

For Such a Time as This



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Loving and Giving During the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic may have given us an unwelcome visit this year, but that hasn't stopped FCC from worshipping together, planning a budget, having Board meetings, studying racism and anti-racism with book studies, praying, singing, calling out church leaders, distributing Kick-Off bags, preparing and serving meals for Food at First, all while social distancing, wearing masks, or gathering on Zoom.

Even the Stewardship Campaign will go on with a new theme this year: "For Such a Time as This: Loving and Giving During the Pandemic." Sue Prins has created a logo that signifies two hands enveloping a heart. 2020 at First Christian Church has been a year for growing spiritually, for accepting new challenges, and for ministering in the community with God's healing love. There will not be a devotional booklet this year due to the coronavirus, but you will receive daily devotional prayers

from November 1 to November 22 in your Stewardship packets. The month of November will include sharing from the Stewardship Team with our thoughts on giving of our time, talents, and treasure.

November 22 is Commitment Sunday, and pledges can be mailed to the church office or dropped off before that date. Please take time to prayerfully and carefully consider how God is asking you to give in 2021. You will be receiving a letter in the mail in late October. Now is the time for us to continue building bold faith together within our church, our community, and the world!

Cynthia Gaunt
Stewardship Team 2020



FCC Stewardship Daily Prayers for 2021

This year during our Stewardship season, you are invited to join in daily prayer and reflection using some of the prayers published in the First Christian Church Stewardship Devotionals in 2018 and 2019.

November 1: Dear Lord, Help us to know that we can and are a blessing in someone's life. Let us experience that opportunity to make a positive influence in someone's life. Amen. — Eileen Sambos

November 2: Dear God: Help us show our love in what we do. Out of our abundant treasure, may we bring forth much good fruit. — Corry Bertelsen

November 3: God, help us to realize that no matter what happens, we do belong: to others, and most importantly to You as Your children. Amen. — Tristan Cook

November 4: Holy God, we love because You first loved us. Send us your Spirit to guide us in (re)building bridges. May we invite the difficult conversations and do the hard work of reconciliation that brings us together. Bless us as we follow the way of Jesus. Amen. — Deb Lewis

November 5: Prayer from the Song Unity: Lord, help us live in peace. From our blindness set us free. Fill us with your healing love. Help us live in unity. — Jocelyn Digby

November 6: Equipping Creator, teach us to learn from our neighbors near and far about how to welcome the strangers in our midst. May our abundance be theirs as well. May their gifts join with our own. May we experience the joy, peace and satisfaction of mutual respect. In Your Good Name, Amen. — Janis Pyle

November 7: Gracious God, as we enter a season of stewardship, help us remember and celebrate one of the great mysteries of our faith—that the act of giving is one in which our



collective abundance grows, and never diminishes. — David Gregory

November 8: God, Whose giving knows no ending, guide us to make our choices based on love for others, to trust that You will provide for all our needs, to refuse to see the world as separate beings but instead to embrace the Oneness of all, and to have faith that our giving brings Your kingdom closer to earth as it is in heaven. Amen. — Meg Knol-Digby

November 9: God, help us to “let go” of the wrongs done to us. By forgiving, our hearts are opened to your inflowing love. — Darla Ewalt

November 10: Dear God, Help us to live with good intentions. We ask you to fill our hearts with a spirit of living and of giving guided to do your Holy works. Amen. — Cathy Krebs

November 11: God of abundance, you are with us, in us, beside us, over us and under us. Soak us with the deep understanding that we can share shockingly abundantly, too. Amen. — Janet Lott

November 12: Loving Father - We pray that you will be with us as we follow our individual paths in our service to you. May we learn from your son Jesus Christ and strive to be good shepherds with open and giving hearts as we listen to the Holy Spirit within us. In Jesus name we pray — Amen.
— Larry Mesenbrink

November 13: Thank you God, for those moments when we experience you rejoicing over us, and for the

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

moments when we let go and abandon ourselves to your love and goodness. May the joy, gratitude, and power of those moments free us to live as your beloved children. Amen.

