



FIRST CHURCH UNITED
 1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776
 Office—627-2989 Activity Area—627-2446
 Pastor, Marian Hart
 Secretary, Katie Thrasher
 July & August 2014



Dear Friends in Christ,
 The following are random thoughts from a woodpile meditation during a recent pastor's retreat and a prayer exercise called 'spiritualizing the creation.'

The woodpile—stacked neatly like we imagine our lives need to be. In reality, to be used or of service, the wood is scattered, broken, burned, consumed, sawn, split, nailed, and stained or painted. Sawdust, ashes, chunks of bark and splinters leave a mess behind—like our lives lived—it gets messy, it's painful, we have to change and sacrifice, die to self.

As we sit, all piled up and ready, we may lament, "No one has chosen to use us yet." But what of the shelter we give to spiders, mice, snakes, gophers? What of the satisfaction and assurance of preparedness, of future warmth, or structure I will provide? What if the purpose changes? I might become a footrest, a candle holder, a door stop. Is willingness to serve, however called, the key?

No matter our size, we're essential to a good fire. We may be tinder, kindling, or fuel. We may burn slowly, quickly, hotly, or just smolder. Does not the Spirit burn as She wills? A spark here, a raging furnace there. How might we be a pleasing scent rising up as smoke to God as we are consumed?

There is a sense of commonality, stacked together for a purpose. There is an awareness that others will have to join us eventually because we will be burnt up, pass on to ashes, become one with the earth again, and provide nourishment for new growth.

We will warm folks inside and out. We may stubbornly refuse to burn. We may rot—even then, we can serve as compost.

On the surface we are sharp, rough, broken, solid. We have layers, curves, knots. We can be rearranged to better fit. (serve)

We come from something much larger than ourselves. The cracks and scars and splinters tell of our history. God can/will use us no matter our life stage, our size, our looks, our pre-conceived notion of worthiness, where we come from, whether we are aware of self potential or not, whether others see purpose in us or not.

There is a sense of balance, precariousness, yet potential for rebuilding if toppled. We can always make room for more, one more.

There is an untapped energy within us. There is a piece of eternity, too. And the peace of eternity. Because God created and it is good.

I am grateful for eyes and mind and heart to see; for willingness to receive revelation; for the special closeness I'm allowed to feel.

Shalom,
 Pastor Marian

P.S. Being made in God's image and pondering the woodpile, how does that mean we are a 'chip off the old block'?

CHURCH RECORD

June 2014

DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
June 1	\$1323.00	58
June 8	\$1856.00	58
June 15	\$533.00	34
June 22	\$405.00	38
June 29	\$1184.00	50

LECTIONARY

July 13-

Gen. 25:19-34; Ps 119:105-112
 Rom. 8:1-11; Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23
 Guest preacher-Rev. Tim Davison



July 20-

Fair Sunday
 Worship in the Grove 9:00 a.m.

July 27-

Gen. 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128
 Rom. 8:26-39; Matt. 13:31-33, 44-52

LECTIONARY

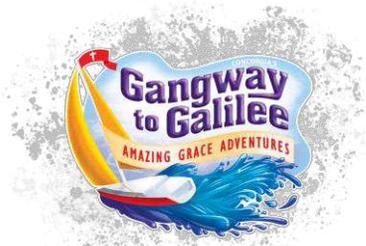
Aug. 3-
Gen. 32:22-31; Ps. 17:1-7, 15
Rom. 9:1-5; Matt 14:13-21

Aug. 10-
VBS Program

Aug. 17-
Gen. 45:1-15; Ps. 133
Rom. 11:1-2a, 29-32; Matt. 15: (10-20) 21-28

Aug. 24-
Exod. 1:8-2:10; Ps. 124; Rom. 12:1-8
Matt. 16:13-20

Aug. 31-
Exod. 3:1-15; Ps. 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c
Rom. 12:9-21; Matt. 16:21-28



Are you ready for an adventure?

This year's Vacation Bible School will teach us about Jesus' ministry on and around the shores of the Sea of Galilee; showing how He keeps us safe, saves us, and provides for all we need now and eternally.

You'll enjoy Bible Crafts and exciting games, experience thrilling Bible stories, yummy food, and hear unforgettable music. Aug 4-Aug. 8, 5-7 p.m. at FCU. There will be a light meal beginning at 5:00.

Registration forms are on the last page of the newsletter and are available through the office.

CARPETS

It has been some time since the carpets have been cleaned at First Church. The board has received estimates for clean and deodorizing the carpets. The budget does not have funds to clean the carpets, and the board will not proceed to have the work done until funds have been donated to clean the carpets in each

room. The following are the bids for each room. If you are interested, please send a donation to First Church United and note on the memo line what room you want your donation to go for. You don't have to pay for entire room, and as the donations are received, and once the total amount is received for a room, we will have the contract clean that room.

The bids received are a church discount rate and are noted below:

Sanctuary	1915 sq. ft.	\$613
Narthex	452 sq. ft.	\$145
Fellowship	2207 sq. ft.	\$706
Nook (between kitchen and fellowship hall)	396 sq. ft.	\$127



There is always less to report from the Music Ministry during the summer. It's not that there is less music. It's just that there are no choirs to present some of that music.

One newsy item is that we are welcoming Zachary Archer as an organist for some of our summer services! We're very excited to have him share his talent and interest with us!

A note to choir members & prospective members: Please watch for your annual August Letter which will inform you of dates for our kick-off picnic, first rehearsals, and any other details to help you fill out your fall calendars. If you, or someone you know, would like to become a member of our choirs, please contact any of us listed below - new faces, voices &/or chime strikers will be welcomed with open arms! (Chime Choir requires a bit of an audition, but don't let that stop anyone who reads music!)

