



FIRST CHURCH UNITED
 1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776
 Office—627-2989 Activity Area—627-2446
 Pastor, Marian Hart
 Secretary, Katie Thrasher
 January 2017



Dear friends in Christ,

I always have the best seat in the house on Christmas Eve. Looking out at faces lit by candlelight as we end our worship together is a humbling position. There are those who are here nearly every week and those I don't even recognize. There are extended families and solitary folks. There are the very young and the very old. There are those whose struggles and joys I know and those of whom I don't. It is a holy time of being together, seeking the presence of our Savior.

And speaking of that, an eerie thing happened this year. As the choir was singing from the back of the sanctuary, I was watching them when someone else caught my eye. Jesus appeared to be peeking out from around the Christmas tree in the narthex so that he could listen in! The rest of the service, I felt that 'listening in presence.' If only we could be aware of that 24/7, what a difference it might make in our lives.

The sweetest thing that evening was Rayleigh and Skylar walking down the hallway hand in hand amidst the crowd of big people. If you missed that sight, you missed something wonderful!

As we enter the new year together, it is my most sincere wish that you would seek Jesus more; that you would be conscience that he wants to be more than a peeping tom into your life, he wants to be acknowledged as Wonderful Counselor, Prince and Peace, Lord of lords, and Savior.

Joyous New Year!
 Pastor Marian

CHURCH RECORD		
December 2016		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
December 4	\$2,364.52	82
December 11	\$2,730.25	69
December 18	NA	NA
December 24	NA	107
December 25	\$8,890.25	40

LECTIONARY
January 1 – Isa. 63: 7-9; Ps. 148; Heb. 2:10-18 Matt. 2:13-23
January 8 – Jer. 31:7-14; Ps. 147:12-20 Eph. 1:3-14; John 1: (1-9)10-18
January 15 – Isa. 60:1-6; Ps. 72:1-7, 10-14 Eph. 3:1-12; Matt. 2:1-12
January 22 – Isa. 42:1-9; Ps. 29; Acts 10:34-43 Matt. 3:13-17
January 29 – Isa. 49: 1-7; Ps. 40:1-11 1 Cor. 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

Welcome Table

FREE MEAL
Every Saturday Dec-March
From 12:00-1:00 at FCU



We may have just enjoyed the Christmas season with all of its glorious music, but there will be no shortage of music in our church this January! With five Sundays this month, our Worship Team celebrates Epiphany, and both of our choirs will fill up the remaining Sundays. Let's celebrate '17!!

Sun., Jan. 1: WORSHIP TEAM

Wed., Jan. 4: Chime Choir - 6:45 to 7:30

Chancel Choir - 7:30 to 8:30

Sun., Jan. 8: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., Jan. 11: (same as Jan. 4)

Sun., Jan. 15: CHANCEL CHOIR

Wed., Jan. 18: (same as Jan. 4)

Sun., Jan. 22: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., Jan. 25: (same as Jan. 4)

Sun., Jan. 29: CHANCEL CHOIR

SPIRIT of GENEROSITY- Leaving a Legacy
Prayerfully consider including First Church United in your will. A Charitable bequest is a way in which we can leave a legacy and express our faith and values to the church. The church benefits from gifts that provide for future generations. For questions, please contact Tom Brooke.

THE LENDING TREE

is open Wednesday's from 11:30-1:30 and Saturday's 9-12.



#40 in 17

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 15th after the service.

Potluck follows, bring your favorite dish to share.

REMOVAL OF THE GREENS
Saturday, January 8th following the service.

CYG NEWS

New Year kick off will be Jan. 8 from 5-7 p.m. at West Liberty Christian Fellowship with games and pizza. The rest of the month will be regular CYG at FCU with lessons on bible characters continuing, worship with the band, games, cube time, and food. Invite your friends!

Long Range Planning after church brainstorming sessions- January 22, February 19, March 19, April 23 and May 21. More details will be coming later. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Christian Education

Hello, Church Family!

Hope this finds you all well and warm this mid-winter day. Blessings abound in and around our church, it seems. The Christmas Play and Potluck was enthusiastically received by the children, their families, and friends who came to watch this year. I believe, through the repeated telling of the message in our multiple practices that our young Christians have come to further understand that Jesus is our Savior. Thanks very much to Tasha Wiele, Breona Maurer, Lisa Murphy, and all others who helped to make it such a success.

In 2017 our hope is to incorporate more key bible lessons to augment the lectionary-based Godly Play series we have been following. Additionally, there are plans to have the children share more music with the congregation this year. Should be a wonderful time!

Thanks again for your support. It is an ongoing blessing to be part of such a fine community of fellow believers, sincerely.

