



# The Spire

First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

Celebrating 150 Years!

October, 2018  
Volume 64, No. 9

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
200 Lynn Ave.  
Ames, IA 50014-7188  
Worship Sundays 9:45 am

PHONE:  
515-292-9612  
E-MAIL  
[office@fbcomes.org](mailto:office@fbcomes.org)  
WEB:  
[www.fbcomes.org](http://www.fbcomes.org)

First Baptist Church is an open and caring family of faith where worship is central and faith engages both heart and mind. We are warmly ecumenical, delight in our diversity, and cherish our Baptist heritage of freedom. We are called by Christ to share God's love with the campus, community, and the world.

As we seek to follow the way of Jesus, we welcome all people to fully participate in our fellowship: all ages, colors, backgrounds, political affiliations, and physical and mental abilities; male and female, gay and straight, rich and poor, single and married. We are all God's children, and all are welcome here.

Dear Friends,

In this month of October, we focus on service and world mission. Opportunities include the CROP Walk, our Great Day of Service, and the World Mission Offering. Another avenue for sharing in mission beyond our church is our new sister church relationship with Iglesia Bautista de Mayaguez in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. While the ABC Biennial in 2021 in San Juan, Puerto Rico will be an opportunity for members of our church to visit our sister church, there is also an opportunity to travel to Puerto Rico next year.

As part of the ABC "Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing Puerto Rico" effort, mission work teams from around the country are working on rebuilding projects across the island. We are looking into the possibility of sending a mission team to work in Puerto Rico, either over spring break or in June 2019. We would work wherever assigned in Puerto Rico, but there would also be an opportunity to travel to Mayaguez.

During Fellowship Time following worship on October 14, we will have a brief meeting to gauge interest and share information about a potential mission trip to Puerto Rico. In the meantime, please see me if you are interested or have questions. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday!

Blessings,  
Dave



Iglesia Bautista de Mayaguez

## GREAT DAY OF SERVICE

Sunday, October 21—9:45 am

We will have a seven minute worship service in the sanctuary followed by hands-on service projects including:

- Campustown Cleanup
- Assembling hygiene kits for Church World Service
- Making no-sew fleece blankets for newborns
- Visits to homebound persons

We will conclude with a meal (which will be provided) at 12 noon. Please join us as we work together to make a difference in our community and in our world!



### October 7

*Worship Leader:* Catherine Parrish

*Ushers:* Bob Parrish, Kent Johnson  
Jan Thompson, Wallace Sanders

*Sound System:* Bob Parrish

### October 14

*Worship Leader:* Aaron Stegemöller

*Ushers:* Michael Thompson, Nancy Maydew  
Kaylinn Taggart, Wilson Korges

*Sound System:* Tom Logue

### October 21

#### Great Day of Service

### October 28

*Worship Leader:* Erin Johnson

*Ushers:* Scott Anderson, Julie Johnston  
TJ Nugent, Jere Maddux

*Sound System:* Tom Logue

**October Flowers:** Dianne Borgen

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Jeanne Williams	2
Douglas Thomas	3
Kenneth Johnson	4
Marian Thompson	9
Fred Borgen	10
Joe Parrish	12
Dorothy Ewing	16
Martha Gleason	26
Lucas Anderson	29
Kyleigh Murphy	29
Luke Rustin	29
Theodore Vang	29
John Whitaker	29
Larry Schrag	30

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Lyndsay and Gabe Whitaker	8
Michelle and Noel Hassler	21

## Budget Forum

As we begin our season of stewardship promotion, we invite you to attend the Budget Forum on Sunday, October 28 following Church School. We will discuss and vote on the draft 2019 budget presented by the Executive Council.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Lunch



On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, following Church School, let's meet for lunch at the following locations:

October 21—Arby's on Duff  
November 18—Mongolian Buffet

For more information, see Catherine Parrish



We are 9 months into 2018 with our regular church pledge and the capital campaign for our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Now that we are all back to a "regular" schedule and have just a few months to complete pledges, it was decided to mail 9-month giving records to everyone who completed a pledge card.

Please review the content carefully to make sure there are no errors. If you have a concern with your record, please contact me so it can be resolved. If you did not pledge, but want to know what your giving has been for the first 9-months, please contact me and I would be happy to send you a report.

Don't forget that our Capital Campaign runs through December, 2019!

Jerilyn Logue  
FBC Financial Secretary  
[tjlogue@yahoo.com](mailto:tjlogue@yahoo.com)

## AMOS Action With Candidates

Thursday, October 18  
First Christian Church  
Registration 6:30, Action Begins 7:00

One of the ways that our church supports AMOS is by being there on occasions where a show of support is important. We will meet with other AMOS institutions to recommit ourselves to the work of organizing to make our community a better place. We will hear proposals for a model to deal with chronic homelessness and mental illness in our community, and there may be a report as well regarding Project Iowa, the job training program that AMOS started. Candidates for County Supervisor will be present and we will ask the candidates to support our agenda.



