

aboutfirst

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

JANUARY 2024, FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CEDAR FALLS

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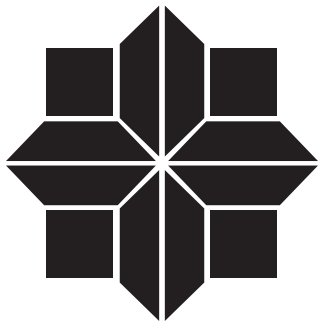
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First United Methodist Church
718 Clay Street
Cedar Falls, Iowa, 50613
aboutfirst.com

Announcements and editorial content for publication may be submitted to the First UMC media office by the 20th of each preceding month.

Email to:
katie.greuel@aboutfirst.com



aboutfirst.com

news

Generosity Devotions From Our Own!

Coming your way, soon.

To celebrate "What Gifts Can We Bring" Stewardship Drive in January, several people from our congregation have written devotions on generosity. You will be inspired by what they have shared.

You will receive a devotion each weekday, Monday – Friday in your email from the Church office from January 8 – January 26. It will be a great way to start the New Year.

Read what our own have to say about the Gifts We Bring.



What Gift Can You Bring?

4 There are different spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; 5 and there are different ministries and the same Lord; 6 and there are different activities but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. 7 A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good.

12 Christ is just like the human body—a body is a unit and has many parts; and all the parts of the body are one body, even though there are many.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 12 Common English Bible

One hundred or more years ago, congregational singing sounded much different than it does today. While we would recognize many of the tunes and titles of the favorite hymns being sung, the sound of these songs was quite different. Every congregation -- no matter how large or how small -- sang in four-part harmony. Soprano, alto, tenor and bass lines blended together to create a rich, layered sound in each hymn. Today everyone sings melody and so there is no difference to bring out the harmony.

Paul would criticize such a situation as bad for the common good. For Paul, it is the dissimilarities, even the dissonances between and among all the members of the body of Christ that keep it vital and alive. It is the mix of sounds and the clash of interpretations that testify to the vitality of the church. The multiplicity of spiritual gifts moving in the midst of the church is a sign of health, not disease.

Paul knew there was a better way to deal with the inevitable discord that arises within congregations. He celebrated differences. He praised the diversity of spiritual gifts that created a church full of one-of-a-kinds.

This January we are asking around First UMC, "What Gifts Do We Bring?" It's part of our Stewardship Drive (you may have wondered where the estimate of giving cards were this fall, no worries they will come in January this year).

What gift is the most important for a church member? Such a question is meaningless. Such a question isn't even appropriate to ask. For the in the church we are called to God's economy of grace.

Rev. Dr. Jill Sanders writes the following:

The practice of stewardship is essential to the Christian life. All that we are and all that we have are on loan to us from God. Our money, our gifts, our talents, our skills, our passions, our bodies, our rivers and streams, our minds and indeed our very lives are entrusted to us by God... When we practice stewardship, we are able to offer all of these gifts for the purposes they were intended—and all of life flourishes.

Friends are not to rank one gift as great than another. Choir singing as of greater value than ushering. Missions of more importance than evangelism. No in the church we practice the stewardship of the gift we have been given. For all are necessary in the body of Christ the church.

If the church does not hold together the diversity of people and their gifts who will?

Certainly, the business world and market are not going to do it, because business and the Market have a bottom line that is efficiency and profit.

Government won't do it, because the bottom line is meeting the needs of the people and reduce chaos (or is chaos now the point of some in government these days?).

It is left to the churches, synagogues and mosques, because their bottom line is to be building and keeping relationships.

However, we have been too focused otherwise and not on the fundamental the tradition of honoring diversity. As Paul puts it here, "a body is a unit and has many parts; and all the parts of the body are one body, even though there are many."

We need to honor all gifts so that all will take seriously how to give their gift in service to the church and to the others. What gift can you and I bring?

I ask because one way that we can be loyal as a people of God is to be loyal through sharing our gifts.

Pastor Scott



Church World Service Blankets

January is great month to appreciate a warm blanket. Contributions to CWS Blankets and CWS Tools mean Church World Service will be ready to help families around the world recover from disasters and displacement. What's more, they'll be there to help people gain the resources and develop the skills necessary to build – or rebuild – sustainable lives and communities.

Imagine the possibilities:

- \$250 can provide warm blankets for five families left homeless by a tornado.
- \$450 can provide refugees resettling far from their homelands the gardening tools and materials to build six small raised beds for vegetables.
- \$750 can provide sewing machines and training for three women, empowering them to earn an income and feed their families.
- \$1,100 can provide 10 displaced families with emergency food packages that will feed a family of five for one month.
- \$2,500 can provide 250 blankets to an agency serving homeless individuals and families in the U.S.

