

aboutfirst news

February, 2020 First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Love First. Let's Gather, Grow, Go Together



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Announcements and editorial content for publication may be submitted to the First UMC media office by the 20th of each preceding month. Email to: chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com

Lessons in Parenting

I write this article to you immediately following an incredible weekend spent with my daughter Addisyn. We went sledding, built snowmen, put up new decorations in her bathroom, and snuggled...a lot. Addisyn is now 5 years old and turns 6 on February 19th. As I am sitting in my office working on various tasks, I cannot help but ponder my experiences of parenthood the last several months.

I have seen her learn to spell her name and do basic math. I have seen her grow in understanding of scripture and her love of God while learning the 10 commandments. I have seen her leg function improve as she has been through rigorous physical and occupational therapy. The congregation has been overwhelmingly supportive during these last several months. I frequently give thanks that she has an uncalculated amount of friends and spiritual parents/grandparents in our church.

Addisyn is just simply a lot of fun. She is incredibly loving and trusting. You have probably come to know that she is quick to answer questions during children's time and she does not have an ounce of shyness in her body. She is eager to please and always ready to help. The little girl that she has grown into is one of my proudest accomplishments. However, as every parent knows, being a dedicated parent is exhausting at times. Trying to protect Addisyn from scooting down the stairs, protecting her from our dog's hyperactive tail, protecting her from running too fast and falling....the list goes on. This is the stuff of exhaustion for those with young children.

I realize that there will soon be a time in which parenting will be tending towards different things. No longer will I worry about stairs, getting wacked by the dog's tail, or her falling and hurting herself. Rather, it will be in a similar sense, me protecting her from herself. Protecting her from making poor decisions, from emotional vulnerabilities from adolescence, and from selfish decision that lead to pain and heartache.

I have learned one thing for certain. No parent can remove the world in which their children live. There is no sanitizing it or making it safe from harm or danger. There is no depth of faith and prayer that can produce this kind of reality—nor should that be our goal. For there will come a day in which we will not be present to protect them from themselves, nor should we desire that our children be dependent upon us in that way anymore. The whole point of parenting is not, in the end, for protection or even for outward perfection—but for wisdom: to not only make good decisions but respond appropriately to poor ones as well. This requires real living in the world as it is and even letting our children fail.

As I write this reflection, I realize that for quite some time now, my parents are no longer watching over me in the same way. They no longer live to protect me from my-self. They've done their work however hard it may have been. They now have let me go, in a good way. I am in their eyes an adult who must make decisions on my own. Depending on them for constant direction or approval at this point, would be for them, an indicator of problems, not health. Whatever consequences come my way they know I must learn to handle them.

I know there's a sermon in here some-where – that though we need God to save us from our-selves, God desires that we actually grow and mature in his wisdom as we learn from the real struggles present in this world and struggles deep within our own hearts. But I'll save that for another day.

Be Bold, Be Strong,
Rev. Matt German

Here's An Idea:

Check out the prayer bookmark between now and Valentine's Day...bring a flower or send a card to someone you know, or even someone you don't, whose name is listed. Stay and visit for awhile. This can mean so much to someone who is not as involved in the life of the church as they'd like to be. Let us be the face and hands of Jesus for others!



Do Babies, and Children Belong in Worship Services?

Yes, Absolutely!

A note to kids:

We're glad you're here. We hope you have fun today singing and praying and learning about Jesus. Thanks for coming! Be sure to check out the kids tables with coloring sheets and quiet games you can use during the service

A Note to Parents:

Our church enthusiastically welcomes your growing family to fully celebrate with us.

May we suggest:

- **Relax.** God put the wiggle in children; don't feel like you have to suppress it in God's house. If you need a little more wiggle room, it's OK to get up and move.
- **Sit towards the front or an aisle** where it is easier for young ones to see & hear. Quietly explain the parts of the the worship service
- **Sing the songs, pray the prayers and say the responses.** Children learn from our actions.
- If you feel as though you must leave worship with your child, please come back! Remember, Jesus says, "Let the children come to me", Matthew 19:14

A Note to All

The presence of children is a gift to our church. Like all of us, they are members of the Body of Christ and a reminder of the growth and future of our church. Please welcome our children and their parents, and give them a big smile of encouragement.

Newcomers' Coffee with the Pastors - Feb 2

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, February 2 at 9:45 in the chapel 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!



Miss A Sermon?

If you miss a Sunday message from Pator Scott or Pastor Matt, 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.

LOVE FIRST BY THE NUMBERS

13,088

The greeting cards for sale on the rack outside the office are hand-made by a group of First UMC folks. They are sold for 50¢ each. During the 4th quarter of 2019, \$116 from card sales was given to Lincoln School to help buy books for kids. Since we started selling cards in 2004, a total of \$13,088 has been generated - that's 6,544 cards made and sold!



Our next card-making session will be in March. Watch for the date in next month's newsletter, and come join us!

- WINTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE -

Sunday, 8:30 am Contemporary & Traditional

Sunday, 11:00 am Traditional Worship

Wednesday, 7:15 pm, Fusion Tonight Worship Talk Show



Ash Wednesday Worship February 26, 7:00

Ash Wednesday services are typically quiet times of reflection on our humble, mortal position in God's creation.

