



FIRST CHURCH UNITED

1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776
Office - (319) 627-2989
Rev. Deborah Mann
Secretary, Katie Thrasher
May 2021

From the heart of Pastor Deb . . .

This is the start of a beautiful new day here at First Church United! Many have gotten their Covid vaccines and the church is open for both in person and zoom worship. Just like the overflowing blossoming trees, our lives are filled with a bounty of *hope* and *possibilities*. That is the Easter message our Savior brings! Death and isolation do not have the final word. Because Jesus Christ lives, we too, are reminded there is life after sorrow. Not only hope of eternal life in heaven, but *abundant life* right here on earth. We have so much to be grateful for: family, friends, new babies, creation, and the wide assortment of ministry opportunities our church home has provided through God's generous hand. The exciting part is . . . there is more to come!! Our Gracious God continues to knock on the door of our hearts and lead us down new pathways that bring light and love to others in need. The Shepherd of all ages continues to pursue the lost and lonely, the broken hearted and discouraged, and seeks our help.

That is why this month, we will continue to spruce up our walls and grounds in preparation for those needing a new church home. A place where they can find rest and nourishment for their weary souls and encouragement for the journey ahead. May they feel the love of Christ and our wonderful church fellowship the moment they park their car or walk inside this lovely building. That is what people are yearning for today. That is what we all need. An inviting place of warmth and unconditional acceptance. I pray beloved family, that we will continue to work, learn and have FUN together as we build up the Kingdom of God. If we BELIEVE, TRUST and FOLLOW, I know that God will provide for all our needs. As Proverbs 16: 3 reminds us: *Commit our work to the LORD, and our plans will succeed.* Let us move forward in Hope and Peace and may God grant us the desires of our hearts!

Be safe - be well
Love Pastor Deb

CHURCH RECORD		
APRIL 2021		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
April 4	\$1,188	75
April 11	\$206	47
April 18	\$5,640	69
April 25	\$345	33

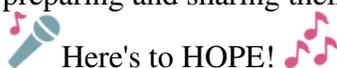
MAY LECTIONARY

Advent Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Fifth Sunday of Easter May 2, 2021	* Acts 8:26-40	Psalm 22:25- 31	1 John 4:7- 21	John 15:1-8
Sixth Sunday of Easter May 9, 2021	* Acts 10:44-48	Psalm 98	1 John 5:1- 6	John 15:9-17
Seventh Sunday of Easter May 16, 2021 (If Ascension not observed here)	* Acts 1:15-17, 21-26	Psalm 1	1 John 5:9- 13	John 17:6-19
Day of Pentecost May 23, 2021	* Acts 2:1- 21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14	Psalm 104:24- 34, 35b	Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1- 21	John 15:26- 27; 16:4b-17
Trinity Sunday May 30, 2021	Isaiah 6:1- 8		Romans 8:12-17	John 3:1- 17
First Sunday after Pentecost	Psalm 29			

MUSIC NOTES

What a blessing! While we know it isn't over, our ministry through music has been weathering a long storm. In spite of the glitches, musicians have continued to connect on Zoom, outdoor services, and effective precautions indoors. The changes are gradual, but many of us are starting to feel more comfortable within the welcoming walls of our sanctuary. Our music is gradually transitioning to the more normal, and that is certainly a joy!

We will continue to keep our small group of singers in place for now. We hope and pray that it will be safe to continue gradually taking those precious steps back to full choirs, full instruments, and a full congregation to hear and feel inspired! Our Chime, Chancel, and Kids' Bell Choirs are missed, but those choir members are also missing the inspiration and joy they feel when preparing and sharing their sacred music.



Here's to HOPE!

Please mail your offering to our Financial Secretary

Dinette Myers
1244 Country Heights Lane
West Liberty, IA 52776.

HYW 6 CLEAN UP

Hello church family,
Anybody interested in helping with the highway pick up, please contact Jason Thrasher at Jason.thrasher28@gmail.com.

This year, rather than selecting one individual time to all gather, we will be assigning lengths of the highway so that groups may work at their own leisure.

Thanks so much in advance for your assistance, Jason.

Aquarius will host their annual perennial plant and bake sale on Saturday, May 8 at Fred's Feed & Supply. Plants, gardening items, and baked goods will be available. All proceeds will go towards community projects and scholarships.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER MAY 6

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY MAY 9

TREE DEDICATION MAY 18

SENIOR RECOGNITION MAY 23

PENTECOST MAY 23

MEMORIAL DAY MAY 31ST

THANK YOU

I wanted to thank everyone for all the well wishes, cheerful flowers, beautiful music and lovely reception on April 18th as Lee Ann and I officially joined the church and I was installed as your pastor. We feel so blessed to be a part of this wonderful church family and community.

