

**April 2023 Newsletter**  
**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
**1000 Willson Avenue - Webster City, Iowa 50595**  
**515-832-2232**  
**<http://www.firstcongregationalwlc.org/>**

*“...just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*  
–Romans 6:4 ESV

One year I received an email on Maundy Thursday from the Guided Meditation site that came with this heading: “Here is your special Easter Discount coupon.” The body of the email said this: “We wish you a very happy and of course relaxing Easter! Hopefully you will have some time to simply relax and enjoy your long weekend. If you are finding it difficult to unwind, maybe try a guided meditation or soothing meditation music to ease you into a more relaxed mindset. As a subscriber of The Guided Meditation Site, we are pleased to give you a 'Special Easter Discount' coupon. All you have to do is enter 'EASTER' in the coupon section of your shopping cart to receive a 20% discount on all of our products! Happy Easter!”

Well, I’m not sure I approve of using Easter as a marketing ploy to sell guided meditations—especially when Easter was only referred to as a “long weekend” during which it may be difficult to unwind. The ad struck me wrong, and I found myself thinking “Who gets Easter?” and I mean that in two ways: who “gets” Easter as in who understands it, who grasps the fullness of its message...and I also mean it in the sense of who “owns” it. Who gets to define Easter? Who gets to control its meaning, and who gets to use it for their own purposes?

Do companies like Paas and Peeps and Cadbury and all the other businesses that trade on the Easter business “get” Easter? Do they get to tell us what Easter means, that Easter is pastel colors and sugary sweetness?

Do families “get” Easter? Do family get-togethers and large family dinners encapsulate the meaning of Easter? Is everything else about Easter a subplot supporting the main plot of getting the brood together to share family time on a long weekend?

Do the skeptics and scoffers “get” Easter? There are atheists who dismiss the entire story as a nonsensical imaginary tale...and neo-pagans are quick to remind us that Easter is actually about Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, and that Christians appropriated a lovely pagan festival for their own celebration! Do non-Christians get Easter? Do they get to tell us what it means, and how—or if—we are to even honor it?

Does the Christian religion “get” Easter? From time to time we hear about riots in Jerusalem at the church of the Holy Sepulcher, as fellow Christians protest and turn violent over who gets to claim that Easter space as their own. What an astonishing way to “get” a holy day that honors the one who gave his disciples a new commandment to love one another, *so that everyone would know we are his disciples...by our love!*

And do individual Christians “get” Easter? Yes, it’s our holiday, so we “get” it...it is ours to observe and celebrate. But do we as Christians really *get* it? In the sense of understanding its mystery, its importance, its good news? That’s a little harder to answer, isn’t it? I’m a Christian—or at least I think I am...and I’m not sure I *get* Easter. When it comes to Easter, I’ve been all over the map. As a child I was mesmerized as I heard the story with an accepting, uncritical mind. I’ve been a skeptic, not sure if it’s really possible for this story to be literally true. I’ve been a doubting Thomas—a lot! Unless I see those nail holes and the gaping wound in his side—I will not believe. I’ve been perplexed and confused...I want to believe, but I’m not sure what Jesus rising from the dead really means. Does it mean I’m saved? Does it mean that the world has changed? Will I rise from the dead on the great day of judgment—is that the hope? Or am I missing something else? Does Easter mean something more?

Well, fellow Christians, we “get” Easter—It’s our holiday, it’s our “holy day” to celebrate however we see fit...

And we “get” Easter whether we *get* it or not, whether we understand it or not, and believe it or not. When you think about it, Jesus gave us quite a gift, this Easter business! Although it’s really more of a *puzzle* than a gift. But maybe that *is* its gift...Easter as a puzzle.

That way we get to wrestle with Easter like Jacob wrestled with that angel and ended up with the new name “Isra-El,” which means “God- wrestler.” We get to try to figure out how it is good news that a good man was killed by jealous, confused and frightened people, sealed in a tomb...and then came out alive on the third day.

