



aboutfirst

LOVE FIRST. LET'S GATHER, GROW, GO TOGETHER

ADVENT

Light of the World

DECEMBER, 2021 FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CEDAR FALLS

contents

2-3	PASTOR'S PAGE
4-5	NEWS
6-7	EVENTS
8	WORSHIP & DIGITAL CHURCH
9	ADVENT FOREST
10	COLORING PAGE
11	NEXT BIG THING!
12	MISSIONS
13	MONTHLY MISSION
14-15	YOUTH & UMW
16	ADVENT SPECIAL MUSIC
17	HELPING
18	REACHING IN & OUT
19	SHORT NOTES

Issue 254,
December 2021

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aboutfirst.com



Advent - The Comings of Christ

Advent derives from the Latin *adventus*, which means “*coming*.” The season proclaims the comings of the Christ—whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate. Each year Advent calls the community of faith to prepare for these comings; (The United Methodist Book of Worship) This is where I start every year as we approach the Christmas season in the church. I start here, in our Book of Worship, to set my heart and soul on the path towards Christmas. I start here to take my eyes off the secular preparations that can easily distract me. I love Christmas lights, decorations, gift-giving and cards and I can easily get caught up in all of that if I don't keep my focus on the comings of Christ. It also reminds me that, in the church, the focus is not just on the celebration of Christ's birth, but also on Christ's presence and the promise of Christ's return.

The comings of Christ – whose birth we prepare to celebrate, Happy Birthday, Jesus! I think about the complicated and meager beginnings of Jesus' life here on this earth. A frightened young woman who would bear this promised Messiah, her confused and faithful husband-to-be, a decree from the government that sent them on a 100 mile journey in the final days of pregnancy only to find they had no place to stay. A baby, the Messiah, born in a stable, laid in a manger, worshipped by shepherds, proclaimed by the angels. A birth story for all times. How do you celebrate his *coming* in your home?

who come continually in Word and Spirit,

The Christmas story didn't end, because the life of the Messiah didn't



end but lives on through the Word of God and through the presence of the Holy Spirit. During this time, try to focus on Christ's presence in the world today and in our lives each day. My goal is to spend time each day in God's word. I have mentioned before, my "go to" scripture reading for December is the gospel of Luke. There are 24 chapters and if I read a chapter a day, starting on December 1st, I finish on Christmas Eve, ready to celebrate the birth of one who has changed the lives of many, including my own. Maybe you would like to join me in Luke this year!

whose return in final victory we anticipate.

The story of Jesus' life began at his birth, but the promise we have is that it did not end with his death. Advent is a time to also think about Jesus final coming with wonder, hope and anticipation. I will reflect on this during the season of Lent, looking for those promises in the gospel of Luke, wondering what it might be like, and remembering the story isn't over.

I wonder, if the people who also journeyed to Bethlehem under the decree of the Emperor ever thought about the promised Messiah. Did they have any idea it was happening in their presence, in their times? How will it be when Christ comes again? When the world seems out of control, when life gets crazy, we can remember the story of God saving grace through Jesus, isn't over yet!

Happy Advent, how will you observe the "comings" of Christ this year?

Pastor Karen

Give Through Our Website or Your Phone

Online giving is great for you, because you can do it any time, any place, and you don't need to carry cash to church. Recurring (automatic) giving is great for you, because you won't have to try to remember to write the check. Recurring giving is also great for the church because it provides a predictable income stream for budgeting and planning purposes.

Our secure online giving portal allows you to make one-time offerings, or to set up a recurring gift. Check it out today.

<http://aboutfirst.com/giving>

or, download the GivePlus app to your mobile device and give directly from your phone. Available for androids and i-people.



GIVE PLUS⁺
A VANCO COMPANY



FUMC Christmas Ornaments

The music department is once again selling Christmas ornaments. The glass ornaments feature musical titles of the season. You can buy them individually for \$10 or you can purchase the entire set for \$36. They are packaged individually in a lined box. Orders will be taken online or in the church welcome center until December 12th. If you order at the Welcome Center please pay when you order....make checks out to Cedar Falls Laser Engraving. Heath Wilken will pick them up at the church office. Please allow one week for orders to be completed and you can pick the ornaments up at the Welcome Center. Questions? Contact Bevan Lucas or Heath Wilken.



Poinsettia orders

Christmas is coming. Your purchase of a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one will brighten up the season. Each poinsettia costs \$15. Deadline to order is December 22. You will find an order form at the Welcome Center or in the office, or you can mail your check to the church and include a note clearly indicating who the poinsettia is in memory or honor of, and by whom. You may take your poinsettia home with you after the last Christmas Eve service.

Join the Facebook Group

We have created a Facebook group called First Friends and Family to allow everyone to interact and share the ways they are finding to Love First. Head over to our church Facebook page, select 'visit group'. You should find the button under the banner. Want to join? Click the member request button and we will be sure to add you.



Ensuring the Future

First UMC Endowment funds are your gifts that keep on giving to secure the financial future of the church. An endowment is a monetary gift that can be invested to support church programs and expenses.

These funds are managed by the endowment committee with the assistance of the Iowa United Methodist Foundation.

Having a planned-giving program not only strengthens the future of our church but is a way for you to say that you believe in the future of our church. An Endowment Fund program is truly a gift that keeps on giving.

If you are interested in learning more about our church's endowment program, please contact a member of the endowment committee.

