



FIRST CHURCH UNITED
 1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776
 Office—627-2989 Activity Area—627-2446
 Pastor, Marian Hart
 Secretary, Katie Thrasher
 April 2018



Dear Friends in Christ,

This being Holy Week, I have been doing a lot of reading and thinking about resurrection. The original ending of the gospel of Mark ends abruptly with the women who discovered the empty tomb trembling and bewildered, running away and being too afraid to tell anyone what they had found.

I've been thinking of death and the mourning process and how we find our way to resurrection hope. We mourn the death of jobs and dreams, relationships and homes, health and youth, pets and people. I've been with those reluctant to share any feelings and those who can't stop talking. It is so important for us to stick with mourners and help them believe in resurrection, to find new life, not only in the hereafter for their loved ones, but in the here and now for themselves. Those of us who have been through loss are often the best equipped to help those whose loss is fresh.

The women at the tomb obviously did not stay quiet forever or we wouldn't know the rest of the story. The disciples did not stay locked in a room hiding or the world would not have heard the news of Jesus' resurrection. It is vital that we, like they, tell our stories, as unbelievable, frightening, or risky as they may be. That is how the 'tacked on' ending to the book of Mark came to be. Someone's commentary, their story, was told.

The beginning of the book relates 'this is the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.' We are all still working on the rest of the story. And it is a story we are called to tell. Share your faith in acts of love, even use words if you have to, but make sure someone who needs to hear the good news, hears it from you!

Happy Easter!
 Pastor Marian

CHURCH RECORD

March 2018

DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
March 4	\$2,928.06	63
March 11	\$889.26	62
March 18	\$1,276.42	58
March 25	\$5,228.81	80



Music Notes

Could there be a better way to begin a month than with Easter Sunday? What a great cause for celebration! It might even seem like the rest of the month will be a bit lack-luster. But not from your Music Ministry! The rest of April will not be "a yawn." We will fill your spring with joyous music!

Sun., April 1: [Easter Sunday]

1st Service - WORSHIP TEAM

2nd service - CHANCEL CHOIR

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

Chancel Choir - 7:30 to 8:30

Sun., April 8: CHIME CHOIR

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

Sun., April 15: SPECIAL MUSIC

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

Sun., April 22: [Earth Day] WORSHIP TEAM

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

Sun., April 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.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Hello Church Family,

Hope this finds you well and warm. Pleased to report that both Sunday School and WOW are going well. Hard to believe that it is past Easter already. We are planning toward Pentecost, now. And, preliminary sketches of summer scheduling are beginning to take shape. A common theme in both groups is that attendance has been so strong that we are starting to specialize the curriculum into age, availability & attendance-oriented programs.

Sunday School continues to flourish, with the help of Brookelyn and Brittney Harned. The core group of attendees in the 1st-4th grade age range have been learning to read, interpret and discuss the relevant passages in the lectionary. It's a great joy to see these kids grow in their faith and understanding. We tackle some tough questions, and it's insightful to me to know how deep and complex their perspective is already.

WOW attendance has been off the charts. We had 31 last week & 35 children this week. It's a good sign that kids are inviting their friends to the program. If you have not already been personally witness to the program, I'd highly recommend it. The multi-faceted approach to learning seems to help subject apprehension quite well. We do crafts, games, activities, yoga, free-play, bells, singing, and more. Curriculum continues to follow the lectionary here, also.

Again, it takes a village to make all of this happen well, so there are many people to thank. Marilyn, Wayne, Margaret, Missy, Emily, Lori, Brenda, Jaime, Rachel, Joel, Katie, Lisa, Breona, Todd, Marian, Chance, Charlie, Gary, Norma, and more all are integral components to this program, and are much appreciated! Sincere gratitude for all of your assistance. It is an honor to shepherd our younger generation in their faith walk, teach them about Christ, the church, and being the future leaders of our world as good Christians.

Yours in service, Jason

FAIRSTAND MEETING - April 18th following the service to discuss finishing up projects that we started last year? Anyone with an interest in the Fairstand should attend.

CYG NEWS

Two more weeks of CYG this year! April 8 and 15 we will conclude our lesson on the books of "The Good and Beautiful God" and "The Good and Beautiful Life." We will recognize our seniors on the 15th and do student evals. CYG Board meets April 22 @ 5:00 at WLCF.

I want to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, flowers, food and visits at the time of Harold's illness and passing.

Also, a big thank you to all who helped with refreshments at visitation and at the funeral luncheon.

I am very thankful for my church family.

Evelyn Wilkerson

HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF IN DICKINSON, TEXAS

The work I started with the First Baptist Church of Dickinson at the beginning of the year has not only continued but continues to grow through gifts of cash and donations of time and materials from many different groups from many different states.

