

FIRST CHURCH UNITED
1100 North Calhoun Street
West Liberty, Iowa 52776

MISSION STATEMENT

OF

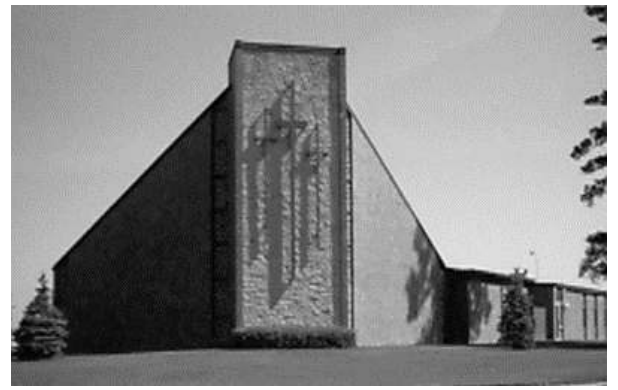
FIRST CHURCH UNITED

**God has called First Church United into being as a family,
with close and personal relationships,
dedicated to God's work and Christ's teachings.**

**We are committed to sharing the good news of the gospel
with the local and world communities by
reaching out in service to everyone's needs.**



March 2023



FIRST CHURCH COMMUNITY NEWS

From the heart of Pastor Deb...

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life.”
- John 3:16 (NIV)

“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters.”
- 1 John 3: 16 (NRSVUE)

During this season of Lent, I pray that we take these Scriptures to heart. Remembering not only what Jesus has done for each of us, but in turn extending that unselfish love and sacrifice to one another. We give not because it feels good, but because we are instructed to do so. We give in response to what Christ has done for us, our greatest example. Yes, there are many benefits to giving, but Lent is also meant to be an intentional time set apart for honest, personal soul searching. It is about seeking God’s help to guide us in the right direction, identifying and letting go of practices that do not build us up or bring God glory. By doing this, we not only reap the benefits in our own lives but are able to share those benefits with others. Through the cross of Calvary, we are mindful of God’s salvation plan. Jesus came so that we might have LIFE and LIGHT. Let us honor His gift of goodness by carrying forth His unending message of Love and Hope while putting our faith into action.

Blessings on our Lenten journey.

Church Workers for March

March 5

Usher –
Greeter/Coffee Hour –
Candle Lighter – Galvan children
PowerPoint – Jim Kiwala

March 12

Usher –
Greeter/Coffee Hour –
Candle Lighter – Elder Family
PowerPoint – Katie Thrasher

March 19

Usher –
Greeter/Coffee Hour –
Candle Lighter – Parizek Family
PowerPoint – Bill Koellner

March 26

Usher –
Greeter/Coffee Hour – Evelyn E.
Candle Lighter –
PowerPoint – Shaun Kruger

If you are interested in helping with any of the service tasks, please see the sign-up sheets at the church.



CHURCH RECORD		
February 2023		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
Feb 5	\$2814	66
Feb 12	\$460	60
Feb 19	\$3,102.50	51
Feb 26	\$261	69
TOTAL	\$6,637.50	