Committee members are: Mike Butler (Chair), Alan Bernard, Richard Congdon, Jim Noelting, Jim Kenyon, Harriett McMahill, Jean Richardson, Susan Whitson, and Pastor Scott Kober.



A Letter to the Church

December 2021

Dear Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church,

On that first Christmas, the angels praised God, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” The shepherds came and adored the newborn Savior. It was written in Luke that “Mary treasured all of these things and pondered them in her heart.” We too need to pause and treasure the gift of Christmas in our hearts. That gift is Jesus, who came to reveal God’s truth and love to us.

Traditionally, our church has shared in receiving a special Christmas offering as a way of showing our gratitude for God’s gift of Jesus to us. These gifts are not for us, but will be used to spread healing, hospitality and hope to others who need to hear of the miracle of Christ.

Cedar Falls First UMC has done a great job all year of supporting ministries and missions locally, nationally and internationally. Our Christmas eve mission focus will be the same as last year’s, the Cedar Valley Angels. CV Angels is an organization that provides support to the children and families in the foster-care system.

Cedar Valley Angels

In the Cedar Valley we have children that are removed from their homes and placed in foster care due to neglect, abandonment, or because they are the victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. When children are removed from the home, they are confused and upset, and they need the temporary protection and nurturing that a foster family can provide.

Foster families that open their homes to children often find their resources stretched further than they expected, and the demands of parenting a foster child often stress other family relationships.

Cedar Valley Angels provides support in the way of Love Boxes. The Love Box Program includes: enrichment activities, encouraging notes, gift cards, household supplies, groceries, clothing, mentorship, and a supportive community.

You may receive a letter in the mail with a special Christmas offering envelope-gift for foster families in the Cedar Valley. You may place your gift in the offering plate on Sunday morning, Christmas eve, or send it to the church office at any time.

The angels shared the good news that first Christmas - the wonderful, joyous news for all people. Their message inspired the shepherds to seek this Savior whose life brings new life, love, and hope for all. You can be that angel today and help us continue sharing that Christmas message. Thank you and God’s blessing for you and yours this Christmas season.



Dec

December 5 - Children's Christmas Program

Where: Sanctuary

When: 10:15 am

Our kids have been practicing for the past few weeks and they are so excited to share this story with you. December 5 is also the last Sunday of Kids Creation Corner and Children's Sunday school until we resume in January.

December 5 - Christmas Bell Concert

Where: Sanctuary

When: 7:00 pm

An annual favorite, sure to put you in the Christmas Spirit!

December 7th - Grief Support Session

Where: Parlor

When: 2:00 - 3:30 pm

The holidays are especially difficult if you are grieving

a loss. Our First UMC Grief Support Team wants you to know that you are in our thoughts and prayers this Christmas season. Please call Carol through the church office for more information. If you would like some individual support, please call anytime.

December 12 - Christmas Candlelight Service of Memories

Where: Sanctuary

When: 3:00 pm

On Sunday, December 12th at 3:00 pm we will be holding a special worship service for anyone who would like to reflect on memories of loved ones we have lost. We will have special music, messages of hope from our pastors, and a time of fellowship after the service. No matter when your loved one has died, whether that be recently or in the past, you will be welcome in our sanctuary. Transportation can be arranged if necessary. Please call 277-0711 for information.

December 19 - Hymns of Hope concert

Where: Sanctuary, Online

When: 3:00 pm

ember

The holidays are a special time of year to gather with loved ones and remember the birth of Christ. The anticipation of hope and peace is often found in the music of the season. We will celebrate the joyous time of year with a special musical offering. Join us for Hymns of Hope on December 19th at 3pm. This special gift will feature traditional and contemporary selections from our music ministry. Join us in-person or watch live on the church Facebook page or Youtube channel.

December 27 - LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Our monthly Blood Drive will be Monday, December 27. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill, and the need is great. Sign up to donate at www.lifesevebloodcenter.org

Crafter's Corner

Where: Parlor

When: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Get your crafting project lined up and join the group on the 4th Monday of the month. If you are looking for a project to do at home, Crystal Wilken is looking for people to do one

or more of the bag "processing" steps at home to help with our surplus of plastic bags that are used to make sleeping mats. This might be simply cutting the bags into strips, or looping the strips together to make "plarn" (plastic yarn), or even crocheting the plarn into the mats. She will provide all the materials with step-by-step instructions. Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

Heart's and Hands

The Hearts and Hands group has been busy this fall. On October 26, the members provided all the makings for walking tacos and delivered that food to First Presbyterian church in Waterloo. Some of our group helped serve the tacos.

Then on Wednesday night, November 17, we helped Jenna in the big kitchen to make take-home snacks with the Blast kids. We made two kinds of non-bake treats. Both the kids and adults in the group had a great time!

Our next project will be to fill Christmas bags sewn of pretty Christmas fabric with useful and seasonal items. The bags will be delivered to FUMC church members who may be in need of some Christmas cheer. If you have a friend or family member who could use that "cheer", let the church office know and we will try to grant your request.



Newcomers' Coffee with the Pastors - Dec. 19, 10:15am

If you are new or newer to First United Methodist Church, our pastors want to get to know you! Come have a coffee with the pastors on Sunday, December 19 at 10:15am to hear about what is happening at First United Methodist Church and how you can begin to take next steps in getting connected. We look forward to seeing you there!