— Pastor Mary Jane Button-Harrison

November 14: Dear God, we pray that you bring us joyful anticipation as we consider our financial support of First Christian Church and all its ministries. Amen. — Vern Hawkins

November 15: Bless us oh God, and the many gifts that you have provided. Thank you for instilling in us the quality of curiosity; about you, about each other and about your beautiful world and its diverse creatures and plants. May we constantly question how we can be the best stewards possible to keep the Christ spirit of giving, alive and thriving. Amen. — Mary VonAh-Gregory

November 16: Father God, I begin and end each day praising your holy name. You have blessed me with a spirit of gratitude. I am grateful for the tears I shed for those who are challenged by the trials of life. I am grateful for the abundant unmerited favor my family and I receive from you. I wake each day with hope and grace abiding in my spirit. I honor your faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

— DeLores Hawkins

November 17: Between the time I wake each morning and the time I sleep each night, help me remember that muscles need to be exercised, including my heart. — Charissa Menefee

November 18: God of love, help inspire our understanding of abundance and stir in our hearts a desire to live generously. Amen. — Stacey Maifeld

November 19: Dear God, Help me to make noise and be loud for love. Help me to overcome any anxiety about using my voice and my native tongue to counteract hateful and exclusive messages. Help me to spread love, loudly, wherever I go and to welcome everyone as you do. Amen. — Abby Schwartz

November 20: God, in these days with so many differing and strident voices yelling their truth at us, help us to listen quietly and thoughtfully for a revelation of the truth. Amen. — Sue Prins

November 21: God, I seek your inner peace, sometimes all I can do is repeat "Peace be still." Even in the midst of what appears to be 'chaos' I can choose to still my mind and fully focus on all the resources You have already given me. I feel my storm subsiding as I give You grateful thanks for the resources I already have. And from that gratitude I cheerfully pass a portion forward. — Don Withers

November 22: O God of Comfort, You are our source of strength and comfort and you give us opportunities to live out our Christian faith and share our spiritual gifts with those in need, as it says in Matthew 25:35-40, For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in ... Amen. — Cynthia Gaunt



Higher Education &
Leadership Ministries

of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Colleges &
Universities

Seminaries &
Divinity Houses



2020 Thanksgiving Offering
REJOICE
A special day offering of
Disciples Mission Fund

Thanksgiving Offering

Received from Sunday Nov. 15, through Nov. 22

The Thanksgiving Offering benefits the Colleges, Universities, Seminaries, and Divinity Houses affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). You may mail your offering to: First Christian Church, 611 Clark Avenue, Ames, IA 50010, or you may give generously [ONLINE](#). Make sure to designate your offering as "Thanksgiving Offering – Higher Education," from the Designation Dropdown List.

Living Faithfully in the Best and Worst of Times: Lessons from Joseph, Ruth, and Jonah

WORSHIP THEME FOR
September 13 – November 22
via Zoom Sundays at 10:30 am

UPDATED *Zoom Weekly Activity Schedule*

Sunday		
9:30 AM	Zoom Room Open Tech People Setup/ Check Musicians Practice	Online Link: fccames.org/ SundayWorship
10:00 AM	Fellowship Time Before Worship	Meeting ID: 835 4977 8613 Passcode: 789716
10:25 AM	Greetings Video	Phone Connection: 1 312 626 6799 ID: 83549778613#
10:30 AM	Worship	

Wednesday		
12:15 PM	Midweek Prayers Online Link: fccames.org/ WednesdayPrayers	Meeting ID: 826 9816 5415 Passcode: 645905 Phone Connection: 1 312 626 6799 ID: 82698165415#

Thursday		
10:00 AM	Coffee Fellowship Online Link: fccames.org/ CoffeeFellowship	Phone Connection: 1-312-626-6788 ID: 86790917856#

Keep this Schedule Handy

Updated Tuesday, September 1, 2020

Story of Ruth	
Oct. 25	Gleaning and Hope Ruth 2
Nov. 1	Daring to Act Ruth 3
Nov. 8	New Life Ruth 4
Story of Jonah	
Nov. 15	Running from God Jonah 1-2
Nov. 22	God's Justice and Ours Jonah 3-4

Alternatives to the Offering Plate

- You can always send a check through the mail to: First Christian Church, 611 Clark Ave., Ames IA 50010. If you add "Attention: Dave or Jeanne Fitz," the envelope will be delivered directly to our Financial Secretaries.
- Now might be a good time to set up, through your bank, some form of automatic payment to FCC. This can be done either as a direct deposit (in which funds are transferred electronically), or as online bill pay (in which your bank sends an actual check to the church). Contact FCC's Financial Secretaries, Dave or Jeanne Fitz (515-232-9306), for more information.
- You can also make your offering by debit card, credit card or PayPal, using the **DONATE** button on the FCC website. This button is also regularly included in the electronic version of *The Call*, and in the online *Weekly Update*. It's safe, secure, and convenient! For more information, contact the church office.

