



FIRST CHURCH UNITED

1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776

Office - (319) 627-2989

Pastor, Rev. Deborah Mann

Secretary, Katie Thrasher

September 2021

From the heart of Pastor Deb . . .

Today, I led a memorial service for a Simpson Home pet - Whiskers, the cat. He obviously made an impact on the staff and residents during the 14 years of his life spent with them. It reminded me once again of the fragility of all life and the positive difference we can make in this world, no matter who we are. A small act of kindness, a loving smile, a gentle word, and a listening ear shared with others can leave a legacy of love. As we have been challenged the last few weeks with rising covid numbers, those acts of kindness have been especially meaningful. Placing WOW and Sunday School on a temporary hold was very difficult, but in our desire to be loving, faithful witnesses for Christ, we chose this action out of love for the children and the staff. We are praying to return asap. I do believe that we can continue to overcome all obstacles through loving acts of kindness and generosity. We have a wonderful church family that is eager to serve.

This past week, we were blessed to hear the Chancel Choir's return and by the end of month, the Chimes Choir. We continue to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, praising His name in song and worship. This week, the Adult Bible Study will resume on zoom, our deacons will have a new calling list, and in the latter part of October, a new gathering entitled "Lunch Ladies" will begin. Our Community Youth Group - CYG, for ages 6th grade - 12th begins Sunday night and right around the corner, we have a toddler baptism. There are good things happening in our ministry amidst the challenges and I thank all of you for your persistence, patience and prayer on this journey of life. I pray that together, we will continue to share our gifts of service and love as we look **Forward with Hope** to find new opportunities in reaching one another. Please continue to keep our community churches in prayer and let me know if you are interested in leading a new ministry. I would love to help.

Giving thanks to God in all things - Pastor Deb

CHURCH RECORD		
August 2021		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
August 1	\$1,750	37
August 8	\$431	56
August 15	\$2,160	50
August 22	\$5,100	58
August 29	\$4,722	39

SEPTEMBER LECTIONARY

Advent Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Proper 18 (23) Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 5, 2021	Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Psalm 125	Isaiah 35:4-7a Psalm 146	James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17	Mark 7:24-37
Proper 19 (24) Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 12, 2021	Proverbs 1:20-33 Psalm 19	Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 116:1-9 <i>or</i> Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 - 8:1	James 3:1-12	Mark 8:27-38
Proper 20 (25) Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost September 19, 2021	Proverbs 31:10-31 Psalm 1	Wisdom of Solomon 1:16-2:1, 12-22 <i>or</i> Jeremiah 11:18-20 Psalm 54	James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a	Mark 9:30-37
Proper 21 (26) Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 26, 2021	Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 Psalm 124	Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29 Psalm 19:7-14	James 5:13-20	Mark 9:38-50

MUSIC NOTES

After the longest break in the history of our choirs, we plan to finally resume in September! Whether or not there will need to be adjustments made as time goes on, due to the continuation of COVID, remains to be seen. So stayed tuned for updates.

In the meantime, here are our dates and times for rehearsals and the Sundays we sing or play. Can't wait to see you all together again!!

Wed., Sept. 1: Kick-off picnic at 6:00 in Fellowship Hall
Chime Choir, 7:00-7:45
Chancel Choir, 7:45-8:30

Sun., Sept. 5: CHANCEL CHOIR

Wed., Sept. 8: Chimes, 7:00-7:45
Chancel, 7:45-8:00

Sun., Sept. 12: KIDS BELLS

Wed., Sept., 15: (same as Sept. 8)

Sun., Sept. 19: CHANCEL CHOIR

Wed., Sept 22: (same as Sept. 8)

Sun., Sept 26: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., Sept. 29: (same as Sept. 8)

FIRST CHURCH UNITED IN PERSON CHURCH GUIDELINES

1. Masks are still required for those who have not been vaccinated.
2. Fellowship hall will be open for those who prefer not to sit in the sanctuary.
3. Offering plates will not be passed, but are on the back table of the sanctuary for your convenience.
4. Communion elements will not be passed at this time. Please bring your own or use the sealed elements at the back of the sanctuary.
5. Music will be played and sung. If you have not been vaccinated or would feel more comfortable, please wear a mask covering.
6. Fellowship after church is allowed, but refreshments will not be served at this time.
7. If you are feeling unwell or have a fever, please stay home so as not to 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. We thank you for your cooperation as we want

to keep everyone safe including our children 11 and under who cannot be vaccinated at this time.

Please mail your offering to our Financial Secretary

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

OFFICIAL BOARD MINUTES

August 5, 2021 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER by Board Chair Dean Phelps.

Those in attendance were Margaret Barnhart, Blaine Kelly, Susan Deahr, Treasurer Keith Barnhart, Secretary Katie Thrasher, Jodi Kelly, and Brenda Miller.

