

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL



TIDINGS



"You are welcome here!"

THIS SUNDAY:

September 21, 2025 10:30 AM
Worship Service

Scripture Text:
Matthew 22:34-40

Sermon:
BLUEPRINT: the foundation

[Click Here to watch last Sunday's service](#)

September 14 Sermon Recap:

This week we looked at Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the Shema. God calls us to love fully with all our heart, soul, and might. That means our thoughts, our life, and our energy all belong to God.

We also saw that this love is active. It shapes our choices, our relationships, and the way we live each day. God promises to transform our hearts so we can love genuinely and live faithfully. Loving God fully is the blueprint for life and purpose.

Reflection Question:

How can you love God with your whole heart, soul, and might this week? What difference could that make in your life and your relationships?

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Thursday, September 18
Life Line Screenings (All-Day)

Sunday, September 21
12:00pm - Overton Baby Shower

Tuesday, September 23
11:00am - Food Bank Volunteering
7:00pm - NAMI Presentation

Wednesday, September 24
5:30pm - Bells
6:15pm - Dinner
6:45pm - Study
7:30pm - Choir

YOUTH HOCKEY NIGHT - 9/27

We're heading out for a night of hockey, friends, and fun on **Friday, September 27th!** There are only **9 spots** available, so if you're in grades 6-12, grab your spot soon. It'll be a great night—you don't want to miss it!

TIDINGS DEADLINE

Please note that the deadline to submit an article for the October 1st Tidings is Monday, September 29th at 9am.

BIBLE STUDY: BLUEPRINT

Want to keep the Sunday conversation going? Join us for Bible study as we dig into our current series, **Blueprint**. It's a relaxed space to talk, ask questions, and see how God's design connects with real life. Everyone's welcome—come check it out! We'll also be sharing food each week. If you'd like to bring something, you can sign up [HERE](#).

A CHANGE IN GETTING TO KNOW YOU

This month marks the final installment of our long-running "**Getting to Know You**" display. We are deeply grateful for the many stories that have been shared over the years. They have helped us learn more about one another, celebrate our church family, and grow closer as a community. Thank you to Barb Mardis who graciously led this endeavor!

As this chapter closes, we're excited to open a new one. The display case on the way up to the Library will soon take on a fresh purpose. It will begin to highlight and expand upon our **sermon themes**. This space will offer another way to reflect more deeply on the messages we hear in worship each week and to carry those themes into our daily lives.

We give thanks for what has been, and we look forward with anticipation to how this new focus will continue to inspire and guide us together.

FOOD BANK NEWS

Please consider joining us for one or both of the next Food Bank Volunteer Opportunities! We will meet at the Food Bank on Tuesday, September 23rd from 11am to 1pm and Tuesday Oct. 7th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.

NAMI PRESENTATION

Join us downstairs, **September 23rd at 7pm** for a presentation by Darlene Fitkin who is a therapist with Quakerdale Family Services. She will inform us as to the many benefits of adding Laugh-Therapy for better overall mental health.

CROP WALK

CROP Hunger Walk is coming to a neighborhood near YOU on **October 5th!**

Our church is hosting the annual walk and we would love to have you join in the preparations and the walk!

There are plenty of jobs and a great way to connect with fellow church members! We are doing our part to fight hunger and food insecurity in our community and around the world! JOIN US!



[Scan the QR code above to go directly to our church sign up and donation page.](#)

Getting To Know You

GETTING TO KNOW: KAREN DEW



I was born in Cedar Rapids to Tom and Genevieve Tharp Bjornsen. I am the oldest of 7 children, proud mother of Robert and Heather, grandmother to Eric and Megan.

Life was challenging, yet full of love. Mom was from a family of 9 children. Mom and dad's families all lived 3 houses apart and only 3 blocks from us. We enjoyed lots of music, fish fries, and stories of Ringling Brothers Circus. My aunt Genevieve's mother and brother were in the famous Flying Wards, the first arial act for the circus.

My love of music continued for me in 4th grade.

I played viola until 11th grade. I also played in the All-State Orchestra for two years. After graduation, I worked for Collins Radio as a key-punch operator, got married and moved to Waterloo after my kids were born.

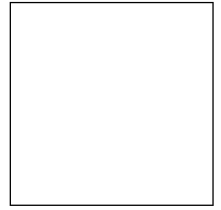
I had belonged to Bethany Congregational church - a small one where we were all neighbors and the kids were classmates. Finding this church in Waterloo was somewhat challenging for me. Such a large building and would the people accept me and my kids? When I walked in with Robert age 4 and Heather 1 yr old, I just was amazed. I saw wealthy people and felt out of place but everyone was welcoming. Since I have been here I sang in the choir, and found the gift of ringing handbells. Between this church and First Presbyterian I rang bells for 50 years. I also sang in the Metropolitan Chorale for 10 years.

I went to college at Hawkeye Tech when Bob started his 2nd semester there. On my first day of classes I got news that my mother had died. She had always wanted to go to college so she went with me in spirit. I felt her presence every day so my diploma was for her. I have worked for Waterloo Schools, for several doctors as a medical transcriptionist, and as a data entry operator for Head Start.

I now enjoy sewing, quilting, reading and watching Megan as she performs on stage. God has blessed me with many people who are kind and caring. Hanging by my back door is a plaque which says, "Only one life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." Good words for all of us.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
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WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

TIDINGS



CREATE AN ENDOWMENT OF LOVE. PLEASE CONSIDER INCLUDING OUR CHURCH IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING.



Join us for a magical baby shower celebrating the Overton family this **Sunday, September 21 at 12pm**, following the service.

A baby registry link is available by clicking [HERE](#) for anyone who would like to bless them with a gift (no pressure!).

There's also a food sign-up sheet on the EJS wall at church, organized by category—if you plan to bring something, please write down the specific item to help keep things easy for everyone. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to Mackenzie!

