



FIRST CHURCH UNITED
 1100 North Calhoun Street, West Liberty, Iowa 52776
 Office—627-2989 Activity Area—627-2446
 Pastor, Marian Hart
 Secretary, Katie Thrasher
 September 2015



Dear Friends in Christ,

At my last Soil to Soul class, we had a discussion comparing sustainability to flourishing. Our readings focused on farming and ecological concerns. We began to apply our thoughts metaphorically to the church and spiritual growth.

One alarming, and for me sickening, comparison was confirmation class memorizing doctrine and the force feeding of geese in order to make them nice and fat and ideal for slaughter and consumption of their livers. Geese will naturally gorge themselves if left in the right environment and in the meantime they will be free and happy. What if we let our students explore more and fill themselves with answers to their faith questions more by ‘free range and exploration’ within our classes and let the scriptures speak to them personally?

My first thought when hearing the word ‘sustainability’ was, “That means keeping the status quo.” That is where any organization stagnates. And that seems to be where many are today, struggling just to maintain, while sitting around lamenting ‘the good old days.’ We fail to wake up and realize it’s a brand new day filled with possibilities that will not look like the past. It’s time to stop pushing the proverbial snooze button and take steps to flourish.

Another workshop I was in calls this ‘naming your underlying adaptive challenge.’ A large segment pointed out the history of how the western church changed as the world changed. We’ve had ethnic, village, missionary, city neighborhoods, family suburban, corporate, attractional life style, multi-site, social network, multi-cultural, re-denominational churches. Now we are said to be in the great unraveling. We are called to make adaptive change which means asking different questions. NOT how do we make the church grow? How to get people to church? How to meet needs and help (those who are coming)? BUT What is God up to out ahead of us in our neighborhood? And how do we participate more fully in what God is up to in our communities? This class advised learning how to go from strategic planning to using more of a discerning approach. The adaptive challenge question is: what issue(s) are we currently facing, for which we presently do not have an answer but which we must address, if we are to live into God’s future?

Most examples of answering this question ended with either ‘and we don’t know how to change this’ or ‘and we don’t want to change, we expect to deplete our resources serving our members, and then close.’

That’s certainly not flourishing. Our speaker gave some suggested steps in the ‘process of living with uncertainty while engaging the God questions.’ We accept we are on a journey; we practice discernment; WE EXPERIMENT, and we reflect. We behave our way into new thinking, rather than think our way into new behavior.

So, what do you all think? How do you name our adaptive challenge? What do you see God is up to? How can we participate? I for one, vote for flourishing over sustaining.

With you on the journey, open for experiment, and ready to flourish,
 Pastor Marian

CHURCH RECORD		
July 2015		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
July 5	\$6,559.00	45
July 12	\$1,987.00	58
July 19	NA	NA
July 26	\$962.00	31

CHURCH RECORD		
August 2015		
DATE	OFFERING	ATTEND
August 2	\$1,545.00	40
August 9	\$1,097.00	46
August 16	\$1,589.00	99
August 23	\$751.80	45
August 30	\$830.50	

LECTIONARY

September 6 – Prov. 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23; Ps. 125; James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17; Mark 7:24-37

September 13 - Prov. 1:20-33; Ps. 19; James 1-12; Mark 8:27-38

September 20 – Prov. 31:10-31; Ps. 1; James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37

September 27- Esther 7:1-6,9-10; 9:20-22; Ps. 124; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50



Autumn greetings to all. It was great to see so much of one another during the summer in different capacities - celebrating together at Harts' cabin, fair stand and preparations for it, Vacation Bible School, various meetings, gardening, painting and other projects, not to mention summer worship services. And now it's time to resume worship with choirs!

In addition to the schedule below, please remember our Wed. night meals together. Meals will begin with our first rehearsal night (Sept. 2) and again on the 9th, even though W.O.W. doesn't begin until the 16th.

Here is our September calendar. The calendar for the entire choir year will be ready for you at our first rehearsals. Can't wait to make music together!

Wed., Sept. 2: Meal - 6:00

Chime Choir - 6:45 to 7:30

Chancel Choir - 7:30 to 8:30

Sun., Sept. 6: SPECIAL MUSIC

Wed., Sept. 9: (same as Sept. 2)

Sun., Sept. 13: CHANCEL CHOIR

Wed., Sept. 16: (same as Sept. 2)

Sun., Sept. 20: CHIME CHOIR

Wed., Sept. 23: (same as Sept. 2)

Sun., Sept. 27: WORSHIP TEAM

Wed., Sept. 30: (same as Sept. 2)

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.