May God continue to bless our time together with an abundance of loving Christian fellowship and growth opportunities. We celebrate the joining of our two families. To God be the glory!!

Thank you beloved church family (hugs)

Pastor Deb and Lee Ann



Installation Service April 18, 2021: Rev. Joshua Patty, Lee Ann Maas, Rev. Deborah Mann, Rev. Linda Hunsaker, Rev. Liz Woodward

If you were not able to attend but would like to see the recording of the Installation Service, please contact the church office by May 14.



FIRST CHURCH UNITED WORSHIP IN PERSON GUIDELINES

Zoom church will also be available to those who do not wish to attend church personally. Below are the guidelines established in order to attend church safely.

1. Enter in the main door of the church then use hand sanitizer provided on the table in the entrance.
2. Come directly into the sanctuary and find a pew marked with an X. One family unit per X.
3. The fellowship hall will be open if you prefer not to sit in the sanctuary.
4. Masks are required and must be worn at all times.
5. There will be an offering plate on the back tables of the Sanctuary.
6. Hymns will be sung only while wearing masks.
7. We will be allowing the choir to sing. Choir members will be seated 6 feet apart.
8. Bring your own communion supplies.
9. Fellowship after church is allowed as long as distance requirement is met and face masks are in place. There will be no coffee or snacks provided.
10. If you are feeling unwell or have a fever, please stay home as to not transmit any illness to anyone else.

These guidelines will be reviewed and changed by the Board's discretion. It is First Church United's intention to provide worship to all members via Zoom and in person.

SYNOD SCHOOL 2021

A place where you... Learn, Laugh, Sing, Dance, Try new things, Leave spiritually and personally renewed.

July 25-30, 2021. Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool .

800-328-1880, ext. 207.

More information is on the table in the main entrance hallway.

SUMMER CAMP

Don't forget to register for camp before it fills up! Check out <https://www.uppermidwestcc.org/summer-camp> or <https://campwyoming.net/> to see which camp fits your calendar. Scholarships are available through the Endowment fund.

OFFICIAL BOARD MINUTES

April 1, 2021 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER by Board Chair Dean Phelps.

Those present were Jo Noble, Gary Hahn, Margaret Barnhart, Karen Nortman, Blaine Kelly, Susan Deahr, Pastor Deb, Treasurer Keith Barnhart, and Secretary Katie Thrasher.

OPEN IN PRAYER by Pastor Deb.

APPROVAL OF DOCKET move to approve Board docket 1st Blaine, 2nd Karen, unanimously approved by the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES move to approve 1st Jo, 2nd Blaine, unanimously approved by the Board.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Keith reports the per capita for each denomination has been paid. The manse roof bill has been paid, \$13,700 out of the Irey funds. We've moved \$12,000 so far this year from savings to checking. Mid American budgeted bill will go up for about 3 months from \$147 to about \$280. He will send in the WOC/OGHS contributions at the end of April. The Irey Funds CD will mature in early May. Board needs to decide what to do with it when it matures and talk to Jason Cassady at WLSB.

Susan will talk to both denominations to see if we can put it in a fluid account that will earn interest when not in use but be able to be moved/used as needed. Dean will talk to Jason Cassady. Move to approve Treasurer's report 1st Blaine, 2nd Karen, unanimously approved by the Board.

Beginning March balance	\$445.52
Receipts	\$29,217.00
Sub Total	\$29,662.52
Disbursements	\$29,302.61
Ending balance	\$359.91
Board Checking balance	(\$13,783.59)

PASTOR'S REPORT March 2021

- Worship planning and preparation - find and work with support team, offer prayer for all before worship service. Addtl services added during Lenten season including Ash Wednesday and Good Friday via zoom and Sunrise service at Noble pond. Work extensively on sorting through items and planning for Easter services. Gave info to Index about services. Also met with and planned membership service with Robyn Cox. Also held first membership meeting with Michelle and Dale who will join at later date. Bible study and research for sermons. Work with music team and sound board assistance.
- Held consistent office hours. Answered phones, texts and emails, talked with individuals needing assistance and those dropping by, talked with our Salvation Army rep and Food Bank manager, sent cards, made phone visits and those sent to hospitals, followed up with joys and concerns, assisted Katie with any paperwork needing attention. Assisted new circle leader and those with counseling needs
- Talked regularly with Associate Regional Minister, and Disciples cluster group of colleagues. Talked with she and Susan about installation date. Also attended via zoom Clergy Chat with Regional Minister Josh Patty and other colleagues
- Attended Ministerial Association meeting and Presbytery Slated meeting via zoom
- Met weekly with CYG attendees and offered prayer support for group. Attended via zoom CYG board meetings as well. Lee Ann has also been attending all CYG activities and helping me clean tables after everyone leaves.
- Attended Lenten 5 week study offered through Presbytery via zoom
- Followed up on forming Worship Planning committee with Karen Nortman's help. Held beneficial meeting via zoom. Also attended Endowment meeting via zoom.
- Cleaned up lounge/library area and started working in the children's rooms with help from Katie. Worked