SUNDAY MORNING

Worship Schedule

8:15 am	Traditional worship service, sanctuary
9:00-11:15	Fellowship, Gathering Place
9:15 am	Transformation Contemporary worship, Fellowship Hall
9:30-10	Kid's Corner - will resume January
10:15 am	Sunday School for all ages
11:15 am	Traditional worship service, sanctuary

Masking inside the church building is recommended for all as Covid numbers continue to rise. Please continue to take precautions and social distance when possible.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT Your Church Night

Come out from 5-7:30. (will resume in January 12)

5-5:45	Filling Station meal, Gather Place
6-6:30	FUSION Tonight, theater
6:00	younger BLAST kids in gym
6:15	Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary
6:30	WOW AA, 055
6:30-7:30	BLAST, gym and lower level
6:30	Youth group, 3rd floor
6:30	More Than Moms, parlor
6:30	Drive Thru History, chapel
7:30	Chancel Choir rehearsal, sanctuary

HOW TO WORSHIP ONLINE

Option 1

Facebook Live Stream

Watch Sunday worship live, as it happens on our First UMC Facebook page.
facebook.com/firstumccfmedia/

Option 2

aboutfirst.com

The online worship page at aboutfirst.com has service videos and worship resources including: links to the teaching scripture passage, kids' video, online sign-in, and online offering.

Option 3

Youtube Channel

Go to aboutfirst.com and click the 'sermons' graphic for a link to our channel

FACEBOOK DEVOTION

A devotion is offered on Facebook each Tuesday at 6:00pm with a rotating cast of characters.

On Fridays about noon one of our pastors will give a preview of next Sunday's message.

FIRST UMC IS ON CABLE TV

We have an hour timeslot on public access cable TV in both Waterloo and Cedar Falls. Our program includes a Sunday School story for children, a devotion from a church staff member, and the teaching session from last Sunday's service.

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channels 18 and 95.5,
Friday @ 8:00 pm, Sunday @ 9:00 am

Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 17,
Sundays @ 11:am & 8:pm

Miss A Sermon?

If you miss a Sunday message, you'll find it on our youtube channel. Go to our website at aboutfirst.com and scroll down to the "sermons" graphic, which will link you to all of our sermons and public videos.

advent forest

Advent Forest

On display in the Gathering Place this December will be our first "Advent Forest" Here, you can walk in the forest for inspiration, holiday spirit and gift giving opportunities. Here you will find a listing and brief description of what you will find!

Memory Tree

It's not too late to bring a special ornament to place on our Memory Tree sponsored by the First UMC Grief Support Team. All congregation members and friends are invited to bring a special ornament to honor your loved one/ones who have died. We will have tags available to write names and attach to the ornaments. You may remove the ornament after the holidays or leave it for us to use again next year. Please call Carol through the church office with questions.

Christmas Tree Walk

Any individuals or groups are welcome and encouraged to bring and decorate a tree starting December 1st. All trees will be located in the Gathering Place. A sign-up sheet will be at the Welcome Center, after Thanksgiving. Contact Linda Kennedy with any questions.

Widows of Veterans Christmas Tree

We would like to invite you to extend your Christmas generosity to Widows of Veterans. This program is a relatively new program through the Black Hawk County Veterans Affairs office that provides gift bags to widows who lost their veteran spouse during the past year. Last year, the VA was able to assist 29 area widows. This year, the VA knows of 16 widows. You can help by purchasing gift cards in increments of \$10 or \$20 to area stores such as Walmart, HyVee, Target or to area restaurants or other stores. The

VA will distribute these cards as part of their gift bag to Widows of Veterans.

This year, we know of widows of veterans as young as 26. The average age is 70, and most veteran deaths this year have been associated with World War II (90 years or above in age); the Korean War (85 years or above); and the Vietnam War (70 years and above). Look for our Widows of Veterans Christmas Tree, take a reminder tag from the tree, and return your gift card to the Church by Sunday, December 12. You can also provide gas gift cards, which are needed by veterans throughout the year and are always greatly appreciated.

Thank you so much for supporting our veteran community in this way.

Angel Tree

This year we are again partnering with North Cedar and Lincoln Schools to share a little Christmas love to some families in our own community. The Angel Tree and wish list tags are now on display in the Gathering Space. Here's how it works: select a tag, purchase the gift, and return the gift to the church by Friday, December 10. We'd appreciate it if you would wrap it, but you may bring it back unwrapped. Please be sure the tag is securely attached. If you'd prefer not to shop feel free to make a donation and we'll shop for you! (If you write a check please make it out to FUMC with Angel Tree in the memo.) We are also in need of \$25.00 gift cards to Walmart to give to the families.

Julie Fee is the contact for the Angel Tree ministries this year. Feel free to direct your questions to her at bjfee@cfu.net or 296-8963.

Kids and Youth Tree

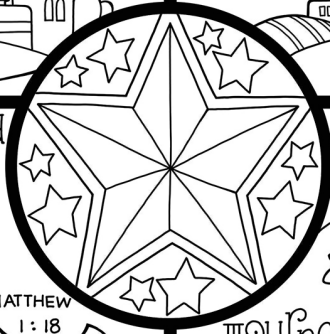
The Kids and Teens have made ornaments that will be on display in the Advent Forest!