## CROP Walk

The 2018 Ames Area Crop Walk for Hunger will be held on Sunday, October 14th. The walk will start and end at Brookside Park.



Registration is at 1:00pm and the walk will start at 1:30. The walk follows about a 3 mile loop through the

campus and back to Brookside Park. There will be an optional abbreviated walk for those that prefer a shorter distance.

Our church had a long tradition of supporting the CROP Walk and we encourage everyone to participate by walking or sponsoring a walker. Last year, the Ames walk raised \$37,000 to support local, national, and international hunger relief efforts.

## World Mission Offering

Through the month of October, we will receive the World Mission Offering, which supports American Baptist mission work around the world. Our gifts help to support missionaries currently in the field and to train new missionaries for service. Our gifts help to build relationships with 240 global partners around the world. It is through these networks with Christian groups in other nations that our missionaries are invited to serve, and we work closely with these partners as we provide relief and disaster assistance.



Our church knows personally some of our mission personnel who work overseas. Dan Buttry has done amazing work in conflict transformation; this past year he has done significant work in Jamaica, Nicaragua, Ivory Coast, and other places. Central Seminary in Kansas city has established the Buttry Center for Peace and Nonviolence, to carry on Dan and Sharon Buttry's work in teaching peacemakers.

Based in Amsterdam, Lauren Bethell fights human trafficking around the world. Her current work focuses on grassroots efforts to address exploitation and abuse of women and children.

David and Laura Parajon continue their amazing health ministry in Nicaragua, bringing medical care to rural areas as they train health promoters in very remote villages and establish health, hygiene, nutrition, and clean water projects. In a time of political unrest in the country, this ministry continues to have a tremendous impact.

Our gifts to the WMO support the work of these global servants and much more. We will receive this offering through the month of October, and invite you to give generously.





## Continuing a Progressive Tradition, 1977– 1999

Rev. J. David Mallgren came from Davenport to serve as pastor in 1977. Church staff included Marilyn Peterson, secretary; Jackie Pritchard, choir director; and Mark Pritchard, organist.

One of the challenges facing the church involved institutional relationships. The American Baptists were no longer funding United Ministries in Higher Education, and the church wrestled with whether to continue to participate in that ecumenical campus ministry effort without denominational support. While encouraging the Iowa Baptist Convention to provide funding to UMHE, the church decided to continue as a partner in that ministry.

Another concern was the Ames Community Nursery School. The only such program in town when it was established in 1961, there were now a dozen or more similar preschools and day care centers, and the nursery school was facing financial challenges.

In 1979 the church participated in a cooperative Vacation Bible School with First Christian Church and United Church of Christ-Congregational. This pattern of cooperative ministry efforts continued through the era.

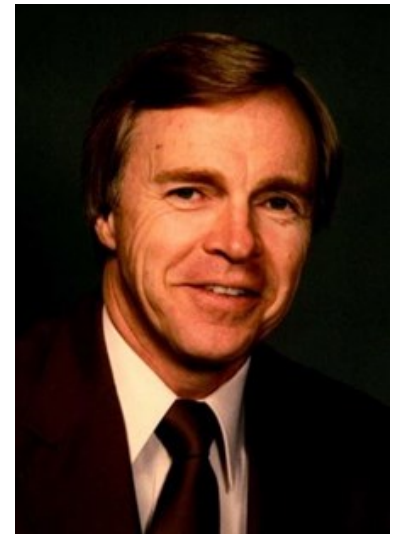
With concern over a long-term decline in membership, Rev. Mallgren made this report to the Long Range Planning Committee in 1982:

Members are getting older. There are more Baptist churches in our area. The population is shifting. Fundamentalism is increasing. There has been a change in the center of our lives. We now have more than one center. How can we reverse this trend to separate religion from the rest of our lives? ... Will the church be here in 25 years?

Rev. Mallgren's comments are interesting in that they could have been made any time over the last 50 years or so – and in many congregations.

In response to these trends, and with a desire to share the Good News, the church made efforts to increase visibility and outreach, using advertising campaigns and holding "Invite a Friend" Sundays. Family Nights with social activities for the church family were held, with enthusiastic response. The choir and music program continued to be a strong program of the church, and many members attended conferences at Green Lake Conference Center in Wisconsin.

Rev. Mallgren announced his resignation as pastor in 1985. He left the church to serve as a Field Minister for the region and later became Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. He retired in 1999 and he and Margo moved to Winterset, Iowa. He died in December 2016.