Now we get why he was killed. That’s what the world does to good men like Jesus—nothing new there. But why did he come back? Why, even after he said “it is finished”...why wasn’t he finished with *us*? Now I know we have church answers to that question. We all been told what Easter means—at least once a year. But what does it mean that a man would love you so much that he would be willing to *die* to help you...and then be willing to come back to life to *continue* helping you?

What does it mean that a man would be literally tortured to death, yet even while he was suffering in anguish he prayed “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do?” He wasn’t just praying for his torturers. Wasn’t he also praying for all of us who go about our lives bungling things up, hurting others, wasting our lives, wasting opportunities to be loving, helpful people.... because we know not what we do?

What does it mean that someone who *loved* like Jesus loved was raised from the dead, and is now exalted to the right hand of God? Does it mean that the kind of love Jesus embodied is of supreme importance? Does it mean that we need to take love more seriously, and work at it more intentionally? Does it mean we need to surrender to it more completely, and let it change everything about us?

And what does it mean that Easter is a sign of new life, and new beginnings? That Easter is Jesus’ testimony on behalf of God, who wants us to resurrect to new lives, too? Does Easter mean setting aside our bitterness, our anger, our pessimism, our despair, our aimlessness and our hopelessness so we can live the lives we were created to live? So we can come out of the tombs we have been living in, and resurrect to blessed and holy and empowered and loving lives?

So what *does* Easter mean to you? How do you “get” Easter? And what will you do with it—this year, and next year, and the year after that?

Friends, Holy Week is upon us once again, and my prayer for us all is that this year we all “get” Easter a little more; a little deeper; with a little more joy than we ever have before! And I pray that the power of God, which filled a crucified, dead and buried man 2000 years ago and brought him out of a tomb to a new life..

Will fill each of *us* with new life! And not just on Easter Day, but every day! Happy Easter! –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



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- 2 - Karin Yungclas
- 4 - Sherry Leksell
- 9 - Wil Groves
- 9 - Lynn Leksell
- 12 - Mya MacRunnel

- 13 - Karla Krebs
- 15 - Lorraine McCoskey
- 16 - Jacob Lahr
- 17 - Alaina Imhoff
- 18 - Shelby Brim
- 19 - Christy Fiala
- 19 - Arden Schlitter
- 21 - Joe Gilbert
- 25 - Hailey Marie Brim

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:**

- 4 - Alan & Karin Yungclas
- 28 - James & Gretchen McGlynn

**Church Staff**

**Rev. Craig Blaufuss**, Pastor  
 Office: **832-2232** Cell **297-4316**  
 Pastor's email: [revcraigblaufuss@gmail.com](mailto:revcraigblaufuss@gmail.com)  
**Michele Omvig**: Admin. Assist. **269-7210**  
 Church's e-mail: [administrative.office@fcuccwc.org](mailto:administrative.office@fcuccwc.org)  
**Dale Olson**: Stephen Ministry Ldr **839-5619**  
**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**

**Parish Nurse News**

Want a healthier diet? Add some whole grains. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend making half your grains whole grains, versus refined grains. A grain product is any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, farro, quinoa or other cereal grain. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas and grits are among the many foods in the grain group made from whole grains, refined or a combination of the two.

**Palm Sunday April 2 10 a.m.**

April 2 is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. Join us in worship as we remember Jesus' triumphal procession into Jerusalem and prepare our hearts and minds for his passion, crucifixion, and resurrection. Although it is the first Sunday of the month, the sacrament of Holy Communion will not be offered at this service.

**Maundy Thursday Evening Service April 6, 6 p.m.**

We will observe Maundy Thursday with a service of worship beginning at 6 pm in the East Chapel. We will reflect together on the meaning of this night, and share the sacrament of Holy Communion.