He shall be born in Bethlehem
MICAH 5:2

He shall be called Immanuel
ISAIAH 7:14

John shall prepare the way
ISAIAH 40:3

Mary is betrothed to Joseph
MATTHEW 1:18



Journey to Bethlehem
LUKE 2:4

No room in the inn
LUKE 2:7

He will be great, and be called the son of Most High
LUKE 1:32

Be it unto me according to thy word
LUKE 1:38

Mary visits Elizabeth
LUKE 1:39,40

A decree is issued
LUKE 2:1

Hallelujah
Jesus is born!
LUKE 2:7

A Host of Angels appears
LUKE 2:13,14

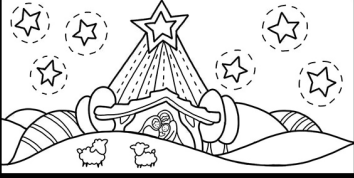
The shepherds spread the word
LUKE 2:17

Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy
LUKE 2:10

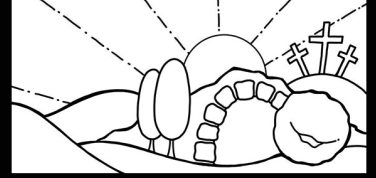
The magi follow the star
MATTHEW 2:9

The Magi bring gifts
MATTHEW 2:11

Simon sees the savior
LUKE 2:25-32



For mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people
LUKE 2:30,31



THE NEXT BIG THING

We are a congregation with a history of doing big things and we have much to celebrate. Our missions have touched lives around the world in the name of Jesus. Here at home, we've done big things to maintain our facility as a safe, functional and pleasant headquarters for our worship, fellowship, education, and outreach. Just this year we replaced the roof over Fellowship Hall, and nearly two years ago, just as the pandemic began, we paid-off the mortgage on the major remodeling and construction project of 2011-14.

Maintaining our church home (like the home you live in) is a never-ending series of improvements. Let's take a look at the Next Big Things.

1. Tower entrance stonework. We have some crumbling stone and concrete near our historic doors on the corner of 8th & Washington. This is a safety issue as well as an aesthetic one. The work to repair the stone and concrete has already begun with intentions of being complete before this winter's snow.

2. HVAC improvements. While much of our infrastructure is up to date, we still have some older air conditioning and air handling units which are failing. Among them is the AC in the sanctuary. To ensure our ability to comfortably function through the next summer's hot weather, the time has come to replace these antiquated and unreliable units.

3. Fellowship Hall Refresh. The Scott Fellowship Hall was built in 1996, and still has the original carpet, paint, wall coverings and chairs. This space was built to be used and we've used it hard! Outside groups meet there, our church groups meet there, FirstKids uses it as their indoor playground, youth groups play there, and years of community meals have been held there. The room has hosted concerts, conferences, athletic events, and all of this use has taken a toll. The floor covering has gouges and evidence of spills, the wall covering has stains of food and drink, wood veneer is peeling off the closet doors, and most of the chairs have ragged edges on the upholstery . . . there's a reason we worship with the lights off in there! After 25 years of hard use, it is time to refresh this space with a new look that we can be proud of.

The three items are the Next Big Things for maintaining our church home. Costs are expected to be in the \$280,000 - \$300,000 range. You have an opportunity to participate in making this happen through a special pledge to be fulfilled between now and 2024. Early pledges and funds presently in-hand have already topped \$100,000 so we're off to a great start! Watch for information on how you can pledge, and after the Christmas season, a series of short videos will take you deeper into each of these projects. Thank you for helping us accomplish the Next Big Thing!



Be a Blessing to Someone – Love INC

People in need will often approach a church for assistance. Unfortunately, many churches are not equipped to meet the variety of needs that are presented. That's not a failure of the churches – at their core, they are faith organizations, not relief agencies. But, the Christian imperative is to help. Love INC works like this: when someone approaches a member church for assistance, they are referred to Love INC. Love INC then conducts an interview to fully determine the need, and which church is best able to assist. Love In The Name of Christ (Love INC) pools the strengths of area churches and agencies to reach out to those in need – our church is one of over 30 that partner with Love INC..

You can be a blessing to someone today by volunteering with Love INC as a Clearinghouse or Community volunteer. If you're interested in serving with Love INC, fill out a volunteer form found at loveinccv.org or call 266-1264. They'll get back to you in the next couple of days.

Meals on Wheels

The NE Iowa Area Agency on Aging could use a few more Meals on Wheels drivers to deliver from the Community Center in Cedar Falls to homes in our own community.. Do you have an hour to spare to deliver meals? You pick the days that work best for you – once a week or once a month. Call or email Elise Bovy at 319-231-6798 or ebovy@nei3a.org

Help the Wee Ones

Donate to our Wee Care closet. 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 in our own community 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.

Your donations do make a difference. This message was sent to the church recently, to the attention of Cindy Spragg, one of our WeeCare volunteers:

“Thank you so much for your kindness and prayers when we stopped to pick up our items from Love INC. It really meant a lot to me. When we stopped, we didn't know the gender of our baby. We had a boy! You are truly a blessing. Thank you for everything you do.”

Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

There is always a need for durable/sturdy fabric to make school bags and other stitching projects. The Stitchers & Quilters also could use decent sized lengths of cotton quilting fabric for comfort quilts, baptism quilts, and quilts for foster kids, as well as school bags and quilts for Midwest Mission. There is a designated bin for your quality fabric donation in the church collection site on the main level of the church in the little hall across from the drinking fountain.

Spring trip to Midwest Mission Distribution Center

We have a couple of rooms reserved in the dorm at Midwest Mission Distribution Center the first week of May, 2022. If you are looking for a way to serve in a comfortable and not-too-far-away place, this is a great place to do it! It's very affordable at \$116 per person (plus cost for meals and gas to get there). They will need a downpayment of \$58 from each participant by March 8. Think about it and get back to Lisa in the church office if you have questions.