OPEN IN PRAYER by Dean Phelps

APPROVAL OF DOCKET motion to approve 1st Blaine, 2nd Margaret, motion is approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from June meeting.

Motion to approve 1st Margaret, 2nd Blaine, motion is approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Keith reports he has moved \$23,500 from Savings to Checking so far this year. Pledges are on track but non-pledges and loose offering are lower than previous years at this time. Keith will start paying the missions beginning next month.

Move to use Board Discretion Endowment Interest funds to pay for paint used in the updating of the church 1st Blaine, 2nd Sue, motion is approved.

Keith paid workers comp. of \$448 in July. Insurance will go up from Aug. 21-Aug. 22. Keith paid for carpet cleaning bill out of Future Maint. of the Church. After many years of not spending much Christian Ed. Funds Pastor Deb has bought new materials.

Motion to approve Treasures Report 1st Blaine, 2nd Sue, motion is approved.

Start of July balance	\$1,355.40
Receipts	\$18,570.49
Sub Total	\$19,925.89
Disbursements	\$18,588.99
Ending Balance	\$1,336.90
Board Checking balance (22,701.01)	

UPDATES

1. Sound/Visual Committee – Brenda Miller
 - a. Brenda walked through what we've been doing for our sound/visual. She states at this time we are using Zoom. We currently use 5 computers and 1 video camera to make zoom work. Two people have been doing the Zoom set up and run the service every week. The Sound quality is not great due to lack of the right equipment.
 - b. Letter from Kerry G.- Brenda addressed the letter sent to the Board by Kerry G saying that she is correct in that zoom in interactive but that is very difficult to do with a live "audience". It is hard to blend the two. One thing we could do is a 30 min. Zoom fellowship time to share joys and concerns prior to the service then we could switch to a livestream service.
 - c. Brenda would like to propose we purchase 1) new laptop with tech specs to run our audio and visual-\$600, 2) Camera to go under tv in the Sanctuary, that has multi purposes -\$2,300, 3) Encoders for camera both audio and visual-\$200. Approximate total for all new equipment needed \$3,500. Motion to get info to Katie re: purchasing equipment and reasons why we need it to Katie 1st Susan, 2nd Blaine, motions carried.
 - d. Board agrees live streaming will happen by Thanksgiving. A set of guidelines will be created and posted to help Zoom be successful. Board considered Kerry's concerns very carefully and agreed to move slowly and thoughtfully regarding Zoom.
2. Organizing/updating church rooms- Jodi Kelly

Jodi reports that new furniture, waste baskets, clocks, carpets cleaned, blinds, chairs, tables and other items have been purchased for the educational wing. Thank you Jodi from the Board. Jodi and Blaine noticed the vents need to be replaced. Move to use Board Discretion Endowment Interest funds to pay for the new vents for the church.

PASTOR'S REPORT/CHILDREN'S REPORT

June and July

Children's Report

Hello Board Members - as I will not be in attendance for our August meeting due to VBS overlap, I wanted to write a brief note to hi-light our children's programming. -We are hearing many good things from parents who are pleased with our response to clean and freshen the education wing of our church. They love the look and the enthusiasm, along with the new toys and worship bags and binders for the kids. It all sends a powerful

message that we love and care about the needs of the children here at First Church United.

- It was great to see children participating in helping with our food stand at the fair. I LOVE all that wonderful intergenerational mentorship! It says so much when these kids have grown up and want to teach their own children or just want to come back and help their parents and the church they love.

-I also want to thank the endowment committee for their generous support in funding camps and Synod School. There are priceless moments and memories at camp that can make lifelong differences in the lives of these individuals.

-As we continue to wrap up our summer activities, we saw an exuberant turnout for VBS last night. We had 27 children from pre-K through 5th grade and another 5 pre-teen helpers totally 32, plus 10 adult helpers!! What a great time we had. Their parents offered compliments and the energy level was contagious. WOW will begin in 2 weeks on Wed, Aug 18th. Our goal is to continue bringing the children back into the church (along with their families) and providing for their spiritual needs.

