

Congregational Tidings

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*



A weekly newsletter



April 1, 2020



FCUCC Virtual Holy Week Schedule

***All services will be on the FCUCC
Facebook Page and Youtube Channel***

April 5th - *Palm Sunday* 10:30am

(Included in this version of The Tidings is a palm for this Sunday.

You can decorate it any way you like and wave the palm high during the service.

*Or you can post it on your doors, tape it to your window, or any other way
to show that you are still shouting "Hosanna!" for all to hear. -Pastor Scott)*

**April 9th - *Maundy Thursday* with
Virtual Communion 7:00pm**

**April 10th - *Good Friday Service*
of Tenebrae 7:00pm**

**April 12th - *Easter Sunday*
Service 10:30am**



IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to COVID-19 health concerns, the Church Office and Building is closed. You can keep in touch with the church staff during this time:

Questions?

Call 319-234-8927 or email us at fcuccoffice@gmail.com

(Messages will be checked periodically)

Pastor Scott: (919) 265-8902 or scott@firstcongucc.org

Youth Director Katie: katie@firstcongucc.org

Music Director Luke: luke@firstcongucc.org

Organist Hudson: organist@firstcongucc.org

Office Manager Michelle: fcuccoffice@gmail.com

Custodian Kyle: k.lindaman79@gmail.com

Here are ways you can stay in touch:

*Check your personal email for regular updates from Church Staff. Not signed up to the church email? Please contact Michelle.

*Facebook: First Congregational UCC Waterloo, Iowa (@FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa)

*The FCUCC website: www.firstcongucc.org

*Our new Youtube Channel: FCUCC Waterloo

*And of course by reading *The Tidings!*

** Weekly Events **

Wed., April 1

7:00 pm - Prayer Service via our Facebook page

Fri., April 3

3-5pm - Community Coffee Hour via Zoom

Sun., April 5

10:30 am - Palm Sunday

Sermon: *Fasting From...Power*

Scripture Reading: **Mark 11:1-11, 14:3-9**

Join us via our Facebook page and Youtube channel.



‘Read a Good Book Lately?? Have you read a good book lately that touched you in a special way? Or made you laugh out loud? Or gave you one of those “aha” moments? Or was maybe just a good distraction that took you somewhere wonderful? ... Well, have you?

If so, we want to know about it! Many of us have a little extra time to read a good book, or two, or so. So, let us know about that good book (without spoiling the ending, of course) and what you liked about it ... how it tickled your funny bone or how it spoke to you. Write a “book report” of 250 words or less and send it in the US Mail or email (fcuccoffice@gmail.com) to the church office. We’ll get it into Tidings so everyone else knows where to find a good book. **Whether you’re 6 or 96 we would like to know about your good reads. :)**



Do you know how long it’s been since we did a First Church Cookbook? Too long!! We think it’s time to put together a new, updated cook book. Do you have time to try out and tune up your favorite recipe? Well, let’s get going! It can a marvelous main dish ... or a delectable dessert ... or a scrumptious salad ... or something that’s simply quick to put together in a very busy world. So, write down the recipe, or better yet, just scan the coffee-stained, yellowed back of the envelope where you originally jotted it down and send it in to the church office by US Mail or email (fcuccoffice@gmail.com). **But wait, there’s more ...** Also include a paragraph as to

why this recipe is special to you. Most favorite recipes have a story. What’s yours? Did you used to make it with your grandmother? Was it a Christmas dinner favorite? We need to include that in the cook book, too. Recipes with stories ... not just your everyday cookbook! **Get yours in today!!**



April Birthdays

5 Kaylee Holt	17 Anna Kendall	24 Alice Schneider
6 Marlys Tandy	19 Harper Corson	Sadie Grace Kleitsch
8 Sarah Lauterbach	20 Erinn Lauterbach	26 Keith Jorgensen
9 Peter Blankenfeld	21 Tim Ensworth	27 Beth Lauterbach
10 Jeff Essmann	Tim Lind	John W. Stevens
12 Janice Akin	Ross Martens	28 Tristan Holt
14 Lucas Greene	22 Rich Thuesen	29 Collene Peirce
Donna Sheridan	23 Scott Driver	

April Anniversaries

4 Kurt & Margaret Kaliban
16 Dick & Joan Grimm
26 Rick & Julie Kiefer
29 Kyle & Kari Lindaman

A Reflection from Rev. Samantha Houser...

