

First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
100 First St. NE  
Mason City, IA 50401

Return Service Requested



## CONGREGATIONAL HI-LIGHTS

First Congregational United Church of Christ:  
100 1<sup>st</sup> St. N.E., Mason City, IA 50401  
www.FirstChurchinMC.com  
(641) 423-0105 – firstchurchinmc@gmail.com



***Sunday Worship & Sunday School***  
~ 10:00 am ~

### ***Church Office Hours:***

9:00 am - 1:00 pm – Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday  
8:00 am - Noon - Wednesday

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The Rev. Patricia Aurand, <i>Pastor</i>	Paula Halverson, <i>Church Secretary</i>
Mary R. Olson, <i>Custodian</i>	Teresa Janssen, <i>Treasurer</i>
LaDonna Hassenstab, <i>Church Musician</i>	

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**Volume 58/Issue 2**

**January 15, 2012**

### **THIS WEDNESDAY...**

From **5:30 pm – 7:00 pm**, Kids First (pre-school through 6<sup>th</sup> grade) will gather in the Dining Room. We will start with a blessing and a meal from 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm. From 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm, we will learn about praising God through a variety of activities related to Psalm 111.

At **7:00 pm**, the Choir will rehearse in the Music Room.

**The 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**  
of  
First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
will take place in the Sanctuary  
immediately following  
an abbreviated Worship Service  
on Sunday, January 29, 2012  
(at approximately 10:40 am)

Following the meeting, there will be a potluck lunch held in the downstairs Dining Room.

## PRAYERS OFFERED FOR:



**Rich Hays**, in Intensive Care at Mercy  
**The Family of Cathy Gardziola** (sister of Tom Ballmer) as they mourn her January 14, 2012 death. Services for her were held in Michigan on January 17, 2012

**Jordan Beier** (grandson of Mary and Maynard Olson), now receiving dialysis and urgently awaiting a kidney transplant

**Julie Gardziola** (niece of Tom Ballmer and Sally Pressly), receiving treatment for breast cancer

**The Family of Rev. Greg King** (Pastor of the UCC in Chamberlain, SD – where Pastor Patti served before coming to Mason City) as they mourn his January 11<sup>th</sup> death as a result of an automobile accident. We lift his wife, **Patti King**, in our prayers as she continues to be hospitalized; and **the Congregation of the United Church of Christ in Chamberlain, SD**

## Individuals & Families in the midst of difficult times

**Those serving in the military:** **Kyle Chesnut** (grandson of Jim Chesnut); **Cory Hodnefield** (“grandson” of Gene Davis); and **Travis Mallo** at West Point

## Those who are in assisted-care facilities:

Apple Valley in Clear Lake: **Nita**

Good Shepherd: **Alice Anne, Fran, Lou, & Bernice**

Heritage: **Maxine**

Homestead: **Esther**

IOOF: **Gene P.**

Willow Pointe: **Lois**

## ANNUAL REPORTS NOW AVAILABLE:



Annual Reports for 2011 are now available. You may pick up a copy from First Church, or you may request that a copy be mailed to you by contacting the Church Office at 423-0105 or via email: [FirstChurchinMC@gmail.com](mailto:FirstChurchinMC@gmail.com)

## PROGRESS REPORT

### ALLEY ENTRANCE:

Work continues on the east Alley entrance. At this point, the primary work has been completed. Work left to be completed includes the installation of a new gutter along the roof over the east Alley entrance; painting and carpeting of the new hallway; installation of the door (once all the parts arrive); staining and sealing of the newly installed triple pane windows; re-keying of the locks; and installation of the intercom.

While the Alley entrance is usable on weekends, please continue to use the Office entrance during the week.

If you are in doubt as to whether or not the church is accessible on a given day, please call 423-0105 before venturing over.

### PEW CUSHIONS:

The pew cushions that were ordered in November are due to arrive in late February/early March. There were production delays due to supply issues and worker shortages.

## THESE DAYS NOW AVAILABLE

The popular quarterly devotional, *These Days*, is once again available both in regular and in large print.

You may pick up a copy from First Church, or you may request that a copy be mailed to you by contacting the Church Office at 423-0105.

## FELLOWSHIP GROUP TO MEET

The next meeting of Church Fellowship will take place Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am in the Mason City Public Library's Commons, with hosts Marge Lundberg and Doris McCready.

This group is open to any and all (regardless of age, gender, or ability) who wish to enjoy the company of your First Church friends.

## 500 CARD CLUB

The next gathering of those playing the card game 500 will take place Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the home of Laura Lee Ewers.

## NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH?

If you need a ride to church, or to an event at the church (like Fellowship, Sunday School, or Worship), please contact Mary Olson at 424-4175 by 5:00 pm the day before. She will then coordinate transportation for you to get to Church☺.

### NEEDED: CO-FUNERAL COORDINATOR

Arnita Searle has stepped down as being one of our two Funeral Coordinators (Bren Ehlers currently serves as the other Funeral Coordinator).

We are in need of someone to serve as Co-Funeral Coordinator. The Funeral Coordinator coordinates refreshments for the receptions which typically follow funeral and memorial services.

Our current practice is to provide bars and beverages. If the family wishes to have something more elaborate, the family arranges for such items to be catered. The Funeral Coordinator then enlists volunteers to provide bars as needed, to serve the refreshments and then to clean up afterwards.

If you would be willing to help coordinate this extremely important ministry, please contact the Church Office or Pastor Patti.

## LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT SUNDAY – FEB. 5<sup>th</sup>!

Next Sunday, we are excited to welcome Dr. James Hammann back to First Church to lead us in Worship through music.

