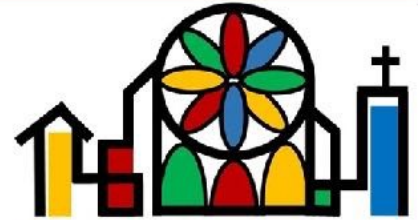


First Congregational UCC

TIDINGS

A weekly newsletter for our church family and friends

October 4, 2023



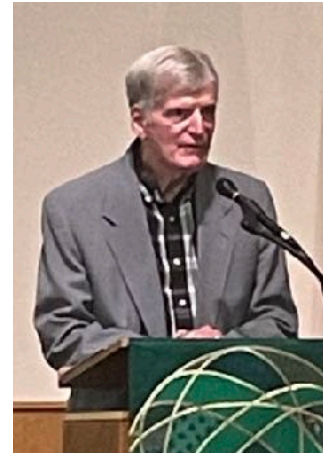
FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa

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

PULPIT SUPPLY



Thank you, Rev. Cathy Young, for her thoughtful and challenging sermon on the topic of Christian Nationalism last Sunday. Thanks to Craig Driver for assisting as worship leader, and Gina Greene for her mini message about communion.



You can watch the service by clicking on the picture of Rev. Young.



This week, we welcome Rev. Brad Braley back to the pulpit. His message is entitled, "Pressing On for the Prize!" Gina Greene will be serving as worship leader and Kay Leary will provide the mini message.



FALL CLEAN UP - JOIN US THIS SATURDAY - OCTOBER 7TH 9AM - 12PM

Followed by Pizza & Soft Drinks and will finish up before the Iowa Football Game at 2:30pm, Panther Game at 6pm & ISU Game at 7pm!! 😊

We will Be:

1. Raking garden areas
2. Pulling larger weeds
3. Spreading brown mulch
4. Planting Bulbs in East Garden Areas (100 days of flowers next summer.)
5. Transplanting Hostas, Day Lilies & Lily-of-the Valley

Bring: rakes, hoes, shovels, bulb planter tubes. Label your tools. Don't forget gloves.

Call or e-mail Michelle in the office to volunteer. (319-234-8927 or fcuccoffice@gmail.com)

TAKING CARE OF FAMILY:

~ Prayers for Henry Doepke, who was hospitalized for several days last week at Allen Hospital for pneumonia. He continues his convalescent at home.

~ On Sunday, Jayne Slaughter mentioned 2 families specifically affected by mental health problems. Please keep them and all people struggling with depression, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and other mental conditions in your prayers.

~ Prayers for those of our congregation who struggle with ongoing health concerns of any kind.

~ We pray in gratitude for Connie Jo Peirce, who reports that she continues to recover from her surgery though she is still struggling with sciatica pain. She received good news that she will not need further treatment for her cancer.

~ Rex Boatman turns 98 on Saturday!
Happy Birthday, Rex!



GREETERS!

What a joy it is to see a greeter at the front door. Thank you to those that have signed up. Take a Sunday morning and welcome your church family, friends and neighbors. Sign up to be a greeter.

ADULT BOOK STUDY

A discussion of Rachel Held Evans's book, *Inspired*, will continue this week. Join us this Sunday morning at 9:15 a.m. with "The Letter" and Chapter 8, "Church Stories". The group will meet in the Friendship Room for discussion.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

The next Trustee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17th at 6:00pm. Note this is the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

LITTLE PANTRIES

Thank you to everyone for continuing to add extra groceries to your cart and bringing them in for the little pantries. No one should go hungry! Thank you!

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Group will be held on Wednesday nights from 5:30-7:30pm at First Baptist (434 Baltimore Ave.).

We have two other very important and exciting dates for October which are :

1. Saturday, October 14th from 7pm - 9pm. The youth are going on a Haunted Hayride. The address is 100 Waterhawk Road, Evansdale, IA 50707. (Entry Fee and Free snacks included!)
2. RYE 2023: Youth Gathering in Cedar Rapids - Friday, October 27th, 4pm until Sunday, October 29th, 3pm.

You can find more information here:

<https://www.thechurchonorthland.com/rye-2023.html>

NORTH EAST IOWA ASSOCIATION

The next meeting will be held November 4th from 10am to Noon. Join us for a seminar / workshop led by Rev Janice Springer on "Learning to Hate, Choosing to Love" followed by a light lunch of soup and sandwiches and a brief meeting. Event will be held at Cedar Falls UCC and should conclude by 1:30pm. Rev. Janice Springer has served as a local church pastor for 40 years. She is a spiritual director and has led workshops in several states and Canada. Janice is open to have non-Association members attend if they contact the association in advance.

ANNUAL FALL CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY

Saturday, October 28th ~ 9am until 11am

First Baptist Church (434 Baltimore, W'loo)

Please drop items to donate at First Baptist (weekday mornings) or FCUCC. If you'd like to help organize on October 27th, come to First Baptist from 9-2.