Mission OF THE Month

Angel Tree for Area Families

This year we are again partnering with North Cedar and Lincoln Schools to share a little Christmas love to some families in our own community. The school guidance counselors have provided us with a wish list for families from each school. Each child will have two tags on the tree, one for clothing and the other for toys, books and other small items.

The Angel Tree and wish list tags are now on display in the Gathering Space. Here's how it works: select a tag, purchase the gift, and return the gift to the church by Friday, December 10. We'd appreciate it if you would wrap it, but you may bring it back unwrapped. Please be sure the tag is securely attached. If you'd prefer not to shop feel free to make a donation and we'll shop for you! (If you write a check please make it out to FUMC with Angel Tree in the memo.) We are also in need of \$25.00 gift cards to Walmart to give to the families.

Julie Fee is the contact for the Angel Tree ministries this year. Feel free to direct your questions to her at bjfee@cfu.net or 296-8963.

Christmas Special Offering

THE PROBLEM

Children who grow up in foster care have experienced multiple forms of trauma. These include being separated from their families and various kinds of abuse/neglect. While foster parents are trained in trauma informed care, they are often stretched to their limits. In Black Hawk County, the number of children in foster care is four times greater than the number of foster homes available.

THE SOLUTION

The Cedar Valley Angels. Their mission is to walk alongside children, youth, and families in the foster care community by offering consistent support through intentional giving, relationship building, and mentorship. The special offering will be gifted to "The Angels" and all the families they support. Look for the colorful Christmas offering envelope in the mail, or you can pick one up in the church office or at the Welcome Center.

Thanks to all of you that contributed and helped with Mission Ingathering for 2021.

Our church collected \$3,285 in cash; 104, Personal Dignity Kits; 372, Student School Kits; 30, Cover Them With Love Quilts; and 19, Baby Sweaters; a value of \$9,256 of in-kind items.

That is a total of \$12,541 that we sent to Midwest Mission Distribution Center and that they will distribute to those in need!

On Saturday, November 6th, we collected items from 87 churches. Thanks to all of you that helped load the truck and track the dollars, oh and the ones that made treats for that morning! You know Methodists operate better with coffee and food. \$113,219.20 in cash and in-kind gifts were collect at our Ingathering Site.

I am always amazed when I see the truck pull away from our church on Ingathering Day. What a blessing it is to be a blessing!

Again, thank you all!

Jan Bendon



YOUTH NEWS



Children's Christmas Program

Our Children's Christmas Program will be Sunday December 5th. Please join us in the sanctuary at 10:15. Our kids have been practicing for the past few weeks and they are so excited to share this story with you. December 5 is also the last Sunday of Kids Creation Corner and Children's Sunday school until we resume in January.

Crazy Fun Busy

Our last Crazy Fun Busy Wednesday night for the year will be December 1 as we decorate the church for Christmas. We will be back with our usual groups and activities on January 12th.

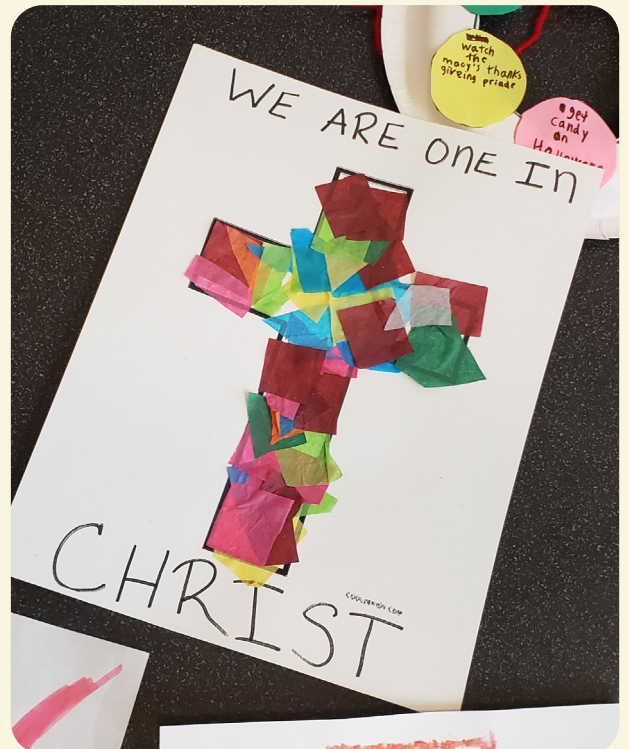
Thank you!

I would like to say a quick Thank you to all of our congregation members who have helped us get back up and running this past fall. We would not be able to hold the programming we do without all of your help.

Kid's Creation Corner

Kid's Creation Corner is a new ministry we started this fall. It has been such a joy to watch it transform into a place where our follow their parents footstep in fellowship. We start our time together with the kids enjoy a little social time while they work on their latest Lego creations. One of the things I have found to enjoy the most is hearing the amazing conversations that get to have with one other.

Many of you have shared how much you enjoy viewing their creations hanging on the wall. The kids know this and look forward to add new projects weekly.



We are wrapping up a great first semester of G3 youth!

November kept us very busy with our monthly game night, Wednesday night small groups, and LOTS of yard cleanups! We are always finding new and fun ways to do youth ministry. (We truly appreciate everyone who signed up for a yard cleanup to help us raise money for next summer's mission trip to Denver, CO. Your support is getting us closer and closer to our fundraising goal!)