One Day Missions

GATHER, GROW, GO

North East Iowa Food Bank

We'll be sending crews to the Food Bank on Thursday, January 11th from 9 to 4 pm and Tuesday, January 16th from 9 to 11 am. If you are interested, please sign up on the clipboards at the Welcome Desk in the Gathering Space. If you can't make it every month, that's okay! Rides are available from the church to the food bank and if we are working in the refrigeration area you will be contacted in advance.



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.

In particular need now are:

Diapers sizes 4, 5, 6

Socks 18-24 month size

Receiving blankets and bibs

New clothing 18mo-24 mo/2T both boys and girls

Baby wash & lotion

8oz bottles & sippy cups

Your donations do make a difference. Thanks to all of you who support our "wee ones". The moms are always grateful.



Community Meal

A free meal is served every Tuesday from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. It is open to anyone in the community as an opportunity to meet with friends, or to stretch their food budget a bit. We host the

meal every week, and other area churches take turns providing the meal and the workers. Our church's commitment is the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Thank you to all who have volunteered to be a part of this. At this point our biggest need is dessert – cookies

or bars are preferred. If you are willing to bake for the meal the 4th Tuesdays of each month, or any month, please contact Maxine Kehret at 319-610-4191.



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.

Give the mat loom a try

The loom for weaving plastic shopping bags into mats for homeless persons is on display on Sunday mornings for those age 5 to 105 years to take a turn & find out more. Pastor Audrey Westendorf (seated at loom) will be on hand to assist.





January 2 - Grief Support

Where: Parlor

When: 2:00 pm

The grief support group will meet January 2 from 2:00-3:30 in the church parlor. As we begin a new year, this is a great way to get off to a good start. This supportive group invites sharing, listening, and learning. Join us!

January 9 - Card Making

Where: Gathering Place

When: 1:00 to 4:00 pm (Come-and-Go)

January is a time to enjoy the INDOORS for awhile. Come on in to the Gathering Place to make some cards for the church card rack. No experience is necessary. Bring a snack to share if you'd like. This quarter the money collected (only \$.50 per card) will be sent to Midwest Mission.

January 22 - LifeServe Blood Drive

Where: Gathering Place

When: 12:30-6:00 pm

Our monthly Blood Drive will be Tuesday, December 26 from 12:30-6:00. They have quite a few appointments slots to fill, and the need is great.

Appointments are encouraged, but not required. Sign up to donate at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org.

January 11 & 16 - Food Bank

Where: Food Bank

We will continue to send two crews to the NEIFB. The first group will go Thursday, January 11 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and the second group will go on Tuesday, January 16 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Look for the sign up sheets at the Welcome Center Desk. Rides are available.

Crafters Corner

Where: Parlor

When: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Get your crafting project lined up and join the group on the 4th Monday of the month from 6:00-8:00 in the Parlor. This month they will be meeting Monday, January 22

Please contact Crystal Wilken at crystalwilken@gmail.com with any questions.

Facebook Fridays

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



Seeking Blood Drive Caller / Scheduler!

Lorna Ericson has been a faithful volunteer for our Life Serve Blood Drives by calling donors to schedule appointments at our monthly blood drive. Our December drive was her last time to help with this. Thank you to Lorna for her dedication.

Life Serve is looking for others who may wish to help them save lives by scheduling donors – either every month or on a schedule that works best for the volunteer.

Description: The Blood Drive Chairperson plays a crucial role in organizing and ensuring the success of regular blood donation events in Cedar Falls. They would work closely with the Territory Representative to receive a list of potential donors for each blood drive. They manage the schedule by contacting donors to make an appointment time for them. By contacting each donor at least twice, they reinforce the importance of their contribution, answer any additional questions, and provide essential details leading up to the blood drive. The Chairperson can use an online platform to efficiently enter donor information, ensuring accurate and up-to-

date records. This step is crucial for maintaining an organized database that facilitates effective communication and follow-up with donors. If someone isn't comfortable using our online platform, the Territory Representative can assist with this part.

Our Life Serve Territory Representative is Mikala Niemeier. Her email is Mikala.Niemeier@lifeserveblood-center.org. She can answer your questions and walk you through the process.

