

May 2022 Newsletter
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595
515-832-2232
<http://www.firstcongregationalwc.org/>

“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”—Matthew 8:20

Do you remember the first time you saw a bird’s nest? Even a child can sense there is something marvelous about them! Did you ever wonder how it was possible for a bird to make such a thing--so round, concave, sturdy...carefully woven together and mortared with mud? Who laid these plans in the bird’s brain? It is an amazing thing to watch birds create nests for holding and hatching and brooding their young, and Vicki and I have again been treated to a close-up display of this miracle by our front door-- thanks to a finch and her consort weaving a nest in a plastic wreath stapled to the house. It has been delightful to see the new life appearing in this nest—balls of fluff so awkward and silly, necks craned to the heavens and beaks agape begging for food. It seems that Life takes such tender care of her youngest and most vulnerable—at least for a while. Then as the chicks become fledglings the parents become impatient, and the would-be birds, hungry and anxious, tumble from the nest and either fly, or hop...or die. There is something in this part of the bird’s life cycle that has always struck me as dissatisfying, almost cruel. Young birds often leave the safety of their nests even before they are ready to soar and seek the safe high branches. I have seen fledglings hopping and chirping madly, angry and frightened while anxious bird-parents flutter and chatter warnings to cats and children and would-be rescuers. That so many chicks die in this most vulnerable time is God’s heartbreaking and almost shameful secret. Why do they leave their nests before they are ready? Why are they not taught to seek their safety and remain in their parents’ care until the danger of their un-development has passed? Why must there be the sight of a young, sweet chick lying motionless in the grass or on the pavement, taunting us with the message that Life will protect us and cherish us for only so long...and then we will be thrown into the world and left on our own--to struggle, to fight, or die?

We have been trying to make our peace with this kind of heartbreak as long as we have held two thoughts together—we humans who are obsessed with the why’s of life. The fledgling flutters and hops, screeches and chatters—and lives or dies but knows not why. And we...we brood, we scream, we beg and pray that Life never stop holding us with the tender care of a chick in a nest. And when it doesn’t, we brood, we scream, we beg and pray for strength, for answers...and to feel again the comfort of the nest from which we came, which held the promise that Life indeed cares for us, and holds us dear and safe.

There once was a man from Galilee who left the nest of his home and willingly wandered to bring peace to our heartbreak. He dared to tell us that in spite of all appearances there is One who knows us all and loves us with a perfect love. He walked with those whose wings were clipped, or broken; those who never learned how to fly and so never knew the sky. He mended wings, and he taught broken spirits how to soar to Heaven’s heights and see with new eyes and new hearts. His heart was like a mother bird’s nest that could never be overfilled, and as each lost and frightened and flightless soul took refuge in his love, they again found their wings and their trust in Life. He taught them to make of their hearts nests of love, and he bid them share their love-nests with the wounded and timid and flightless among them so they would be safe and cared for as they learned to grow their wings and soar. For this kindness they killed him--they who wanted broken wings and broken lives instead of brothers and sisters with whom to share the sky. But God would not allow the beloved Son to be eternally grounded by them, and in his rising, we can again regain our trust in life, in God...and in our wings.

Friends, these days the world can seem heartless, cold, and filled with uncertainty, and our nest-mates who are our neighbors can feel alien, indifferent, even hostile to us, and we to them. But the one who offered his life as a love-nest to us all bids us to do the same. Each of us can reach out to others who are struggling to soar and offer our hearts to them as safe haven until they again learn to fly. Each of us can lift each other with our small acts of kindness, our words of encouragement, and the simple gift of our love which leads us always heavenward. We can circle round the broken and bereaved as we tenderly care for their damaged wings, until they again learn to fly. For we were not created to soar alone, nor to be grounded by anxious uncertainty and troubled hearts. Let us then learn from the birds and from Jesus, and make love nests of our hearts and lives! –Pastor Craig

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

M 8 am - 1 pm
 T 9 am – 1 pm
 W 8 am – 4:30 pm
 Th 8 am – 4:30 pm
 F 9 am – 1 pm

28 – Diana & Nick Oberender
 29 - Dan & Donna Ryherd

Church Staff

Rev. Craig Blaufuss, Pastor
 Office: 832-2232 Cell 297-4316
 Pastor's email: revcraigblaufuss@gmail.com
Michele Omvig: Admin. Assist. 269-7210
 Church's e-mail: administrative.office@fcuccwc.org
Dale Olson: Stephen Ministry Ldr 839-5619
Sunshine Duffy: Choir Director 835-7626
Melissa Hindt: Organist 712-351-1074
Curt/Lorraine McCoskey: Cust's. 832-5341
Tracy Wehrhan: Church Treasurer 297-0370
Dale Olson: Financial Secretary 839-5619