An Update from the FCC Trustees

Last month, we reported a year-to-date (YTD) income/expense deficit of roughly \$23,000, and this deficit has grown slightly, to just over \$24,000 (as of October 1). With 75% of the calendar year elapsed, we have received about 53% of our pledges. We are hopeful that, with your continued help, we will close this gap in the final quarter of 2020. In the meantime, we continue to have sufficient reserves in our general fund to pay our bills and meet our financial obligations.



Earlier this month, a letter was mailed from the church office to all those who have pledged for the current year, providing donors with a record of what they have given to date. We are pleased to report that there have been some responses to this mailing, and we are hopeful there will be more. We do understand that people have been impacted in very different ways by the pandemic. If you are unable to meet your full pledge, we understand and are deeply grateful for what you can give. If you are able to give beyond your original pledge, we greatly appreciate that as well.

As always, thank you for your generosity, and for helping to ensure that the church can continue its ministries and meet its financial obligations during these challenging times.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about the church's finances, please feel free to contact any one of your FCC Trustees.

--David Gregory (Chair),
Roger Bertelsen, and
DeLores Hawkins

UPDATED 10/20/2020



Thank you, CROP Walk Donors!

On Sunday October 11th, the 51st annual CROP Walk was celebrated in the greater Ames area. Unlike previous years' events, this one emphasized individual versus group walking, and remote versus person-to-person donations, proving that even the COVID-19 pandemic couldn't dampen enthusiasm for this popular, annual fundraiser. Thanks to the efforts of our walkers and the generosity of many people in our "extended family," the FCC congregation raised \$2,023 this year to fight hunger, in our local community and around the world. As in years past, 25% of the funds raised in the Ames-area CROP Walk will be distributed to local agencies involved in food security, including our own ministry partner, Food at First.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all who contributed their time, talents, donations, and support to this very worthy cause!

--The FCC CROP Walk Team
(Pastor Mary Jane Button-Harrison, Cynthia Gaunt, Mary and David Gregory, Vern Hawkins, Stacey Maifeld, Eileen Sambos, Scott and Tiffany and Anleah Walker)



Calendar

Pastor Mary Jane will be on vacation beginning Monday, October 19 through Monday, October 26.



Scheduled Meetings:

- ♦ **Elder's Circle**
Every Monday, 11:30 am via Zoon
- ♦ **Intercessory Prayers**
Every Wednesday, at 12:15 PM,
Coffee House
- ♦ **Leadership Group Meeting**
Monday, November 2 at 5:30 pm
- ♦ **ANTI-Racism Book Study**
Every Wednesday at 6:45—8 pm
via Zoom
- ♦ **Welcome Group Meeting**
Tuesday, November 3 at 9:30 am
- ♦ **Council of Ministries**
Tuesday, November 3, 5:00 pm
- ♦ **Faith Formation Team Meeting**
Tuesday, November 10, 6 pm
5 pm, via Zoom.
- ♦ **Property Meeting**
Tuesday, November 10, 7:15 pm
- ♦ **Trustees Meeting**
Monday, November 16, 7 pm



**Thursday, November 26, the Church
office will be closed in observation
of Thanksgiving Day**

Keeping Connected...



*One important way we can stay
connected during this time of
social distancing and shelter-in-
place is to continue to pray
with and for one another,
our community, and the world.*

You can now submit prayer requests using a new "Prayer Request Form" using this link: bit.ly/FCCPrayers. Using the form, you choose how extensive you'd like your prayer request shared.

One option is through our email prayer chain called "Prayers of the People." If you'd like to be part of that email prayer chain so you receive and can offer prayers, please sign up by clicking on this link: "[Prayers of the People](#)."

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Mary Jane, Administrative Assistant Liz Collazo, or ask an FCC Elder.



Opportunities to Serve

We are the Church...

You are the Church

In his many letters to churches, the Apostle Paul reminds believers that **WE are the church** — **We, the Body of Christ**. (Not a building.) With our talents and our gifts, we can serve one another, meet one another's needs, uplift one another, and BE Christ to one another. While for some, "church" has come to mean "building," Christians haven't always had a building in which they could worship. Instead, they had one another — the *true* Church.

While we may not be able to meet in our *building* right now, we CAN meet as the Church! Through Zoom worship, Zoom Coffee Fellowship, prayers, book studies, phone calls and letters, we can stay connected. We can BE the body.

We are here for you. Do you need...?

