

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

May 18, 2022



Youth Sunday: Come join us for our annual youth-led worship service on May 22nd at 10:30am! Rev. David Glenn-Burns—who has served as the Campus Minister at ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries in Cedar Falls for over 25 years—will additionally be delivering the sermon. ThreeHouse partners with many (college students, young adults, almost a dozen local churches, to name a few) to gather and welcome *all* people, to engage in service and activism, and to help humans find and grow in their voice, vision, and vocation. To learn more, go to <https://threehouse.org/>. See you this Sunday!

TAKING CARE OF FAMILY...



- ~ Prayers for Collene Peirce, who is having a procedure for her pacemaker on Thursday, May 19. Cards and notes may be sent to 3726 Memory Lane, Waterloo, IA 50701
- ~ Prayers for Diana Blankenfeld Paige, who was hospitalized on Sunday for treatment of post-surgery infection following brain surgery 3 ½ weeks ago. To send cards and notes, Diana's address is 239 Parkview Blvd, Waterloo, 50702.
- ~ Prayers for Michelle Holt, who continues to convalesce from heart surgery. Her address is 1203 W. 12th St., Cedar Falls, IA 50613.
- ~ Prayers for Nevaeh and her mother, Kari Brock, who was admitted to the University of Iowa Hospitals on Monday evening for observation for seizures.
- ~ Prayers for Jacqueline Eden's father who just had bladder surgery for cancer.
- ~ Prayers for Steve Maurer, who recently had a flareup of his COPD.
- ~ Prayers for Carol Towsley and her family following the death of Russ who passed away last week.



We are saddened to announce the passing of Russ Towsley on Wednesday, May 11th. The funeral service will be held at First Congregational Church on Friday, May 20th at 10:30 am with visitation from 9:30 to 10:30am prior to the service. You can read Russ' obituary at <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/wfcourier/name/russell-towsley-obituary?id=34745789>.



Youth Director Office Hours: Abbie will hold open office hours May 23rd and 24th from 1pm-5pm. Come see her! She has treats!

Childcare During Sunday Services: As we transition into summer, we wanted to communicate that *starting Memorial Day Weekend, childcare will be provided during Sunday Services (still following the Children's Message through the end of service) ONLY for kids Preschool to 3rd grade.* We do this so

that we can better provide a safe and meaningful environment for our youth that is more-so tailored to their developmental needs.

If your child is on the border one way or the other, or if you have any comments, suggestions, questions, or ideas, Youth Director Abbie is welcoming to a conversation to discuss how we can best provide support for your family :)

Summer Youth and Family Programming: Keep an eye out for summer youth and family programming info coming soon!

Youth Group: For youth group this week, we will be rehearsing for Youth Sunday! Join us from 6pm-7pm on Wednesday, May 18th.



PENTECOST DAY PICNIC - JUNE 5, 2022

June 5 is Pentecost Sunday AND the first Sunday of June--our traditional day for our church picnic. We are resuming our outside worship service and picnic this year, and will hold it at the church. Worship will begin at 10:30am followed by the picnic. The church will provide the chicken and drinks and everyone who is able is asked to bring a side or dessert to share. We always enjoy a great day of worship and fellowship...come join us!

GRADUATES

It's that time of year again! Now is the time to let the church office know if you have someone in your family graduating from high school or college. Please submit their names to the church office for publication in Tidings at a later date. Include school they are graduating from and any future plans they may have in mind such as colleges they will be attending.



SUMMER SPECIAL MUSIC NEED

Special Music is needed for the upcoming summer months! If you sing, play an instrument, or have a way to enhance our summer worship services with your talents, please contact Michelle in the office via phone, email, or stop by to be added to our worship schedule!

CONSENSUS BUILDING IN THE CHURCH

A Webinar Opportunity from the UCC on **June 2, 6:00-8:00 p.m.**--come to the church at 5:50 to participate, Root beer floats and interesting conversations for all who come! If interested or for more information, contact Abbie Chronister, Anne Hoekstra, or Michelle Wolfe.

We are surrounded by a larger culture where issues continually divide us and the majority rules. While we may have come to accept this reality as the best option for governing a democracy, many of our churches have been crippled by divisive winner-take-all votes on sensitive issues like ONA, racism, and how to spend the endowment. This leaves many members of the Body of Christ feeling unheard, hurting, and in some cases so angry they leave altogether. Surely we can do better than that. Surely we are called to do better than that. As followers of Jesus' gospel we are called to make decisions together in ways that build up our communities of faith instead of blowing them apart.

Welcome to Consensus Building 101 - an introduction to a more cooperative model of decision making centered around respect, equality, sharing power and sharing responsibility. The conversations are hard and those hard conversations can create more community instead of a divided one. Join Rev. Becky David and ACM Rev. Kendy Miller to learn about healthier ways to make decisions, what is consensus, and why it's important. Consensus Building 101 is part of a series of four webinars focused on congregational well-being. The next two will happen in September and November (more details coming later!).