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

11 - Lauren Leman
 11 - Mabel Prescott
 11 – Eli Imhoff
 11 – Thomas Arnold
 16 - Neil Oberender
 19 - Gretchen Bruner
 22 – Ed Mosbach
 26 - Carol Crystal
 27 – Isabelle McNiel
 28 – Kasyn Weig
 29 - Linda Lahr

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

7 - Craig & Vicki Blaufuss
 17 - Tracy & Glenda Wehrhan



Good Health care without cutting corners -

- Ask about the risks and benefits of taking a less expensive option if one is available.
- Tell your doctor you'd like to seek a second opinion before you agree to a major test or procedure.
- When your doctor prescribes a medication, ask if there is a generic or over-the-counter version available'
- Check your local stores for offers of free or \$4 prescriptions for selected medications.
- If your health plan offers mail-order prescription services, you may be able to save if you buy a 90-day supply of a medication you take regularly.

Women's Fellowship

Plymouth Circle will meet for an 11:30 am lunch on May 12th at the new Mexican restaurant, La Perla Jarocha.
 Haystack Circle will have a salad supper on May 11 at 6:00 pm.
 The entire Women's Circle groups will have a year end celebration on May 25 at 7:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome to enjoy this dessert event.

Thrift Sale

Thank you to the congregation for their support of the thrift sale. By bringing items and working the sale we have raised over \$1500. This will

give us money to give to those in need around the community. Thank you again and I so appreciate your help and support.

The sale will be on again Friday, April 29 for those who would like to shop from 3 to 6 PM. Then we will be cleaning it up and storing it downstairs for the next sale. If you would like to help be there at 5:55 and we will start the cleanup thank you.

KLAB concludes May 11

Our after-school program, Kids Learning About the Bible, will conclude the 2021-2022 program year on Wednesday, May 11 with our annual trek to the Dairy Queen, followed by an afternoon at East Twin Park. Pick up time will be at 5 pm at the church. This year has been a challenge with the pandemic, but we give thanks to God that we have been able to meet at all so that our kids could continue to learn about our faith, socialize in our church setting, have some fun, and remake connections to each other, to our adult leaders, and to our church. Many thanks to Vicki Blaufuss and Susan Meinders for leading the group, to Ginnie Veach for setting up our snacks, and to Wil Groves for assistance with the kids and leading our Easter Video project. We had planned to hold a lock-in for KLAB on May 20th, but those plans have been changed. We will set a new date for the lock-in and announce that soon!

Adult Education Concludes May 22

Our Adult Education classes will conclude Sunday, May 22, for our annual summer recess. We have been meeting in the Multi-Purpose room beginning at 9:00 am since the Cabinet voted to allow resuming in-person meetings in the church. Previous to that we were meeting remotely via Zoom. I want to thank all of our participants for meeting and thoughtfully discussing the variety of topics we have studied this year! –Pastor Craig

Confirmation Sunday is May 22

Confirmation Sunday will be held May 22 beginning at 10 am as part of our worship service. This year's confirmation classes have been a real challenge with the pandemic, illnesses, early school dismissals and busy schedules! Our last Confirmation class will be Wednesday, May 18, beginning at 1:30 pm.

Summer Worship Hours and Saturday Service Dates

Our summer worship hours will remain at 10:00 am, which is the start time for worship services we have been using since we returned to in-person worship services on Palm Sunday (March 28) 2021! During the summer months we will hold 3 Saturday evening services: June 25, July 23, and August 27. Saturday services will begin at 5 p.m., and following our Saturday services there will be no Sunday morning worship service that weekend. If the weather allows, we will hold these Saturday services outdoors; please look for more details in the coming months.

Beacon of Hope Meal

Our next Beacon of Hope meal will be Tuesday, May 31. Menu is Tater Tot casserole, Rainbow jello salad, bread and butter sandwiches, and bars. Sign-up sheet will be posted on Sunday the 1st. If you haven't served or provided a meal - please consider doing so.