- Help with Zoom or other technology
— **never miss a Zoom gathering again!**
- Pre-stamped offering envelopes
- Church directories
- Church library books
- Fall Devotionals (small or large)
- Groceries
- Errands
- Someone to talk to



BUG ME! Email me at fccames@fccames.org or give the church a call at 515-232-5766. We are happy to place any items in the mail, or deliver them to you. **If you need help with Zoom, you may contact David Gregory at 708-9004, or Amy Kuehl at 520-1896, and they would be THRILLED to help you.**

We love and miss you, but we know we'll be together again soon.

— Liz Collazo
FCC Administrative Assistant



"Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift... The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..."
(Eph. 4:7;11)

- **GIVE your financial support to the Church.** Giving is a spiritual discipline and a commitment to the mission and vision of the Body of Christ. Even while we are not gathering in our building, the work of the church continues, and expenses keep coming in. Please keep supporting your Church during these challenging times.
- **FIGHT HUNGER** by joining FCC's core team of Food at First Volunteers by helping to serve a meal every first Saturday of the month. For more information, you may contact Cynthia Gaunt at cygaunt@hotmail.com. There are new guidelines in place to keep everyone safe, and ALL meals and markets will be **TO GO** now. Food at First also needs volunteers during the week. 515-344-4357.
- **BE ANTI-RACIST** by participating in anti-racism initiatives, Zoom book studies and topic exploration gatherings.

Thank you so much for what you do! Keep watching this box and respond as you are able. It takes a lot of people contributing their gifts to keep the ministry of FCC moving, growing and vital.

2020 Fall Women's Retreat Held Online

While it may not have looked the same this year, women from across the Upper Midwest still gathered together for the 2020 Fall Women's Retreat. This year's theme, "A Community Potluck," included a different "course" each evening from Sept. 23-26.

Typically this event takes place at Lake Koronis Retreat Center in Minnesota and includes a weekend of fun, relaxation, and learning together. This year, participants joined from their homes via computer, but the fun, relaxation, and learning continued. Keynote speakers, break out sessions, a talent show, and nightly vespers were some of the highlights from this year's event.

They even managed to pull off a virtual closing circle. This event takes place annually, so keep an eye out to join in 2021!



Around the Region — Things We Do Together

For more info or to register for events:

<http://www.uppermidwestcc.org/regional-newsletter-dte>

Below, @CCC = held at the Christian Conference Center

Oct. 22
Regional Operations Council Orientation Online

Oct. 29
Regional Operations Council Online

Nov. 6-7
Regional Committee on Ministry

**Love is an Action Word:
Identity, Theology, and
Faithful Care for the Community**

October 22, 2020
7pm ET | 6pm CT | 4pm PT

Invited Panelists:

Alan Dicken Brian Gerard Bere Gil Soto Margie Pride

REGISTER IN ADVANCE & christianchurchdoc

REGISTER

[View playlist of all town halls](#)

COME AS YOU ARE, YOU BELONG!

At First Christian Church we say, "Come as you are, you belong!" And we mean it! We welcome and bless all as we join together in following the way of Jesus. Recently, Ty Schwartz shared with the Elders a change in Ty's life. The Elders received this deep sharing with grace and affirmation. We hope you will receive the following letter from Ty in the same spirit.

FCC 2020 Elders *Darla Ewalt, Cynthia Gaunt, Mary Gregory, Vern Hawkins, Amy Kuehl, Deb Lewis, Gwen Mitzel, Sue Prins, and Pastor Mary Jane*

Friends,

I am so happy to be writing to all of you today! Many of you see me, hear me, speak to me. Perhaps more of you know my children. I treasure this relationship with all of you, our church family.

I have some news of a personal nature which I hope you will be happy to receive. It's something I've wanted to share for some time now, something that I've prayed about, sought guidance on, and waited for. Starting now, you will see my true and authentic self as a woman.

I want to stress again that I treasure my relationships. My family, Abby and I and our children Molly, Nevan, Killian, and Rowan, is still my family. My church family, all of you, is still my church family.

Moving forward, you can expect to see changes in my personal expression. My appearance and my speaking voice are changing, for example. As for my singing voice, while I retain my lower vocal range, I also sing in the lower female register and I generally prefer to do so.