- As for CYG, we participated in this year's fair parade and passed out many flyers. We are scheduled to have our Fall Fun night at WLCF (barring any changes due to Pastor Mario's current health issues). We have some new /returning members on the board, including Lee Ann and Jodi from our church and there are now 4 pastors involved. We are hoping to jump start CYG and increase our membership again. Much thought and prayer went into making our church feel at home for our CYGers (as well as the younger kids). They will have clean rooms and new furniture and hopefully feel safe to come back. The music team is anxious to play again for CYG and we have divided the food responsibilities among the churches. We pray that God will continue to make our church a Beacon of Light and Hope to ALL God's Children. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

With a grateful heart,
Pastor Deb

Pastor's Report

The past few months have been very busy and productive. So many blessings that we have witnessed through our church community coming together. I have continued to plan and prepare for worship services, fulfilled office duties and followed up with member's needs (as known) via in person visits, calls, cards, emails or texts. In addition, I have:

- Met with the family of Elsie J Powers, prepared and led her funeral service

- Worked with Jodie at Community wide garage sale
- Worked with Jodi on planning and preparing for all Church Clean Up and Cookout, then participated in events of that day
- Decorated bulletin boards, walls, sanctuary, etc.
- Worked with Brenda to continue discussing technology needs
- Planned and met with Worship Committee for summer months
- Worked with Communion Elders to schedule summer months
- Met with Music Team for yearly planning
- Additional time needed for worship planning on special summer services
- Planned and held worship services at Simpson, including 1 service with our choir members
- Planned and presented Bible study at Simpson weekly for a month
- Met with Shepherds and worked with Katie to order items for visitor packets, nametags
- Attended Ministerial Association and Cluster meetings
- Worked with CYG board to walk in the parade and discuss fall activities
- Posted to Facebook several times
- Worked with Salvation Army and Food Pantry staff as needed
- Researched fall curriculum
- Kept up with Presbytery and Disciple materials sent out
- Met and worked with Jason and committee on VBS planning and prep
- Shopped for materials as needed
- Helped to clean church food stand and worked during fair
- Attended Synod School
- Took a week vacation to Colorado with Lee Ann and her daughter's family

ONGOING BUSINESS:

1. Katie's will be out of town August 7-14
2. Children's hallway mural coming soon.
3. The Meeters (Janice, Pastor Deb, Margaret) - **visitor packets have been put together and name badges have been created.**
4. Manse
 - a. Manse front step railing - Dillon Brooke
 - b. Door handle in garage – Jim Kiwala
 - c. Extra dirt around Manse east side - Bob Dewar

- d. Sidewalk/steps raised – completed 6/2021
- e. Landscaping needed to keep weeds under control – rock preferred.
5. Electrical work – **Bid from Kessler to replace lights in hallway, classrooms, food pantry, family restroom, lounge.**
6. Fill open Board positions – **Board asks for Nominating committee to meet to find 2 candidates to fulfill Gary Hahn and Jo Noble's positions, ending in December 2022. Nominating committee is Jodi Kelly and Letha Ottaway.**
7. Roof Update – will have numbers next week.
8. Bathroom plumbing – we are on Lynch's Plumbing list.
9. Needs Assessment

Mission/Ministry

- A. Consider local and worldly mission outreach including both denominations church camps
- B. 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.

- C. Consider needs the manse may have such as floors, carpet, windows.
- D. Consider saving funds for furnace replacement needs. Put in future maintenance of the church fund.- Report that Keith included in Treasurer's report averages \$10,000/year.

Church needs to be brought up at a later date

- f. Improve parking lot
- g. Maintenance of the roof, sanctuary wall, kitchen leak, carport/canopy.
- h. Bury outside downspouts.
- i. Replace the pew seat cushions.

Trustee Work to be done –

1. Church soffits need to be refilled with foam - Lori
2. Birds nest in bricks by raised bed area. - Lori

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss fellowship hour with coffee and cookies or are we too soon since new outbreaks – **Board agrees to hold off on offering coffee and cookies after the service for now but does not discourage visiting after the service.**
2. Wood trim work around the Manse garage and front door is starting to rot and in need of repair and painting- **Pastor Deb will ask Lori or Dillon.**

3. Test outlets in church and have them replaced as needed – **Blaine will ask Kyle Barnhart at Chowns Appliance.**

ADJOURNMENT

PRAYER CONCERNS SHARED

CLOSING PRAYER

NEXT MEETING September 2, 2021 at 6:30pm.

8/11/2021 **The Nominating Committee reached out to Brenda Wright and Letha Ottaway to fill the 2 Board positions. Brenda and Letha agreed, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendations. Welcome Letha and Brenda!**



September

2 Charlie Thrasher
4 Lewis Morrison
7 Marsha Jacobs
8 Jeanne Hale
9 Kyle Harned
11 Mary Larson
11 Jacob Johnson
14 Kurtis Minor
16 Ken Noble
18 Kyle Barnhart
18 Marcy Dewar
20 Jason Thrasher
23 Rob Miller
25 Jasmin Gardenier
26 Addyson Lehman
26 Jim Kiwala
26 Savannah Smith
29 Evelyn Evans
29 Scott Skubal
30 Brooklyn Harned

HAPPY
Anniversary!

September

4 Bill & Jan Koellner
25 Roger & Carolyn Bengé
25 Ryan & Tana Deahr
30 Aaron & Hannah Campbell