The church had a small congregation of 40 very dedicated and faithful people when I found my way to them on Christmas day last year. Their building is roughly twice the size of our church building and roughly half of it was flooded during Hurricane Harvey back in August 2017. Not to be discouraged the congregation has remained faithful and loyal to God's word as well as determined to keep the work of the church alive no matter what disaster comes their way. Under Pastor Jimmy's direction the service I was able to provide for them has allowed their congregation to nearly doubled in size over the six weeks I volunteered there.

I developed some deep personal relationships with several people while I was there, and I remain in contact with my adopted church family. As a result I have received several pictures of the works in progress at the church, and I understand that the "international Kitchen crew" I scraped together continues to provide dinner after church service on Sunday. Directly after dinner Pastor Jimmy convenes a meeting for those who were displaced by Hurricane Harvey, where FEMA, State, County, and Local Agencies are on hand to answer questions and help with finding answers to the concerns of the people.

While I was there the church had partnered with roughly 40 displaced families (a few were members of the church) and vowed to do whatever it

took to get them back in their homes as quickly as possible. Each family has a mentor from the church to meet with them, provide emotional support, and keep them in touch with the agencies they need for help.

From the last week in February through the last week in March hundreds of volunteers have stayed at, worked on as well as worked out of the church to make repairs for those who were affected by Hurricane Harvey. For almost two weeks even the worship hall was cleared out to make room for beds for the volunteers.

Just prior to Palm Sunday Pastor Jimmy told me they had been able to move two families back into their completely renovated and refurnished homes, they have started work on most of the homes they have partnered with, determined one home was not salvageable, and had done an estimated \$180,000 worth of work to the church. All of this work was provided at no cost through the efforts and donations of the organizations of volunteers who came to work out of the church.

As we go into the spring break period hundreds more college students from many states are scheduled to stay at the church while they volunteer in the area. How is that for some youth involvement we can get behind and be grateful for!

Pastor Jimmy told me that because of actions and work performed up to date by volunteers from their church, as well as people like me, they are now a designated federal disaster preparedness center. This has led to some reimbursements from the federal, state, county and local government agencies. This has also opened many doors for them and allowed them to further their work to the community.

I am very proud and humbled by the service I was able to provide for the survivors of Hurricane Harvey. But most of all I am grateful for the opportunity and support my friends, family and church provided for me which, in turn, allowed me to serve on this mission.

Arnie Hart



OFFICIAL BOARD SUMMARY FIRST CHURCH UNITED OFFICAL BOARD MEETING

March 1, 2018

CALL TO ORDER by Board Chair Deepak Giri. Those in attendance were Jo Noble, Pat Barten, Joe Myers, Joel Murphy, Jim Kiwala, Brenda Miller, Holly Gingerich, Pastor Marian, Treasurer Keith Barnhart, Secretary Katie Thrasher.

JO NOBLE would like the Board to create a description of what a Deacon is to go into the By-Laws. Jo would like us to get a hold of both denominations to see what they have for the Deacons list of duties. Jo would like a committee to be formed and for others to know what Deacons do.

Currently there is no definition of a Deacon in the By-Laws.

Board moves we ask the current Deacons to define the role of Deacons then bring it to the Board for approval 1st Joel M., 2nd Holly G., unanimously approved by the Board. After approval of Board it will need to be approved by the Congregation before it is added to the By-laws.

SANCTUARY CARPET AND REMODEL Pat Barten took measurements of the Sanctuary and Deepak G. spoke with him about needs the Sanctuary has. Board wants to make sure the wiring is covered, the front area is safer, and the children have the space they need when using the Sanctuary for worship (CYG, WOW, Christmas Play...). Board will keep thinking about this and ask Pat Barten to come up with 3 drawings of possible ways the front of the Sanctuary can be remodeled to fit these needs. Deepak will have the drawings and designate time after church to share and gather feedback and ideas from members. Board would like to have the drawings and discussion before the next Board meeting. Deepak plans for the drawings to be available for everyone to see by Sunday, March 11.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET 1st Brenda M., 2nd Joe M., unanimously approved by the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 1st Joel M., 2nd Holly G., unanimously approved by the Board.

TREASURER'S REPORT Keith Barnhart reports he has paid the 2nd 1/3 of per capita to the Missions. The other big item to be paid in January was ground maintenance for \$1,480. He moved \$2000 into checking from savings but has paid that back now. We are behind in donations so far this year. Motion to approve Treasurer's Report 1st Joel M., 2nd Joe M., unanimously approved by the Board.