Stepping Forward Romania

Steve Mather is requesting work teams of 4-6 people for building cabins and a dining hall between May 10- June 25 so they can continue to house Ukrainian refugee families and also have the weekly summer camps for children starting in June. Dan and Donna Ryherd are going in mid-May for a two-week period and invite any other individuals to join them (1 or 2 weeks). Requirements are a current passport, Covid vaccination, pay your airfare, and be willing to follow Steve's leadership- No experience in construction is necessary and all in-country expenses are covered (housing, food, transportation). Of course, experience in construction, framing, roofing, plumbing and electrical are a big plus! Please contact the Ryherds asap if you have interest at ryherddd@gmail.com or call 515-835-8016 (Donna) or 515-822-3125 (Dan).

Coming in June

Mission Board will be setting out a table to collect food items for the food pantry at UDMO during the month of June. According to Jamie at UDMO the need is great at this time and all gifts are welcome and needed. We will be focusing on shelf stable items such as peanut butter,

pasta, pasta sauce, rice etc. A pickle jar will be available if you would prefer to make monetary donation. So, if you like to plan ahead and be prepared, this is a heads up for June!

Thanks

Thank you for your generous gift of money, pet food and supplies. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you again, Almost Home

UDMO would like to thank you for your generous monetary donation. We've been very busy helping families in need. Thank you so much for your continued support!

Sincerely, UDMO Staff

The Women's Fellowship thrift sale was a success! The sale was Saturday, April 23, 8am-2pm., then it was continued Sunday afternoon, and Friday, April 29 from 3-6 pm.

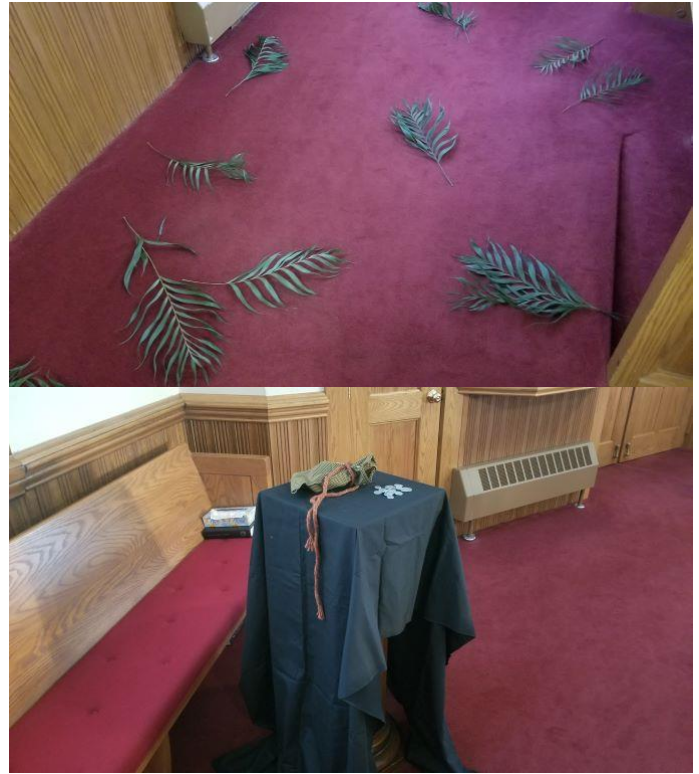
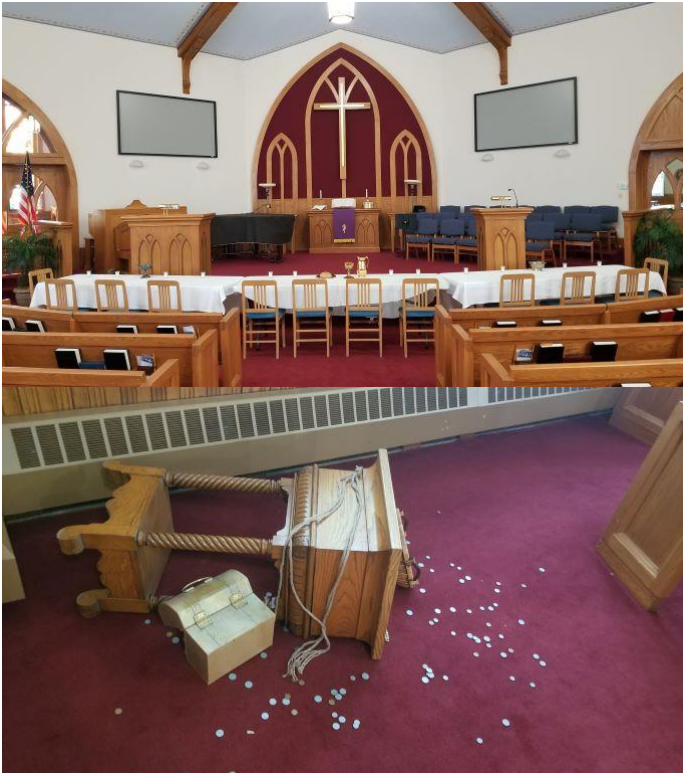