We're looking forward to a great December in youth ministry! On Wednesday, December 1, the youth will be joining the church-wide effort to help decorate our beautiful building for Christmas! Pizza will be served at 5 and decorating begins at 6. On Friday, December 3, ALL youth are invited to our monthly game night from 6:00-8:00 here at the church. Bring your friends for some pizza and fun Christmas games! On Wednesday, December 8, all youth in grades 6-12 are welcome to join us for a Christmas party from 6-7:30 on the 3rd floor. We will play a Christmas movie and have some fun Christmas activities and snacks, too!

YOUTH

There will be NO game night on December 31 (New Year's Eve). Enjoy your time spent with family and friends! Looking forward into January, our big event will be the Des Moines mission trip from January 15-16, 2022. All youth in grades 6-12 are invited on this trip. We will depart from the church at 9am on Saturday, January 15 and return back at 2pm on Sunday, January 16. This trip will be all about collaborating with West Des Moines United Methodist Church to help serve people in need. Bring everything you need for an overnight stay, plus a pillow, blankets, and snacks. Contact Haleigh at youth@aboutfirst.com if you would like more information or are interested in signing up. Deadline to sign up is January 8, 2022.

Thank you to all of our youth for a great 2021!

UMW Upcoming Dates

DECEMBER 1 - WEDNESDAY

MORE THAN MOMS, 6:30PM, PARLOR

DECEMBER 6 - MONDAY - SATURDAY

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN BOARD MEETING,
9:30AM, LIBRARY

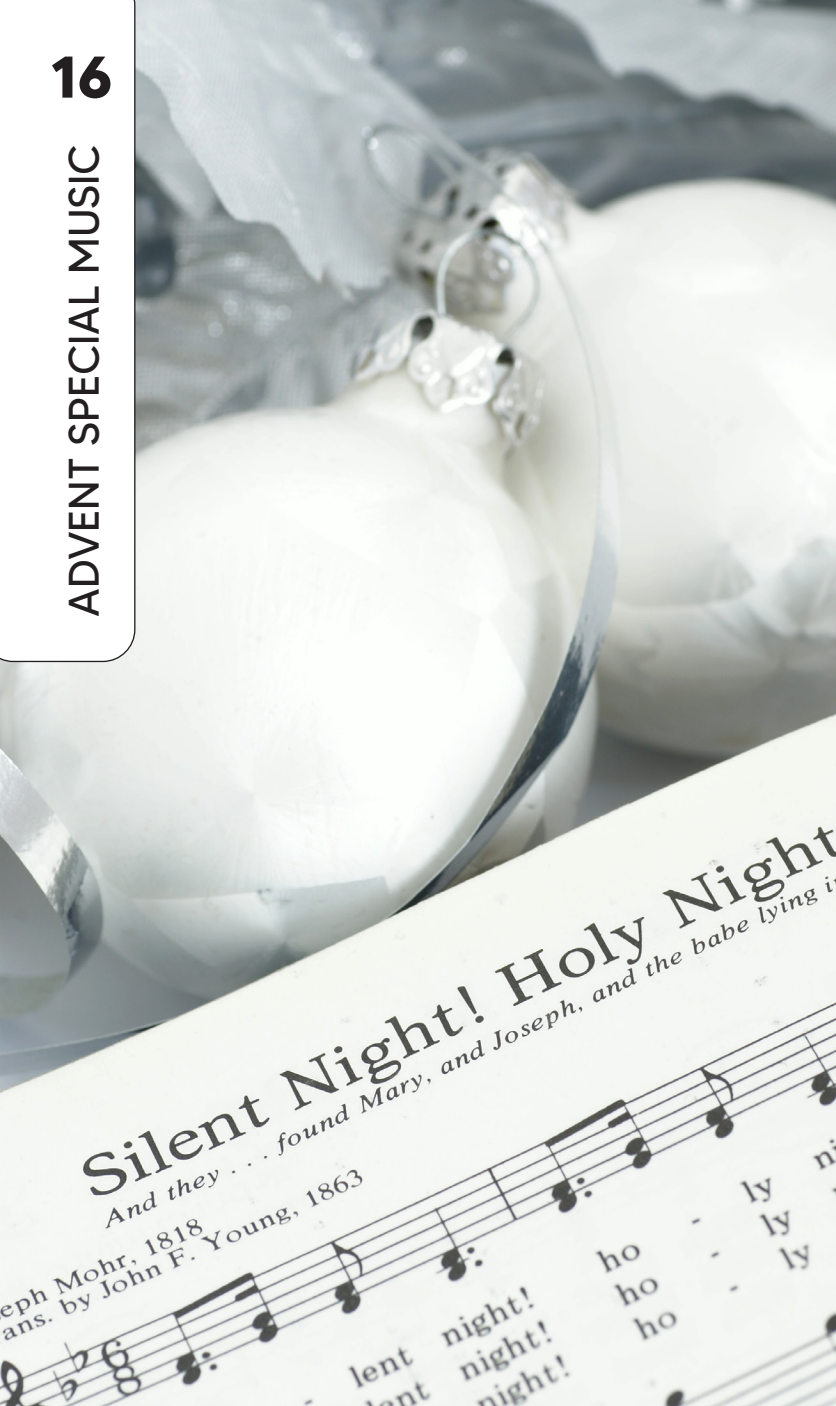
DECEMBER 9 - THURSDAY

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON, 11:30, FELLOWSHIP HALL



December Bible Verse

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1



Hymns of Hope Concert

December 19 at 3:00 pm

The holidays are a special time of year to gather with loved ones and remember the birth of Christ. The anticipation of hope and peace is often found in the music of the season. We will celebrate the joyous time of year with a special musical offering. Join us for Hymns of Hope on December 19th at 3pm. This special gift will feature traditional and contemporary selections from our music ministry. Join us in-person or watch live on the church Facebook page or Youtube channel.

