours in Christ

Tim Crawford,
Development Director

Thank you to everyone for your prayers and cards of encouragement during my recent illness and hospitalization. Your cards mean so much to me. It is wonderful to be a part of such a caring church.

Alice Heise

I cannot express how much I enjoy the beautiful quilt that I was given. It keeps me warm and is so beautiful. I love it. Thank you to the stitchers and quilters and to Carol Dick who delivered it to me.

Chuck Kuczor

I want to thank the Congregational Care Team for the beautiful red rose for my 83rd birthday. I would also like to thank Jane Wyckoff for delivering it to me. Thanks again.

Richard Fanning

Sympathy to:

- David and Marlys Pals on the loss of David's brother, Jimmy, on December 26.
- Friends of Julie Bailey. Julie passed away January 8.
- Family and friends of Beverly Oltman, who passed away Jan 12.
- Family and friends of Cleon Wood. Cleon passed away January 13. A private family service will be held in the spring.

Walking and Wondering

Dr. Gene Young, who was the Senior Pastor here in the mid eighties, will be in the Gathering Place following the morning worship services on Sunday, February 12 to sell his latest book, "Walking and Wondering". The subtitle is "Inspiration for Walkers". The book is like a devotional book. Each short essay (about two pages) takes some object he has observed while walking and the object triggers a spiritual message. The price is \$14.95 plus tax making the total \$16.

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".

Attendance- week ending

	1/1	1/8	1/15	1/22
1/29				
FUSION (Wed)	x	x	37	56
Transformation	x	111	90	110
Traditional 8:30	x	111	114	113
Traditional 11:00	x	106	88	142
Combined 10:00	180			

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

March newsletter deadline is February 20.

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John Bentley, Head Custodian

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Chris Congdon, Media Coordinator
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