

Congregational Tidings



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

A weekly newsletter



September 4, 2019



*(Everyone meet in the
chapel at 9am.)*

Rally Day - Sunday, Sept. 8th:

9:00 am - Sunday School Classes

Pastor's Adult Class - Lounge

Pre-School to 3rd Grade - Classroom

4th to 6th Grade - Chapel

Middle & High School - Youth Room

Women's Class - Friendship Room

10:30 am - Seven Signs of a Vital Church
Series Begins (Choir Resumes)

Following Service - Lunch provided by RE Board

Grill Out & Fish Fry!

Wednesday Night Activities Beginning Sept. 11th:

New Book Study with Potluck: 6:00pm

*(Krazy Kinfolk: Exploring Dysfunctional
Families of the Bible)*

Youth Group: 7:00pm

(Middle and Senior High)

Choir Practice: 7:00pm

Our Fall Sermon Series

As the calendar moves from summer to fall, First Congregational UCC prepares for a new Church Year starting September 8th. Rally Sunday is a wonderful opportunity for our church family to reconnect, welcome back the Handbell and Church Choirs, and enjoy a tasty Cookout and Fish Fry prepared by our friends from the Religious Education Board.

Rally Sunday also marks one full year since I formally began my time as your Pastor and Teacher. Over the past months we have engaged in a congregational conversation about our past as a church, our current context and practices, and where we feel God is calling us to go in the future. These important conversations have taken place over a cup of coffee during Community Office Hours, in Fall and Spring Thursday Night Book Series, via email and phone calls, and in Board of Trustees and Common Meetings.

I have heard your stories about how FCUCC has shaped your faith walk, your joys and concerns about the present, and your ideas about how we can be a better church. Thank you for being so open and honest with me!

So where do we go from here? That is a question that I want to start answering with our Fall Sermon Series. Combining both your input and outside materials from the UCC and other denominations I will be preaching on ***7 Signs of a Vital Congregation***. These signs cover the whole gamut of what it means to “be the church” and are both timeless and relevant to our wider culture. They are not to be intended as an evaluation of FCUCC or a definitive statement about the future of our church-but as a way of creating a common language about who we are and what God wishes for us to be.

I pray that you approach each of these Sundays with an open heart and mind. As always, my door is open if you want to talk.

Pastor Scott

PS. Starting September 8th the Pastor’s Sunday School Class will be looking at that day’s sermon topic in depth. I would love to see you there!

7 Signs of a Vital Congregation

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| September 8th: | <i>Discipleship Formation</i> | Philippians 3:4-14 |
| September 15th: | <i>Authentic Evangelism</i> | 2 Corinthians 4:5-12 |
| September 22nd: | <i>Empowering Servant Leaders</i> | Matthew 9:35-38 |
| September 29th: | <i>Being a Welcoming Church</i> | Guest Preacher: Rev. Ellis Arnold |
| October 6th: | <i>Spirit-Filled Worship</i> | Isaiah 29:13-16 |
| October 13th: | <i>Caring Relationships</i> | John 13:35 |
| October 20th: | <i>Why Church? Why Here?</i> | 1 Corinthians 12:13-31 |

Public Office Hours

Join Pastor Scott at Sidecar in Downtown Waterloo on Wednesday, September 4th from 3-5pm.



Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The offering this year will be held on **Sunday, October 6th** as part of our World Communion Sunday. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities.

A Note from your Youth Director, Katie...

Hello, I am excited to announce the kickoff of youth events this month. This upcoming weekend on Sunday, September 8 we will begin our Sunday School programming at 9:00am. There will be classes for the **pre-school - 2nd grade** aged children in the Sunday School room next to the Youth Director's office, the **3rd - 5th graders** will meet in the Chapel, and the **middle and high-school aged youth** will meet upstairs in the youth room. Our Wednesday night programming will begin on September 11 at 6:00pm with a community meal followed by opportunities for adult classes and a new **Youth Group class for middle and high-school aged students** (6th - 12th grade) from 7:00 - 8:00pm. We will continue children's lessons during the service and children in pre-school - 4th grade are welcome to join me downstairs for children's church. I look forward to seeing you and learning with you at all of our upcoming events. Blessings ~Katie Thomas

Community Meals Notice

No cookies are needed for the September Community Meals.