Due to Pastor Patti being away on Study Leave, there will be no Bible Study this week. Nor will there be Choir Rehearsal this Sunday.

At our **10:00 am Worship Service**, our scripture focus will be on Psalm 100. Dr. Hammann will play selections on the organ and on the harpiscord (which he's bringing☺). His focus will be on "Handel, Beyond *Messiah*".

**Following Worship**, there will be refreshments in the Stone Fellowship Room. Monthly Blood Pressure evaluations will be offered in the Church Office.

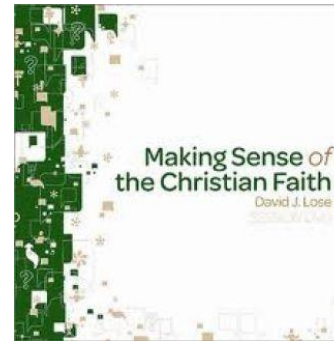
## PLEASE HELP!

We are in need of Sunday Hospitality Hosts and meal providers for Kids First, which takes place Wednesday nights. Signup sheets for both opportunities are posted in the Office Hallway.

**Hospitality Hosts** provide refreshments following Sunday Worship. Refreshment examples include cookies, bars, cheese and crackers, fruit and/or vegetable trays, or whatever suits your mood.

**Wednesday Meal Providers** feed 15-25 people a week during Kids First and feed 25-35 for seasonal activities such as the recent All-Church ADVENTures and the upcoming Lenten activities for All Generations. The meal is served from 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm, with activities and lessons following.

## NEW STUDY TO START THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16<sup>th</sup>



In anticipation of the upcoming Season of Lent, a group of us will be gathering soon to begin an exciting 8-week study called *Making Sense of the Christian Faith*.

There is no expectation that you have certain prior knowledge of the Bible or theology. Just bring your questions and openness to talk about matters of faith and life. I would be

very pleased if you could join us.

We will gather on Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup> in the First Church Meeting room.

We are meeting at 10:00 am, and will plan to meet for about 90 minutes.

Copies of the book used in the study are available for a \$15 deposit (returned when the book is returned in good condition) or for the cost of \$15. Please contact Pastor Patti for a book.

If you plan to join us, you will find it very helpful to have read the Introduction and first chapter of the book. But even if you haven't read the book ahead of time, come anyway.

It should be a very relaxed first gathering.

Contact me at First Church (423-0105), by mobile phone (424-6734) or by email at [revaurand@gmail.com](mailto:revaurand@gmail.com) with any questions.

~ Pastor Patti

## NEXT WEDNESDAY (February 1<sup>st</sup>) ...

From **5:30 pm – 7:00 pm**, Kids First (pre-school through 6<sup>th</sup> grade) will gather in the Dining Room. We will start with a blessing and a meal from 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm. From 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm, we will learn about “caring acts” through a variety of activities related to Mark 1:29-39.

At **7:00 pm**, the Choir will rehearse in the Music Room.

## DOGS TO DINE AT CHOP RESTAURANT



The DOGS (Dining Out Group) will next descend upon the Chop Restaurant in Mason City at 6:00 pm on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Chop is a new upscale restaurant opened by George Barlas, previous owner of the North Beach restaurant in Clear Lake and the Union Bar in

Iowa City. Located at 11 S. Delaware Avenue, Chop Restaurant offers steak, seafood and pasta entrees and includes salads, soups and more.

To make your reservation, please utilize the signup sheet in the Office Hallway.

## WINTER WEATHER REMINDER

When School is cancelled or dismissed early due to the weather, regular Church Programs are also cancelled or postponed.

Usually, the Church Office is open for regular or limited hours on those days.

If the weather causes Church Services or Church Programs to be cancelled or postponed, such notifications will be passed along through the **Calling Post** (the call arrives from **405-308-4474**) and **through email and on Facebook.**

*If you are uncertain as to whether a Church event has been called off, please call the Church at **423-0105**; or Pastor Patti at **424-6734** BEFORE you venture out!*



## LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SUNDAY – JAN. 29<sup>th</sup>

This Sunday, we will hold our 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

While there will be no Choir Rehearsal this Sunday, at **9:00 am** our Feasting on the Word **Bible Study** will continue. This week, participants will study Psalm 111 and consider how recounting God’s faithfulness to the covenant calls forth praise and strengthens faith.

At our **10:00 am Worship Service**, our service will be brief (in order to accommodate the Annual Meeting which will immediately follow Worship. Our scripture focus will be on Psalm 111 and Mark 1:21-28. Pastor Patti’s message will be on “*With Authority*”.

**Immediately following Worship**, the 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of First Congregational United Church of Christ will take place in the Sanctuary.

At approximately **11:30 am** (following the Annual Meeting), there will be a potluck lunch in the downstairs Dining Room.

Please bring a dish to share as well as your own table service (so no one gets stuck doing dishes all afternoon☺).

## PASTOR TO TAKE STUDY LEAVE

Please note that Pastor Patti will be away on Study Leave from Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> through Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>.



Please direct any pastoral emergencies to the Rev. Duane Lookingbill of the Osage United Church of Christ. Pastor Duane’s mobile number is 612-462-4480 and his email address is lookingbill@osage.net.

## LOST AND FOUND

A men’s gray, hooded, zippered, lined sweatshirt was found in the Stone Fellowship Room after Worship some time ago. If you, or someone you know, are missing such an item, it may be found hanging on the rack inside the Office entrance foyer.

Following the December 4<sup>th</sup> Jazz Big Band Coalition concert, a pair of black-framed glasses was found in the westernmost set of pews. They may be claimed in the Church Office.