From dust you came

To dust you shall return

Ash Wednesday worship begins the season of Lent, which is a time to re-focus on the significance of the Christ's living, dying, and resurrection, and to reconsider the implications for our lives. Join us for Ash Wednesday worship in the sanctuary.

Three Ten Connect

Here's an easy way to welcome our guests in Sunday worship: **3 • 10 • Connect.**

It's simple: in the **first three minutes** after a worship service has ended, look around in a **ten-foot radius** and see if there's someone you don't know. If so, stick out your hand and say "hi". Make a little conversation. Ask them if they have any questions about our church, and if so, volunteer to introduce them to a pastor, a staff person, or someone you know to have the answer. Then, be sure to say that you, personally, are glad that they are here, and that you hope to see them again. It's that easy. **3 • 10 • Connect.**

Christianity and World Religions Series Concludes

This fascinating sermon series concludes Sunday, February 9. If you would like to review a week, note that GPS study guides and video recordings of all sermons are available at our church website, aboutfirst.com.

- Sunday, February 2, Islam
- Sunday, February 9, Christianity

New Worship Service: 2 Songs and a Sermon

Lent is such an important time in the Christian calendar that we will be offering a third Sunday morning worship service for the six weeks beginning March 1. It will be a shortened service which will include 2 songs and the morning's message. Music and preaching will be led by Pastor Matt. Those who typically attend Traditional worship may find this shortened service to be a convenient way to hear both pastors' messages, without having to attend two full worship services.

2 Songs and a Sermon | 6 weeks beginning March 1 | Sundays, 10:00am, in the sanctuary

Saving the Best for Last

Our worship theme for the season of Lent is "Saving the Best for Last". It will be a focus on selected elements of the last week of Jesus' life. We'll look at some of Jesus' final teaching moments with his disciples, which reveal his expectations for us, today, and we'll get ourselves spiritually ready to understand the magnitude of the resurrection and the great celebration of Easter.

- **March 1: The Triumphal Entry, Matthew 21:1-11**
- **March 8: The Greatest Commandment, Mark 12:28-34**
- **March 15: Humble Servitude, John 13:1-20**
- **March 22: Jesus in the Garden, Matthew 26:36-46**
- **March 29: The Trial, Matthew 27:11-26**
- **April 5: The Crucifixion, Matthew 27:27-55**
- **April 12: Celebrate the Resurrection!**

Can't Make it to Church? Watch Online!

Our Sunday sermons are live-streamed on our Cedar Falls First United Methodist Church Facebook page. Transformation livestream begins 8:55-ish, and Traditional livestream begins 11:25-ish.

You can also watch any sermon from the last few years by clicking the "sermons" button at our website, aboutfirst.com.

Administrative Council OKs 2 New Working Groups

Our First UMC Administrative Council, at their first-quarter meeting on January 21, 2020, supported and authorized the formation of two new working groups:

Stewardship Task Force is tasked with planning and implementing new strategies to keep concepts of stewardship in front of the congregation year-round, rather than just during a fall pledge drive. This allows the Finance Committee to focus on asset-management, while the Stewardship Task Force looks for ways to encourage giving and participation.

Worship Design Task Force will meet as-needed as a creative think-tank to assist the pastors in planning worship services. Goals are to look for ways to engage people of all ages through active participation, imagery, music and ideas. This is different from the Worship Committee, which will continue to handle the logistics of worship times, ushers, communion stewards, etc.

Administrative Council Forms Way Forward Task Force

The UMC's General Conference which will be held in May will be a defining one for the future of the United Methodist Church. Legislation has been proposed which may divide the UMC into more than one denomination. Depending upon which legislation is approved at General Conference, our local church, First UMC CF, may find itself having to choose whether to join a new alliance or remain in the UMC. Our First UMC Administrative Council has authorized the formation of a working group to guide us through this process. This is a pro-active step to begin informing our First UMC CF congregation of the options and possibilities that may be facing us.

First UMC Recycles - a Win - Win - Win

For years, our church office has collected waste paper for recycling, but that has been limited to the office, only. Now, we're rolling that option out to the rest of the building. You'll find small, blue recycling bins in the foyer outside of the sanctuary, and near the exit to Fellowship Hall. Use these for the pieces of your church bulletin that you do not wish to take home. Also, in the Gathering Place, you will find a three-bin recycling station for waste paper, aluminum beverage cans, and plastic beverage bottles.

This recycling effort is a small piece of good stewardship to return these waste resources to the production stream, rather than simply throwing them into the landfill. And, it's not just First UMC who benefits from our recycling. Our waste paper is collected by River Hills School, which uses it as a fundraiser, and our beverage containers will be collected by our Troop 44 Boy Scouts who are already hosting can/bottle drives here once a month. So, First UMC recycling is a win for all three organizations, as well as this beautiful planet we call home. Thanks to the HOME Team and Trustees for implementing this new program.



Q What are some of ways the Endowment funds have been used?

A The Endowment Committee has approved disbursements to support the church in numerous ways. The Committee has provided funds for new sidewalks around the church, blacktopping of the parking lot, scholarships for seminary students, bibles for the confirmation classes, vacation bible school, Upper Room, Sunday School curriculum, technological and computer equipment, updating the parsonages, new bus, music for the choirs, piano and organ maintenance, church maintenance, support for the Parish Visitor ministry, plus many other items.