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 8, 2019
10:30 am

Pastor Scott Spence will present the message:
Discipleship Formation

Scripture Reading
Philippians 3:4-14

Deacon-In-Charge
Nancy Mahood

Acolytes
Greg and Michelle Holt

Greeters
Barb Mardis
Sue Hummel

September Ushers
Craig Jensen
Dave Panicucci
Jeff Thompson
Rocky Petersen

SAVE THE DATE!! Saturday November 23 - Time to start prepping for our **Annual Christmas Bazaar!** *There are many ways you can help:*

- ~ Bring your gently used items to be sold in our Bottom Drawer, Grandpa's Shed and/or Accessories areas. ~ Bake bread, cookies, pies for our Baked Goods area.
- ~ Make Candy for the Candy Corner. ~ Make crafts for the Handmade Goods area.
- ~ Create a Silent Auction item. ~ Donate books for the Book Nook.
- ~ Decorate a Christmas tree for the Festival of Trees raffle.
- ~ Sign up to help work the day of the Bazaar (it is fun and rewarding).

If you haven't experienced this Amazing event and are interested, please contact anyone on the Bazaar Committee.

Thanks for everyone's help. It wouldn't be the success it is, if it weren't for our Awesome congregation coming together for this event.

Connie Jo Peirce, Jayne Slaughter and Jill Jensen

Upcoming Events

Wed., September 4
3-5pm - Community Office Hours at Sidecar (*Downtown, W'loo*)
7:00 Choir Practice

Thurs., September 5
5:30 Bells Practice

Sun., September 8
10:30 am - Worship

Mon., September 9
Community Meals (A)

Tues., September 10
7:00 pm - Common Meeting

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.

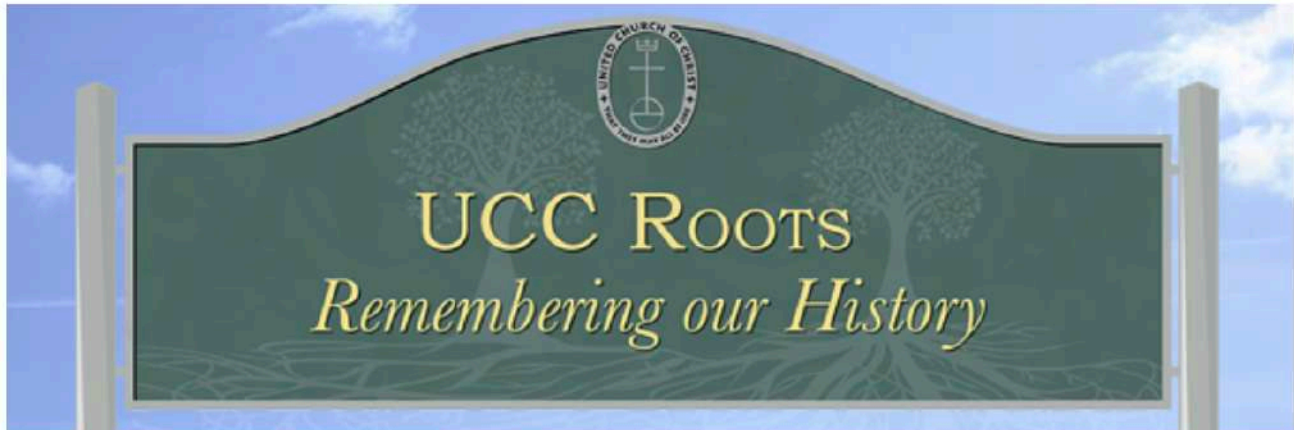
F I R S T C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C



Nicaragua Shoeboxes

Thanks to all who have stepped up to help 19,000 moms, 2400 K-12 students in 14 schools in Nicaragua. At the same time we are blessed with hundreds helping us fill dried food packs to feed 2400 kids a hot meal everyday they are in school. We are so blessed to be able to help so many (19,000 healthy babies in 18 years) and hundreds change their lives by graduating from schools. This would not happen without hundreds joining hands to change their lives.