Christmas Bell Choir Concert

December 7 at 7:00 pm

An annual favorite, sure to put you in the Christmas Spirit! Join us in the Sanctuary on December 7th at 7:00 pm for a magical night of bell music.

FUMC Bell Program is Turning 50!

Our handbell program at FUMC will be turning 50 in 2022! To celebrate this milestone in our church the bell choirs are going to commission a brand new arrangement from famous handbell composer Cathy Moklebust to premiere at the May Concert. If any church members would like to contribute to this project as a donation or by designating a donation in honor of a loved one or family please send your donations to the church office and label it for the bell choirs. Checks can be made specifically to the FUMC Bell Fund. Thank you all for your many years of support to our program!



The Spirit of Christmas

Christmas is about giving to the needy. God gave us His infant son as He saw and knew the world needed Jesus. We then in turn, as Christians, give to others with our service, our financial gifts, by paying it forward to others with kindness, assisting with home care, and providing food or transportation, to name a few.

20 years ago, in February of 2001, Carol Dick and FUMC's Pastor Laura Smith saw a need to help those in our congregation going through personal losses that were difficult to bear alone. They took their gifts of caring and went to St. Louis for the Stephen Ministry training, became leaders and enrolled our church in this ministry. Since then FUMC has been blessed with their gifts and has been committed, providing 11 training classes and commissioning 60 people at our sanctuary's altar. More than a 100 people have had the gift of a Stephen Minister walk along side through their loss, giving encouragement and support, for as long as needed.

Thank you to Carol, Laura, and FUMC for the support these past 20 years and all who have been part of Stephen Ministry! A gift to so many. Please contact the church office at 319 266 1713 if you are interested in hearing more about this Stephen Ministry program for future training or if in need of a Stephen minister.

HELP WANTED!

SUNDAY MORNINGS

9:30 Kids Creation Corner

We are looking for 4-6 volunteers. Each volunteer would have one Sunday a month. In this new ministry our volunteer will lead the kids in a craft, outside play, games and help them display their creation on our new Kids Creation Board that will be located outside of the Chapel.

Sunday School Teachers

We need teachers to help in our Kindergarten-2nd grade class. Please consider contributing to the spiritual development of our young minds!

Greeting

As a greeter you are our guest first encounter. You will be responsible for welcoming all who enter our doors. We need greeters at the First and Second Services. Greeters will be placed at the main doors to Welcome our guests.

Welcome Desk

Help answer questions about the church when we have a visitor. You will hand out our Welcome gift.

Coffee & Fellowship

We need volunteers to help serve our baked good, make coffee and drinks. This position starts 8:00am and ends at 11:00am.

Calling all Singers

Choir is in full swing and now is the perfect time to come and lift your voice. Worried about adding another event to your hectic schedule? Don't sweat it, you can sing as often as you like, without committing to every Sunday. You don't even have to know how to read music; we will help you find your voice. Junior high to senior citizens and every age in between are welcome to come sing along. Join us for rehearsals on Wednesdays at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary.

Money Counters

We will need volunteers to go around and pick up Sunday school folders. Then you will count up attendance for Children's Sunday school and count money from the Adult classes.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

B.L.A.S.T. Volunteers

Spend some time mentoring and having a good time with our church's younger members.

First UMC is Seeking a Worship Leader!

First United Methodist Church is seeking a highly skilled Modern Worship Leader with a passion for music, leadership and ministry. The qualified applicant would provide strategic vision and leadership for the contemporary worship service/s, overseeing the weekend experience, providing leadership and guidance for the church in conjunction with pastoral leadership, as well as vision and strategy for growth and expansion of music/worship ministries. This position is salaried at 10-15 hours a week and starting annual pay would be competitive depending on experience and proficiency.

Email jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com
for more information,

Send a Card or Note

Send a card or a letter to our friends in care facilities and unable to attend church. Phone calls and cards are also much appreciated for those who are staying home. Think of who sits around you in worship or in a group, and give them a call or a card. We still have updated photo directories at our Welcome Center. Pick one up Monday-Friday.

**Doris Crandall, Jake DeVoogd,
Marilyn Pape**
Martin Suites
420 E. 11th St
Cedar Falls IA 50613

**Marlys Cook, Sharon Krebs, Homer
Leymaster, Emogene Marty, Faye
Rohwedder**
Windhaven Assisted Living
5500 S. Main St
Cedar Falls IA 50613

**Harold Krebs, Ellen Opsal,
Lura Treloar, Duane Wessel**
Deery Suites
5307 Caraway Lane
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Mardy Hermann
Thalman Square
5500 S. Main St
Cedar Falls IA 50613
Marilyn Geesaman,

Virginia Van Tassel
Nation Cottage
5111 Caraway Lane
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Nola Kelly, LaVonne Neese
Thuesen Cottage
5127 Caraway Ln
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Rudy Grapp, Vivian Hill
New Aldaya Lifescapes
7511 University Ave
Cedar Falls IA 50613

**Darlene Jordan, Bob Peterson,
Perry Thurman**
Pinnacle Care
1223 Prairie View Rd
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Chet Starr
Bickford Cottage
5101 University Ave #110
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Betty O'Brien