*Rev. David Mallgren*



*David, Diane, Elisa, and Joel Nethercott*

Rev. David Nethercott was called as pastor in 1986, coming from Valley View Baptist Church in Cedar Falls. David wrote a detailed recollection of his time in Ames, which is available [on our website](#). He noted that one of the first things that happened after he came to Ames was the closing of the nursery school. While this marked the end of an era, the church could be proud of its leadership and foresight in making care for children a priority in the community.

Some of the notable happenings of the late 80's-early 90's included the establishment of Care Circles that provided fellowship and support within the church, hiring a part-time Campus Ministry Coordinator and Children & Youth Coordinator, and improvements to the church facilities. This included renovation of the college/career room, renovation of the kitchen, remodeling of the children's area downstairs, and installation of an elevator lift.

Gayle Osterberg was hired as Office Manager in 1987. She served the church for 25 years and had a significant ministry beyond simply taking care of office tasks. Three pastors, two interim pastors, and countless church members, rental parkers, and church neighbors benefitted from her caring presence in the church office.

The global vision of the church continued. In 1988, the church began a sister church relationship with Shiloh Baptist Church in Los Sanchez, Nicaragua. This relationship continued for several years and church members were able to visit our sister church. Members of the church were active in the Baptist Peace Fellowship. Rev. Saboi Jum and his wife Nang Bawk joined our fellowship in 1990. He was a pastor and peacemaker from Myanmar and served as General Secretary of the Kachin Baptist Convention.

Ongoing conversations that began or continued through these years included the problematic nature of carrying the “Baptist” label, and whether a change of the church name might be in order; the limited life expectancy of the pipe organ and need for a new organ; and the difficulty of a church structure designed in a different era. The Nethercotts left Ames in 1991 as David took a position at First Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. He later served a united ABC/Presbyterian congregation in New York State and is now retired in California.



*Jim, Keitha, and Shannon Boardman*

Rev. James Boardman was called as pastor in 1992, coming to us from a church in the Buffalo, New York area. Almost from the very beginning of the church in downtown Ames, the pastor had lived in a church-owned parsonage. This changed with Rev. Boardman. While the house itself is more than adequate, the location in the campus area, surrounded by fraternity and sorority houses and apartments, is less than ideal for families. Prior to the Boardmans coming, the Covenant House next door had been housing the Center for Creative Justice. With the parsonage now vacated, CCJ moved into that space and the house at 304 Lynn was sold.

United Christian Campus Ministry, a later incarnation of UMHE, moved from Collegiate Presbyterian to First Baptist in 1993. The ministry was supported by the Presbyterians, Disciples, UCC, Baptists, and Mennonites. UCCM was housed in our church until the ministry concluded in 2001.



*Revs. Joanne and Mark Jacobs, Sam, Erin and Gretchen*

The church sought to focus on growth and on deepening spiritual life. Workshops were held on topics including “Spirituality and Health.” Task forces studied concerns including Human Sexuality, Long Range Planning, and Church Growth. Lenten Studies, a tradition for some years now, continued to be held.

In 1994, Rev. Joanne Jacobs was called as Christian Education Director. Rev. Jacobs led the Christian Education Committee in establishing a Child Care policy and instituting background checks for all who work with children and youth. While numbers were less than in previous years, committed members led in ministry with children, youth, and college students.

In 1997, the Christian Education Board purchased a computer for \$2500. It included a 266 mhz processor, 32 MB of memory, and a 33.6 modem/fax.

The computer was placed in the CE office for congregational use, and computer classes for church members were held. In 1998, Tom Logue was instrumental in establishing a church website.

In the summer of 1998, Jim Boardman resigned as pastor. Shortly after, Joanne Jacobs resigned as CE Director, as her husband Mark was taking a pastorate in Newton. Earl Hammond, deacon chair, served as acting moderator because that position was unfilled. It was a time of transition and uncertainty. After many years of slow attendance decline, there were real questions about the future.

During the interim, the church studied options for the future including selling the building and moving to a smaller facility, finding a partner congregation to share our relatively large building, and merging with another church. Some of the feedback the church received during this time was interesting; members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship said that they hoped we would continue in ministry because a Baptist church like ours was needed in Ames.

At a congregational meeting, after younger members expressed a desire to continue as a church at the current location, longtime member Bud Ewing said, “If the younger members are for it, then I’m supporting it,” and after months of study, conversation, and prayer, the decision was made. It was decided to stay at 200 Lynn Avenue, to call a new pastor, understanding that the church would need to change the way it did things, and to make no other decisions about its future for at least three years. In the fall of 1999, the church called Rev. David Russell as its 25<sup>th</sup> pastor.