**Easter Activities Sunday, April 9**

Easter is the pinnacle of the Christian faith, the day of our greatest celebration as Jesus "conquers sin and death, and reconciles the world to himself." Join us as we begin our Easter celebration at First Congregational with a festive Easter Breakfast, starting at 9:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall, provided by the Christian Education board. There will be a free-will offering that will benefit our Christian Education program. There will be no Adult Education class that day. At **10:30 a.m.** (please note the time change) we will gather in the sanctuary for our Easter Worship service, which will include the sacrament of Holy Communion. There will be no coffee after worship that day.

**Easter Flowers**

The Chancel Committee invites you to share your favorite flowering plant with the congregation for the Easter service. If you wish to participate, please have your flower(s) at the church by 4pm on Saturday, April 8. You may take your flowers with you following the Easter service, Sunday, April 9. Please let Michele know if your flower is in memory or honor of someone by April 5.

There are many Spring plants traditionally associated with the Easter Season. This is a list of some of them, along with the symbolism behind them.

**Azaleas** are interpreted as having many different meanings, but the most relevant Easter meaning is, "caring for the family and self."

**Daffodils**, along with other floral bulbs, are symbolic of rebirth and new beginnings. These are also known as "Lent lilies" in England because of their long association with Lent.

**Daisies** symbolize purity, innocence, gentility and loyalty.

**Easter Cactus** symbolizes rebirth.

**Easter Lilies** are symbolic of purity, virtue, innocence, hope and life, which makes them the go-to flower of Easter.

**Hyacinth** - in the language of flowers, the **purple** hyacinths mean you are seeking forgiveness, **blue** hyacinths are tied to sincere care or constancy, and **pink** hyacinths symbolize joy, playfulness and fresh starts.

**Tulips** seem to come back from the dead, which is one reason they are associated with

Easter. They have a unique bell-shaped blossom that resembles the spherical shape of an Easter egg.



**THRIFT SALE**  
**Friday, April 21, 2023**

Women's Fellowship will be conducting their semi-annual Thrift Sale from 10 to 6 pm. Drop Off Donations Wed. April 19. NO - large items or furniture, but you can send a picture of item and your name, phone #, and price. It will be posted on a board for people to see and call you.

**Remember items should be clean, complete, and in good repair.**

**Contact** Cindy Henning at 297-0422 or bestgrandmacindy@gmail.com with questions. Thank you for your donations and help making this fundraiser a success.  
Cindy Henning

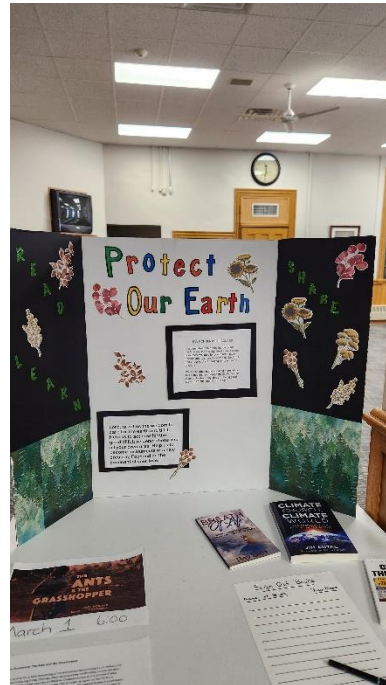
**D/SAOC Auction**

The Domestic & Sexual Assault Outreach Center is doing their annual auction again this year. The online cake auction will run from March 30 - April 4. First Congregational donated items for 2 pet Easter baskets.



**Care For Our Earth**

An education/informational display has been set up in the Fellowship Hall by the mission board with books and information about environmental justice. Please feel free to peruse - or even check out a book! Also, if you have informational items that you'd like to share with the congregation, please add it to our resources.



**Tri-Conference update from our Interim Conference Minister**

Dear Friends, I wanted to take a moment to give up an update on staffing.

**Continuing or New Staff Hires:**

(A) The Tri-Conference Ministries Board voted to call Rev. Kendy Miller as our Designated full-time Associate Conference Minister. The Board also voted to call Rev. Jonna Jensen as our part-time Associate Conference Minister. These are both 18-month designated positions as we continue our discernment and planning around the Tri-Conference Ministries. I want to congratulate them both!