CROP Walk on October 4th. We will start at the West Liberty Country Club at 4:30 and walk to FCU.



ROAD TRIP

The September visit will be on the 10th. Meet at the church at 11:00 to carpool. We will share lunch, a short bible study, and lots of fellowship.



The community has been invited to participate in our local Rotary Club's project to provide new winter coats for as many as possible to those in need. Each year, the churches and Voluntary Action Council work together at Christmastime to make sure children have toys, families have food, and all have hats and gloves. The past few years we have also collected coats. We have given away over 100 per year. Last year, with Operation Warm, Pastor Marian was able to work with the schools and get new coats to students in need in advance of Christmas. We also had several cases of adult coats to give. We gave away close to 200 coats in 20 minutes which means there were still those in need who did not receive a coat. This year Pastor Marian is chairing the Operation Warm project again and has issued a challenge to fellow Rotarians to give \$100 with the goal being to reach \$2000 for a matching grant. She is inviting all churches and individuals to join in the giving. Your gift check of any amount can be made out to District 6000 HEF and given to Marian or Tom Brooke by Sept. 25 for early ordering of coats. We thank you in advance for your caring and generosity.

Harold and Evelyn Wilkerson are very grateful for the prayers, calls, cards, and support from our church family over the last 6 months. Harold's recovery was miraculous. PRAISE THE LORD! We credit the prayers on our behalf for his present condition.



THE LENDING TREE

You have been seeing blurbs about our new ministry The Lending Tree.

Several of you have given or offered to give items already. THANK YOU! When you do your fall cleaning, keep us in mind. We accept all items that are clean and in good condition. If you would like to volunteer a couple of hours to help at the store, please contact Pastor Marian. Targeted date to open is Oct. 7. Increased hours of being open will depend largely on volunteers available.

OFFICIAL BOARD SUMMARY

August 6, 2015



The monthly Official Board meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Ken Ruegsegger. In attendance were: Jan McCrabb, Susie Lehman, Bill Koellner, Margaret Barnhart, Ken Noble, Karen Nortman, Pastor Marian Hart, Treasurer Keith Barnhart and Clerk of session Katie Thrasher. Those not in attendance were: Darren Brooke, Joe Myers

Devotion – Pastor Marian read from the Message about the Women at the Well. Asked “What would we ask Jesus for and what would Jesus ask of each of us?”

Open in Prayer

Approval of Docket: move to approve as amended 1st Jan M. 2nd Ken N. unanimously approved by the Board.

Approval of May Minutes: Keith Barnhart clarified that we did not finish paying the missions for the year but paid \$1000 to each. There is still \$1100 to pay to each mission for 2015. Move to approve minutes 1st Ken N. 2nd Karen N. unanimously approved by the Board.

Treasurer’s Report:

Keith Barnhart gave the Treasurer’s report. Total of \$3000 has been paid to each mission. Insurance went up a bit. All bills are paid. Kids Against Hunger balance is \$1300.00. Keith needs to pay \$40.00 to Ministerial Association. Keith will change where the money to pay for the Gaga ball pit will come from (was originally paid from Vacation Church School but will be taken out of line #2108 as previously voted and approved). Keith pointed out we have been paid from the 7th Day Adventists for use of the church and by the group of Ragbrai riders who used the church overnight on Friday, July 24th. It was agreed the Future Maintenance of the Church budget line will be used to pay for the lights that were fixed in the Fellowship Hall.

Move to approve Treasurer’s report 1st Bill K., 2nd Jan M. unanimously approved by the Board.

Starting of June balance	\$3,960.78
Receipts	\$7,453.09
Subtotal	\$11,413.87
Disbursements	\$9,751.90
Ending Balance	\$1,661.97
Board checking balance	\$361.97

Starting of July balance	\$1,661.97
Receipts	\$9,903.78
Subtotal	\$11,565.75
Disbursements	\$10,234.19
Ending Balance	\$1,331.56
Board checking balance	\$(33.44)