The Christian Ed Board sponsored our Easter Breakfast, back after 2 years of the pandemic. Over 50 people attended and enjoy a good breakfast before our Easter worship service.



Our first in-person Maundy Thursday worship service since the pandemic began traced some of the events of Holy Week leading up to the Last Supper. Worshippers shared Holy Communion while seated at the tables in the front of the sanctuary.





Treasurer's Report

<u>INCOME</u>	March	YEAR TO DATE
Pledges and Offerings	\$21,068.87	\$47,260.87
Other Income	0.00	.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$21,068.87	\$47,260.87
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	1,416.67	\$4,249.97
Pastoral Services	8,046.50	24,479.70
Maintenance and Repairs	4,648.89	8,826.96
Church Office	2,998.08	9,016.11
Music Ministry	487.30	1,223.55
Christian Education	0.00	0.00
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	67.98	481.49
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$17,665.42	\$48,277.78

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Webster City, Iowa

Cabinet Meeting held on April 12, 2022

Members Present:

Moderator:	Joyce Gelhaus	Pastor:	Craig Blaufuss
Vice Moderator:	Wil Groves	Trustees:	
Finance Sec.:		Women's Fellowship:	Joyce Gelhaus
Finance :	Tracy Wehrhan	Mission:	Gayle Olson
Staff/Parish:		Worship:	Curt McCoskey
Christian Ed:	Vicki Blaufuss	Evangelism:	Patty Gescheidler
Treasurer:	Tracy Wehrhan	Clerk:	Stephanie Hill

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by the Moderator, Joyce Gelhaus in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a prayer. Wil Groves moved that the March Cabinet meeting minutes be approved. Tracy Wehrhan seconded. The motion passed.

Board and Committee Summaries:

Treasurer's Report: March offerings exceeded March expenses by about \$3,000.00. Year-to-date expenses exceed offerings by \$1,000. A general fund bond came due last month. The proceeds were used by purchase another bond for 4.5% interest. Tracy Wehrhan moved and Wil Groves seconded a motion that the report be put to audit. The motion passed. **Finance Board:** The board reviewed its section of the constitution and determined that no changes were needed. **Christian Education:** The video of the Palm Sunday play performed by the children of the church was well received. Christian Education is sponsoring Easter breakfast at 9:15 Sunday morning. There will be Easter Eggs; the golden ones will be worth a prize. **Evangelism:** Patty Gescheidler reported that the Homecoming Potluck held March 20th was a great success. A big THANK YOU to all who participated. **Mission:** The basket from UCC for the D\SAOC auction had a bid of \$80.00 last week. That was not the final bid. One Great Hour of Sharing collection was \$870.00. Ukrainian Appeal - \$800.00 has been collected so far. The collection will continue until the end of the month. May 1st is the scheduled date for Mission to do coffee, however, it is possible that a baptism will take place that day. Brownie Sundae date is Friday, June 17 from 6:30 to 8:00. Posters and sign-up sheets will be out closer to that date. Teacher Appreciation Week is May 2nd to May 6th. Mission board is looking at treating teachers to a donut from Pete's Donuts. The pickle jar will be out for this. Earth Day is April 24th. The board will be working on a poster and giving away wildflower and pollinator seed packets. Mission Board encourages folks to pick up trash around town on your own. **Trustees:** Pastor Craig reported that Joyce Gelhaus trimmed up the trees. Thank you to Joyce. The water lines in the church are fixed as well as the drinking fountain and the elevator door. The rugs were shampooed. An electrical panel is still being worked on. The downstairs area needs to have stuff cleaned and sorted. **Women's Fellowship:** Thrift Sale will be held April 23, 2022 for just this one Saturday. Yard signs can go up Easter Monday. Items can be dropped off on April 20th. A home was found for the glass luncheon plates. They will be going to Kendall Young Library for DIY projects. The top of the refrigerator was cleared off and those items like coffee packets are stored elsewhere. May 25, 2022 will be the Women of the Church Celebration. **Worship:** Saturday services will be held June 25, July 23 and August 27 outdoors in the vacant lot. The owners have given us permission to use it. The new communion protocol went well, but will be modified slightly to reduce congestion. Substitutes for Melissa Hindt are being sought for the times she cannot play for the service. **Pastor's Report:** Services at Southfield and Windsor Manor have resumed with enough participation that a 6-week rotation is possible. Crestview will participate by summer hopefully. Maundy Thursday service will be held on the 14th of April. The Spring Homecoming Potluck was a great success. Confirmation will take place on May 22, 2022 with 4 confirmands. The lock-in originally planned for May is rescheduled for June.