New "Circuit Model" Unveiled in Cedar Falls Event

(text compiled from IAUMC Communications and First UMC Media staff)

After considering suggestions from the Vision 2032 listening events last fall, the Bishop's Operational Team has proposed that changes be made to make the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church a stronger conference beginning as early as this year.

One of those changes is a shift to the proposed Circuit Model of churches. A Circuit is a grouping of local churches, related by geography or mission, led by a Circuit Elder (lead pastor) alongside laity, licensed local pastors, and other elders. This concept was first unveiled at events at Story City Grace UMC and Cedar Falls First UMC on Saturday, January 11.

A pilot Circuit was launched in Delaware County in July of 2018 under the leadership of Pastor Phil Rogers. Pastor Keith Pitts was then appointed to be part of a voluntary circuit of pastors who choose to engage around a focus on worship excellence.

The proposed transition for the entire Conference would be July 1, 2021, with Circuit Leaders and Elders appointed then. Training and transition planning are ongoing.

What this means for us at First UMC CF is that we may find ourselves sharing leadership, resources, programming, and ideas with other United Methodist Churches in a formal way. It should lead to greater connectivity between local UM churches.

Rev. Bill Poland, Iowa UMC Director of New Communities of Faith says, "This model of being the church is not new: It is the model under which most of our congregations in small towns and villages were formed. Each congregation will have someone to lead worship, preach the word, and give leadership to the congregation. They may be clergy, a supervised Lay Servant, or a Certified Lay Minister who is part of the leadership team of the circuit. The idea is to preserve autonomy while engaging connectionally in ministry and mission."

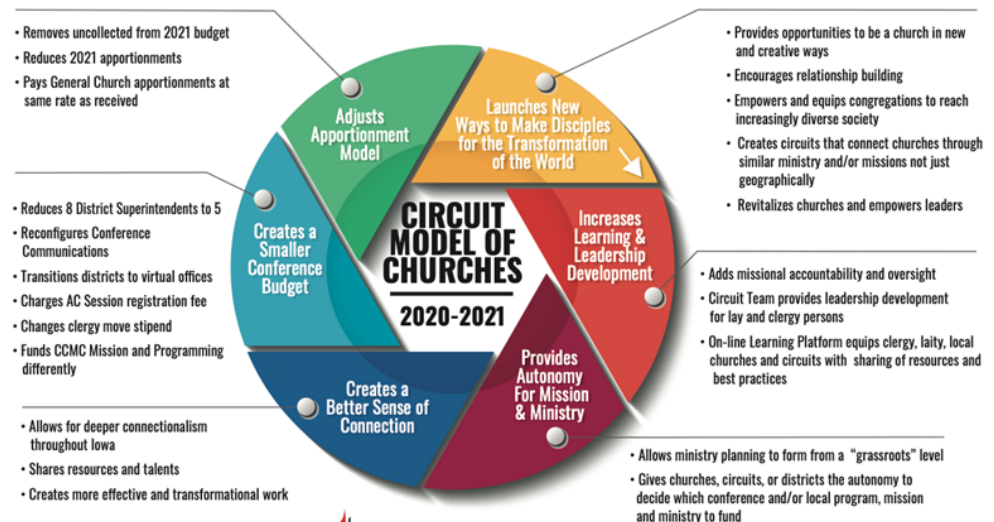
The entire presentation can be viewed at www.iaumc.org/vision2032, and a summary of questions asked at each session will be posted soon. If you have suggestions or questions, you are encouraged to contact the Bishop's Operational Team by emailing vision2032@iaumc.org.

General Conference 2020

The United Methodist Church will meet in General Conference in May of this year. There are several proposals which aim to move the UMC beyond its current conflict over LGBTQ inclusion. Most of them include provisions to split the current UMC into 2 or more denominations. We want you to be informed and encourage you to visit our website at aboutfirst.com where you'll find a handy, side-by-side comparison of the five proposals most likely to be considered. You'll also find links to official UMC news sources, and to the Iowa Conference as well.

First UMC Forms Way Forward Working Group

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Excited about getting started being the Church of 2032 in 2020?

Take the next step and register for the Fresh Expression Iowa Vision Day on February 15, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm at First UMC, 206 SW Walnut St., Ankeny, IA 50023. Early registration ends Feb. 9 with a fee of only \$30. Go to <https://www.iaumc.org/freshexpressions> for all the details.

Feb 2 - The Grandiose Groundhog Day Soup and Chili Spectacular!

AKA: Chili Cookoff

Where: Gathering Place

When: 1:00-12:30

THE cookoff is back! This thing is legendary, and for good reason. Remember Lorna Ericson's chicken noodle? Nathan Standing's lemon chicken? Rich Congdon's creamy gnocchi? Barb Pershing's Fish Chowder? Mark Fransdal's garbage-can chili or Jim Reidy's scorched-earth version? Start perfecting those recipes now. Each contestant will need to bring a Crock Pot of Chili or Soup as well as copies of their recipes. We will have one winner for soup and another winner for chili, and because it is Groundhog Day, there will be special recognition for the top vote-getter which uses some form of ground hog. There is no cost to enter or vote. (please note: Ground Hog is PORK! Not roadkill or rodent)

The event will be held Sunday, February 2, in the Gathering Place. Sampling and lunch will begin at 11:00 a. m. and voting will end at 12:30.