February start of month balance	\$2,661.29
Receipts	\$10,260.81
Sub Total	\$12,922.10
Disbursements	\$12,747.25
Ending Balance	\$174.85

Board Balance (\$5,875.65)

PASTOR'S REPORT FEB. 1-MARCH 1, 2018

Office hours kept as possible

Plan and lead worship Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25

Adult Sunday school

CYG Feb. 4-activity at McNaul's, Feb. 11, 18+Board Meeting. Plan and lead lessons, plan and shop for meals, prepare meal Feb. 18
 Lending Tree Wednesdays and Feb. 24
 WOW Wednesdays
 Visitation and funeral Harold Wilkerson Feb. 1, 2,
 Necrology report DoD Jan. 29
 Worship team meeting Feb. 5
 Ministerial Association meeting Feb. 7
 Funeral Patricia Webb Feb. 10, Necrology report DoD Feb. 2
 Book study and lunch Feb. 13
 Ash Wednesday service Feb. 14
 Cluster meeting and lunch Feb. 15
 Simpson worship Feb. 16
 Simpson bible study Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27
 Camp Wyoming Timber Management meeting Feb. 22
 Community prayer Feb. 26
 Pastoral visits-5
 Mileage-138

Request vacation April 17-22, includes a Sunday.
 Motion to approve request 1st Joe M., 2nd Holly G., unanimously approved by the Board.

Lending Tree Report January/February 2018

Blankets	\$4.00
Pan	1.00
Coffee Pot	4.00
Misc.	1.50
Blanket	4.00
Books	2.00
Cups	2.00
Sheets/knives	5.00
Picture, misc.	5.00
Sheets	5.00
Misc.	6.50
 Total sales	 \$40.00

ONGOING BUSINESS:

Church Cleaning List -

1. Dust wood in Sanctuary (wood beams, woodwork in front of the Sanctuary) - will wait to do this until after the carpet/flooring has been finished.

Inside the Church

1. Immersion baptismal leak – Brenda M. will talk to Blaine to get more information about the leak.
2. Sanctuary Carpet- see above.
3. Lounge ceiling leak- Deepak had someone fix holes in the roof and replace the ceiling tile.

4. Circuit Breaker issues with Organ/Clavinova – These were fixed by Kessler. The circuit breaker was marked with the correct identification. Additional attention is needed and will be addressed when carpet/Sanctuary remodel occurs.

Outside the Church

1. NE wall of new wing has water mark – will look again this spring/summer.
2. Door near sanctuary entrance, sidewalk cracks, and spalled concrete in handicap area – Jim K. will have a quote for the Board later this month.
3. Volunteer Trees in east lawn removed - Joe Myers will take care of this in the spring
4. Door overhangs on NE wing near kitchen to prevent rain entering - Joe M. will get an update from Mark Johnson.
5. The light in the parking lot is out. Jim K. reports that Kessler Electric will fix this when the weather is better.
6. The tulip tree and others need trimming. – no update.

Manse

1. New dishwasher needed for Manse- Deepak called Dane Lovell. Disposal is taken care of. The Manse needs a new dishwasher. Lynch will take care of the issue with the shower. Deepak contacted Slater Appliances. Deepak can pick up the new dishwasher and Arnie Hart has said he will install it. Motion to buy dishwasher from Slater Appliances for \$499.00 1st Joe M., 2nd Jim K., unanimously approved by the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Necrology report – Patty Webb Feb.2, 2018
2. In January we welcomed two new members Pat Brooke and Marcy Dewar. In February we welcomed new member Bill Laughlin.
3. Holly talked to Jason at WL State Bank to inquire about automatic donation/contributions. Each person who would like to set up this service would just fill out a form to contribute and then the treasurer would get a report so the contributions would be tracked.

MINISTRY & PROGRAM REPORTS:

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

Hello church leaders,

I am pleased to report once again that all is going well with our youth programming.

Attendance at WOW continues to grow. An already strong program is being promoted by the kids within it, who invite their friends. We are deep into our Lenten lessons, trying to give the kids a sense of what

this season of reflection and purification means to us as Christians. Our multi-faceted format keeps the lessons fresh. We have done yoga, bell choir, singing, crafts, games, service, and study. We are fortunate to have the help of many adults in the church and parents who volunteer their time.

Sunday school also is succeeding at ushering in this new age of young Christians who will take the helm soon. We learn to study the Bible and reflect on what is in the lectionary. There are also games and crafts, and the kids enjoy coming into the sanctuary for communion.

Special thanks go to all those who help when I am required by my full-time employment to be absent from church. It is a challenge, to say the least, to not be present for my CE duties, but I know that the kids are in good hands.