(B) I hired Jane Estrada to serve as our Administrative Assistant for Ministry Support. Jane has been working for our Conferences and now enters this new position. Congratulations Jane!

**Goodbyes:**

As the Communications Specialist position is being significantly downsized in our new staffing structure, Aidan Spencer will be leaving the Tri-Conference Ministries at the end of March to

follow other career paths. Aidan has served as our Communications Specialist for three and a half years and has been an amazing part of our ministry team. We want to thank her for her work and send her into the next part of her journey with our blessings! In discussions with Aidan, we have decided that sending cards and emails of thanks and blessings would be most appreciated. So please do that! You can send an email to Aidan at aidan@spencerberg.com or a card to this address: 2016 W Greenleaf Ave. Apt. 2A Chicago, IL 60645

**Searches for Open Positions:**

(A) This means we have one part-time Associate Conference Minister position available. This is a ¼ time position and we are looking for candidates from the Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences. Here is a link to that job description and if you are interested in applying for the position or have questions, please email me at Phil@ucctcm.org.

(B) Communications Assistant - This is a 5 hour per week position that will focus on website updates, weekly news update emails, and Facebook updates. If you are interested in this position, please email me at Phil@ucctcm.org. I would ask for your patience as we make these important staffing transitions. Our guiding principles remain those given to us by the Conferences at our Annual Meetings of a sustainable budget, and local-church and authorized minister focused ministry from TCM staff. Blessings on you all as we continue our way to the cross and the empty tomb. Rev. R. Philip Hart Interim Conference Minister Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conferences United Church of Christ

**Treasurer’s Report**

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Pledges and Offerings	\$13,045.00	\$34,790.33
Other Income	0.00	.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$13,045.00</b>	<b>\$34,790.33</b>
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Outreach and Mission	1,416.67	\$3,232.30
Pastoral Services	8,287.81	16,575.62
Maintenance and Repairs	2,675.42	6,652.28
Church Office	3,101.78	6,317.79
Music Ministry	408.33	816.66
Christian Education	0.00	119.10
Local Ministry	0.00	0.00
Misc. Expenses	6.42	292.72
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$15,896.43</b>	<b>\$34,006.47</b>

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Webster City, Iowa

Cabinet Meeting held on February 9, 2023

**Members Present:**

Moderator:	Wil Groves	Pastor:	Craig Blaufuss
Vice Moderator:	Gayle Olson	Trustees:	Nick Oberender
Finance Sec.:	Dale Olson	Women’s Fellowship:	Patti Gescheidler
Treasurer:	Tracy Wehrhan	Mission:	Jose Burgos-Lozada
Staff/Parish:	Cindy Henning	Worship:	Curt McCoskey
Christian Ed:	Patti Gescheidler	Clerk:	Stephanie Hill

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by the Moderator, Wil Groves in Fellowship Hall. Pastor Craig opened the meeting with a prayer. The February minutes were approved as written.

