



The Spire First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

Pastor's Word

In reading some of the early history of our church, and of the Squaw Creek Church that preceded it, I was struck by some statistics. In 1860, there were 246 churches in the Iowa Baptist Convention. This is substantially more than we have today in what is now the Mid-American Baptist Churches, which includes Iowa and Minnesota.

Of course, most of the churches were very small. The churches in the local association had from 8-39 members. Most did not have their own building. Travel was difficult. You walked or rode a horse or took the wagon, and churches served a small and sparsely populated geographic area. It was very much the frontier.

What is interesting is that in some ways, we are returning to those days. Oh, we have easy travel, to be sure, and easy communication. Many things have changed dramatically. But rural areas are becoming more and more sparsely populated. The majority of municipalities in Iowa do not have a school or grocery store. A great number of our churches may have from 8-39 in worship. And there is a continuing decline in religious affiliation among younger generations.

None of this is by choice or design. But what is by design is a growing movement of house churches and dinner churches that do not necessarily own a building and that are small by choice. They may meet in homes or cafes or community rooms. The point of being relatively small is not to exclude people (indeed, the point is often to draw people in), but to provide an opportunity for relationships and community and fellowship.

I am not arguing that small is better. I want our church to grow in numbers, and meaningful relationships can certainly happen in larger churches. What I am saying is that as a small church (that is actually a medium-sized church by our region's standards), our size can be a plus. I was able to attend the Theologian in Residence program at the UCC last weekend. The speaker, Dr. Dave Csinos, made presentations regarding faith formation and children. Research has shown that the faith formation of both children and adults benefits when there are opportunities for intergenerational experiences – not just adults watching children, but children and adults participating together.

I reflected on our church and it occurred to me that this is an area in which we excel. I thought of our choir, with members ages 9 to 89. I thought of mission trips that include children, college students, and adults of various ages. I thought about fellowship times where children and adults mingle freely and children who have adult friends in the church. I thought about people of all ages participating in our cook-off. We are far from perfect, but it seems to me that we are doing some things right.

Just some thoughts on a cold winter's morning, for whatever it's worth. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday!

Blessings,
Dave

February, 2018
Volume 64, No. 2

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

PHONE:
515-292-9612
E-MAIL
office@fbcomes.org
WEB:
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.



February 4

Worship Leader: Lorrie Whitaker
Ushers: Bob Parrish*, Kent Johnson
 Jan Thompson, Wallace Sanders
Sound System: Bob Parrish

February 11

Worship Leader: Emma Phomvisay
Ushers: Michael Thompson*, Jill Grauman,
 Nancy Maydew, Kaylinn Taggart
Sound System: Tom Logue

February 18

Worship Leader: Joe Parrish
Ushers: Dianne Borgen, Jerilyn Logue
 Tom Logue, Jon Pritchard
Sound System: Kent Johnson

February 25

Worship Leader: Michael Thompson
Ushers: Scott Anderson, Julie Johnston,
 Jere Maddux, Tiffany Nugent
Sound System: Tom Logue

February Flowers: Rita Parrish

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Aaron Stegemöller | 6 |
| Anastasia Lee | 9 |
| Tom Logue | 9 |
| Patrick Coffey | 12 |
| Kathy Clotey | 15 |
| Elijah Belle | 17 |
| Emma Phomvisay | 17 |
| Viola Thomas | 17 |
| Lois Curtis | 19 |
| Kaylinn Taggart | 20 |
| Michelle Logue | 22 |
| Michelle Hassler | 27 |



Rosemarie and David Starrett
 February 23



Join us for a **Super Bowl Party** on Sunday, February 4th.
 The festivities will start at 5:15 pm with kick-off at 5:30
 pm. Feel free to bring a snack to share. If you are not a big
 football fan, there will also be board games!



Ash Wednesday Service February 14, 6:30 pm

This meditative service marks the beginning of the season of Lent. The service will include music, scripture, prayer, and the imposition of ashes and will be held in the lounge. All are welcome!

First Baptist Church 150th Anniversary Celebration June 30-July 1

- Choir Reunion
- Celebration Dinner
- Worship with Special Guest
 Rev. Soozi Whitten Ford

More details and registration coming soon.



Capital Campaign Update

We continue to make progress on our facility improvement campaign. The total amount pledged to date is \$122,439.47. Of this, we have received \$67,829.47. We additionally will use \$50,000 in funds already on hand.