Sampling cups, spoons, and drinks will be provided.

If soup/chili is not your specialty, please bring bread or rolls for our bread table to accompany the yummy soups and chilis. Make your plans to enter or just come and enjoy the great food and good fun! Registration begins this Sunday, Jan 12.

Feb 4 - Grief Support Session

Where: church parlor

When: 2:00-3:30 pm

"He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds."- Psalm 147:3. Our next group grief support session will be held in the church parlor on Tuesday, February 4th from 2:00 to 3:30 pm. This is offered for anyone who is experiencing a loss in life. There are many kinds of losses, each of which can carry with them many different emotions. In these sessions, participants will have an opportunity to share thoughts and feelings in a safe, non-threatening environment. No reservations are required.

Feb 20 - First Friends Potluck

Where: Gathering Place

When: noon - 2:00

Everyone is welcome! Spend some time enjoying good food, card games, dominos, cribbage, etc. Fellowship is an important part of the gathering. Check us out! Come and get better acquainted with others in the church. Couples and singles are welcome. Bring a dish to share and your own table service. We meet on the third Thursday of every month from noon until 2 pm in the Gathering Place.

Feb 24 - LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30 - 6:00

They have quite a few appointments slots to fill. Sign up to donate blood at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org.

We also need hosts and cookie bakers. Use the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center to let Lisa know if you can bring cookies, or hang out and chat with the donors for an hour or so.

Would you like to help coordinate these blood drives? Let the church office know. It's pretty easy to find people to provide cookies and to host - often as easy as an email to some of the faithful who almost always plan on it.

Feb 25 - Crafters' Corner

Where: church parlor

When: 6:00-8:00pm

This is a laid back and hands-on group for all skill levels. Bring your own craft project to work on or volunteer your time and talent to make sleep mats for the homeless, handmade essentials for those in need, or prayer shawls. Thank you to all who have donated craft items - we are well stocked and need to use up what we have. Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

M T **W** T F

Wednesday is Your CrazyFunBusy Church Night!

- 5:15 - 6:00 **The Filling Station**
- a meal for everyone. Eat & go on to
- 6:00 - 7:10 **Jr / Sr High Youth**
- fun & connections for 7th - 12th graders
- 6:00 - 7:15 **BLAST! (for kids)**
- Bible Learning And Service Together
- 6:00 - 7:15 **More Than Moms**
- helps for the real life of womanhood
- 6:00-7:00 **World Religions Class (ends Feb 12)**
- Pastor-led companion to sermon series
- 6:15 - 7:30 **Tower Bells**
- weekly bell choir rehearsal. Want to play?
- 7:15 - 8:00 **FUSION Tonight**
- live talk show / worship
- 7:30 - 8:30 **Chancel Choir**
- for adults who love to sing

8 Calendar

Recurring Weekly:

Sunday

8:00 prayer in the chapel
8:30 Transformation Worship
8:30 Traditional Service, sanctuary
9:30 Fellowship time, Gathering Place
9:45 Sunday School for All Ages begins Jan 8
9:45 King/Reidy GPS, chapel
11:00 Traditional Service
6:30 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary

Tuesday

9:30 Quilters/Stitchers, O59
4:30-6:00 Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
6:30-8:00 Tuesday Night Fellas, O59
7:00-9:00 AA, O55

Wednesday

9:00 Women Connected by Prayer, parlor
5:15 AA, O55
5:00-6:00 Filling Station, Gathering Place
6:00-7:00 World Religions class, library
6:00-7:15 More than Moms, parlor
6:00-7:00 BLAST Fellowship Hall
6:00 Youth Group, 3rd floor
6:15-7:30 Tower Bell rehearsal, sanctuary
6:30 WOW AA, O55
7:15 FUSION
7:30 Chancel Choir rehearsal, choir room

Also Scheduled....

SUNDAY February 2

Soup/chili cook-off
Christianity & World Religions: Islam
Communion
Rus DeBonis at Frederika
1:30-2:30 Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall
NO EVENING ACTIVITIES

MONDAY February 3

5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, O58

TUESDAY February 4

2:00-3:30 Grief support, parlor
6:30 Stewardship sub-committee, library

WEDNESDAY February 5

6:00-7:00 World Religions class, library
7:00 Kids choir rehearsal, choir room
7:15 FUSION- Mechille Bolt

THURSDAY February 6

10:00-12:00 Renovare group, chapel
2:00 Clergy group, library
6:30 Trustees, library
7:00 Transformation Band, Fellowship Hall

SUNDAY February 9

World Religions series - Christianity
Boy Scout Sunday
9:45 3rd grade Bible class, chapel
9:50-10:00 Kid's choir rehearsal,
2:00 Bear Den, library
6:30 Les Cloches d'Or rehearsal, sanctuary
7:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY February 10

9:30-11:00 UMW Board meeting, library
5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, O58
6:30 HOME Team ,chapel

TUESDAY February 11

6:30 Finance Committee, O57

WEDNESDAY February 12

2:00 communion service at Stanard Care
5:15 AA, O55
5:00-6:00 Council Task Force, chapel
6:00-7:00 World Religions class (last one)
7:00 Kids choir rehearsal, choir room
7:15 FUSION- Steve Kahler