with Jodi and Syd extensively on the storage room. Put up new bulletin boards designs and welcome banners. Went shopping to get a few items. Continued cleaning and painting in the office. Lee Ann hung up dry erase board and helped with wiring and painting. New signage put up on doors. Mission statement and office arrow framed.

- Decorate sanctuary with assistance from others
- Worked on documentation for new members joining, mileage reporting, service info, etc.
- Worked with others on getting church ready for in-person attendance. Katie worked tirelessly. Lee Ann, Brenda and Todd have also assisted with zoom, sound system and mike issues. Also worked with groups coming in to use church facilities, including quilters and lifeline screening
- Worked with members to pass on vaccine information and to get my first vaccine, as well as Lee Ann. Also donated blood during the blood drive.
- Lee Ann assisted Katie and Marianne with voting arrangements
- Worked with Liberty Communications on wi-fi issues and posted to Facebook. Took photos around church to use in possible posts.
- Talk with individual church members and listened to ideas expressed. Worked with Todd on ideas and pictures for outreach window design
- Followed up with Jason to confirm his Sunday coverage for my approved vacation on June 27th
- Submit article for April newsletter and request letter for church board docket
- Manse roof was put on. Continue working inside of the manse. Lee Ann fixed 2 toilets and several other small items.
- Attended my Uncle Garry's funeral via zoom.

Board read Pastor Deb's request. Dean recommends a committee be formed to look into sound system needs. Pastor Deb will reach out to people who have been involved in music and sound system needs before to meet with West Music. Motion to form a committee to investigate a new sound system and work with West Music 1st Blaine, 2nd Karen, unanimously approved by the Board.

Motion to approve the items on Pastor Deb's request list 1st Susan, 2nd Margaret, unanimously approved by the Board.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

1. Dedicated Greeter team - **Will be called “The Meeters” from now on. Margaret reports they are working on a contact list they can hand out that would include names and phone numbers of those in charge of all of the activities in the church. They would like to also have a map and other information about the city to give those new to the area. The Meeters will collect info and bring it to the Board for approval.**
2. Manse
 - a. Manse front step railing - Dillon Brooke
 - b. Door handle in garage - Jim Kiwala is working on it
 - c. Extra dirt around Manse east side - Bob Dewar will do this in the spring
 - d. Toilet seat – Lori - **completed**
 - e. Porch Railings- Jim Kiwala
 - f. Filter in the basement by the back door needs to be replaced. - Darren Brooke
 - g. Gasket needs to be replaced in the basement toilet – **completed**
3. Needs Assessment – Board divides the bequest 3 ways. 1) Mission/Ministry 2) Immediate Maintenance 3) Future Maintenance.

Immediate Maintenance

- A. Consider improving the handicap parking area and replacing the bad patches of concrete in the parking lot. – The area by the dumpster and basketball hoop has been fixed.
- B. Consider maintenance of the roof, sanctuary wall, kitchen leak. - 1) fixes spots on roof 2) replacing roof 3) Add Carport/Canopy - **Blaine reported that some caulking has come loose on the roof. It needs to be replaced and add some pitching. Blaine will get caulk and ask Jim Kiwala to help work replacing it with him. Blaine cleaned out the gutters as well.**
- C. Consider burying outside downspouts.
- D. Consider replacing the pew seat cushions.
- E. Railing for Manse front steps- will be able to complete once the sidewalk/steps are raised.

Mission/Ministry

- F. Consider finding an emergency stay option/building a small home or purchasing a trailer/consider separate accommodations within the church for emergency housing needs. - **Motion to remove 1st Blaine, 2nd Gary, unanimously approved by the Board.**

- G. Consider local and world mission outreach including both denominations church camps
- H. Consider assisting the community with laundry needs - **Katie will put Jacque McCoy, our Salvation Army contact, in touch with Margaret’s contact in Muscatine to help the Salvation Army proceed with helping people with their laundry needs.**
- I. Consider offering classes to those in the community to help with budgeting and other life skills. Offer support to families and those in need in our community.

