

Congregational Tidings

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



A weekly newsletter



www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa

August 18, 2021

FROM THE REOPENING COMMITTEE . . .

The committee continues to meet weekly. The Blackhawk county status remains high. The Delta variant is a problem because the amount of the virus in the nose of infected patients is at least a thousand times more than with the original virus. The effectiveness of the two vaccinations is nearly the same with the Delta variant as it was with the original virus. Unvaccinated people are sicker because of the significant increase in the number of virus particles. Children are sicker for the same reason. We suggest continuing worship outside. Worshipping inside depends on vaccination, masking, number of people, ventilation, hand washing, and the time spent. Mandating vaccination and masks is problematic. Be careful.

~ Greg, Tim, Beth, Dave

MODERATOR MUSINGS:

These past few days have been a humanitarian nightmare in 2 different parts of the world—Afghanistan with the leaving of US troops and the resurgence of the Taliban, and the 7.2 earthquake and Tropical Storm Grace in Haiti. Lots of people are suffering, people who were already struggling in many ways, and the ripple effect of these disasters will resound for some time. I always wonder what I can do that can make a difference.

Often in times of international disaster, the best we can do is to support a charity. There is a myriad of charities from which to choose, and it's sometimes difficult to know where to turn. The national United Church of Christ Global Ministries often intercedes with immediate and long-term relief and as a member of a UCC church, I like to support their humanitarian efforts.

https://www.globalministries.org/uccs_haiti_response_10_10_2014_1226/

I also like to check with Charity Navigator, which rates a variety of charities according to their mission, their effectiveness, accountability and transparency. I want to know that the money I donate will be used for the purpose that was intended rather than on self-promotion of the agency. <https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=8990>

Please keep these 2 areas of the world in your prayers, and if you are able, support your favorite charity with financial support.

~ Anne Hoekstra



PRESENTED BY GALLAGHER BLUEDORN

BLOCK PARTY - CHURCH ROW
SUNDAY, AUGUST 29, 2021 / 4:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

Join us while we listen and dance to Windsong. This summer, the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center will partner with Hearst Center for the Arts, Waterloo Center for the Arts and Waterloo Urban Farmers' Market and take its portable stage into Cedar Falls and

Waterloo neighborhoods for a series of Gallagher Bluedorn Block Parties.

Location: Church Row Neighborhood, Washington Park, Waterloo, IA

MARK YOUR CALENDARS ~ MORE UPCOMING EVENTS:



~ The Retirement Party for Lynne Ensworth will be held on *Tuesday evening, September 7*, from 7:00-9:30 pm at Montage in Cedar Falls in the large first floor room (no stairs). We hope to see you there!

~ Put *Sunday, September 19* on your calendar for a kayak outing in the afternoon! More information will follow!



~ The 50th Annual CROP Walk will be held on *Sunday, September 26th*! Let's celebrate by sponsoring 50 walkers from our church. Details coming soon!

MOMENT FOR MISSIONS

**“Please Vote to Help Support Our Neighbor!
Mark your calendars for WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18TH!**

House of Hope is in the top 200 agencies nationwide, selected to compete for a \$25,000 State Farm Neighborhood Assist Grant! Voting starts AUGUST 18TH! The 40 agencies with the most votes each get \$25,000!!! Here is a link to their cause: <https://www.neighborhoodassist.com/entry/2039153> -

House of Hope, Pillars Program

The House of Hope Pillars program is the only transitional housing program for women aging out of foster care in Black Hawk county and yet, Black Hawk county ranks 6th in the state for children in foster care and Iowa, 6th in the nation. 20% of youth who age out will be homeless immediately and 71% of women will be pregnant by age 21. Homeless young women are among the highest at risk for falling victim to human trafficking. Youth who age out of foster care have complex trauma histories and face a multitude of barriers to achieving stability and independence. Stable housing and a positive network of support the greatest protective factors in overcoming adversity. House of Hope formed a committee to develop Pillars to prevent these vulnerable women from falling through the cracks. Since 2018, Pillars has been home to young women who never found their “forever family” and continues to provide trauma-responsive programming and resources as these young women transition to adulthood.

For more than 25 years, House of Hope has been supported entirely by community contributions, non-government grants, and fundraising events. Like many non-profits, Covid-19 has impacted our ability to fundraise. A \$25,000 grant from State Farm will ensure women who age out of foster care will have a place to call home at Pillars and continue receiving the invaluable support, guidance, and care vital for achieving long-term success. Some accomplishments include increased employability, improved credit scores, addressed mental health, learned life skills in healthy relationships, cooking, car maintenance, and financial literacy, left with stable housing, finished education, learned how to budget, and more. Without safe housing, support, and access to resources, these young women are at high risk for continuing a cycle homelessness and poverty and worse.

According to a study by the University of Cincinnati’s Economic Center and Hamilton County Job and Family Services, youth who age out of foster care without permanent housing and support can cost communities millions of dollars in health care expenses, criminal justice expenses, homelessness, un/under employment, not to mention the long-term effects of trauma and toxic stress. Keeping the highest at-risk women from falling through the cracks benefits the economy, the quality of life in a community, but most importantly, young women who have already been through trauma and turmoil. Pillars is designed to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness before it starts. Rather than being a strain on resources, women completing the Pillars program will become self-sufficient, independent women contributing to the community. A \$25,000 grant from State Farm is an investment with the greatest return: generational impact. “

~ Laurie Allbaugh



The graphic is a vertical teal banner. At the top left, it says "SUPPORT HOUSE OF HOPE PILLARS" in white, stacked vertically. To the right of this text is the Pillars logo, which consists of a house icon and the word "Pillars" in a colorful, multi-colored font. Below the logo is a large QR code. Underneath the QR code, it says "Visit neighborhoodassist.com" in white. At the bottom of the banner, it says "SCAN THIS CODE TO ADD A DAILY REMINDER TO YOUR CALENDAR!" in white.



Youth Group: Youth Group on August 18th!
We will be doing Balloon Painting outside the church from 6pm-7pm.

Blessing of the Backpacks:

Join us on Sunday Service on August 22nd for a Blessing of the Backpacks! Students and teachers, please bring a pack to be blessed. Let us help you get ready for a new and exciting school year!



Rally Day:

Mark your calendars for Rally Day on September 12th! We will kick-off Sunday School at 9am.

Youth Director Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 1pm - 5pm

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

First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here