Thank you to all of you at FCC that have been helping us for 19 years. Thank you to Connie Jo and Jayne who have been doing so much to help us with this project.



***The Herald of Gospel Liberty* spread new Views of Church**

In the early history of the United States of America many religious leaders were inspired by the promise of “liberty.”

They were fed up with traditional church practices and scorned church leaders in New England, southern Virginia, and the mid-west. On September 1, 1808 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a newspaper publication, called the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, began promoting radical ideas of groups that simply called themselves “Christians.” Many years later, some of those “Christians” became part of the United Church of Christ. Although the *Herald* newspaper is often lauded as the “first Christian newspaper” published in early America, most UCC members know little about the radical ideas of the “Christians.”

Elias Smith (1769–1846), the publisher of the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, was poor, unschooled, and totally self-taught, but he was an effective promoter of the ideas of the “Christian movement”—sometimes called the “Christian Connexion.”

The “Christians” intentionally founded non-denominational churches. They insisted that Christ was the only head of the Church, that the New Testament was their only rule of faith, and that “Christian” was their only name. They rejected “Calvinism,” titles like “Doctors of Divinity,” fancy robes and “Surplices,” “written sermon notes,” “creeds,” and “covenants”. Yet, Elias Smith also argued for “the necessity of a college education for ministry, missionary societies, and church councils for ordination and discipline.”



Elias Smith’s life and autobiography show us how the self-ignited and the sustained fire of his intellect inspired people, and how his passion for the essentials of Christianity was unconquerable. His rejection of dogma and doctrine remind us that religion is often grounded in the misguided inventions of the human mind. Smith’s insistence about these things hold lessons for the church today. Although Smith’s rants against the settled clergy, and his ravings against the institutional church were and are unsettling, they remind us that being a Christian is always demanding.

Contributor: Kendall H. Brown

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.

I KNOW WE'RE ALL WELCOME AT THE TABLE, BUT DO I HAVE TO SIT NEXT TO YOU?

Workshop September 28, 2019
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

At The Cedar Falls United Church of Christ 9204 University Ave Cedar Falls Iowa 50613
Cost: \$25 Early Registration (September 15th) with a few scholarships available
\$35 after 9.15.19 Lunch provided (at registration please state any dietary needs)



How do we stay in community with the church member who stands on the opposite side of vital issues like gun control or gay marriage? How do we welcome our co-worker whose idea of God rubs us the wrong way? How do we embrace the brother-in-law who is against everything we are for? This workshop will help us figure that out.

We'll learn some tools to help us see the face of Christ in those we find hard to love, and we'll take home tools that will help us share this material in our own communities. The workshop is practical, often playful, sometimes intense. Our work together is based on Janice's book *I Know We're All Welcome at the Table, But Do I Have to Sit Next to You?* which will be available at the workshop.

Leader: **Rev. Janice Jean Springer**, an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ, has served churches in Missouri, Iowa, Michigan and Montana. She is currently the Interim Minister at Church of Christ United in Winthrop, Iowa and the Minister of Spiritual Formation at University Congregational Church in Missoula, Montana.. She is the author of *I Know We're All Welcome at the Table, But Do I Have to Sit Next to You?* and also *Nurturing Spiritual Depth in Christian Worship: Ten Practices*. She lives in Waterloo, Iowa and Frenchtown, Montana.

Register by e-mail: cedarfallsuccpastor@gmail.com or above address for the host church or call 319-266-9686