Meanwhile, we hope you'll enjoy the rest of your summer!

The Music Ministry: Brenda Miller, Lori Brooke, Marianne Phelps, Susie Lehman

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.



ADAM'S RIB

Arnie is having a table at the Picnic in the Park. He plans to smoke some ribs and sell small portions (Adam's ribs).

Calling all Pork Packers! We will be packing pork on Saturday, July 12th at 12:00 p.m. Call 309-791-8099 if you can help.



ROAD TRIP

July visit to Oaknoll will be on Thursday the 24th.
August visit to Oaknoll will be on Thursday the 14th.
Meet at the church at 11 to carpool. We will share lunch, a short bible study, and lots of fellowship.



LADIES! MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Presbyterian Women of East Iowa were gifted from Lois Schermerhorn. We have decided to use the funds to sponsor a retreat for women at the Owl's Nest in Camp Wyoming. Beginning the afternoon/evening of August 15, we will gather for a meal, some icebreakers, a candlelight labyrinth walk, a chick flick, and whatever else we find of value. Saturday morning will continue with breakfast in the Deer Center; ice breakers, introduction of our theme, "Discovering/Celebrating our Gifts," some activities based on women in the bible who gave us their stories of tears and/or laughter; a time for artistic expression or service project; lunch; another session on singing and dancing; and a closing with a drum circle and final sharing around 4 pm. Details for registration will be forthcoming. You may come for just Saturday or stay overnight Friday. Cost is \$25. Linens, all activities, and meals included.



Birthdays in July

1 Kaden Brooks
6 Lisa Newcomb
8 Levi Larson
9 Calli Jo Deahr
10 Kevin Minor
14 Wayne Noring
14 Bill Koellner
14 Joseph Delgado
15 JoAnne Akers
19 Matthew Kelly
20 Rebecca Kober
23 Lexi Irwin
24 Hope Pierce
25 Corey Herrold
28 Letha Ottaway
30 Janet Woody
30 Cassie Miller



Anniversaries in July

6th Curt & Lisa Newcomb
7th Rob & Brenda Miller
11th George Barber & Norma Brooks
20th Joe & Dinette Myers
27th Terry & Chris Kruse
30th Leon & Mary Larson



Birthdays in August

1st Norma Minor
2nd Montana Herrold
4th Betty Dean Probst
5th Marilyn Irely
5th Ashley Gardenier
5th Amrita Giri
7th Aditi Giri
8th Bob Foor
8th Mike Gardenier
14th Courtney Kober
14th Dakota Herrold
16th Harrold Stagg
19th Wilbert Wendt
23rd Hannah Miller
24th Mary Pat Brooke
24th Terri Larson
25th Lenny Larson
26th Todd Koellner
29th Ken Ruegsegger
30th Tom Woody
31st Harold Wilkerson



Anniversaries in August

1st Darren & Lori Brooke
18th Roger & Heidi Morrison
23rd Keith & Margaret Barnhart
26th Mark & Missy Johnson
27th Joe & JoAnne Akers

Church Workers

July 6th

SPEAKING ELDERS:

None needed

COMMUNION SERVERS:

None needed as communion will be done by
Intinction

USHERS: Harold & Evelyn Wilkerson

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Ken Ruegsegger

ORGANIST: Zachary Archer

POWER POINT: Keith Barnhart

July 13th

USHER: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Harold & Evelyn Wilkerson

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Carolyn Probst

July 20th

**Fair Sunday – Worship at 9:00 a.m.
in the Grove**

July 27th

USHER: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Jo Noble

ORGANIST: Zachary Archer

POWER POINT: Jim Kiwala

Communion Preparer for July will be
Evelyn Wilkerson

August 3

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Keith Barnhart & Ken Noble

COMMUNION SERVERS:

None needed as communion will be done
by Intinction

USHERS: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Norma Brooks & Bud Barber

ORGANIST: Susie Lehman

POWER POINT: Bill Koellner

August 10th

USHER: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Harold & Evelyn Wilkerson

ORGANIST: Lori Brooke

POWER POINT: Keith Barnhart

August 17th

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Keith Barnhart & Ken Ruegsegger

COMMUNION SERVERS:

None needed as communion will be done
by Intinction

USHERS: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Ken & Marilyn Ruegsegger

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Carolyn Probst

August 24th

USHER: Open

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Harold & Evelyn Wilkerson

ORGANIST: Susie Lehman

POWER POINT: Jim Kiwala

August 31st

USHER: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Harold & Evelyn Wilkerson

ORGANIST: Marianne Phelps

POWER POINT: The Thrasher Family

Communion Preparer's for August will be
1st Sunday- Ken & Jo Noble
3rd Sunday – Ken & Marilyn Ruegsegger



VBS Registration Form

First Church United

Child's Name _____ Grade in school this fall _____

Child's Name _____ Grade in school this fall _____

Child's Name _____ Grade in school this fall _____

Child 1's Birth Date _____ Age _____ Child 2's Birth Date _____ Age _____

Child 3's Birth Date _____ Age _____ Any known allergies _____

Parent's Names _____ Best time to contact you _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Alternate phone _____

Emergency Contact Person and Phone _____ Home church _____

Will your child be able to join us in worship as we celebrate VBS on Sunday, August 10? _____

Do we have parent permission to take pictures of your child during VBS activities and use pictures for Church related documentation (power point slides, newsletter article, WL Index)? _____ (yes) _____ (no) Please sign name to give permission.

Please fill out the Pre-Registration form above and return it to FCU with a check payable to "VBS" for the \$10/child or \$25/family registration fee!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Name _____

Allergies _____

Reactions _____

Family Physician _____

Where to take in case of emergency: Circle

University of Iowa

Mercy in Iowa City

Muscatine Hospital