In the Bulb



When the bulk of the news around COVID-19 was breaking in the US, I happened to be driving across the Cheyenne River for a clergy gathering in the Black Hills. Actually, I was just over the river in a town named Wasta, population 82. For those of you not familiar with the geography, it is a town that is after Wall Drug and not yet to Rapid City but unremarkable unless you are in need of a refreshing moment...which I was. I stopped and took in the view and googled the significance of the name.

According to Google the Sioux pronounce it wash-tay, meaning 'good' because of the sparkling clear springs of cold water that come from the base of the river bluffs. It was an apropos naming to have run across. Just a year ago to the date of my travels the three conferences had had their attention drawn to the destructive powers of river water. In fact there are many in across our conferences that are still facing the aftermath of the floods of 2019. This new moment, as I stood and admired the water as it followed the cracks and folds in the land my attention was drawn to the cleansing powers that the water held for us.

Not just in the 'wash you hands' movement...although I do believe that all of us should adhere to that rule, followed by a good moisturizing regiment; but even more I was thinking about the cleansing powers of nature in general. The ability to feel grounded through the very creation that we were born from and will eventually be returned to.

As I stood in the wide openness of the Midwest and felt the breeze on my face, listening to the wind and the water taking in the naming of Washta standing in the dissonance of so much, I was reminded that community matters, that relationships are important, that we were created to be connected. AND that all of those things can happen in a variety of ways. Through virtual realities, using prayer and Spirit as a conduit, by invoking our ancestors, through our engagement with creation that each of us has access to no matter how isolated we might feel at the present.

And so I pray in the form of a hymn of promise written by Natalie Sleeth words that I hope will stir hope within each of us in this season: In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Rev. Samantha Houser
Associate Conference Minister



Christian sympathy is shared with the family of **Margaret Hubrig** (mother of **Jayne Slaughter and Scott Hubrig**). Margaret passed away peacefully Tuesday morning (March 31st) with her children by her side.

Funeral plans are pending and will be announced when made.

A Pastoral Letter in a Time of Pandemic

As leaders in our beloved United Church of Christ, we write to speak a word of tender care to our congregations, our clergy, and our members.

We are sensitive to the grief and loss that many of you are experiencing. Most of us have never seen anything like this. The pandemic has interrupted our lives. Some have suffered the premature death of loved ones, while others live through and with severe pain and suffering. People are losing their jobs. Many of us have been placed under orders not to leave our homes and to shelter in place. In most of our communities, orders have been given to limit gathering in public spaces. This has been hard for all of us.

As leaders, we also bear witness to acts of profound kindness and creative ingenuity that remind us of the better angels within us. We are watching a Church prove itself to be incredibly adaptable as orders to stay at home have not ended our collective need even in times like these to give our thanks to God. Churches who not only have never gathered in a digital community, but who never thought they would need or want to, are doing just that – and experiencing something very profound and very meaningful. We have heard stories of whole families, spread across the country, being able to gather together for the same worship service via digital broadcast. That is such a meaningful gift the church has to offer in a season such as this.

We grieve deeply with you the losses that we are all living with; but we also celebrate a body of Christ that can adapt quickly to meet the emerging need. It is our hope and prayer that what we are learning about ourselves – about our capacity for grace, for hope, for change, for love beyond our walls – will enrich us long after this pandemic ends.

We strongly encourage churches to suspend your traditional ways of gathering to worship. Gathering to worship in this moment places our loved ones at risk. On the website of the denomination you can find resources to help you create new ways to worship as a sequestered community. Our Conferences are regularly offering networking opportunities so that you can share creative ideas and practical learnings.

Remember that we are a Christmas people, and that Jesus is incarnated in every act of love and kindness we extend to one another.

Remember that we are an Easter people and we know that God can reach us beyond all the barriers the world can create.

Remember that we are a Pentecost people who know that the Holy Spirit can revive us and who will be our strength in times of great distress.

We can do this. We are the Church, the body of the risen Christ. As leaders called to serve you, we pledge to you that we will continue to draw on every resource available to us that will help you through this season. In the love of our blessed Redeemer, we remain as always your humble servants and your beloved covenant partners.