THURSDAY February 13

DCOM interviews
1:00 UMW Unit meeting, Fellow Hall

FRIDAY February 14

5:30-7:00 Daisy Troop 4029, library

SUNDAY February 16

Girl Scout Cookie Booth
Roberta Robbins at Frederika UMC
9:50-10:00 Kid's choir rehearsal, choir room
6:00-7:30 Girl Scout Troop1874, chapel

MONDAY February 17

President's Day
9:30- UMW District meeting
10:00 Deborah Circle, parlor
5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, O58
6:00 Pack 44, Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY February 18

5:30-6:30 Worship Committee, library

WEDNESDAY February 19

11:00 service at Pinnacle Care
12:00-1:30 clergy lunch and learn, library
7:00 Kids choir rehearsal, choir room
7:15 FUSION #7- Lynn Calvert

THURSDAY February 20

Newsletter deadline
10:00-12:00 Renovare group, chapel
Noon-3:00 First Friends potluck

SUNDAY February 23

Transfiguration Sunday
Chris Werling at Frederika UMC
9:45 3rd grade Bible class, chapel
9:50-10:00 Kid's choir rehearsal, choir room
7:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY February 24

12:30-6:00 Blood Drive, Gathering Place
5:00-7:00 Stephen Ministry training, O58

TUESDAY February 25

6:00-8:00 Crafter's corner, parlor

WEDNESDAY February 26

Ash Wednesday
2:00 Communion Service, Windhaven
7:00 Ash Wednesday Service, sanctuary

THURSDAY February 27

9:30 Mary Circle, parlor
1:30 Joy Circle

FRIDAY February 28

noon Newsletter labeling
5:30-7:00 Daisy Troop 4029, library

Lay Servant Ministries Course

What if we had an adult version of the confirmation class that our youth take? If we did, it would look a lot like this: a five-session, UMC-Approved course designed to get you thinking about your own personal life of ministry in a more intentional way.

During Lent, Pastor Scott will be leading the Basic Course in Lay Servant Ministries. In the Basic Course, topics such as servant and spiritual leadership, caring ministries, basic communication skills, sharing your faith, and leading meetings will enhance your knowledge and skill as a leader. This course is not designed to prepare you to preach. Those who have gifts for preaching may take the advanced course on preaching after this course. You could almost think of this course as a lighter version (and good introduction) of the School for Lay Ministry.

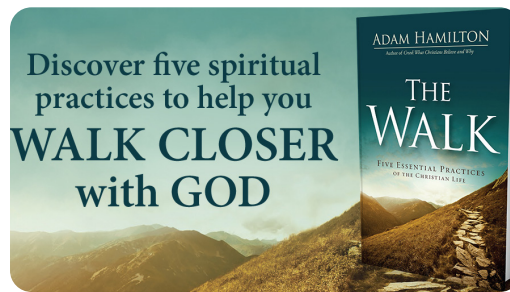
This Basic Course will equip you to better lead and work with others, not only in the church, but also in the community and the world you live in. Five, two-hour sessions begin Wednesday, March 4, at 6:00 pm. See Pastor Scott for more information.

Lenten Study - The Walk

Through the season of Lent, Pastor Matt will be leading this look into the faithful practices which define the Christian life.

How do we daily follow Christ, and faithfully serve him? In this class we'll explore five essential spiritual practices rooted in Jesus' own walk with God: worship, study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith.

Six sessions will begin Wednesday, March 4 at 6:00pm. Book is *The Walk* by Adam Hamilton. Watch for more information.



Extended Learning Opportunity - The Prayer Class

The class is intended to empower and equip laypeople and clergy alike to offer heartfelt, informed, thoughtful, and appropriate prayers on behalf of the people of God. As Samuel Wells says, "Interceding in public worship is a duty."

Text for the class is *Shaping the Prayers of the People* by Samuel Wells and Abigail Kocher. Order from www.umcdiscipleship.org, Cokesbury www.cokesbury.com (least expensive) Barnes & Noble or Walmart for \$16-20. This book is intended to make it a joy. *Shaping the Prayers of the People* begins by considering what public prayer is and offering practical guidelines for avoiding common pitfalls. It explores prayers as an integral part of worship and discusses the kind of language we need (and don't need) to address God. Finally, the book provides an array of example prayers along with commentary.

The Iowa School for Lay Ministry Commission is pleased to offer this class at Cornell College. It is open to clergy, SLM graduates, and any lay person interested in becoming better at leading public prayer. Instructors are Colleen Petaros and Steve Kahler. CEUs are available.

Class is March 14 on the Cornell College Campus in Mt Vernon, Iowa. You must fill out a pre-registration form on the Iowa SLM web page. Tuition is \$75, payable on-site. Lunch is included.

New Children's Choir

We are very excited to announce that we will be starting a Children's Choir! Bevan Lucas will be leading this ministry and we are so excited to see what he and the children can do. Our first practice will be on Wednesday, Feb. 5th. Practices will be on: Wednesday nights 7:00-7:15 and Sunday mornings 9:50- 10 in the choir room. Our first performance will be on March 8th during the 8:30 worship services.