PASTOR’S REPORT June 5-Aug. 6, 2015

Office hours kept as possible

Gardening

Plan and lead worship June 14, 21, 28, July 5, 12, 26, Aug. 2

Simpson worship June 5

Hastings School for Pastors June 14-19

Camp Wyoming chaplain for TTT Camp June 14-19

Bible Study Simpson June 23, 30

Village Community supper June 23

Pastoral Relations Committee meeting June 24

Volunteer summer reading program June 24

Christian Ed meeting June 24

Village Community supper and dance celebration

Soil to Soul class July 6

CYG Mission trip meeting July 7

Oaknoll Road Trip July 9

Bike rides at Simpson July 14

Women in Ministry lunch and bible study July 14

Presbytery Gathering Team meeting July 14

Fair stand July 15-19

Simpson worship July 17 and fair food supper delivery

Bike rides at Simpson July 22

Host RAGBRAI at church and showers at manse July 24

Meeting with Jason July 24

Synod School July 26-31

Soil to Soul class Aug. 3

Endowment meeting Aug. 3

CYG Board meeting Aug. 4

Bike ride at Simpson Aug. 5

Speaker at 100+Women Who Care meeting

Pastoral visits-17

Counseling-1

Request vacation Sept. 16-22, that’s Wed. through Tuesday due to class on Monday and Presbytery meeting on Tuesday. – Motion to approve 1st Karen N., 2nd Bill K. unanimously approved by the Board.

Ongoing business -

- Painting- The hallway still needs painted. Nursery walls needs to be painted where the handprints are. It is ok to paint over handprints. Suggested the hallway paint should be a semi-gloss.
- Status of repair of east bath room- still needs to be finished. Suggested we hire someone to finish the job. Need to have the mirror hung and a towel holder hung. Suggested the changing table from the nursery to that bathroom. A sign saying family restroom and handicap accessible is needed. Katie will look online for signs.
- Status of changing out ceiling lights office and fellowship hall – completed.
- Lisa Murphy is working with Missy Johnson to complete the cradle roll.
- October 9-10: Leadership Retreat at Camp Wyoming.
- Christian Ed. Projects – No teepee or bean tunnel will be done this summer but the gaga ball pit will be completed soon.
- CYG projects- did a great job painting.
- Sign by Little Bear Campsite- sign was taken down.
- Choir Loft Fan- Kessler cleaned it and it is much quieter now.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Katie's new office days – Tuesday and Thursday 9a.m.-2p.m.
- Endowment Fund requests –
 - 1) Pastor Marian – Fund B – up to 8 attendees for \$25/person for the Leadership Retreat August 15th. 1st Margaret B., 2nd Ken N. Approved.
 - 2) Pastor Marian – Fund C - \$500. Library programming “Books, Bytes and Beyond” 1st Karen N., 2nd Bill K. approved.
 - 3) Missy Johnson – Fund C – \$500. Request for funds for school supplies for those who cannot afford to buy them. 1st Jan M., 2nd Margaret B. approved.
 - 4) Pastor Marian – Fund B - \$330 Synod School Reimbursement. 1st Bill K., 2nd Ken N. approved.
 - 5) Pastor Marian – Fund C- \$2500.00 New Ministry Startup. 1st Bill K., 2nd Ken N. approved
- Church Usage for 7th Day Adventist's- request for extra days. Motion to approve the use of the church as long as it is coordinated with our groups. 1st Bill K., 2nd Ken N. unanimously approved by the Board.
- Trustee's- Locks and Carpet Spots- Locks have been taken care of. Bret Akers will try to remove spots.

- Leadership Conference at Christian Conference Center August 15th.

MINISTRY & PROGRAM REPORTS:

CHRISTIAN ED.- Looking forward to a great VBS week starting on Sunday! Also looking forward to the 2015-2016 Sunday School and WOW year. Considering and researching curriculum to fit our needs with the varying age groups that attend.

CHRISTIAN ED. & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE – meeting Wednesday, August 19th at 6:00 p.m. to plan for weekly WOW's that will begin after labor day.

September Elder on Call – Bill K.

Ken R mentioned we need to trim/take out the dead or dying bushes on the property. Will discuss this more at the September meeting.

Ken R mentioned the stained glass windows are leaking. Marv's Glass has looked at them. If cost is too much it is suggested we ask the congregation to adopt a window like they did for the Sanctuary lights last year. Will discuss this more at the September meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

PRAYER CONCERNS

CLOSING PRAYER

NEXT MEETING September 3, 2015 at 6:30p.m.

Our sympathy goes out to the Howard Bjork family.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It has been a good month in the Christian Education Department. Vacation Bible School was a roaring success. Thanks again to all who helped make it so good ☺

We are gearing up for another great season of Sunday school that begins September 13th. Spread the word far and wide, any child is welcome to attend and will benefit from our program! What we do here at First Church United is so unique, so wonderful, and so focused on improving the lives of our children that I sincerely hope many new faces can attend.