Old Business:

Constitution Committee: Will meet in early May. Each board or committee is to review their section of the constitution and suggest any changes they want to make.

Getting Church Members Back: Cabinet members had a lengthy discussion on what can be done to bring members back into the church. An example was the Celebration potluck. Also discussed were the consequences of the reducing membership with closure being a possible outcome. This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

New Business:

Basement Clean-up: The basement has areas with items that need cleaned and sorted. Trustees will organize this effort.

Visioning process: Cabinet members discussed the need of a Visioning Process. Is this something we need to do to envision the church in, say 10 years? This topic is connected to getting church members back into the church and was tabled.

Next meeting is May 10th, 2022 at 7:00pm

Respectfully submitted, Stephanie Hill, Church Clerk

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

WORSHIP BOARD We thought the serving of Communion April 3 went well but will take steps to be sure people have a bit of time between the serving of bread and of juice/wine. Pastor Craig will prepare and serve the elements for Communion Maundy Thursday, April 14. Jane and Gretchen will prepare the elements for Easter. Don and Marjorie will be the stewards. Women's Fellowship asked that the communion supplies – cups, trays, cloth napkins – be moved to the north end of storage under the counter. Melissa Hindt is not available for accompanying several upcoming services. Pastor Craig and Gretchen will check with Josi Greenley, Peggy Owen and Kolleen Taylor. We continue to seek pianists/organists for times Melissa is not available to play. We propose Saturday services be held at 5

p.m. on June 25, July 23 and August 27, instead of Sunday morning. The vacant lot's new owners have given permission to use it. For Mother's Day, Don will get carnations for the women of the church. We'll plan recognition for the men on Father's Day at a future meeting. The choir will sing on Easter Sunday. They will sing a familiar song and rehearse briefly before the Maundy Thursday service. The Worship Board next meets May 5, 3:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BOARD Lenten Luncheon Comments – 96 people attended; could have been a bit louder; Program by Sarah Ostlund was very meaningful; would like more than 1 luncheon next year if able. Thrift Sale – Cindy will get info to radio, newspaper & WCF; if you put out a sign in your yard to advertise sale, please get a new one with new times in the office, also get a new stake if you need one; put signs out Monday, April 18th; sign-up to work in circle or on Fellowship Hall table. Kitchen Cleaning is completed. Plymouth Circle pulled the glass snack trays & cups and placed on a table in Fellowship Hall, reserving 3 dozen sets for future use. Those placed on table will go on Thrift Sale unless someone can use them. Stephanie will ask craft person at Library if they want for adult crafts. Removing those trays freed up space in cupboards. Discussion held about moving some things around to get stuff on top of fridge in cupboards now. NEW Dessert Plates – Mary Van Diest has offered to purchase a lightweight melamine type plate for coffee or dessert events instead of using paper. **Discuss in your circles for comments.** May Dessert All Circle meeting - May 25 at 7 pm. Each circle is responsible for 3 desserts, each able to serve 15- 20. We will distribute our funds at that time. **Please ask in your circle for ideas of who to give to.** We will ask someone to come receive money and give a short description of how they use the money. We want to encourage ladies from entire church to join us. Stephanie will gather names of those to invite and Cindy will invite someone from the organizations we are giving money to. Officers for next year – Patty Gescheidler will be a co-chair; Verna Bierle will be treasurer; Cindy Henning will be secretary. **We still need a Co-Chair to work with Patty. Ask in your circles for a volunteer.** Nursing home Birthday Parties – as of now they are not open for this. We will re-visit this item next year. Next meeting is May 4th.