LITTLE PANTRIES / FOOD BANK IDEAS

Here are a few more ideas continued from last week's Tidings... (Thanks to Craig Mahood for sharing this.)

1. Tea bags and coffee make us feel like you care.
2. Sugar and flour are treats.
3. We get lots of peanut butter and jelly but usually not sandwich bread.
4. Dishwashing detergent is very expensive and is always appreciated.

MODERATOR MUSINGS—by Anne Hoekstra

One of my favorite Old Testament Bible stories is about Joseph—you know, the one in “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat”. Rev. Brad Braley retold this story in his mini message a couple of Sundays ago. He reminded us through his storytelling and audience participation that good can come out of bad. Joseph being sold into Egyptian slavery by his brothers actually resulted in his being able to save them. Our human condition means that bad things happen—war, riots, death, betrayals, illness, floods, tornadoes, divorce, job loss, etc. No one is immune from sorrow and pain. But this story reminds us that good things can come out of these events.

My favorite part of this story is when Joseph’s brothers come to Egypt in desperate need of assistance, and after tricking his brothers into a private conversation with him, Joseph reveals himself. The brothers have reason to be frightened for their past mistreatment of him and the reversal of power! In their shock and fear, they offer to become his slaves. However, he amazes them (and us) with his response, “Don’t be afraid; I can’t put myself in the place of God. You plotted evil against me, but God turned it into good. . . .”

Many of our Bible stories are about this kind of reversal. It is comforting to know that with the help of God, stories can change. Our stories can change. We don’t always know how, but as Christians, we trust God to change the story somehow. Joseph’s story took many years to unfold, with lots of plot twists and desperate moments. Yet, this story became a story of redemption.

We trust in that same God to make things right in our church. We have been between pastors for too long. We’ve experienced so many of the same issues that other churches have in the cultural shifts away from organized religion and declining attendance. We want to be back to normal—whatever that means. We long for a spiritual leader who will care for us and challenge us. We are waiting for that special pastor who will take us into our next chapter of being First Congregational UCC. And yet we wait.

We’re tired of waiting and are impatient! However, in this in-between time, we have many things to celebrate. We have been blessed by the preaching of more than 30 individuals. Many of our congregants have stepped up to do what needs to be done—teaching Sunday School, volunteering at the Food Bank, working on Habitat Builds, donating to our neighborhood pantries, delivering meals to homebound, supporting youth at Bunger, collecting goods and clothes for our neighbors, donating to Neighbors in Need and LoveINC, walking for CROP, singing or playing bells in worship, tending our aging building, and working within our Church Row Community in various ways. The list goes on and on.

Romans 8:28 reassures us that, “we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” We trust that God is still at work in our lives and in our church, and that we will find a pastor soon. In the meantime, we carry on.

MOMENT FOR MISSIONS

~ The Habitat Weekly Prayer Walk is cancelled this week as the leader will be at a conference.

~ Neighbors In Need has collected \$202 so far. Please submit your gift in the offering plate this Sunday or bring to the office by Wednesday, October 11th.

~ On Wednesday, October 11th from 7 to 8pm **FCUCC will host a National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Presentation downstairs.** Presenters Jennifer Shaw, LISW, CIMHP and Tasha Lowman, LISW, are mental health therapists with Cedar Circle Mental Health and Wellness. Shaw has focused on adolescent mental health and practiced for 15 years. Lowman has worked for more than 10 years, including Brentwood, Allen Hospital's mental health unit, and Unity Point Clinic Psychiatry. This presentation is free and open to the public.

~ **Sharing and Caring Support Group for Adults with Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners**

Hawkeye's Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center, 120 Jefferson Street, in Waterloo
Break Room-see signage-enter by the door to the left of main entrance, 6-7:30 pm:

Monday, October 9 Topic: Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Monday, October 23 Topic: How to Communicate with your Doctor

~ **Online Evening Support Group for Adults with Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners**

Tuesday, October 10 & Wednesday, October 18--contact NAMI at info@namiowa.org for the information to join-6-7 pm

~ **Education/Support Group for Adults with Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners**

Waterloo Center for the Arts, 225 Commercial Street, Media Gallery-Room 108 - Turn right at the reception desk and it is just past the elevator on the green wall on the right hand side. 2-3:30 pm

Thursday, October 12 Topic: Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Thursday, October 26 Topic: How to Communicate with your Doctor

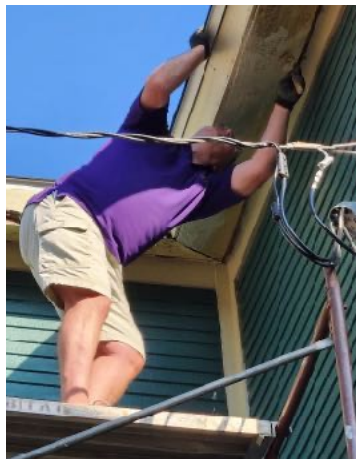
First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

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



Habitat Build

Thank you team for a great day!
It was a hot one but a lot of fun and a lot was accomplished.
This team took to the sky!