**Board and Committee Summaries:**

**Treasurer's Report:** The February offerings were \$12,445.00 and expenses were \$14,443.53. Expenses outweigh offerings for the month. Because offerings exceeded expenses for the previous two months, the offerings to date still exceed expenses to date. So far March offerings are not looking good. Tracy Wehrhan moved and Cindy Henning seconded a motion that the report be put to audit. The motion passed. **Finance Board:** The Finance Board members have not met. Scholarships will be on their next agenda. **Christian Education:** There will be no KLAB for two weeks and possibly not on the 23<sup>rd</sup> either due to a conference. Easter breakfast will be served on April 9<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9am in Fellowship Hall. Quiche, egg dishes and pastries are on the menu. **Mission:** Souper Bowl supper raised \$271 in January. The collection for Funding Future Leaders was \$1210. OGHS offering will be taken March 19<sup>th</sup>. The D/SAOC auction is online from March 30 through April 4<sup>th</sup>. Items are being collected for an Easter basket for pets. A climate change display will be up soon in Fellowship Hall. Offerings for Earthquake emergency relief fund were taken through February. Jose will report about cobalt mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. **Staff/Parish:** The committee met to establish meeting times and assign folks to contact church employees. **Trustees:** The wiring (guts) for the electrical panel (which is here) were shipped yesterday. A concern was brought up about the outside light above the west entrance. It does not seem to be working. **Women's Fellowship:** Lenten Lunch is on Tuesday, March 28 from noon to 1pm at Faith United Methodist for \$10.00. The "SERVV" sale is underway. A catalog is in Fellowship Hall. Orders will be done online. Thrift Sale is April 21<sup>st</sup> from 10am to 6pm. Watch for a sign-up sheet. The Constitution and By-Laws for Women's Fellowship are being reviewed and possibly revised. Circles will review it and then vote on it during the May dinner which will be Thursday, May 25 at 5:30 to 6:30. A taco bar with root beer floats will be served. **Worship:** First meeting was March 3<sup>rd</sup>. There will be no communion on Palm Sunday. There will be communion on Maundy Thursday and on Easter Sunday. Regan Ray McCarville will be baptized on March 19<sup>th</sup>. **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Craig will be gone on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Marjorie will lead the service. Easter Sunday is April 9<sup>th</sup> and there will be a breakfast served at 9am. Shrove Tuesday pancake supper was a success with more than 40 people enjoying the pancake bar. KLAB will not meet for at least 2 weeks. The adult Sunday school topic of LGBTQ is ongoing. The Tri-Conference is still looking for 10 Conference Deacons. WC financial institutions are doing a food pantry drive in March with proceeds going to local food pantries. The summer lunch program is still be considered by the school system as to whether it will happen this summer. EHNC approved 5 applications in February for a total of \$1800.00. The 'Jesus Revolution' movie will be at WC Theater March 17 – 23. There will be discounted admission for youth groups on a special night. Other churches are welcome to attend.

#### **New Business:**

The A.S.K. Program is a new congregational discernment program designed to assist churches with a revitalization process. This is a 3-month congregational discernment program guided by Rev. Phil Hart, Interim Conference Minister of the Tri-Conference of the UCC. This topic will be on the August Cabinet agenda. Please read the Pastor's report for more details.

The next meeting is April 11, 2023 at 7:00pm in Fellowship Hall.

Respectfully submitted, Stephanie Hill, Church Clerk

#### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**MISSION BOARD** Sherry will continue as chair of our committee. Andrea will be secretary. Jose will be Cabinet Rep.

It was reported \$271 were raised at our Souper Bowl meal in January. It was decided the funds would be given to ACE's food pantry so will need to have a check sent to them. A big thanks for all who attended and supported this event and also to the Cabinet who provided desserts for the day.

Funding Future Leaders collected \$1210 to be sent to help offset seminary costs for Iowa students.

It is felt the renewed focus and attention to the HEIFER peace pipe is generating some excitement and donations.

Gayle will take care of promoting OGHS. This offering will be taken on Sunday March 19. The other 3 special offering assignments will be decided at the March meeting.

DSAOC auction is March 30-April 4. It is an on-line auction again this year. With it being shortly before Easter it was decided we would do Easter baskets for pets. Sherry will take care of getting the information out about this.

Sherry and Gayle will be working on a table that will be a space for sharing information about climate change and how and what individuals can do.

We will be supporting the UCC earthquake emergency relief fund. These offerings will be accepted for the remainder of the month of February. Craig will have something for the bulletin to inform people of this.

Jose raised the issue of how mining for cobalt is being done in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He will be reading up on this and will report back with more info.

Our next meeting will be Thursday March 9 at 5:15 at the church.

Respectfully submitted, Gayle Olson (secretary for February)

**STAFF/PARISH COMMITTEE** The main purpose of this meeting was to volunteer to be the contact purpose for the staff. Board Chairperson & Cabinet Representative: Cindy Henning. Secretary: Mary Van Diest.