3rd Grade Bible Class is Underway!

We are happy to have 5 families participating. This is a 5 week course with the final class being held on March 1st. We will also be having the Bible presentation during the 11:00 Service. This is a great thing to witness as we ask the congregation to help lead these children as they continue growing in their faith.

BLAST Off to Great Start

for the Winter/Spring Semester. If you have a child that is in Kind-6th drop them off with us in the gym on Wednesday nights at 6:00. The group is working on kids learning to stand firm in their Faith with our Travel Guide to the Armor of God.

10 Mission of the Month

Wee Care is our Mission of the Month

Wee Care is First UMC's way of showing that we care about the little ones in our community. We've supported and hosted this ministry since July of 2011, and it is one of the most heavily used gap ministries with Love In the Name of Christ.

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 29.

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.

How does Wee Care work?

It begins with a call to the Love INC Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse volunteer assesses the need and sets up an appointment for the parent to come to our church to pick up the items. Most of the families who are helped by our Wee Care ministry are single parent households who are struggling to get by on their small income and keep up with their baby's needs. There is a cap on how many appointments they can have in a given year, and once the child reaches 24 months of age they are no longer eligible for Wee Care assistance.



Cindy Spragg is one of our Wee Care Volunteers. Here, she waits for a Wee Care family to pick up their supplies which include diapers, bottles, wipes, onesies, baby wash, and a choice of books to read to their little one.

The Love INC Clearinghouse has an easy-to-use online system for providing a list of requested baby items and for getting appointment and contact information to the Wee Care volunteers from First UMC. On Tuesday, the weekly volunteer retrieves the list of needs and packs up the items from the special storage area for our Wee Care items at the church. The appointments are set from noon until 2:00 on Tuesday afternoons, and the baby items are picked up at the Welcome Center. The Wee Care volunteer is welcome to offer a word of support or encouragement to the parent, and to pray for the wee ones. A struggling parent can always use a kind word.

So, how can you help?

Pick up a shopping list at the display in the Gathering Place. Baby supplies for our Love INC Wee Care ministry are always appreciated. Baby wash, baby lotion, baby wipes, diapers in all sizes, burp cloths, receiving blankets, baby washcloths, bottles (4 and 8 oz) and sippy cups can always be used. Seasonal clothing is also helpful to have on hand, and parents are grateful for the cute new clothes or warm jackets. Of course, 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. We cannot accept baby powder or any baby foods (or formula or pedialyte).

You may bring baby supplies to the church anytime, but this month the best place to leave them is in the basket by the display in the Gathering Place. If you are not a shopper, you can make a monetary donation and we will purchase the supplies most needed. Checks can be made to FUMC, with "Wee Care" on the memo line. Thank you for your ongoing support of our WeeCare ministry to support mothers with small children who could use a little help.

Work / Mission Trip to Detroit Michigan

Our friends at Threehouse - the UMC-affiliated UNI campus ministry are planning a mission and work trip to Detroit, Michigan, and it is **open to First UMC members**, as well. Threehouse did a similar trip two years ago and Chris Congdon went along. Here's what he says about it:

- It was fun to be the "old guy" traveling with a bunch of college-aged people. I enjoyed our evening discussion sessions and exchanging perspectives and ideas.
- The work we did was meaningful, and the agency we partnered with gave us an inside look into some of the worst urban decay in the United States. It was fascinating to see.
- Some of the strongest witnesses of faith come from people who have struggled the most. As you work alongside them, let them minister to you.
- Cass Community Services - founded by United Methodist pastor Rev. Faith Fowler - is creative in finding ways to lift people and neighborhoods up from desperate situations. You might come home with a new idea that could be implemented in CF or Waterloo.
- We baled cardboard for recycling, cooked and served food, went into derelict neighborhoods and picked up illegally-dumped tires,
- We made mud mats out of those tires, which CASS sells to help fund operations
- We worked with special needs adults at an adult daycare center and attended their Friday dance party, which was one of the most genuinely joyful things I've ever seen.
- Expect to work in a soup kitchen - and to eat there, too.
- Expect to get filthy dirty in your daily work, and tired, too. Take gloves.
- Expect to sleep communally in an open bunkroom in a musty church basement.
- You'll be able to have a mostly-private shower every day, but don't expect luxury.
- There will be a little time for sight-seeing.

This is a roll-up-your-sleeves work trip, and also an educational one. If most of your life has been in middle-class Iowa, you will see a different side of America than you ever have before. You'll be exposed to new perspectives on politics, economics, and race relations.

Details of the trip are still coming together, and if you want to get in on the ground floor, attend a meeting at Threehouse, 6:30pm, on Feb 6 and/or Feb 9. Trip dates are expected to be May 10 - 17. Cost will probably be between \$200-\$400.



LOVE FIRST
GATHER, GROW, GO
TOGETHER

LOVE FIRST BY THE NUMBERS

15

Volunteers helped collate material packs for Lincoln School

119

Boxes of food packed for Feed My Starving Children

\$1500

Continues our partnership with Banyam Theological Seminary in Nigeria

Disabilities Awareness Offering - February 16

The Conference Commission on Ministry with Persons with Disabilities is thankful that our church supports Disabilities Awareness Sunday each year. This Sunday calls the churches of the Iowa Annual Conference to increase their understanding of the difficulties faced by people with mental and physical disabilities, to celebrate the gifts and graces of persons with disabilities, and to consider how we can better serve all people with Christ's love and care. Your donations help the Commission to give grants to churches working on projects that enhance their accessibility, and to help fund training events. They receive no apportionment funding. Our donations are much appreciated and used to help provide what is needed to see that everyone can participate fully in church activities.

