

Congregational Tidings

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*



A weekly newsletter



www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa

February 10, 2021



Taking Care of Our Family

Please let Pastor Bret, Michelle, or Anne know of those we should be keeping close ...
Prayers for Richard Cook who is to undergo an exploratory procedure and possible further surgery of his heart on Wednesday.

Please pray for Joanne Lane who is in a lot of pain from a fall on her stairs, injuring two ribs and her back.
Prayers for Pastor Bret's mother, Ruth Ann Myers, fell and is undergoing severe pain from the fall.
Prayers for our church family as we continue to find new ways to be our church
Prayers for those most affected by the world today ... may we help them find peace

WE TOLD YOU IT WAS COMING ... AND HERE IT IS!!

Yes, it's time! It's time for the return of the First Church Talent Show!

We need to know your talent and your interest in participating right away!

Please contact Greg Holt greg.holt@wcpbhct.org or Meach Meacham shuaib.meacham@uni.edu.

Give them: 1) your name, 2) your talent, and 3) a phone number.

They'll contact you and arrange for videography at church or for you to send in a video of your own.

They'll also discuss other details you need to know for your performance. All acts must be videoed, by you or by us, by the end of February so they will be ready for a March world premiere.

COME ONE, COME ALL TO THE FIRST CHURCH TALENT SHOW ...
THE NEXT GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH!!



Opportunity to join the Board of Social Causes & Justice

Lois and A.J. and Diane and Laurie are Lonely! We are your members of the BOARD OF SOCIAL CAUSES & JUSTICE (previously Mission), and there should be at least FIVE of us ! We are jealous as all the other boards have seven to nine serving and even some committees have that many participants! Our church has always prided itself on our neighborhood, community, national and international involvement for the betterment of humanity, whether by delivering meals on wheels, building with Habitat, mentoring through the Job Foundation, walking for CROP, volunteering with Love, INC, or educating about Neighbors in Need, to name just a few opportunities. Now is a great time to get involved since we can't do a lot in person due to Covid, our work will be on the phone and through Tidings. We must be creative in interpreting and promoting the outreach ministries of our congregation and denomination locally and beyond and to stimulate and encourage full congregation participation in these ministries. If you are not already on a board, please consider joining us in these endeavors by calling/texting/emailing laurie.allbaugh@gmail.com or 504-3212. Thanks! We would LOVE for you to join us.

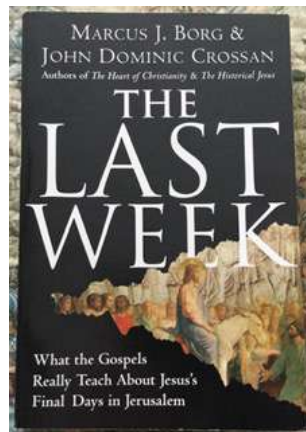
US

Did You Ever Notice ...?

Did you ever notice how sometimes Me and You get in the way of getting things done? Did you ever notice how sometimes We and They get in the way of understanding? Did you ever notice how Me + You = Us? Did you ever notice how We + They = Us? Did you ever notice how Us can get a lot more done than Me and You? Did you ever notice how Us promotes more understanding than We and They? Doesn't it make sense then, that we should spend a lot more time being Us? Doesn't it make sense to spend more time being together than apart?

Sunday Mornings During Lent

During Lent, starting Sunday, February 21, the Sunday morning Zoom gathering will read and discuss the book *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem*, by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan.



"Using the gospel of Mark as their guide, Borg and Crossan present a day-by-day account of Jesus's final week of life. They begin their story on Palm Sunday with two triumphal entries into Jerusalem. The first entry, that of Roman governor Pontius Pilate leading Roman soldiers into the city, symbolized military strength. The second heralded a new kind of moral hero who was praised by the people as he rode in on a humble donkey..."

Topic: FCUCC Sunday Morning Book Study

Time: 09:20 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83998402038?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83998402038?pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5MMTJ2bk5aUT09)

[pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5MMTJ2bk5aUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83998402038?pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5MMTJ2bk5aUT09)

Meeting ID: 839 9840 2038

Passcode: 246810

Dial in: 312 626 6799 US

Contact Evie Waack with any questions.