SEARCH AND CALL UPDATE:

The Search committee continues to meet and make plans for any upcoming interviews that we may have for candidates. It's been a bit of a dry spell these last few weeks, but we remain prayerful that the right candidate is out there and is being led to our church. Please continue to pray with us as we walk together down this path. We are a wonderful, energetic, community-involved, caring group of people and are ready to welcome a new minister to our congregation! Pass the word!!! This is a prayer that is part of our church profile. Let's make sure God hears it every day!

Dear Lord,

We are Listening ... This is an important time in the Life of our Church - First Congregational United Church of Christ. A time we are selecting a new minister and choosing our future path. A time to say goodbye and hello. It is a bittersweet time, really. On one hand, change is exciting. New ministers mean new ideas. New churches mean new people to develop relationships and share ministry with. On the other hand, change can be difficult.

Some ministers are leaving great churches filled with many close friends - friends who have shared life's ups and downs. Some churches are losing ministers who have meant a great deal to them - ministers who have shared life's ups and downs in a variety of ways.

Lord, we are Listening ... We thank you for the gifts, talents, and skills with which you have blessed us. We thank you for the experiences that have brought us to this moment. We pray that our congregation will support and encourage each other during this difficult and exciting time, all at once.

Lord, we are Listening ... Be with us as we prayerfully seek Your will and Your wisdom throughout our time of transition. You know our needs and we have faith You want to guide us to the person You have already prepared for this responsibility.

Lord, we are Listening ... Help us all to wait with patience, to grow in hope, and to be filled with expectation. We seek a leader to strengthen us in our faith and in our discipleship; in Your love, send us your Spirit so that our search may end in joy.

Lord, we are Listening ... Continue to remind us that all that we accomplish, is for the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of You, and for the service of humanity. May Your light enfold us; may Your spirit guide us, and may Your grace abound in us.

Know that none of us are alone. And as John Wesley reminds us, "best of all God is with us."

Amen

~ *Diane Highnam*

MOMENT FOR MISSIONS:

You are invited to LoveINC's Open House on May 19th from 4-6 p.m. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Love INC!

Whether you are interested in volunteer opportunities, partnership, or just want to know more about what They do around the Cedar Valley they would love to have you stop by!

Their office is located at 2603 Rainbow Dr. Suite 2 in Cedar Falls.

~ Laurie



PANEL DISCUSSION ON COVID'S IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

Last Sunday's service was designated as Mental Health Sunday. Jayne Slaughter shared some of her experiences with NAMI, and group dedicated to dealing with issues related to mental illness on individuals and families. As part of May's Mental Health awareness, there is a special discussion about the issues of Covid-19 on Mental Health this Thursday: Steve Carignan, UNI, will moderate a Panel discussing the "Impact of Covid-19 on Iowans' Mental Health" on **Thursday, May 19 from 12 pm to 1 pm** at the Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center, downtown Waterloo.



CHECK OUT GREG HOLT'S FILM THIS WEEKEND!

During covid, Greg Holt took the opportunity to collaborate with Paco Rosic to write and direct a film! The final version is ready and there will be four special showings at the **Marcus Theatres in Waterloo!!** Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday (May 19, 20, 21, 22) 6:00 p.m. each night.

This will be your special chance to catch it on the big screen. Tickets \$10. watercityfilms.com



Greetings from our Congregational UCC Sisters & Brothers in Nashua, New Hampshire.

You may have seen the story on KWWL or in the WCF Courier. A pastor is riding his bicycle “Tower to Tower” 1500 miles from the Little Brown Church in Nashua, Iowa to his Congregational UCC church in Nashua, New Hampshire. Nashua, Iowa was actually named after its namesake in New Hampshire. That’s a little fun fact I didn’t know.

Pastor Andy Armstrong rode from Nashua to south of Waterloo last Friday. The Highnam’s kindly offered their guest room, a soft bed, and a hot shower to Pastor Andy and a few of us from our Waterloo First Church had the opportunity to share dinner and wonderful conversation with him. Pastor Andy gave us encouragement, some great advice, and very useful information to assist us as we continue to search for a new senior minister. We appreciate his help. We also learned much about his much larger First Church in New Hampshire ... very interesting and a great reminder of the brothers & sisters we have all across the country and around the world. But mostly, we enjoyed the company of someone from our larger Congregational UCC Community. There’s never too much of that.

Pastor Andy’s bike ride serves as part of his sabbatical and also as a fundraiser to support a project to repair their very old, leaning bell tower. The bells were actually used in the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair! If you would like to contribute to our sister church’s project, just send a check to the church office with First Church-Nashua in the Memo. We will combine those checks into a check from our church to theirs.

~ *Paul Greene*

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

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Congregational Tidings

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