When You Need Someone To Listen



Some activities are better done alone, like brushing your teeth or playing solitaire. Some activities are better and more satisfying when you work with others. Stephen Ministry is one of those get-it-done-together ministries. Stephen Ministers meet regularly with another person to be a listening Christian friend. They also meet with other Stephen Ministers to support and encourage one another. Stephen Leaders provide training and supervision. When Stephen Leaders and Stephen Ministers work together, God accomplishes wonderful things!



Stephen Ministry training for a new class is underway and will be completed in March. Members of this class will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers during a Sunday worship service. They will then be available to provide one-to-one care to individuals experiencing difficulties in life.

The skills our Stephen Ministers learn and practice prepare them to provide a very high level of Christian care giving. The training is intense because it explores some serious life issues, but it is also a growth-producing and enjoyable community-forming experience.

If you are going through a difficult time in your life and would like to consider having one of our Stephen Ministers walk with you, now would be a good time to consider it. Please call Sandy through the church office and you will be directed in confidence.

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.

email Prayer Chain

If you would like to be on the church "eprayer" list, please let the church office know by emailing Lisa at lisa.congdon@aboutfirst.com. We send out prayer requests by email as they come in, and also include prayer requests noted on the attendance slips. Remember, to ensure privacy, please make sure to get permission from the party that you feel needs prayers.

Annual Service of Prayer and Self-Denial

The program for the February UMW unit meeting on Thursday, February 13th at 1:00 will be the annual service of Prayer and Self-Denial, facilitated by Mary Schlicher. This year's theme is "We Rise. Meeting God's Call to Transform Communities."

At the end of the program, we will provide those present an opportunity to contribute. 100% of the offering will go directly to fund national, international and regional projects that support women, children and youth.

Our inspiration for the program will be provided by this passage from 2 Corinthians 8: 13-15:

I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written,

*Nothing left over to the one with the most,
Nothing lacking to the one with the least.*

All are welcome to attend. Be prepared to be inspired and to give.

Faith Over Fear - April 4

Our First UMC UMW is excited to announce Faith Over Fear - an Afternoon With Mandy Sullivan. Accomplish God's best for yourself and learn how to overcome stress, anxiety, and fear. Save the Date April 4, 2020 from 12:30 to 4:00. Watch for ticket information in the near future.

Mandy Sullivan is an Iowa-based speaker and writer who encourages women to experience the Word of God through teachings, sharing, and conversation. You can find Mandy Sullivan on Facebook, or check out her website at nurturehersoul.com

Here's what others have said about Mandy just this month



I went to Mandy's event hosted by a church in Waterloo, IA. It was awesome to hear from someone who had gone through the same struggles as me and how she turned to Christ to find her true identity. Highly recommend Mandy! - January, 2020

Mandy is the best! The events are fun, and so filling for the soul. Professionally prepared, but she speaks to you personally. Mandy will always point you to Jesus. - January 2020

UMW February

- Feb. 05 – More Than Moms, 6:00-7:15
- Feb. 10 – Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m.,
- Feb. 12 – More Than Moms, 6:00-7:15
- Feb. 13 – Unit Meeting, 1:00 p.m.,
- Feb. 17 – NE District Leadership Team, 9:30 a.m., Cedar Falls FUMC
- Feb. 17 -- Deborah Circle, 10:00 a.m.,
- Feb. 19 – More Than Moms, 6:00-7:15
- Feb. 26 – More Than Moms, 6:00-7:15
- Feb. 27 – Mary Circle, 9:30 a.m.
- Feb. 27 – Joy Circle, 1:30 p.m.,

14 How To Help

Some people might think of these ministry opportunities as the “little things”, but little isn’t the right word.

These are the needs of the church that are on-going in our weekly and monthly cycles of ministry.

These are the support roles that need to be filled and the easy contributions that we all can make to enhance the worship experience for others and to ensure that our ministries are well-equipped and well-staffed.

How can you help?

Worship:

Prayer Team

Everyone is invited to join the prayer team any Sunday morning as we lift up worship in the chapel at 8:00 a.m. Contact one of the prayer team members if you have any questions: Jim Larson, Genny Van Dorn, and Jan Hoover.

3rd Sunday Coffee Server

We’re looking for a fellowship server for the 3rd Sunday of the month. This person will help make coffee, put treats out, make lemonade and be able to serve during the Fellowship hour and stay and clean up. If you would like to be involved with this ministry please contact Jenna Engel at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

Altar Flowers

The altar flower calendar for 2020 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.

Outreach & Missions:

Community Meal

This is a great ministry of feeding and fellowship and you can be a part of it. Once a month - the fourth Tuesday - we plan, prepare, and serve the meal. Meals are served from 4:30-6:00, and the prep work begins early afternoon. If you would like to help with meal preparation or serving, contact Maxine Kehret or Stephanie Buchs. We can use donations of desserts, too. We welcome new faces. There are opportunities for everyone.