Blessing the Past, Building the Future
First Baptist Church 150th Anniversary Capital Campaign

We have signed contracts with Clapsaddle-Garber Associates for engineering and design work, including a property survey and site plan; Manatt's, for repair and resurfacing of the parking lot; and Ray's Doors, for replacement of the east doors. The trustees have also approved an awning over the north door on the east side, to be installed by Sign Pro. A committee has met with representatives regarding new carpeting for the lounge, library, and nursery rooms as well as new flooring in the kitchen and continues to work toward a proposal.

Previous conversations with an engineer indicated that the proposed rain garden might be problematic because of the proximity to the basement. We will work with the engineering firm to see if there is a better location or other landscaping that might serve to mitigate storm water runoff.

Spring Break Mission Trip Murrow Indian Children's Home Muskogee, Oklahoma



We will be returning to Muskogee, Oklahoma over spring break to work at the Murrow Indian Children's Home. Established in 1887, Murrow currently provides a home for around 25 Native American children. These are children that are in State or Tribal Custody and in the current foster care and adoption system. Murrow is a ministry affiliated with American Baptist Churches USA and the campus is adjacent to Bacone College, an ABC-related school that is a historically Native American college.

Our work will include maintenance and work projects on grounds and residential cottages at Murrow as well as opportunities to interact with the residents. We will also tour Bacone College and worship at the Bacone College Church.

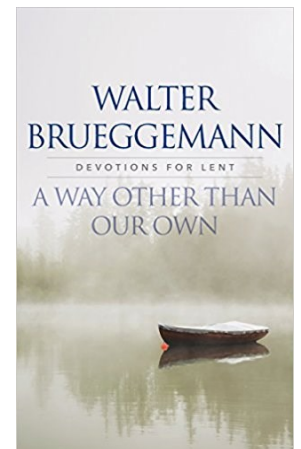
All ages are welcome to serve on our mission team. There is no cost for children participating on the trip with parents. Registration for college students and youth grades 6-12 is \$25 and all others are \$50. Please let Pastor Dave for more information or to sign up for the trip. Registration forms are available on the bulletin board.

Lenten Devotional Guide and Study

This Lent, we invite you to join in reading *A Way Other Than Our Own: Devotions for Lent*. This daily devotional book is written by Walter Brueggemann, perhaps the leading Old Testament scholar of our time. Each day's writing is concise, yet packed with thought and challenge. Brueggemann argues that despite our culture of self-indulgence, we are called to walk an alternative path--one of humility, justice, and peace.

If you would like to order a copy of this book to read during Lent, please contact the church office as soon as possible. We will place an order on February 7 and order additional books if orders come in after that date. Cost is \$5. (You can also order your own copy, and a Kindle edition is available.)

Those reading the daily devotions are invited to meet together to discuss the readings. We will meet at 6:00 pm on February 21, February 28, March 7, and March 21.



FBC History: Ira Rees and the Squaw Creek Church

In 1855, Reverend Ira Rees moved to Iowa from Indiana and settled in Story County. He organized a church at Iowa Center, just north of Maxwell. In 1858 he was appointed a missionary by the Iowa Baptist Convention to organize frontier churches in Boone and Story counties. By 1860, there were 246 Baptist churches in Iowa, but only 2 Baptist ministers in the entire northwest fourth of the state, and Central Iowa was very much the frontier. Rees organized a church at Boonsboro, a now-forgotten town that was eventually incorporated into the town of Boone (which at that time was called Montana).

The first mention of the Squaw Creek Church is in the 1860 minutes of the Upper Des Moines Association, which was formed that year. Squaw Creek was one of five churches in the association. Others included Webster City and Swede Bend (a Swedish congregation). The Squaw Creek church reported 8 members and no pastor. In 1861 Ira Rees became pastor of the church. In his 1862 report to the state convention, Rees noted that the association now had 9 churches. He said, "We occupy a very important field. The whole of the northern valley of the Des Moines River seems in the Providence of God. We are now laying the foundation on which future generations are to build." He also noted that the churches were weak and that the work was a struggle.



Hoggatt School was built in 1862, on the east bank of Squaw Creek, near the present-day intersection of Lincoln Way and Maple Avenue in Ames. Not having its own building, the Squaw Creek Church met in the school. That year, Squaw Creek Church reported 3 baptisms.