March 2023



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Ministerial Association Meeting 10:00 AM WOW 5:30-7:00 PM Chime Choir 7:00-7:45 PM Chancel Choir 7:45-8:30 PM	2 Food Pantry 6:00-7:00 PM FCU Board Meeting 6:30 PM CE Committee Meeting 6:30 PM	3 World Day of Prayer 1:30 at FCU CYG Toby Mac Concert Meet at 5 at FCU	4 Food Pantry 9:00-10:00AM UI Mobile Clinic 1-3PM
5 Huff & Puff Exercise Class is held every Mon, Wed, and Fri at 9:00 AM - age 55+.		Children's Sunday School will be held during Sunday Worship this month.				
6 Adult S.S. 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM CYG 5:00-7:00 PM	6 Pastor Deb off	7 GriefShare 6:30-8:00 PM	8 WOW 5:30-7:00 PM Chime Choir 7:00-7:45 PM Chancel Choir 7:45-8:30 PM	9 Food Pantry 6:00-7:00 PM Aquarius Meeting 7:00 PM	10 Simpson Home Service 10:00 AM	11 Food Pantry 9:00-10:00AM CYG Pancake Fundraiser 7:00-10:00 AM
12 Worship 10:00 AM CYG 5:00-7:00 PM Food Pantry Scavenger Hunt	13 Pastor Deb off	14 Pastor Deb off GriefShare 6:30-8:00 PM	15 Pastor Deb off Chime Choir 7:00-7:45 PM Chancel Choir 7:45-8:30 PM	16 Quilt Club 11:30 AM-2:30 PM Clover Kids Noon-5:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00-7:00 PM Worship Planning 6:30	17	18 Food Pantry 9:00-10:00AM
19 Worship 10:00 AM CYG 5:00-7:00 PM	20 Pastor Deb off	21 GriefShare 6:30-8:00 PM	22 WOW 5:30-7:00 PM Chime Choir 7:00-7:45 PM Chancel Choir 7:45-8:30 PM	23 Food Pantry 6:00-7:00 PM	24 Bingo Night/Pizza 6:30PM	25 Food Pantry 9:00-10:00AM
26 Adult S.S. 9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM CYG 5:00-7:00 PM Take Away Hunger	27 Pastor Deb off TTT 6:30-8:30PM	28 Lunch Ladies 11:00 AM GriefShare 6:30-8:00 PM	29 WOW 5:30-7:00 PM Chime Choir 7:00-7:45 PM Chancel Choir 7:45-8:30 PM	30		

March Update from the Director of Youth Ministries

“Love. Love, Love that’s what it’s all About”, the kids and the adults shared in singing this song in one of the February Worship services and the kids and adults blended very well which helped us sound like one big family.

Speaking of families, the WOW kids started February out learning about Abraham and Sarah and how they trusted God enough to pack up their things and move to a land that they knew nothing about. Trusting God is very important, and the children learned that sometimes we do not know the whole story, but we must trust God as He guides us through it. The children created pictures of Abraham and Sarah’s travels in crafts, traveled to the homeland in a trust game and got their questions answered in their lessons class. Each week we learned more about different Bible stories like Jacob and Esau and Joseph and his robe of many colors, they saw how God turned something bad into something good. It is great what love and forgiveness can accomplish.

Love was at work with the WOW and Sunday School children this month also when they made “thank yous” and “valentine cards” for the US troops stationed in Poland. This month is the month for collecting money for “One Great Hour of Sharing” and the “Week of Compassion”. If any of the children want to donate any of their coins to help tackle poverty, there will be three coin cubes in the entry way on the table just inside the door, available all month.

Wed., March 1, 2023, we had a representative from Camp Wyoming here at the church during WOW time to present, play games, do a craft with a lesson, and discuss what camp is all about. The kids really enjoyed it.

The kids will be singing and playing sticks on March 12 at the 10:00am Worship service.

The CE committee met for our Spring meeting to discuss Easter and VBS which will be August 1,2,3 at 5:15-7:15pm., more info to come.

There will be no WOW on March 15 due to “Spring Break”.

Keep spreading the Love.

Lee Ann Maas
Director of Youth Ministries

MUSIC NOTES

Yes, time "March"es on. In fact, time springs ahead this month Rise and shine to some inspiring sacred music from our blessed musicians, and don't oversleep on the 12th!