MISSION BOARD Beacon of Hope Meal: Craig reported that about 35 people were served at the B of H meal on March 10th which was served by the confirmands. Only about 2 lbs. of meat were left and none used the Doritos in the walking taco format as was intended. The youth were on the younger side and did not yet feel comfortable sitting with the B of H clients. However, it was a great experience for them. Responsibilities for other offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing on March 27th – Karin Yungclas Strengthen the Church on June 5th – Gayle Olson; Neighbors in Need on October 2nd - Stephanie Hill; Christmas Fund on Christmas Eve – Andrea Mosbach. Karin will have an announcement in the bulletin on March 20th and 27th. Envelopes will be in pews on the 20th.

New Business: Serving coffee: We discussed serving coffee and keeping it a snack rather than 'brunch'. We decided that 3 persons would serve at a time. Andrea, Gayle and Sherry agreed to serve May 1st. Popcorn, Jelly beans in dixie cups and muffins were considered. D/SAOC-Cake auction: This year the auction will be online April 7 through April 12. Baskets rather than cakes will be auctioned though some people will be adding cake mixes. The baskets are due March 18, but if we can get one to them in March, it can be included. The theme for our basket is Family Outside Games. We will ask one of the talented carpenters to construct a corn hole set. The pickle jar will be set out as time is short. Teacher Appreciation Week: is May 2nd to May 6th. Gayle Olson is in charge of this. There are roughly 139 teachers in the system which means that either 12 dozen or 24 dozen cookies will be needed. Questioned whether to include aides (paras). Ukraine Appeal UCC: The pickle jar will be set out in April to collect for this urgent issue. All funds will go to the UCC national office. Next Beacon of Hope meal: will be scheduled in May. Andrea Mosbach is in charge and is planning tater tot casseroles. Food Drive: will occur in June or July. Will be discussed in subsequent meetings. Brownie Sundae Drive-through: planned for the end of June or early July. Will also be discussed in subsequent meetings. Theologian in Residence in Ames: Gayle brought to our attention that Brooks Berndt, the UCC Minister for Environmental Justice will host a Zoom meeting April 23 and 24 on Environmental Justice. Clean-up event: This action event is tabled for now. Ideas for other ways to help the environment are being sought. Next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2022 at 5:15 at the church.

STAFF/PARISH MEETING Cindy volunteered to be the chairperson, Mary Van Diest volunteered to be secretary and Holly will be our cabinet representative. Cindy said she would fulfill Holly's position while Holly is recuperating from surgery. Cindy read the review from the annual report the duties of the Staff/Parish Committee. The committee agreed to meet 4 times a year and on demand if a situation arises that needs to be taken care of immediately. In May the committee members will meet with organist (Melissa Hindt) – Mary Vavroch; Administrative Assistant (Michele Omvig) – Cindy Henning; Custodian

(Curt McCoskey) – Mary Van Diest. A letter of resignation was received from Sunshine Duffy from her duties as choir director. She stated that family and her work did not leave her adequate time to fulfill the duties as choir director. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 1:00 pm at the church.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD The Live Nativity in December was a big success. Many church members and friends, young and old, participated in the display. Several cars of onlookers drove slowly by and many took pictures. We look forward to doing it again this December. The Confirmation class prepared, delivered and served the March 9 Beacon of Hope meal consisting of Walking Tacos.

Approximately 35 men were served. **NEW BUSINESS KLAB:** The KLAB class has grown to 10 participants. There are KLAB registration slips for new kids that need to be obtained. Wil is going to lead an Easter skit performed by the KLAB class. It will be presented on Palm Sunday, either live or by video. Pastor Craig will contact parents to determine if KLAB students are available to be in church on Palm Sunday. Practices will be held during the two KLAB classes before Palm Sunday. KLAB Easter party. Skit practice will be first. Proposed last day for this school year is May 18. KLAB classes are being extended longer than in the past, due to many Wednesdays school early outs and Spring break. The traditional KLAB trip to Dairy Queen and possibly East Twin Park will take place on the last day, May 18. They will return to the church and receive their Certification of Completion. A suggestion was made for Participation Sunday that a video of the year's KLAB and Confirmation activities would be made and presented to the congregation in Worship. In the past students and teachers were recognized, but because of the unavailability of these people, a video was recommended by Pastor Craig.