Yours in Christ,

Jason Thrasher

OFFICIAL BOARD SUMMARY

December 1, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

The monthly Official Board Meeting was called to order by Bill Koellner. In attendance were Brenda Miller, Ken Noble, Wayne Noring, Susan Lehman, Joe Myers, Bill Koellner, Deepak Giri, Margaret Barnhart, Treasurer Keith Barnhart, Pastor Marian Hart and Secretary Katie Thrasher. Those not in attendance were Darren Brooke.

Devotion – Last part of Psalm 72



Open in Prayer

Approval of Docket - Add Ministry Team descriptions, battery needs replaced in Sanctuary Thermostat. Move to approve: 1st Joe M., 2nd Deepak G., unanimously approved by the Board.

Approval of Minutes - Move to approve: 1st Ken N., 2nd Deepak G., unanimously approved by the Board.

Treasurer's Report - Keith Barnhart gave the Treasurer's Report. Keith reports all bills are paid.

C.E. hours increased during the year from previous years thus the increase in the Y.T.D. total.

Insurance has been paid for the year. We have not depleted savings at all throughout the year. Any money taken out was then put back that same month. Motion to approve 1st Joe M., 2nd Wayne N. unanimously approved by the Board.

Beginning Balance for November	\$1,927.49
Receipts	\$13,384.68
Subtotal	\$15,312.17
Disbursements	\$12,844.07
Ending Balance	\$2,468.10
Board Checking Balance	\$2,406.10

2017 Budget – Personnel still needs meet and revue Secretary, Janitor, and C.E. Director.

PASTOR'S REPORT: November 2016

Office hours kept as possible

Vacation Nov. 4-6

Plan and lead worship Nov. 13, 20, 27

Adult Sunday school Nov. 13, 20, 27

CYG Nov. 6, 13, 20 includes meal planning, shopping, coordinating, lesson on 6th and Board meeting

WOW includes meal planning, shopping, prep, serve, and clean up. Sit in with choir on 30th

Lending Tree on most Wednesdays and Saturdays

Women in Ministry lunch and study Nov. 8

Cottage meeting Nov. 10

All day Presbytery meeting Nov. 12

Worship team meeting Nov. 14

Camp Wyoming Board conference call Nov. 14 evening

Cluster meeting Nov. 17

Newcomb Presb. AdHoc meeting Nov. 17

Simpson worship Nov. 18

CLP retreat at Camp Wyoming Nov. 18-19

Hanging of the Greens Nov. 21

Community Thanksgiving prep, serve, clean up Nov. 23

Advent study Nov. 29

Pastoral visits-3

Mileage-326

Non-church Community activity-TTT, Rotary, 100+Women Who Care

LENDING TREE REPORT NOV. 2016

Lamp	\$ 5.00
Desk	10.00
Blanket	3.00
Silverware	10.00
Cups	1.00
Tupperware	10.00
Blanket	3.00
Albums, garland, pillowcases candle, chair	45.00
Toys	3.00
Picture frame	1.00
Playpens chair	12.00
Cake pans, Tupperware	10.00
Cup	1.00
Book, CDs	5.00
Total sales	\$165.00

Donations received-two beds, chair

ONGOING BUSINESS:

Inside the Church

1. Ceiling tile in handicap restroom needs to be replaced
2. Ceiling tiles in the Fellowship Hall need to be replaced
3. Ceiling tiles in the lounge need to be replaced
4. Drains in lounge need to be cleaned - Darren Brooke
5. Immersion baptismal heater broken - Joe will call Kessler to inspect

Outside the Church

1. Downspouts around the church _Ken Wright_____
2. NE wall of new wing has water mark (possible roof work needed)
3. Hole in caulking in E. stain glass window (on outside)
4. Front of church under large cross needs landscape plan (something that is easily maintained)
5. Outside entrance to narthex, concrete is cracking
6. Crabapple trees need to be trimmed

Discussion - Music Ministry will discuss finding a solution for the issues surrounding the lighting in the choir loft previously mentioned.

Brenda M. reports that the new blinds are being installed Monday, Dec. 8th for the kitchen, lounge and room across from the Sunday School room.

Bill K. reports that the Manse has no downspouts. Bob Dewar and Ken Wright took a look at

it today. Bill suggests Ken also look at the church downspouts. Dirt all around the church to build up the ground will work.

Manse Windows – no report

Long Range Planning Committee – Brenda M. reports she would like to have the groups meet after the New Year to share ideas. She will share a time. Brenda suggests monthly gathering times. First gathering time will be January 22nd following worship. This information will be shared by enews, pulpit, newsletter and bulletin.