Mark every Wednesday evening on your calendar as well, everybody! We are resurrecting the congregation wide worship on Wednesday! The first WOW will be September 16th from 6-7:30 with games as the theme for the evening. There'll be plenty of fellowship, fun, joy, laughter, food, and worship available to all ages. Thanks be to God for all of the support and inspiration, community and love found at our church!
Jason Thrasher

P R E S B Y T E R Y
OF EAST IOWA



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Out & About

*Sharing the Conversation within the Covenant Community
of the Presbytery of East Iowa*

Do you wish you knew more about what was happening at other churches in our area? Do you sometimes feel like you are reinventing the wheel when you plan church programs and events? Surely someone else in Eastern Iowa has encountered the same ideas, struggles, and questions you have!

Solution? Subscribe to the Presbytery of East Iowa's weekly email newsletter, Out & About! Each week, the email newsletter highlights church events, Presbytery-wide happenings, PCUSA programs, and articles of interest. Anyone is eligible to subscribe and you can opt-out at any time. To subscribe, go to <http://eepurl.com/bsEcDX> or send an email request to Lara Marsh at presbyeastiowa@gmail.com. Please add the Presbytery's email address (presbyeastiowa@gmail.com) to your Contacts so that the weekly email doesn't end up in your SPAM folder. Thank you!

CYG KICKOFF

CYG's summer fun night had about 40 youth and 15+ adults joining together for games, water antics, fellowship, and food.

Pastors Marian and Mario have issued a challenge to the kids to get attendance of 100 three times before Thanksgiving. If that happens, we will both dye our hair pink (or any other color) for at least 10 days. Come on young people, this is doable!

Your first chance is to bring a friend or two to the fall semester CYG KICKOFF on Sept. 13 at 5 at West Liberty Christian Fellowship. There will be more games, more fellowship, more antics, more food, and a time of worship. Parents, please note your youth will receive a T-shirt if you pay the registration fee. And we will have a sign up sheet for you to volunteer to help with meals. Just think, you may be cooking for 100+! Won't that be fun?

Thank You
FOR YOUR HELP

A huge thank you to those who continue to take good care of our building and grounds. That includes mowers, trimmers, weed pullers, tomato pickers, and flower smellers. And it includes wall painters, dishwashers, and cupboard organizers.

Thanks again to all who helped with VBS in any way. It was a great week.

Congratulations on your new bundle of joy!

Andy & Amy Kirchner welcomed Kenly Rae Kirchner on July 28th.

Jose Delgado & Samantha Noble welcomed Marshall Ricky Delgado on August 11th.

Jesse and Emily Reed welcomed Rayleigh Grace Reed August 25th.



September

2 Charlie Thrasher
4 Lewis Morrison
6 Carol Miller
7 Marsha Jacobs
8 Jeanne Hale
9 Kyle Harned
11 Mary Larson
11 Jacob Johnson
12 Maggie Christy
14 Kurtis Minor
16 Dave Baker
16 Ken Noble
18 Kyle Barnhart
18 Marcy Dewar
20 Jason Thrasher
22 Jeanine Williams
23 Rob Miller
24 Curt Newcomb
25 Jasmin Gardenier
25 Deepak Giri
26 Addyson Lehman
26th Jim Kiwala
29 Ron Brown
29 Scott Skubal
29 Evelyn Evans
30 Brooklyn Harned



Anniversaries in September

4 Bill & Jan Koellner
9 Ryan & Tana Deahr
14 Bob & Terri Larson
25 Roger & Carolyn Bengé

Church Workers

September 6th
Communion

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Leon Larson & Dean Phelps

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Gary Hahn, Shirley Sterner, Susie Lehman,
Rob Miller, Syd Harned, Blaine Kelly

USHERS: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

George Barber & Norma Brooks

ORGANIST: Brenda Miller

POWER POINT: Keith Barnhart

CANDLE LIGHTER: Open

September 13th

USHER: Harold Wilkerson

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Ken & Jo Noble

ORGANIST: Marianne Phelps

POWER POINT: Bill Koellner

CANDLE LIGHTER: Joseph Delgado

September 20th

Communion

SPEAKING ELDERS:

Leon Larson & Dean Phelps

COMMUNION SERVERS:

Gary Hahn, Shirley Sterner, Susie Lehman,
Rob Miller, Syd Harned, Blaine Kelly

USHERS: Tom Brooke

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

George Barber & Norma Brooks

ORGANIST: Susie Lehman

POWER POINT: Jim Kiwala

CANDLE LIGHTER: Charlie Thrasher

September 27th

USHER: Harold Wilkerson

GREETERS & COFFEE HOUR:

Dave & Bertie Baker

ORGANIST: Lori Brooke

POWER POINT: Chance Thrasher

CANDLE LIGHTER: Kaylor Johnson

Communion Preparer for September will be
Betty Burton