Friendship Village Lakeview Lodge
312 Southbrooke Drive #39
Waterloo IA 50701

Darlene Prashak
Heritage Care and Rehab Center
501 S. Kentucky Ave
Mason City IA 50401

Linda Rundall
Sunrise Hill Care & Rehab Center
909 6th St
Traer IA 50675

John Stater
CountryHouse Residences
3720 George B Lake Parkway Apt 12
Elkhorn NE 68022

Dorothy Schwab
Our House Senior Living
1401 15th Ave NW Room 11
Austin MN 55912

Ed Pierson
Parkridge Specialty Care
5800 NE 12th Ave
Pleasant Hill IA 50327



Bus Service

We pick up for the 11:15 traditional service in the sanctuary.. We are offering this ministry for people that have been vaccinated and are willing to wear their masks on the bus. To allow for social distancing, only six passengers will be allowed. Call Steve and Janet MacTaggart at 319-404-0077 to let them know you are interested.



Thank You

It was so kind of you all to remember me on my recent birthday. I really did appreciate your thoughtfulness and the beautiful card.

Yours in faith, Alvira Morris

Bob and I thank you for the cards that cheer us and the many prayers that have been said for us. They are much appreciated. May God bless you all.

Bob and Dianne Peterson

We deeply appreciate and gratefully acknowledge your kind expressions of sympathy. It will always be remembered by the family of Richard Dean Fanning. The Fanning family

We are grateful for your hospitality and presentation for the "Knowing Your Neighbor" program on October 17. Your faith community is a much-valued presence in the Cedar Valley!

Sincerely, Cedar Valley Interfaith Council

I cannot express how much I enjoy the beautiful quilt I was given. It keeps me warm and is so beautiful. I love it. Thank you to the quilters and to Jane Wyckoff who delivered it. Thank you for your continued cards, thoughts, and prayers. Roxanne and I are truly blessed to have such a wonderful and caring church family.

Blessing to each of you,
Dean and Roxanne Noring

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the personal words of sympathy from Carol Dick and cards from friends at the time of my sister Lydia L. Kingsborough's death. Lydia was born on my 13th birthday, and she has been very special to me through the years.

Rowena L. Hardinger

We would like to thank the entire church membership for their faithful prayers given on behalf of our precious granddaughter "Evee-lyn" (Evelyn) Kehret the past 14 months with her battle with leukemia. We so much appreciated the many cards sent, phone calls, and gifts of food during this time. Also much appreciated was your support at the funeral and visitation. A special thank you to Pastors Karen and Scott, and Lisa for their prayers and provision of our updates weekly.

It was so good to get hugs and caring thoughts from our church family during this difficult time. Thank you for being there when we needed you.... Doug & Maxine Kehret, Bill & Elizabeth Kehret, Eli, Arianna and Isabelle, and Jen and Jarrod Nichols.

Thank you so very much! Maxine Kehret

Dorothy would like to thank everyone who sends her cards. She enjoys getting them and would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season. She will have her 86th birthday on December 14.

Many thanks, Jim Schwab

Sympathy

Drew Waseskuk and his family on the death of his father, Robert, on October 26.

Jim and Pauline Harding on the death of a brother-in-law, Mel TeKolste from Lincoln NE, on October 30. He was the husband of Pauline's sister.

The Bernard families on the death of a sister-in-law and aunt, Shirley Bernard, on November 2.

Family and friends of Evelyn Kehret, who died November 2. Condolences can be sent to her grandparents, Doug and Maxine Kehret, at 1900 Four Winds Drive in Cedar Falls. They will share them with Evelyn's parents and siblings.

Roger Maifeld and his family on the death of his brother, Fred, on November 4.

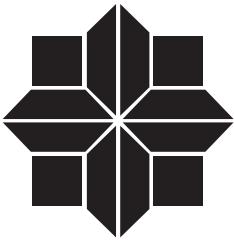
Pastor Karen and Gary Nelson and their family on the death of Karen's nephew, Josh Dirks, on November 4.

Hospital reminder

Governmental regulations prohibit health care facilities (this includes hospitals, assisted living and nursing homes) from sharing information about their patients and residents, so if you want your church family to know you need our love and prayers, please call the church office.

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2022 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.



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

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First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls

Worship

8:15 am Traditional worship service, sanctuary
9:00-11:15 Fellowship, Gathering Place
9:15 am Transformation Contemporary worship,
Fellowship Hall
9:30-10 Kid's Corner, chapel
10:15 am Sunday School for all ages
11:15 am Traditional worship service, sanctuary

Television

Cedar Falls (CFU) Channels 18 or 95.5
Friday @ 8:00 pm, Sunday @ 9:00 am
Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 1
Sundays @ 11:00am & 8:00 pm

Our Pastors

Scott Kober, Lead Pastor, scott.kober@aboutfirst.com
Karen Nelson, Associate Pastor, karen.nelson@aboutfirst.com

Staff

(in alphabetical order)

Sam Barr, Transformation Music Coordinator
sam.barr@aboutfirst.com

Dee Behr, Parish Visitor
dee.behr@aboutfirst.com

John Bentley, Head Custodian

Chris Congdon, Media Coordinator
chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Lisa Congdon, Office Ministry Coordinator
lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Haleigh Derhammer, Middle School Youth
youth@aboutfirst.com

Carol Dick, Grief Support Coordinator
cdick@cfu.net

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