We look forward to the upcoming Easter season, and our near – future lessons will be focusing on what that means to us. I expect good things. :-)

At your service, Jason Thrasher

Motion to approve report 1st Brenda M., 2nd Joe M., unanimously approved by the Board.

ADJOURNMENT motion to adjourn 1st Joel M., 2nd Joe M., unanimously approved by the Board.

DEVOTION Matthew 6

PRAYER CONCERNS

CLOSING PRAYER

MEETING April 5 , 2018 at 6:30p.m.

FOOD PANTRY REPORT FOR MARCH

This has been a busy month despite the weather. We have seen snow, sleet, and ice on food pantry days. We had 4 new families come in this month, and saw the return of 6 families after a couple months of not visiting.

Totals for the month: 32 families came to the food pantry representing 101 people in the community. Total visits to the food pantry 43 this represents 139 people that were helped this month. Two trips to the Riverbend Food Bank were made and we had fresh produce and bakery products to share with our guests this month, and these were well received.

We enjoyed working with volunteers from Our Redeemer Lutheran church this month. In the slow times the food pantry shelves were stocked and time was spent organizing the storage room. Dave Baker added some extra support to the bottom shelves so they could hold extra weight and these shelves were put to use. A big thanks to Rhonda and Ron Jensen for getting the organization of things rolling.

The power point I put together to show at First Church United was well received by the members and we have a few volunteers to assist at the food pantry the month of April. I have extra copies on flash drives with a printout to assist anyone who would like to share the power point presentation with their church or other group. These extra copies are at the food pantry for your convenience. Please stop by during regular pantry hours and ask for them.

West Liberty Christian Fellowship Church will be providing volunteers for the month of May and I am looking forward to working with Julie McKillip and her group of volunteers.
Dave Baker

The Easter Lilies decorating our Sanctuary have been placed in loving memory or in honor of:

Ken Ruegsegger, Earl & Ellen Hitchings, Gerald, Vera & Duane Ruegsegger, Virgil & Venita Harned
Marion Barnhart, Annabelle Kempf, Don Kempf,
Elgin Phelps, Sterner & Hansen Families,
Kenny & Shirley Baker, Robert & Arline McGlumphry,
Annette Martinez, Pam Westra Hillyer,
Bob Brooke, Harold Brooks, George Barber,
Annette Martinez, Jim, Donald & Kate McCrabb,
Loletta Mackey, Clare & Gladys Brooke,
Charles & Ione Miller, Findlay & Beryl Brooke,
Chelsea Brooke

Church Workers

April 1

Easter Sunday/Communion/Chancel Choir

6:00a.m. Sunrise Service at Noble's Pond

8:00a.m. Service:

Communion done by Intinction

9:00 a.m. Egg Hunt and Brunch

10:00 a.m. Service:

SPEAKING ELDERS:

None Needed

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Dinette Myers, Joe Myers, Bob Dewar,
Jim Kiwala, Brookelyn Harned, Chance Thrasher

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS: Norma Brooks

8 :00a.m. ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

10 :00a.m. ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

8 :00a.m. POWERPOINT: Bill Koellner

10 :00a.m. POWER POINT: Bill Koellner

8:00 a.m. CANDLE LIGHTER: Alice Thrasher

10:00a.m. CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

April 8

Chime Choir

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Marilyn Ruegsegger

ORGANIST: Susie Lehman

POWER POINT: Todd Woodburn

CANDLE LIGHTER: Jude Woodburn

April 15

Communion/Special Music

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Mary Larson & Keith Barnhart

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Dinette Myers, Joe Myers, Bob Dewar,
Jim Kiwala, Brookelyn Harned, Chance Thrasher

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

The Giri Family

ORGANIST: Lori Brooke

POWER POINT: Todd Woodburn

CANDLE LIGHTER: Payton Murphy

Communion preparers for April are

Butch & Karen Nortman

April 22

Worship Team

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

The Murphy Family

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Katie Thrasher

CANDLE LIGHTER: Tenley Murphy

April 29

Chancel Choir

USHER: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Norma Brooks

ORGANIST: Marianne Phelps

POWER POINT: Arnie Hart

CANDLE LIGHTER: Alice Thrasher



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1st Dustin Brooks

4th Emily McDonald

5th Brad Sterner

8th Blakley Deahr

13th Kyle Miller

15th Lucas Williams

19th Cailyn Williams

19th Nathaniel Williams

19th Brady Laughlin

22nd Tenley Murphy

22nd Gabe Gardenier

27th Emmee Wiele

28th Mike Morrison

29th Jo Noble

29th Jena Wiele



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

22nd Dean & Marianne Phelps

26th Ken & Jo Noble

28th Curt & Lisa Newcomb