Remember, while our team only serves on the fourth Tuesday, other churches are here cooking and serving every Tuesday of the month. You’re always welcome to come and eat - the community meal is completely free and open to everyone.

Got extra fabric? Bring it in!

There is always a need for fabric to make school bags and other stitching projects. The Quilters & Stitchers are looking for durable/sturdy material for school bags. They also could use decent sized lengths of cotton quilting fabric for comfort quilts, baptism quilts, quilts for foster kids, and of course - for the beautiful items they make for the quilt auction each November. 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.

Ongoing Wish Lists

For those who like to shop, we have an opportunity for you! There are several in-church groups that can always use supplies to support their ministries. For your convenience, we have compiled the wish lists for Wee Care, UMCOR School Kits, FirstKids Daycare & Preschool, and Sunday School all on one sheet. And, we have also compiled a list of items that you may have at home that could be repurposed for another use by Lincoln School, our Cardmakers, and River Hills School.

Pick up the Wish Lists sheet on the literature rack outside the church office, or at the donation collection site in the little hallway near the drinking fountain on the main level of the church.

Thank You

To our church family,
Thank you for the two beautiful roses you sent to us. We enjoyed their beauty for many days.
Roger & Rosie Uhlenhopp

Dear church,
What a blessing and a surprise! Thank you for the Wal-Mart gift cards. They are appreciated and will most definitely be used.
Blessings,
Bill & Pam Jones and family

Sympathy to:

- Family and friends of Clyde Berger. Clyde passed away December 30. His funeral was held January 2.
- Chris Werling and her family on the death of her sister-in-law.

Winter Weather Policies

Worship Services

This is Iowa and winter weather happens. When winter weather gets bad, the pastors will decide if changes should be made to the worship schedule.

Weekly Activities

Cedar Falls Schools will be our guide. If Cedar Falls Schools have cancelled classes or dismissed early then church activities will also be cancelled for the rest of the day and evening.

Cancellations will be broadcast on both KWWL Channel 7 and KCRG Channel 9 and posted online at aboutfirst.com. We'll also try to get the word out on facebook and twitter. We also ask that you use your best judgement and do not venture out if it is dangerous to do so.

Girl Scout Cookies are coming!

Senior Girl Scout Troop 6581 will be hosting a Cookie Booth on Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020 from 8 am to 12:15 pm in the Gathering Place. Your favorites are back, as well as the new Lemon-up cookie.

Prices remain the same as last year with the Samoas, Thin Mints Tagalongs, Do-Si-Dos, Trefoils, and Lemon-ups at \$4.00 a box. The S'mores and Toffee-tastic (gluten-free) are \$5.00.

An option to donate cookies to military groups, is also available. Profits from this event will be used toward funding our trip to Savannah, GS in June of 2020. Any questions, contact Linda Kennedy - LK@cfu.net
See you then!

Boy Scout Can Drives

Our chartered Boy Scout Troop is planning monthly can drives to raise money for troop activities. The plan is to collect cans the last Saturday of each month from 9:00-noon in the north parking lot of our church. Save your cans to support the scout programs of our church.

Mobile Giving Options Available

First UMC Cedar Falls is now able to accept financial contributions through the mobile giving apps Venmo and Shazam Bolt\$. Both apps are available for Android and Apple devices. The apps are free to download, and after you link your bank account, transactions are handled much like debit card payments. Don't carry cash or a checkbook? No worries - just use your phone! Send contributions to contributions@aboutfirst.com

Consider Automatic Giving

You'll never need to remember to write a check again! It is quick and easy to set up. Contact our Financial Manager for details. 319-266-1713..

First UMC Live Online

The whole world - including you - can watch our Sunday sermons live, online at our First UMC facebook page. The video stream for Transformation worship starts around 8:55, and the Traditional worship stream starts around 10:25. Please, if you can't make it in-person, consider watching on Facebook!

Also, be aware that this means there are live cameras in our worship spaces. Our cameras are usually positioned to show only the morning's speaker, but it is possible that the congregation may also appear in the livestream. If, for any reason you wish to ensure that you do not appear on-camera, please ask our camera operator for a safe place to sit.

Attendance- week ending

Attendance- week ending	1/5	1/12	1/19	1/26
Fusion (Wednesday)	x	20	15	X
Transformation	97	64	55	68
Traditional 8:30	113	87	69	129
Traditional 11:00	101	111	46	92

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First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls



Sunday, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Traditional services
Sunday, 8:30 a.m. Transformation Worship

Bus rides are available for the 11:00 Sunday service. Our bus is wheelchair-accessible.
Child care is provided in the nursery for infants and babies for Sunday Services.

Spreading the Word

If you miss a Sunday, or want to hear a message again, find us on the local Public Access cable television channels. If you are unable to receive the television broadcast, weekly dvds are also available, or find the video links for sermons at www.aboutfirst.com

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

Waterloo (MediaCom) Channel 17, Sundays @ 11:00am & 9:00 pm

Our Pastors

Scott Kober, Lead Pastor, scott.kober@aboutfirst.com

Matt German, Associate Pastor, matt.german@aboutfirst.com

Staff (in alphabetical order)

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John Bentley, Head Custodian

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