## The Surprising Story of Christian Thomsen

In 1983, spurred by questions arising from a baptism class that included youth who had been baptized as infants, the deacons and then the Executive Council and church at large had a conversation regarding church membership. A provision in the by-laws allowed members of other churches who had been baptized as infants to join our church as associate members. Baptism by immersion was required for full membership. This was a common practice in ABC churches - but being Baptist, each church decided such matters for itself.

Conversation revolved around allowing such individuals to join as full members. This policy of "Open Membership" was also practiced in many ABC churches. With Open Membership, the church would continue to practice only believer's baptism by immersion, but to accept for membership those who had come from other traditions. The church came to adopt this position.

A very few members left the church over this issue – some because the church was so slow to adopt the new position, and others because they could not abide allowing full members of the church who had not been immersed.

A long-time member, Christian Thomsen, was one of those who took issue with the new policy. Born in Denmark, Thomsen had been a member of First Baptist for 50 years, having joined the church in 1933. He was 86 years old and had been honored by the church by being named a life deacon.

Thomsen worked for many years in maintenance at Northwestern Bell Telephone and as a custodian at a power plant. He lived very simply and frugally in a small house and never owned a vehicle. He walked a mile and a half to church, sometimes getting rides from other members.

Despite his age and his longtime affiliation with the church, he left the church over the decision on baptismal requirements for membership and joined Campus Baptist, a very conservative neighboring church. As it turned out, Chris Thomsen still had many years ahead of him. He died in 1998 at the age of 101, having never married and with no children. To everyone's surprise, he left \$1.1 million to Faith Baptist Bible College in Ankeny (as reported in the January 8, 1999 *Chronicle of Higher Education*) and a "substantial sum" to Campus Baptist Church. (In a *USA Today* network article, Thomsen's friend and executor Craig Hastings did not disclose the amount given to Campus Baptist, but community members understood it to be equal to the gift to the Bible College.) Thomsen had been investing a portion of his salary in AT&T stock over many years and unbeknownst to everyone was a millionaire.



*Christian Thomsen (on right) teaches Sunday School with class members Lawrence Zea, Faye Zea, George Web, and Clara Webb.*

*In celebration of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary we will be highlighting a story from FBC history each month. These stories are available on our website at [www.fbcames.org](http://www.fbcames.org).*







Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 8a Men's Break-fast, Perkins  4p Music & Movement	3 2p Parkinson's Discussion Group  3p Parkinson's Singing Group  6:30p Choir	4	5	6
Office Hours this week: 8:00am-Noon						Mid-American Baptist Churches Biennial Gathering in St. Paul
7  9:45a Worship 11a Fellowship Time	8	9  4p Music & Movement  7p Trustees	10 11:30a Women's Lunch, Mandarin  3p Parkinson's Singing Group  6:30p Choir	11	12	13
Office Hours this week: 8:00am-Noon						
14  9:45a Worship 11a Fellowship Time 11:15a Church School  1:30p CROP Walk at Brookside Park	15  5p Women United	16 8a Men's Break-fast, Perkins  4p Music & Movement	17 3p Parkinson's Singing Group  6:30p Choir	18  6:30p AMOS Action with Candidates@ First Christian	19	20  
21 9:45a Worship/Great Day of Service  12p Catered Meal 2p Prayer Shawl Circle  	22  5p Women United	23  4p Music & Movement	24 11:30a Women's Lunch, Perkins  3p Parkinson's Singing Group  6:30p Choir	25  6:30p Deacons	26	27
28 9:45a Worship 11a Church School 12p Budget Forum	29  5p Women United	30  4p Music & Movement	31 3p Parkinson's Singing Group  6:30p Choir  	<div> <b>Regular Office Hours</b>            Monday—Closed            Tuesday—9am-Noon &amp; 1-3pm            Wednesday—9am-1pm            Thursday—9am- Noon &amp; 1-3pm            Friday—8am-Noon         </div> 		



**First Baptist Church**

**AMES**

**200 Lynn Avenue**

**Ames, Iowa 50014-7188**

**Our Church Staff:**

Rev. Dr. David Russell	Pastor
Mindy Phomvisay	Director of Music
Patricia Izbicki	Accompanist
Janelle Keltgen	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian

**Mid-American Baptist Churches Biennial Gathering**  
**Friday-Saturday, October 5-6**  
**First Baptist Church, St. Paul, Minnesota**

"Tell Me the Old, Old Story Today"

Rev. Dr. Cindy Halvorson of First Baptist, Owatonna, Minnesota will be our keynote speaker and we will install our new regional Executive Minister, Rev. Jacqueline Saxon. Those attending may choose from workshops including ministry with children, ministry in Puerto Rico, and an update on the AMOS medical ministry in Nicaragua and political challenges facing that country. Registration forms are available on the bulletin board; you may see Pastor Dave or call the church office for more details.