Worship Schedule

SUNDAY MORNING

Worship Schedule

8:30 am	Traditional Worship Service, Sanctuary, live stream at aboutfirst.com
9:00-11:15	Fellowship, Gathering Place
9:15 am	Transformation Contemporary Worship, Fellowship Hall live stream at aboutfirst.com
10:00 am	Sunday School for all ages
11:15 am	Traditional Worship Service, Sanctuary

Previous services are archived on our First UMC CF YouTube channel.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

5:30-6:00	Filling Station Meal, Gathering Place
6:00-7:30	G3 Youth Ministry
6:00-6:30	FUSION Tonight, Theater Fellowship Hall
6:00-7:30	BLAST, Lower Level
6:30	Small Groups
7:30	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Find your Place in God's Great Story



Help Needed!

TECH VOLUNTEERS

Tech volunteers get to use the same cool equipment and do the same important job as our paid staff, but they have more flexibility to pick and choose the Sundays and services they work. We can't do this without volunteers. No experience necessary – we can teach you what you need to know. Email chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com for more info.

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. Email Jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com for more info.

EDUCATION

Explore various opportunities to join our ministry teams, including becoming a lead teacher for 1st-2nd graders in Sunday

school, engaging with kids from Kindergarten to 5th grade on Wednesday nights, or working with 6th-12th graders in the Youth program. Additionally, there's an opening in our Wednesday afternoon cook team. If your availability is limited you can still contribute by donating food for our Wednesday night meals. Reach out to Jenna Engel at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com to learn more or get involved.

Reminders:

ALTAR FLOWERS

The altar flower calendar 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.

HOSPITAL INFO

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.

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.

DO YOU WANT TO RIDE THE BUS?

Winter is coming and with it the dicey roads. If you like the idea of door to door service and live in Cedar Falls, consider riding the bus to church as an option. The bus picks up riders for the 11:15 worship service. Please contact the bus coordinators Janet & Steve MacTaggart at 319-404-0077. They can answer your questions get you on the schedule for rides.

education news

Children's Sunday School

We are back on Sunday, January 7th.

Crazy Fun Busy Wednesday

We are back Wednesday, January 10th

Thank You!

A huge thank you to everyone who was involved with the Christmas Program. All of our kids did wonderful job and they loved sharing the Christmas story with all of you.

Nursery Update

Starting this month the Nursery Wednesday night schedule will be changing. The nursery will be open to RSVP only. If you need a staffed nursery on Wednesday night please let Jenna Engel a week in advance. You can reach her at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com

NOTE: THE NURSERY IS STILL OPEN ON SUNDAY



Save the Date!

Family Bible Class

(Previously known as 3rd Grade Bible)

Date: Friday, February 2nd

Where: Gathering Space

Time: 6:00-8:00pm

Who: This class is open for 2nd graders and older.

Please note: This class is meant for any child who has not taken 3rd Grade Bible Class.

RSVP: Please let Jenna Engel know if you will be attending by Friday, January 26th. You can contact her at jenna.engel@aboutfirst.com



Mission Trip Informational Zoom Meeting

If you are in grades 7-12 and plan on attending our summer mission trip to Frakes, KY in 2024, please plan on attending an informational Zoom meeting with your parents on Monday, January 15 at 7pm. We will cover a lot of important information about the trip. Please email youth@aboutfirst.com to get a link to the Zoom meeting. Let us know if you have any questions or concerns, or if you know you will not be able to make it to the meeting.

Save the Date: Winter Jam and Lock-in Feb. 2-3!

Save the date for a weekend trip to the Winter Jam and lock-in with our friends at West Des Moines UMC, February 2-3! Winter Jam is a fun night of great music from your favorite Christian bands— it will be a blast! Cost is \$15 per person. Please contact Haleigh at youth@aboutfirst.com no later than Wednesday, 1/31 so we can order tickets. More details will be sent via email to those interested!

Game Night Friday January 5, 6:00-7:30

Join us for our monthly game night right here at the church! Our game nights happen on the Friday before the first Sunday of each month. Please RSVP to Haleigh no later than Thursday, January 4. Bring your

friends— pizza will be provided!

There will be no game night on Friday, February 2. Join us at Winter Jam!

Join us for Sunday School

Join us for Sunday School at 10:00! Our spring semester starts back up on Sunday, January 7. Youth in grades 7-12 meet in the cafe on the third floor.

crazyfunbusy Wednesday

Join us on Wednesday nights for food, fun, and fellowship for youth in grades 6-12! Our spring semester starts back up on Wednesday, January 10. Grab dinner at the Filling Station starting at 5:30, then join us on the third floor at 6:00 for Fusion, followed by games and small groups for youth in grades 6-12. Our nights wrap up at 7:30. All are welcome— bring your friends!



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.