Future Maintenance.

- J. Consider needs the manse may have such as AC/furnace, carpet, windows, shower in master bathroom and other plumbing structures. - Pastor Marian says the surround and door of the manse shower could be replaced at some point.
- K. Consider cleaning or replacing the pew seat cushions.
- L. Consider saving funds for future furnace replacement needs. Put in future maintenance of the church fund.- Report that Keith included in Treasurer's report averages \$10,000/year.

Trustee Work to be done

1. Church soffits need to be refilled with foam - Lori
2. Install new or replace batteries in old smoke detectors throughout church – Blaine - **Done. Blaine mentioned the Manse smoke detectors may need new batteries. If they are older than 10 years, they need to be replaced.**
3. Women’s toilet needs new innards and family restroom needs more water in the tank – Lori
4. Basketball hoop needs to be straightened and enforced.
5. Baseboards in Manse office need to be replaced.
6. Replace ceiling tiles in Fellowship Hall and Lounge from water damage.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Endowment requests approved by the Endowment Committee –
 - a. Jason Thrasher - \$250.00 for church history class reimbursement for Ministry Education Program - taught by Christian Church- Disciples of Christ of the Upper Midwest (request date 3/4/21)
 - b. Katie Thrasher - \$400.00 for Pioneer Camp June 20-25 at Camp Wyoming. (Note: Alice is sooo excited to go back to camp this year) (request date 3/4/21)

- c. Susan Deahr - \$300.00 for Callie, Makenna and Blakley Deahr to go to "You and Me camp" at Camp Wyoming - (request date 2/11/21)
- d. Katie Thrasher - \$unknown - Campers registration fees without the \$50 campership cost born by the family. The camp will be either Camp Wyoming or Christian Church Camp for Summer 2021. (request date 2/26/21)
- e. Katie Thrasher - \$2000.00 to pay for Todd Woodburn to paint the Narthex doors each season in 2021. There will be 4 seasons painted. This is considered outreach as many people see and enjoy it as well as finding peace and hope provided by each message. (request date 2/2/21)
- f. Robyn Cox - \$120.00 for 4 camperships for a family camp at Christian Conference Center June 11-13.
 - 2. Large fire pit (stone circle ring) on manse property. **Pastor Deb will get codes and dimensions allowed from the City office. She will bring more details to the next Board meeting.**
 - 3. Board request from Pastor Deb - **See Pastor's report**
 - 4. Service of Installation for Pastor Deb – April 18. **Board is in favor of having a regular service at 10:00 then have the service of Installation followed by a Meet and Greet with the Disciples of Christ Regional Minister and Regional Associate Minister plus Pastor Deb's family. Susan and Margaret will help plan and look into a safe way to serve refreshments.**
 - 5. Additional Zoom Account for Care Groups or other church needs - **motion to approve the purchase of a second Zoom account for the church 1st Susan, 2nd Blaine, unanimously approved by the Board.**
 - 6. Copier - **Our contract is up in August and the Board is in favor or researching if there are better options available for the church to use. Karen will research copiers at Staples and Best Buy for next month's meeting.**

ADJOURNMENT move to adjourn 1st Karen, 2nd Gary, unanimously approved by the Board.
PRAYER CONCERNS SHARED
CLOSING PRAYER
NEXT MEETING May 6, 2021 at 6:30pm

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER May 6

Due to covid safety precautions, the Ministerial Association will be doing something different this year for National Day of Prayer. We are asking everyone to be intentional about prayer during 7:00 am, noon or 6:00 pm on May 6. There will be a zoom link from West Liberty Christian Fellowship and will sent with the weekly enews. You can join by Zoom or pray on your own. We will be intentionally praying for: Nation, Government, Military, Schools, Entertainment/Sports, Family, Children, Community, Church.



MAY

- 1 Carla Sphar
- 8 Addilyn Parizek
- 10 Mike Phelps
Joyce Hahn
Katlyn Skubal
- 11 Blaine Kelly
Arnie Hart
- 12 Adeep Giri
- 15 Jan Koellner
Brad Akers
- 18 Zach Irwin
Brooks Reed
Rolo Galvan
- 19 Pat Nortman
- 21 Leland Kober
- 23 Ryan Deahr
- 25 Deb Mann
- 27 Andy Nortman
Marian Hart
- 29 Betty Burton



May

- 5 Jared & Samira Deahr
- 18 Jonathan & Kara Wieland
- 19 Scott & Angie Brooke
- 27 Tom & Janet Woody
- 27 Jason & Katie Thrasher