

Congregational Tidings

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



A weekly newsletter



May 20, 2020



LAST CALL...CARD SHOWER FOR THE SPENCE FAMILY

MUM'S THE WORD: The Women's Sunday School Book Group was asked to plan something for Pastor Scott's leaving. In light of not being able to gather in person we're putting together a basket of a few mementos and collecting cards for the family. A couple of us plan on making a surprise delivery during Pastor Scott's final Friday Coffee Zoom hours. Please join the fun on zoom on May 29. Thanks to the following persons who are

helping with the planning: Janice Akin, Abbey Athey, Karen Dew, Diane Highnam, Kerri Mennenga and Evie Waack.

Remember to send your cards by Friday, May 22 to The Spence's c/o Evie Waack; 433 Loma St; Waterloo, IA 50701.

THANKS!



Sunday Morning Book Conversation

Meeting on Zoom at 9:30 am

Join us this Sunday at 9:30am for a Book Conversation. The current book is *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor and is available wherever books are sold. Part of our time we check in with each other to see how we're doing. Contact Evie Waack at evie.waack@gmail.com or 277-0163 if you have any questions or are interested in joining us.

Pick-A-Text Sunday May 24, 2020

Every year at the Holiday Bazaar we put a special item: the chance to pick the text that Pastor Scott preaches about. This year's winners are Bob and Beth Hurley and they have selected Romans 8:28-39. Please join us on Facebook or our Youtube channel for our Worship Service. All Are Welcome!



Coffee and Cookies Time!

Join us this Sunday following the Worship Service from 11:30-12:30 for Coffee and Cookies Time via Zoom!
This is another time to connect with your church family. We look forward to seeing you!

EASTERTIDE 2020

Worship Calendar:

In the Christian calendar Easter is not just one day but a season of 50 days until Pentecost. Whether we meet virtually or at 608 West 4th, FCUCC is committed to celebrating Resurrection together. Here is a Sunday worship calendar for the last two weeks:



***May 24:** Pick a Text Sunday Winner

***May 31:** Pentecost Sunday & Pastor Scott's Last Sunday



Donna Koweil Scholarship Opportunity

FCUCC has been given a tuition grant again this year from the Donna Koweil Scholarship Fund. The scholarship is awarded to

current college students who are members of FCUCC and have successfully completed at least one year of schooling. Deadline to submit an application is May 31, 2020. If interested, please contact Michelle in the office for an application and cover letter which explains the scholarship in more detail. (fcuccoffice@gmail.com)

~ Marcia Johnson & Connie Jo Peirce



The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill on its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. We will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st, 2020.

Annual Neighborhood Clean Up Day

The Church Row Neighborhood Association is planning to host a Clean Up Day:

Saturday, May 23rd from 9am to Noon

First United Methodist parking lot.

Please help spread the word!



Graduations

Now is the time to let Michelle in the office know if you have a family member who has graduated from high school or college.

Please include future plans they may have in mind such as colleges they will be attending or jobs they have been offered.

Mail to: 608 W. 4th St, Waterloo, IA 50701 or

Email: fcuccoffice@gmail.com



Unfortunately, our Vacation Bible School has been cancelled this year. We look forward to next year joining with our partner churches again.

Also, we will have to hold off on picnicking together, but there will be a regular church service online, on June 7th.

Calming Presence in Uncertain Times

Issue #995 | May 14, 2020



Like others across the U.S. who have been struggling to make sense of the Covid-19 pandemic, I admit that I have been challenged in trying to provide best leadership practices to my staff from which they might draw strength and support.

As a business executive, I am called to lead and inspire and manage people. As a spiritual leader, I am to tend to the emotional, spiritual, and practical needs of staff who are now working from their homes. Also, I need to care for myself and my family. Within the early days of this global outbreak, my heart and head realized my task would not be easy to fulfill. In fact, it would be a heavy lift. Nevertheless, it was – it is – what is needed, perhaps required, for such a time as this.

With the passing of each day, the nation's collective psychic energies become more uncertain, more confusing. People's lives have been upended by stay-at-home policies, temporarily closed businesses, and "essential worker" designations, all in an effort to reduce the spread of the virus. The mandate "to slow the curve" allowed for some white-collar workers to work from home, while for other workers – many in the service industry – incomes were temporarily halted or permanently lost. The economy decelerated. Devastatingly, people from coast to coast have contracted Covid-19, and tragically some of them have died, leaving households grieving and unsure of how to make sense of the pandemonium. Many feel hopeless, as suffering seems unavoidable and answers from our national leadership has been, dare I say, erratic.

As our shared pain continued discharging into the atmosphere, I found myself feeling uncomfortable and restless. Despite spiritual rituals and disciplines of prayer, meditation, and journaling I felt I needed to do something differently – for myself and for the work of leading a now-remote staff.

I spoke with my spouse, a trauma therapist, about how I might employ easy-to-learn self-soothing techniques, which would benefit my team and lower anxiety. After a brief conversation, what he shared was not a new learning. He lovingly looked at me and invited me to close my eyes. "Take three very deep breaths," he said. I did. He reminded me that it would be helpful to have everyone slow down their nervous systems and to feel what was going on in their bodies. In a word, what we needed was to gain an awareness of the present moment.

I smiled as I began to connect to the ground and settle inside of my body, feeling my heart, and not simply spinning out in my head a variety of to-do lists. Applying techniques like these, which I have utilized for decades, allowed me to return to a state of mindfulness. This was something I knew I would share with my teams.

My leadership goal is not to equip the staff to fix the world's problem, but to remind them that we needed only to address an immediate need for which we had responsibility. On tomorrow, we would tackle that day's challenge. Thus, day by day, we would make a way through this situation. It was my promise as a leader and friend.

Additional resources to learn self-soothing techniques to calm anxiety: 1) [Grounding Techniques & Self Soothing for Emotional Regulation](#), by Dr. Rachel Eddins; 2) UCC [Community Care Space](#) with guided meditation videos.

To speak with a trained counselor; A) [Crisis Text Line](#) (text CONNECT to 741741); B) [UCC Mental Health Network](#). #WereAllInThisTogether

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bentley deBardelaben-Phillips is Executive Associate and Team Leader of the Education for Faithful Action Plus (EFA+) Team in Justice and Local Church Ministries.

The United Church of Christ has more than 5,000 churches throughout the United States. Rooted in the Christian traditions of congregational governance and covenantal relationships, each UCC setting speaks only for itself and not on behalf of every UCC congregation. UCC members and churches are free to differ on important social issues, even as the UCC remains principally committed to unity in the midst of our diversity.

First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
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

COVID-19

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 for updates from Church Staff via email.

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

*The FCUCC website: www.firstcongucc.org

*Our Youtube Channel: FCUCC Waterloo

*And of course by reading The Tidings!

** Weekly Events **

Wed., May 20 and 27

7:00 pm - Prayer Service via our Facebook page

Fri., May 22 and 29

3-5pm - Community Coffee Hour via Zoom

Sun., May 24

Sermon: *What Are We to Say?*

Scripture Reading: **Romans 8:28-39**