Future discussions will be held by the Board whether to split KLAB into 2 sections next year, younger and older. Pastor Craig could lead the older group, as there are currently no kids eligible for the next confirmation class, depending on what the current confirmation class decides for the ending date this year. **Confirmation:** Pastor Craig will visit with the Confirmands and their parents on the status and progress of the class. Due to many Wednesdays' school early outs and Spring break, the class is behind in their learning materials. A decision will be made as to when confirmation is going to be completed. The materials will not be covered by Pentecost Sunday when traditionally the Confirmation is over and participants are recognized. The Christian Education Board will be sponsoring an Easter breakfast for the congregation on Easter Sunday at 9:15 a.m. The Board will provide quiche, pastries, fruit, coffee and juice. Paper plates and regular silverware will be used. Quiche - Pastor Craig, Pastry – Patty, Susan, Wil Fruit – , Juice – Dawn. There will be no special activities for the kids on Easter Sunday morning, as done in the past. A Lock-in will be planned for May 20 at 7:00 p.m. Chaperones are needed. Pastor Craig will contact parents for availability of kids. An article will be in the April Newsletter about klab activities leading to the end of year. There was a discussion on giving Bibles out to the Youth. Pastor Craig is going to do some research on a more age-appropriate version (i.e., illustrated story of Jesus). The Board briefly discussed if there are any suggestions for changes to the constitution regarding the Christian Education Board. The Constitution Committee will be contacting Boards for their input.

PASTOR'S CABINET REPORT Worship: We have been working our way through the season of Lent in Worship, and Holy Week begins April 10 with Palm Sunday. We will hold Maundy Thursday Worship in the sanctuary at 7 p.m., with communion. Easter Sunday worship with communion will be at 10 a.m., after the Christian Ed Board's Easter Breakfast beginning at 9:15. I have resumed a monthly Gospel Hour at Southfield, now in the afternoon beginning at 1:30 for the Care Center, and then 2: 15 at the Assisted Living area. (This is a new schedule for Southfield.) Josi Greenley will cover for Melissa on Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday.

Spring Homecoming Celebration: We had a wonderful Sunday at church on March 20 with a homecoming worship service and a pot-luck following the service. During the meal we collected Happy Dollars for the Agape Fund, and there were door prizes for attendees --as well as a lot of great food! It was wonderful to get together again as a church and share a meal. Thanks to Patty Gescheidler and Ginnie Veach of the Evangelism Board for organizing this event!

Christian Education: The KLAB students have been rehearsing for their Easter skit, to be presented as a video on Palm Sunday. We had hoped for a live performance but there were too many anticipated absences to make that a reality. The Confirmation class cooked and served the Beacon of Hope meal on March 8. The menu selected was walking tacos. Thanks to the congregation for providing the needed ingredients; we served about 35 men. The Confirmation class has studied the Holy Spirit, and now they are studying the Paul and the Epistles, and the Church. Confirmation Sunday has been postponed due to the number of classes missed for various reasons. We are now looking at May 22 for Confirmation Sunday, but that date is not yet firm. Adult Ed continues to meet Sunday mornings at 9 a.m., and we are currently exploring the topic "Neurotheology."

WCMA: The WCMA met at Good Shepherd Episcopal church on March 23rd in my absence. The group continues to be very supportive and collegial, which is a blessing! Asbury will hold their VBS July 11-14, from 1-4 p.m. Other churches are encouraged to share their VBS dates with the group. The group did

revise the Ecumenical Human Needs financial support to \$700/yearly, up from \$400. They also voted to apply for a grant from the Teresa Treat Stearns Trust. Care Center services at Windsor and Southfield did resume March 27, with good attendance at both places!

UCC Tri-Conference: Rev. Kendy Miller held a zoom meeting with me Thursday March 10 for a check-in and to discuss church and Conference matters. She is encouraging me to rejoin our local clergy cluster group which meets monthly at Humboldt. She also advised me that another Associate Conference Minister, Ellis Arnold, has resigned. They have hired 2 new support staff. On March 30 I attended a Conference-wide Zoom meeting on "congregational discernment."

Shalom Circle has been meeting weekly in the East Chapel through Lent.

The breakdown of my ministry since March 8:

Worship services led:8; Christian Ed:8; Meetings:11; Visitation :13

Vacation Dec 25-Jan 1

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1000 Willson Avenue
Webster City, IA 50595
Address Service Requested

God is still speaking
to everyone in the home of:

