

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

January 12, 2022



CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The annual meeting of the First Congregational UCC will be held Sunday, January 23, 2021 via zoom.

Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the meeting will be held virtually via computer using Zoom again this

year. If you are a member of First Church and would like to participate in the meeting, but do not have the equipment, internet access, and/or experience to do so, please contact the church office. We will assist you in finding a way to take part in this important meeting.

A link to the meeting will be provided in next week's Tidings. A virtual copy of the annual report will be available next week for your review prior to the meeting. If you would like to pick up a hard copy of the report, please contact Michelle in the office to schedule a time to pick one up. (fcuccoffice@gmail.com or 319-234-8927)



TAKING CARE OF FAMILY...

~ Prayers for Russ Towsley who has recently had additional cancer diagnosed. We pray for him and Carol.



MODERATOR'S MUSINGS...

Here we are again, in the middle of another wave of the pandemic! For those of you old enough to remember the tv show, "Twilight Zone", this feels like a modern version of it, a season with never-ending episodes. I'm over "binge watching" this series, as I know everyone else is, but it doesn't seem done with us! I'd happily pull up another show, but all the stations are playing the same one. Sigh. . .

Vaccinations and masks have given many of us more freedom, but for those who are immunocompromised, this is still an ongoing nightmare. We know many in our congregation and community who are dealing with chronic illnesses, or have fragile health, and would appreciate a call, a letter, or a card. One of the qualities of First C that folks have valued over the years is your friendliness, your caring, and the sense of community that you create. In these challenging times, we need to continue to find ways to take care of each other. Thank you for caring about each other and reaching out.

Anne Hoekstra

FROM THE REOPENING COMMITTEE...

Our reopening committee has been meeting weekly since August of 2020, at that time there were no Covid 19 vaccines available, so a lot has changed since, but unfortunately we are still dealing with increased infection rates with the newer Delta and most recent Omicron variant.



We will continue to meet and offer our best recommendations for the health and safety of our congregation, based on current Black Hawk County, state of Iowa and National Covid 19 Data.

As of this writing we have recommended worshipping via live-streaming as the current Black Hawk Co. infection rate has climbed to 39%. In person worship is an important and meaningful part of our life together but given the current high transmission rates we want to do our part by keeping our members and our community as safe as possible. We wish to resume in person worship and return to some form of normalcy as soon as we can. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding,

Tim, Beth, Greg, and Dave



MOMENT FOR MISSION...

Thank you for supporting Love INC in 2021! God used our 36 partner churches to bless many Cedar Valley neighbors by meeting tangible needs and providing opportunities for them to find support and take steps toward stability in their life. We are so grateful for your kindness and generosity! This year, we hope to expand our community outreach so more people and churches know about the mission of Love INC, invite new volunteers into our ministry opportunities, and deepen our Begin Now ministry to focus on long-term transformation. We have big dreams for what God can do through Love INC and are excited to see what He has in store for us in 2022!

Same Ministry, New Name

With the start of a new year, we have a new name for what has been known as the Love INC Clearinghouse. This resource will now be called the **Connection Center**.

We feel this name better reflects what Love INC does...CONNECT! We want to connect with Cedar Valley neighbors in need, our partner churches, volunteers, and other organizations serving in the community. Though the name has changed, the ministry remains the same. Households in need can reach out to speak with a compassionate Connection Center volunteer who will make them feel seen and heard. All needs are analyzed, verified, and, if possible, met by one of our Gap Ministries.

Our Connection Center will continue with the same open hours of Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-noon.

Begin Now Winter Session

We are excited to start another 10-week session of Begin Now on Tuesday, February 1! Participants will be joining classes focusing on evaluating the past to plan for the future, money management, and strategies to navigate life challenges.

If you are interested in coming alongside people in need with support and relationship as they take steps forward in their life, we have a variety of volunteer opportunities!

- Serve as a discussion leader in one of our classes
- Provide rides to and/or from class for participants - many of our participants do not have access to reliable transportation!
- Prepare and serve a meal for our participants and volunteers
- Mentor kids or hold babies in our childcare environments while their parents are in class

Begin Now takes place every Tuesday evening for 10 weeks. A free meal is served from 5-6 p.m. and class is from 6-7:30 p.m. We would love to have you join us! Visit our website to learn more!

Save the Date - Love INC Open House!

You are invited to a Love INC Open House on Wednesday, February 9 from 12-2 p.m. This is a great opportunity to stop by and see our office, meet our staff and volunteers, and learn more about what Love INC does! Lunch will be provided.

Please help us spread the word about this opportunity! Maybe you have a friend who is looking for a way to serve the community? Or your church staff wants to understand how to make referrals to Love INC? Or maybe your small group is looking for a place to donate goods this year? **Grab a friend and bring them to the Love INC Open House to learn more!**

First Congregational UCC
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Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here

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



INTERFAITH
ALLIANCE
OF IOWA

NEWS ABOUT OUR FCUCC FAMILY...

Lori Lane, daughter of Roger and Joanne Lane and of our congregation, just recently joined Interfaith Alliance of Iowa as a development director. Here is a link to their newsletter which features an article about her.

<https://interfaithallianceiowa.ourpowerbase.net/civcrm/mailing/view?id=319&reset=1>

"Interfaith Alliance of Iowa is a statewide, non-partisan progressive voice for people of faith and no faith protecting religious freedom, ensuring faith is not used to discriminate, championing individual rights, and uniting diverse voices to challenge extremism."

The best of luck to you in your new position, Lori!