Pastor Craig: Dale Olson. Organist, Melissa Hindt: Karen Yungclas. Janitor, Curt McCoskey: Holly Riemenschneider. Administrative Assistant, Michele Omgig: Mary Van Diest.

Our committee will contact their contact person to make them aware that you are their contact person. They can come to you with any questions or complaints to be addressed by the Board. The committee member will check in with their designated contact each quarter.

Cindy has tentatively scheduled our meeting times:

Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 5:00 pm. Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup> @ 5:00 pm. Monday, Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 5:00 pm

The committee will serve the coffee following worship on Sunday, March 26.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Van Diest. Secretary

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD** Minutes of last meeting were approved.

The selection of Board Officers was voted and approved as follows: Vicki Blaufuss, Chair. Patty Gescheidler – Secretary & Cabinet Representative

**OLD BUSINESS** Living Nativity went well and enjoyed by all. CE Board sponsored a hat, mitten, scarf and sock tree. We received substantial donations. The items were taken to the WC School Administration to distribute to the schools.

We will have 2 graduates this year- Chesney Fuller and Shelby Brim

**NEW BUSINESS** KLAB will be making Valentines to send to some church members and members in care centers. February 9, 2023 a Valentine's Party will be held. We will use up the snack supply we have.

Craig and Glenda will arrange for the games. KLAB Easter project: KLAB class will assemble bags containing items representing the Easter Story and handed out to the congregation after Easter Worship.

The bags will contain: Stick Pretzel – representing the Cross, Raisin - Jesus's blood, Round Cracker – Stone rolled away from the tomb, Goldfish – Fisher of Men, Sweet Tart – taste and see that the Lord is good, White Marshmallow – Our Sins are washed away, Bible Verse associated to item

Adult Education class is embarking on a multiweek study of "LGBTQ Basics" in order to increase our understanding of this diverse community of people.

CE Board will sponsor an Easter Breakfast before Worship beginning at 9:00 am. There will be a free-will donation going to the Christian Ed Board.

Responsibilities: Craig & Vicki - egg bake casseroles and quiche. Glenda & Patty - breads and pastry. Susan – fruit. Patty Gescheidler, Secretary

**WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP EXECUTIVE BOARD** Old Business:

Lenten Luncheon – There will be one meal for 2023 on Tuesday, March 28 from noon-1 pm.

Faith United Methodist. Cost will be \$10. There will be a sign-up on table in Fellowship Hall.

SERRV Sale – Gayle Olson brought a spring catalog. It will be put on table with online ordering information.

Thrift Sale will be Friday, April 21, 10 am – 6 pm in Fellowship Hall. A sign-up will be set out at end of March.

New Business:

Constitution and By-Laws were reviewed. The changes will be made and presented at May meeting to be voted on.

May dinner will be Thursday, May 25 at 5:30 – 6:30. We will have a taco bar with Root Beer floats for dessert. Program year proceeds will be handed out at 6:45.

Next meeting April 5th. Submitted by Cindy Henning

**WORSHIP BOARD** This was our first face-to-face meeting for 2023. Numerous board members have been gone on winter vacations, so items were taken care of through texts for January and February.

Officers for this year are: Co-Chairpersons: Don Bruner and Jane Klaver. Secretary: Gretchen McGlynn. Cabinet Representative: Curt McCoskey. Communion Chef: Marjorie Groves

We will meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 3:30.

We are asking Marjorie to put a copy of her communion directions in the black binder and communion cupboard.

On March 12 and April 16, Kolleen Taylor will be playing for the services as Melissa H. is unavailable.

Regan Ray McCarville will be baptized on March 19. She is the daughter of Katie Holdgrafer McCarville. Craig will be gone on Sunday, March 26. We will have a video service and Marjorie G. will be our service leader.

At our next meeting we will discuss summer worship time and Saturday evening services.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 4 at 3:30.