Sunday Morning Book Read

We are currently on Chapter 8 of Chris Stedman's book, *Faithiest*. Please feel free to join us for good conversations and discussions about topics we may not encounter in our everyday worlds, as we try to step into someone else's shoes for an hour.

Please join us 9:20 on Sunday mornings at the Zoom link below or join by phone only at the Dial In number.

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83998402038?pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5MMTJ2bk5aUT09)

83998402038?

pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5

MMTJ2bk5aUT09

Meeting ID: 839 9840 2038

Passcode: 246810

Dial In: 312-626-6799 then

83998402038# then 246810#



Women of Faith

The February Women of Faith program will feature Dr. Suzanne Freedman talking about the psychology of forgiveness. Dr. Freedman teaches in UNI's College of Education and is the coordinator of its Professional Development for Teachers Program. She has conducted research and taught courses on forgiveness and has worked with women survivors of abuse. Dr. Freedman describes forgiveness as a process whereby the injured person can pursue emotional healing but she emphasizes that forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation.

You can read more about her work here: <https://insideuni.uni.edu/value-forgiveness> Dr. Freedman is a warm and engaging speaker, and I'm sure you will enjoy learning about the process and power of forgiveness.

This zoom gathering will take place on **Tuesday, February 16 at 6:30 p.m. (note change in starting time)**. If you would like to participate, please send an email to Ratliff@cfu.net by Saturday, February 13. Kathy Klink-Zeitz will e-mail the link to the Zoom the day before the meeting.

Feel free to contact Evie Waack with questions.

CREATIVE ARTS CORNER

We have our first entry of 2021 for the newly named "Creative Arts Corner", submitted by Dale Waack. Dale tells us this about his photograph which was taken during First Congregational's trip to the Iona Community in Scotland:

"In 2015 Evie and I, along with a few other members of the congregation, ventured off to Scotland for a week at the Iona Abbey. After our week there, our itinerary included a few days of "make like a tourist time". Our last nights were spent at a mountain inn near Glencoe, Scotland. When we first arrived, I spotted a Red Deer (what a treat) in the timber near the parking lot; however, the trees were too dense to get a clean photo. Rather than take a trip to Edinburgh on our second day, Evie and I opted for a day of R&R at the inn. This provided the opportunity to meander through some of the forest with my camera. A slow, steady rain greeted me that morning. I still went wandering, dressed in rain gear. Near a creek bed the forest ended. I spotted two of the deer on a flat grassy area. They were grazing in and out of the forest and were slowly coming my direction. With no place to go and nothing better to do I waited about an hour in the rain. The wait was well worth it. Later in the afternoon with the sun shining, I captured a couple younger ones in the creek bed area. Of the close to 7000 shots I took while on the trip, this one is in my top five favorite."

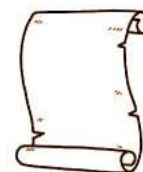


Thank you, Dale, for an amazing close-up of a red deer, rain drops included, in your photo. On behalf of the Board of Creative Arts, I would like to invite others to contribute your creations. We welcome photography, paintings, sculpture, poetry, stories, dance, music, acting, recipes, knitting, crocheting, sewing, needlework, woodworking, pottery--whatever you enjoy creating. Or maybe you have a favorite hobby that isn't necessarily your own creation, but an appreciation of the creativity of others. You can take a picture of your creation or something you appreciate. If you would like to present a video, we can link it to our website and/or Facebook page.

We would like to know a little about what you are sharing, perhaps a story of how you created your work, and why it, or the experience, is important to you. We miss seeing each other and this is a way that we can share ourselves in a different way. We welcome artists of all ages and abilities. Please send your creation or questions to Anne Hoekstra at annelouisehoekstra@gmail.com or call 319-269-0241.