**Judy Focht (rm36),
Geri Gilbert (rm 39)**
Martin Suites
420 E. 11th St
Cedar Falls IA 50613

**Wanda Chase, Tony Lake (rm
9), Homer Leymaster (rm
13), Emogene Marty, Marcia
Simpson**
Windhaven Assisted Living
5500 S. Main St
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Barb Spates
Thalman Square
5500 S. Main St
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Harold Krebs,
Deery Suites
5301 Caraway Lane
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Betty Goettsch
Stanard Assisted Living at
Deery Suites
5301 Caraway Lane #104
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Faye Rohwedder
Nation Cottage
5111 Caraway Lane
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

**Vivian Hill, Donna Hoffman
(D109), Dorothy Schwab
(MC4), Mary Shepherd
(AL104)**
New Aldaya Lifescapes
7511 University Ave
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Joy Sires, Donna Tiller (1304)
CedarStone Senior Living
4715 Algonquin Dr
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Chet Starr
Bickford Cottage
5101 University Ave
Cedar Falls IA 50613

Betty O'Brien
Friendship Village Lakeview Lodge
312 Southbrooke Drive #39
Waterloo IA 50701

Kathy Gill
LaPorte City Specialty Care
1100 US-218
La Porte City IA 50651

Charlene "Chuck" Gratten
Willow Winds Assisted Living #10
121 Bremer Ave
Denver IA 50622

Dixie Messerschmidt
Boysen Heights Senior Living
765 Boysen Rd NE #115
Cedar Rapids IA 52402

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

Delores Berger
613 W. North St Apt 7
Madrid IA 50156

Jack Hovelson
14581 W Parkwood Dr #101
Surprise AZ 85374

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. Or use our handy QR Code below!



Thank You

Bill and I thank all who have sent lovely cards, prayers, and words of hope through the year. Also, thanks to Jane for delivering the birthday carnations. We so appreciate all our church does for us. - Bill & Donna Mincks

Thank you to the staff of my church for the birthday card. Also a big thank you to Jane who brought me the flower and stayed for a nice chat. - Kay Masters

Thanks to the staff for the birthday card. It is always a delight to visit with Jane when she delivers the beautiful carnation. A special thanks to Bancroft Florist for furnishing this beauty weekly. Yes, this ninety four years young /old is so grateful for all the acts of kindness FUMC provides.
- Jo Ackman

I would like to thank the following people for all their kindness shown for my birthday and Christmas – the church care team for their many cards, Jane Wyckoff for delivering the beautiful carnation and her visit, and Maxine Kehret for her visit and bringing out the beautiful flower from the Deborah Circle. Also thanks to Paulette Standing for driving me to and back from the women's Christmas party.
God Bless you all,
Dorothy Schwab

Thank you to the Congregational Care Team for the pretty flower for my birthday and to Jane for the delightful visit when she delivered it. Also, thank you to the staff for

the card they sent. - Pat Benson

Sympathy

Family and friends of Carol Nicholson. Carol died December 4.

Family and friends of Sue DeBower. Sue died December 9.

Family and friends of Marlene Hill. Marlene died December 11.

Evelyn Dailey and Crystal Wilken on the death of Evelyn's sister and Crystal's aunt, Nancy Zink, on December 12.

Family and friends of Betty Fanning. Betty died December 15.

Welcome

We welcome Callen Evan Grimm to our church family. Callen was baptized December 3. He is the son of Jeremy & Kristine Grimm.

Welcome to Sam & Genevieve Shafer and their kids, Graham and Cora, as well as Slade and Christiana Hovick and their daughter Gemma. The Shafers and the Hovicks joined our church on December 17.

Church Directories

If your picture is in the church directory, you have a church directory waiting for you at the Welcome Center. Find the one with your name on it and take it home with you today.

Congregational Care Suggestion

This time after the holidays can be a difficult time for many. Do

you know someone who is home bound or lonely or grieving? Think of how you might be of some comfort. It will not only lift that person's spirits but yours as well. Reach out, make a call, consider a visit. God will be present in your care giving.

Special Thanks!

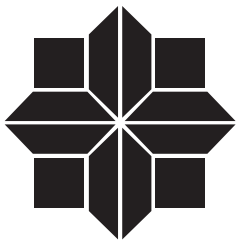
Thanks to everyone who participated in the Christmas Tree Forest.

We had 19 trees displayed in the Gathering Place, the most ever!

They were enjoyed by many.



We are a
**Dementia
Friendly
Organization!**



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

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First United Methodist Church, Cedar Falls

Sunday Worship

8:30 am Traditional Worship Service, Sanctuary
9:00-11:15 Fellowship, Gathering Place
9:15 am Transformation Contemporary Worship,
Fellowship Hall
10:00 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

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