Wed., March 1: Chime Choir - 7:00 to 7:45
Chancel Choir - 7:45 to 8:30

Sun., March 5: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., March 8: Chime Choir - 7:00 to 7:45
Chancel Choir - 7:45 to 8:30

Sun., March 12: CHANCEL CHOIR w/ WOW KIDS

Wed., March 15: Chime Choir - 7:00 to 7:45
Chancel Choir - 7:45 to 8:30

Sun., March 19: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., March 22: Chime Choir - 7:00 to 7:45
Chancel Choir - 7:45 to 8:30

Sun., March 26: WOW Kids and CHANCEL CHOIR

Wed., March 29: Chime Choir - 7:00 to 7:45
Chancel Choir - 7:45 to 8:30

Looking for photos

We have begun working on the church family photo wall, but are in need of more historical photos that represent past mission projects, groundbreaking, worship, group activities. Photos that capture clearly, fun facial expressions or important moments in the life of the church that help represent our identity. The size of the photo does not matter. All photos will be returned after scanning. Please contact Jodi Kelly at jodikelly4372@gmail.com or Brenda Miller at brenkay05@gmail.com if you have photos to share.



Looking for financial support

Expenses include printing of photos and purchase of coordinating frames and hanging hardware. Any amount you can give is appreciated. Special envelopes are on the table in the narthex and you can deliver the envelope to the office or Pastor Deb.

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

3 *Travis & Breona Maurer*
21 *Jeremiah & Kristin Smith*



FCU BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 2, 2023 6:30 p.m.

CALLED TO ORDER Present Rob Miller, Dean Phelps, Pastor Deb Mann, Missy Johnson, Bob Dewar, Rich Hambricht, Keith Barnhart, Jared Deahr (Zoom), and Kate Woods taking minutes.

OPEN IN PRAYER

APPROVAL OF DOCKET Two topics added to new business. Approved: 1st Missy, 2nd Dean

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 1st Bob Dewar, 2nd Dean

TREASURER'S REPORT Slightly higher expenses higher in January due to FICA, insurance, grounds maintenance. Waters estate fund: \$3k moved to the general fund. Furniture expense will be reimbursed by the endowment fund. WOW expense reimbursement procedure to be reviewed. Information was gathered for the Disciples and Presbytery annual report. A portion of the funds for the Presbytery will be directed to a specific project. Keith, Pastor Deb, and Rob will review projects with the Presbytery to assign funds to. Motion to approve: 1st Dean, 2nd Bob.

PASTOR'S REPORT Our New Year is off to a good start. Emerson and Finley Waters were baptized and Sam Morel, Jennifer and Shaun Kruger joined the church. There are other families planning to join the church at a later date. I led a new member class for those who joined and will continue to offer additional training for others. Afterward we held our annual church meeting, installed our new committee members, enjoyed a potluck and took down the Christmas decorations. This month I participated in a pulpit exchange with others in our Ministerial Association. Pastor Betsey Sue Neipert from the WL United Methodist Church came to FCU while I preached at their church. This month the furniture picked out previously by Emily, Holly, Audra and myself arrived. Brad & Audra picked it up from Ashley's Furniture and brought it back to the church. Mark & Missy helped to put the tables and chairs together. They have already been used by numerous groups and the responses have been very favorable. A special thank you to the Endowment committee for assisting with this project. Another project that has begun is working on the family photo wall. Jodi, Brenda and myself are currently sorting through photos to display, but will be asking others for assistance in providing pictures. After the Christmas break, regular programming has also returned with WOW, CYG, our music program and the many activities that fill our fellowship hall. The Pest Control came for their quarterly spraying on Jan 4th and I worked with the trustees on several projects in the church building. I attended regular meetings for the Ministerial Association, DOC Cluster and Presbytery. I also attended the endowment and personnel committee meetings, the prayer group for Anti-Trafficking Day of Prayer, the Ladies Luncheon and took an online preaching class. Prep work has begun for the next GriefShare class beginning on Feb 28th and the Lenten season beginning with Ash Wednesday on Feb 22nd. Regular office duties were held and pastoral care provided. Lee Ann and I had an opportunity to go to West Branch for the Show Choir competition. We are hoping to get to some of the kids sporting events as well. On Jan 30th and 31st we attended the Minister's Institute at the Christian Conference Center in Newton. May God continue to bless us as we journey together. Respectfully submitted, Pastor Deb Mann