First Congregational UCC Reopening Protocol

The First Congregational UCC Board of Trustees approved a set of documents explaining the protocol we will follow to allow small groups to begin using the church building & grounds for meetings and events, when appropriate. Our Reopening Committee also recommended these documents. The documents are available for your review and download from our website at www.firstcongucc.org.

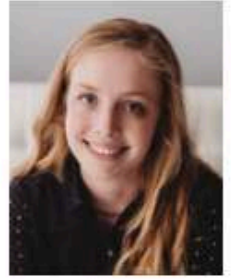


If you have a group of six or less who are interested in using the church for a meeting or event, please review the documents, fill out the request form, and submit it per instructions for review and approval. The decision to allow the gathering will depend on many variables including the current status of COVID in Black Hawk County.

Please submit your completed request form to Anne Hoekstra or Michelle Wolfe for approval.



***Help Support
Laura Kaliban & Japhy Holt:***



February 26th and 27th is the University of Iowa Dance Marathon's 27th Annual Big Event! This benefits the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital in Iowa City. Japhy and I will be joining thousands of other U of I Students in a 24-hour virtual fundraising event that will involve dancing, various activities, and listening to patients' family's heartwarming stories.

During my second year participating in UIDM, I have been a part of the Leadership team on the Event Committee, responsible for planning all of the events throughout the year. I am hoping to raise \$1,200 before the Big Event in February. Japhy is a first year dancer this year and she is hoping to raise \$1,000 by the Big Event. We recognize that this year has been especially hard for everybody, so any amount is very much appreciated by every single one of the Dance Marathon Families. For example, just \$5 pays for a hat for cancer patients, while \$45 would pay for an End of Treatment Party for patients. If you are interested in supporting us in our efforts, please check out our fundraising pages:

<https://donate.dancemarathon.uiowa.edu/detail/385> (Laura)

<https://donate.dancemarathon.uiowa.edu/detail/1297> (Japhy)

For more information about our organization please visit our website: <https://dancemarathon.uiowa.edu/about/>

Thank you in advance!

Laura Kaliban

Create an endowment of love. Please consider including our church in your estate planning.

F I R S T C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C

First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

Congregational Tidings

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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM A LOOK AT OUR CHURCH'S HISTORY?

Hello First Congregational Faithful!

As a part of the interim process, churches reflect upon their history to see patterns and learn lessons from their past. This is more than a trip down memory lane. It is an intentional and self-reflective journey to identify trends, emphases, and ways of service that have impacted our members and wider community.

To start us out in this process of reflection, we will be asking you as the members to create a "Church Timeline" of the events, activities, and ministries which have influenced our church in the past. We will focus on the past several decades, to get a better sense of how our church has met the needs of our congregation and community.

The timeline we make will include a variety of different aspects of our church life, and these will be listed at the appropriate dates along the timeline. We include important events in our nation, state, and local community along with our events within our own church family.

However, the timeline will also extend into the future, where we will list our hopes and dreams of what our church may do and become. Honestly, this is an exciting time as we engage with one another as we recall and reflect upon our church's past and prepare ourselves for continuing in God's service in the present and future!

There are many questions we will need to ask of our ourselves, and you can see a list of these in the expanded version of this letter on our church's Facebook page. All of this is designed to give us a better sense of where we've been and what is our current identity so that we may better consider where God may be calling us in the years to come. It will also help us to recognize all aspects of our past so that we may mend anything that needs mending.

Typically, this brainstorming session might be done by the whole congregation at one church meeting. But during this time of pandemic, we will employ the use of teleconferencing technology which is done best in smaller groups. The **second** group will be **Tuesday on Feb 16th at 7:00 p.m.** The third, and perhaps final group, will be **Sunday, February 21st at 7:00 p.m.** Please be sure to attend one of these groups if you were not a part of the first group. After an assessment of our results, we may delve deeper into specific aspects of our recent history that may need to be addressed.

I look forward to learning from you more about this wonderful church we all call our spiritual home, and to help us all to see important connections and patterns that may assist us in being the best church we can be for the future. God's blessings be with us in this important process.

Love and peace,

Pastor Bret