This transition is a profound change, and I ask for God's grace and compassion throughout this process. Because I want to continue to build relationship with all of you, I also offer you grace and compassion, and I ask you for grace and compassion as well. Please support me in these ways:

1. Please call me Ty. Never call me by my old name.
2. Please use "she"/"her"/"hers" pronouns when referring to me.
3. Please refer others to read this statement from me before discussing this news with them.
4. Please seek information about transgender people from compassionate and affirming sources. The web site transequality.org is an excellent resource. For answers to deeper questions, including questions of theology, the church library has copies of a book called *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians*.
5. Please bring me your remaining questions. I would rather receive your difficult questions than allow them to create distance between us.

Much as I would like this transition to be quick, these kinds of life-altering changes take time. I don't expect that everyone can simply flip a switch and change how they think of me or refer to me. Please be respectful and make a conscious effort to use my preferred name and pronouns. It really helps me with my transition.

It is my sincere hope that all of you will be filled with joy, as I am filled with joy, to see the person God made me to be. Blessings be upon us all.

Ty Schwartz
(760) 297-0611
itschwartzb@gmail.com



News from the Pews

The Church office is currently closed to the public. But our office hours remain
9 am—2 pm , Monday-Thursday

Need anything? CALL US! 515-232-5766
Email Liz Collazo at: fccames@fccames.org

Stewardship Report

			Sept	YTD
Income:			\$25,801	\$159,639
Expenses:			\$26,559	\$183,795
Difference:			\$(798)	\$(24,161)

Congratulations to Tristan Cook, who joined First Christian Church by transfer of membership on Sunday, October 4th.

November Birthdays

- 01 Terrisa Clark
- 02 Amanda Mokaya
- 05 Tim Button-Harrison
- 09 Olivia Pendry
- 11 Liz Collazo
- 16 Dave Fitz
- 17 Hope Pogwizd
- 17 John Pendry
- 19 Scott Walker
- 26 Doug Clark
- 29 David Gregory
- 29 Anleah Walker



Congratulations to Amy Kuehl and Mark Holliday who were married on Friday, October 9th.



Keeping in tune with all things Above are Simone and Matilda Spitzli with their handmade 2020, First Christian Church did a Bible and Sunday school bag Sunday school bag! Isn't it presentation, "social distancing" awesome? style.

Below is Pastor Mary Jane presenting a Bible to Nevan Schwartz.



Thank you to everyone for their thoughts and prayers of concern for Eric Wierson. Eric has been found and is safe with his family.

Ways to Know What's Happening at FCC

- The Call Newsletter – 3rd week of the month
- Weekly News Update – an email sent every Thursday
- Prayers of the People – an email sent as needed
- Announcements during Sunday worship – every Sunday
- Word of mouth - ongoing
- Facebook – First Christian Church (Disciples) Ames

- Website - www.fccames.org

- **Our YouTube Channel**

To receive a hardcopy newsletter, please contact the church office.

To receive newsletter, news updates and prayers via email **please sign up by clicking on an icon below.**

Weekly
News Update



The
Call



Prayers
Of
The
People



Food at
First

Free Meal Program +
Perishable Food Pantry



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Food at First currently needs a dedicated volunteer for Friday afternoons from Noon to 3 pm, to help prepare "to go" meals and market offerings. They also need a person to help as a "floater," who can fill in when a volunteer is not able to do their shift. If you are interested, please contact Patty Yoder at 515-451-6967, or email her at patty@foodatfirst.com.



VOLUNTEER WITH THE
1ST ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOW,
WINTER WONDERSCAPE!

LIGHT UP YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON!

December 3, 2020 - January 2, 2021
Thursday - Saturday evenings available

ALL VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE
TWO COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS
TO THE LIGHT SHOW!

Email rgvolunteer@iastate.edu or call
515-294-8225 for more information!

www.ReimanGardens.com

The people of First Christian Church accept these values as core...

Genuinely accept, welcome and love everyone as Jesus did.

Connect people to God and to one another.

Cultivate an environment where people grow in faith and discipleship.

Celebrate everyone's gifts for ministry and encourage people as leaders.

Minister in the community with God's healing love.

Staff at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Ames, IA:

Minister:	Mary Jane Button-Harrison
Minister of Worship & Discipleship:	Tim Button-Harrison
Minister of Worship Arts:	Janet Lott
Administrative Assistant:	Liz Collazo
Worship Musician:	Ty Schwartz
Building Custodian:	Sherri Khan
Nursery Attendants:	Karen LeCount
Nursery Helper:	

Return Service Requested

Website: <http://www.fccames.org/>

Phone: (515) 232-5766

Ames, Iowa 50010-6137

611 Clark Avenue

(Disciples of Christ)

First Christian Church