ONGOING BUSINESS

Needs Assessment

Maintenance of Church

- A. Replace sink in the old kitchen / current craft room (update) – Rich will set-up a time to have contractor and Lee Ann present to determine needs. Rich will have the contractor provide a quote for two potential locations.
- B. Audio / Zoom project (update) – (Check Zoom recording)
- C. Missy to set up a meeting with Ken Wright. Preference is to keep it from connecting to the church roof. Engineers mentioned forcing water away from the church. A decision will need to be made regarding the direction of the roof slope. A meeting with board and the architect to be scheduled.
- D. Furnace room organization (update) – Other than louvered doors, this is complete. Missy will talk to Mark about the doors.
- E. Lighting for sanctuary steps (update) – Hardwired the wall plate lights, they stay on all the time. Brightening dim lights is being investigated. Puck lights installed by the organ. Reflective tape installed on the steps.
- F. Gutter cleaning (update) – On hold due to the weather.

Maintenance for the Manse

- Grass planting update – On hold until spring.
- Mowing – Dean will be the contact for volunteers.
- Fluorescent lights - Still working with Darren.

Trustee Work to be done None to report.

New Business

Office Administrator position – Katie T will assist during with duties until the position is filled. Information about the position has been shared publicly. The committee will make a recommendation to the board on hiring, but the board will have the final decision on the selection.

Memorial Committee – New silverware for the dining room for 100 people. The old set is of no value. Discussed options for a use for the old set, possibly the food pantry or a local shelter.

ADJOURNMENT Motion 1st Bob, Missy 2nd

PRAYER CONCERNS SHARED

CLOSING PRAYER

NEXT MEETING March 2, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 4 **Rich Hambright**
- 7 **Chris Kruse**
- 9 **Jarod Williams**
- 9 **Kinsley Dean
Probst**
- 31 **Yvonne Gardenier**



WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Dominic Wesley Smith joined the Kristin and Jeremiah Smith family on February 21st.

Prayers of gratitude for Dinette, Mary, Syd, Lee Ann, Missy, Brenda, Jan, and Sam for their help with the World Day of Prayer service. Thanks also to Rhonda Jensen and Vera Smith from Our Redeemer Lutheran Church.

We welcome Mary Larson as the new office administrator! Special thanks to Katie Thrasher for continuing to assist First Church United during the transition and training. We appreciate you!

LENTEN OPPORTUNITY:

6-week Bible Study begins **Sunday, February 26th** after worship. We will be reading the book "John: The Gospel of Light and Life" by Adam Hamilton. Books have been purchased by the church so there is no cost to attend. Babysitting will be available. Please let Pastor Deb know if you are interested. We will also have Lenten devotions available on the hallway table for personal study and reflection in the next few weeks.

BINGO NIGHT with pizza!

Congregational Life invites one and all to play a little bingo on Friday, March 24th at 6:30pm. You are encouraged to bring a white elephant item or two that can be used as a prize. Pizza will be served for all. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or let the office know if you plan to attend.

We look forward to a fun night together!



GriefShare
Support Group

meets on **Tuesday nights from 6:30-8:00 PM thru May 23rd**. Please feel welcome to join at any time throughout the course. GriefShare is a well-designed program, open to anyone in the community who is struggling with the death of a loved one, either recently or in the past.

You may register online at www.GriefShare.com or by contacting the church office. There is no fee to join.

THE INFANT CLOSET

at the United Methodist Church (113 East 5th Street) is open on the first Wednesday of the month from 6-7 PM for parents in need of supplies for children 2 years and under or you can call the church at 319-627-2780 to make an appointment.

FOOD PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED

- Flour
- Sugar
- Chunky Soups
- Jell-O Boxes
- Ramen Noodles
- Cake Mix
- Facial Tissues
- Dish Detergent
- Complete Pancake Mix