Leak in kitchen ceiling – no report.

Nominating activation update – Suggested the structure of the committees stays the same. Discussion on Memorial Fund Committee and how money is designated. Suggested a list of suggestions be presented to the families of those who have passed for how the memorial funds might be used.

Voluntary Action Council – discussion on its future and how the area churches might be involved. Board advises the Food Pantry is now in the Ministerial Associations hands.

Pastor Marian suggests a Fair Stand committee is officially created, nominated and selected. Discussion followed on where/how the money raised from the Fair Stand goes. What that money should be used for.

Margaret B. suggests a Chairman is picked for each committee and that person reports to the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Stewardship Review – Total pledges for 2016- 25
Total pledges for 2017 – 25 at this time

Snow Removal contract – Grief Construction will be contracted again this year.

Fair Stand – tabled till January meeting.

Endowment Request

- 1) \$1000 from Syd Harned for Take Away Hunger. Motion to approve 1st Margaret B., 2nd Ken N. unanimously approved by the Board.

Discussion on Ministerial Help Funds and the churches who give to the help fund.

MINISTRY AND PROGRAM REPORTS:

Christian Education - December, 2016

Hello, Church Family!

Here's wishing you a happy Advent season from the Christian Education Department. As we await Christmas, it is just glorious to behold the wonder with which our church children regard this season. I hope we can all relive some of the fresh appreciation for what Christ's birth means to us during this time of year!

We continue with success both the WOW and Sunday School programs, and have some special events coming up soon: I do hope you all will be able to attend our Christmas Play, on Wednesday December 21st at 6pm. We will be hosting a potluck dinner as well that evening, so do please come! Also, the attending children will be singing Joy to the World on this upcoming Sunday, December 4th. Hope you can make it!

Yours in Christ, Jason Thrasher

MOTION TO ADJOURN 1st Ken N., 2nd Joe M. unanimously approved by the Board

PRAYER CONCERNS SHARED

CLOSING PRAYER

NEXT MEETING: January 5, 2016, at 6:30 p.m.

Church Workers

January 1st

Communion-Presbyterian Style

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Gary Hahn, Bob Dewar, Blaine Kelly,
Lisa Murphy, Shirley Sterner

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Jr. & Evelyn Wilkerson

ORGANIST: Lori Brooke

POWER POINT: Keith Barnhart

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

January 8th

Chime Choir

USHER: Jr. & Evelyn Wilkerson

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Marilyn Ruegsegger & Norma Brooks

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Bill Koellner

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

January 15th

Communion/Chancel Choir

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Leon Larson & Dean Phelps

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Gary Hahn, Bob Dewar, Blaine Kelly,
Lisa Murphy, Shirley Sterner

USHER: Wayne Noring

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Tom & Janet Woody

ORGANIST: Marianne Phelps

POWER POINT: Carolyn Probst

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

January 22nd

Chime Choir

USHER: Dean Phelps

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Marilyn Ruegsegger & Norma Brooks

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Jim Kiwala

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

January 29th

Chancel Choir

USHER: Dave Baker

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

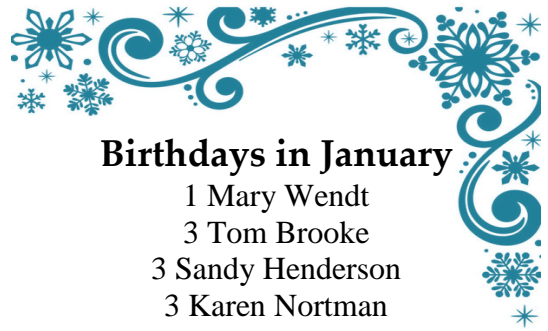
Betty Burton & Evelyn Evans

ORGANIST: Marianne Phelps

POWER POINT: Arnie Hart

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

Communion Preparers for January are
Tom & Janet Woody



Birthdays in January

1 Mary Wendt
3 Tom Brooke
3 Sandy Henderson
3 Karen Nortman
5 Barb Irwin
5 Susan Deahr
7 Joseph Akers
7 Katherine Brooks
9 Tom Brown
9 Mark Irwin
9 Josh Gingerich
10 Evelyn Wilkerson
10 Perry Lehman
11 Diana Brown
11 Ken Harned
12 Lori Brooke
17 Tiffany Schieffer
23 John Bothell
24 Syd Harned
26 Gary Hahn
27 Scott Barnhart
27 Ryan Noble
29 Bob Dewar

Anniversaries in January

2nd Tom & Carolyn Probst
3rd Ken & Syd Harned
28th Dave and Roberta Baker