Gretchen McGlynn, Secretary

**PASTOR'S CABINET REPORT WORSHIP:** We could not meet in person for our Ash Wednesday service due to the weather, so instead I sent out an audio recording of the service for members to use at home. Kolleen Taylor and I led Sunday afternoon nursing home services on February 19. I led gospel hour services at Southfield on February 7 and March 7. Melissa Hindt has asked to be excused from playing on March 12 and April 16, Kolleen will play for those services. On March 19 we will baptize Ragen Rae McCarville. I will be out of state for a wedding on March 26, so we will utilize a video sermon and Marjorie Groves will be our worship leader. Palm Sunday is April 2, and we led care center services that Sunday afternoon. We will observe Maundy Thursday on April 6, location TBD. Easter Sunday is April 9.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper:** Over 40 people gathered to enjoy a pancake bar, sausage links, and scrambled eggs at our Feb 21 pancake supper. The Free will offering not only paid for the meal, but \$230 was left over which went to ACE's food pantry.

**CE Programming:** KLAB has been studying the Transfiguration, Mardi Gras, the temptation of Jesus, Jesus the Good Shepherd and the Son of God, and St. Patrick and the Trinity. KLAB will not meet on March 9 and 16 due to early out and Spring break. Adult Ed is continuing the multi-week study of LGBTQ basics.

**Tri-Conference UCC:** We said goodbye to one of our last Associate Conference Ministers, Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones this past Tuesday via zoom. The Tri-Conference is still gathering applications for 10 Conference Deacons. Our ECM Phil Hart has announced a new congregational vitality initiative: he is looking for 5 churches that are interested in participating in the congregational "A.S.K. Discernment and Discovery" program. This is a three-month program and focuses on helping congregations discern together where they are being called in their ministry journey. Congregations that will significantly benefit from ASK have these characteristics: 1) Will commit to the program for a concentrated 3 months. 2) Church has general cohesion and not significantly conflicted. 3) Has a willingness and openness to consider a wide range of possibilities. 4) Will form a discernment team of 4-6 people that will work to lead and engage the congregation through the program.

**WCMA:** The women's annual Lenten Luncheon will be held at Faith UMC on March 28, noon- 1 pm, cost: \$10. We continue to discuss how to respond with emergency relief to local individuals and families experiencing a crisis like a housefire, and we will have a Red Cross rep at our next meeting to discuss their disaster response protocols. There is a discussion about holding another "Faith at the Fair" church service during the Hamilton County fair on July 30, 9:30 a.m. Asbury is sponsoring another food packing event "Meals for the Heartland" on Sept 16. WC financial institutions are doing a collective food pantry drive in March; proceeds go to local food pantries. The school system is weighing if they will have another summer lunch program. If so, they will ask for help from churches as before. If they will not hold the program, then the WCMA is likely going to provide our own program like last year. EHNC had 5 applications in February, 3 were approved for \$1800 in disbursements.

**Shalom Circle:** we continue to meet on Fridays at 6:30 pm in the East Chapel. Everyone is welcome to attend!

**Jesus Revolution:** The movie "Jesus Revolution" is coming to the WC theater March 17-23. Youth groups will have a special night and discounted rate to see the movie. Groups from churches are welcome to attend.

**Easter Breakfast:** The Christian Ed Board is sponsoring an Easter Breakfast on April 9, beginning at 9 a.m. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

**The breakdown of my ministry since Feb 7:**

**Worship services led:11; Christian Ed:8; Meetings:4; Visitation:9**



# EASTER SUNDAY BREAKFAST



**April 9, 2023**

**9:00 A.M.**

**Please join us for Breakfast &  
Fellowship before Worship on Easter  
Morning**

**Quiche, Pastries, Fruit, Coffee & Juice  
will be provided**

**A free will offering will be taken up  
to support our Christian Education  
programming**

**Sponsored by the Christian Education Board**

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:



April

The word "April" is rendered in a large, grey, serif font. To the left of the letter 'A', there is a small illustration of a clear glass vase containing several stems of yellow flowers. To the right of the letter 'l', there is a small illustration of a branch with several yellow leaves.