Faithfully,

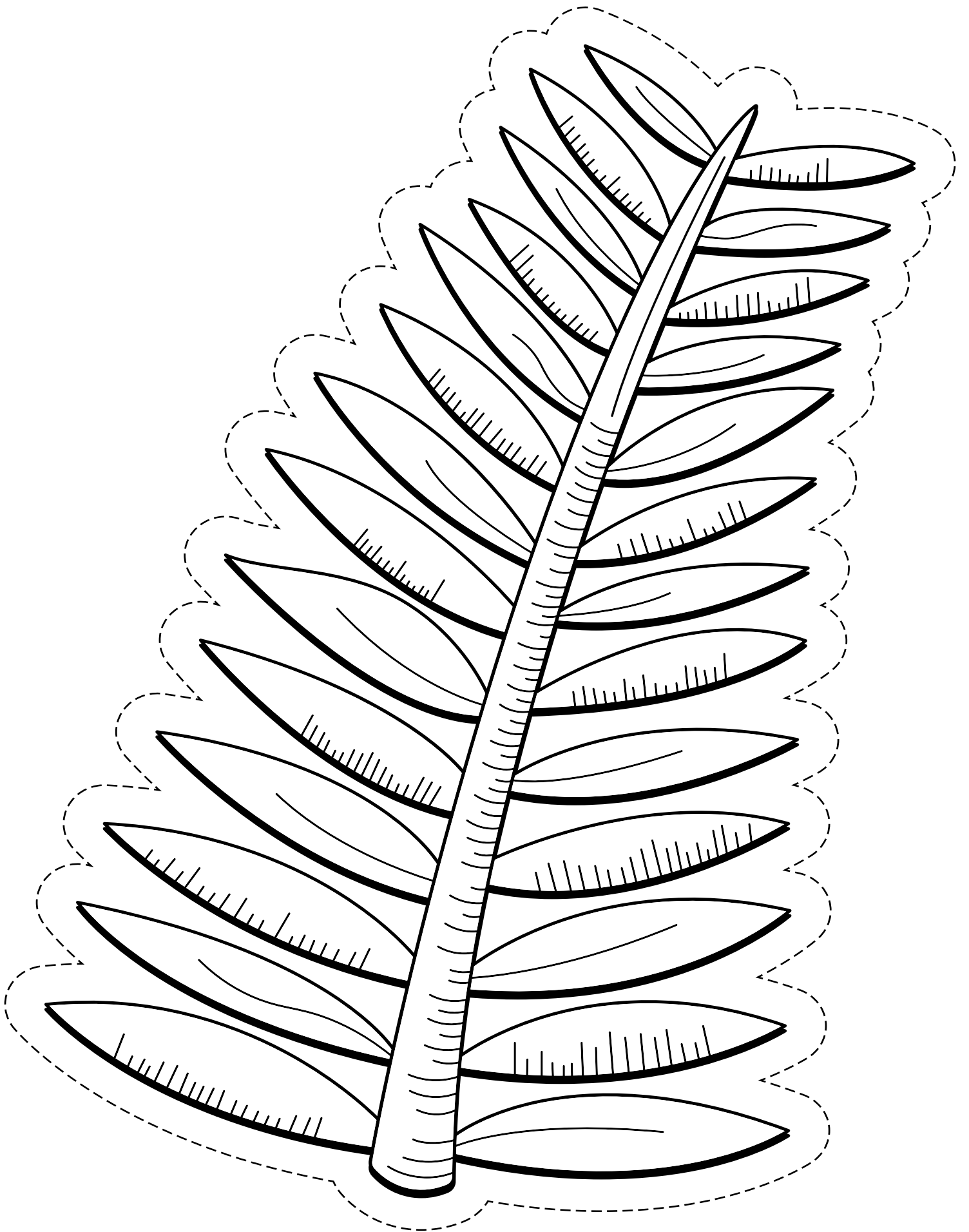
The Council of Conference Ministers

The Officers of the United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer

The Rev. Traci Blackmon

The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson



First Congregational UCC
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WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here

Create an endowment of love. Please consider including our church in your estate planning.

C O N G R E G A T I O N A L

As you may know FCUCC's sanctuary is decorated with beautiful lilies on Easter Sunday. Lilies are traditionally associated with Christ because he mentioned them in his Sermon on the Mount.

This year, you are encouraged to use the funds you would have spent on lilies and share them with a local charity. Two possible destinations for these "virtual lilies" can be our mission partners at Love INC and the folks at Northeast Iowa Food Bank. Share Christ's love by helping them help others through these difficult times.

Thank you!

-Pastor Scott