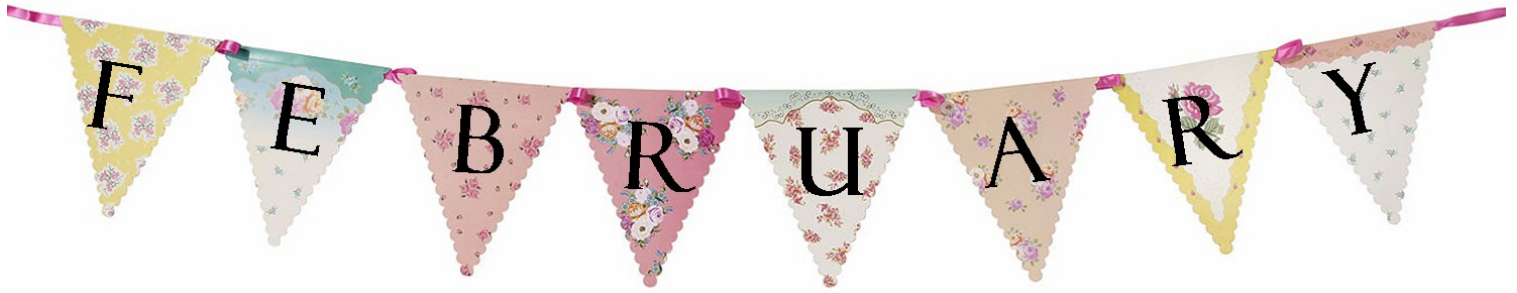
In 1863, Rev. Rees moved on for missionary work farther west. In *Historical Sketches of Iowa Baptists* (1886), S. H. Mitchell noted, "Mention should be made of the departure of Rev. Ira H. Rees for a field farther west. The experience of this brother is a sad one to contemplate. He had settled on land on which the south half of the town of Ames now stands. Undergoing here hardships, poverty, and sickness, almost to the verge of despair, he finally sold out in the hardest of times just before the railroad came to relieve the depression, and went west to try the realities of another frontier settlement."

With the coming of the railroad, the town of Ames was founded in 1864. At the time, the town was to the east of the church, and the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm (founded in 1858) was west of the church and on the opposite side of the creek. Without a pastor, the little church struggled and by 1867 had dissolved. In 1868, Rev. J.F. Childs of Oskaloosa, Secretary of the Iowa Baptist State Convention, worked with Captain Kendrick Brown of Ames to reorganize the Squaw Creek Church. Brown was the son of a Baptist minister in New York and grandfather of Farwell Brown. The First Baptist Church of Ames was formed on July 11, and by the end of the year had 23 members.

The Hoggatt School was later incorporated into a dwelling in Ames. In 1981, the schoolhouse was restored and moved to its current location on the grounds of Meeker School.

We have made tentative plans to hold our May 20 worship service at the Hoggatt School.

In celebration of our 150th anniversary we will be highlighting an FBC historical moment each month.



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|----------|
|  | | | | 1 |  | 3 |
| 4 9:45a Worship/ Communion 11a Church School 5:15 Super Bowl Party | 5 <i>5p Women United</i> | 6 8a Men's Breakfast, Perkins <i>4p Parkinson's Music & Move- ment Group</i> | 7 6:30p Choir | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 9:45a Worship 11a Fellowship Time 11:15a Church School | 12 <i>5p Women United</i> | 13 <i>4p Parkinson's Music & Move- ment Group</i> 7p Trustees | 14 Ash Wednesday 11:30a Women's Lunch, Mandarin <i>3p Parkinson's Singing Group</i> 6:30p Ash Wed. Service 7:15p Choir | 15  | 16 | 17 |
| 18 9:45a Worship 11a Church School 2p Prayer Shawl Circle 6p Cook-Off | 19 <i>5p Women United</i> | 20 8a Men's Breakfast, Perkins <i>4:00p Parkinson's Music & Move- ment Group</i> | 21 <i>3:00p Parkinson's Singing Group</i> 6p Lenten Study 6:45p Choir | 22 6:30p Deacons | 23 | 24 |
| 285 9:45a Worship 11a Church School | 26 <i>5p Women United</i> | 27 <i>4:00p Parkinson's Music & Move- ment Group</i> | 28 11:30a Women's Lunch, Perkins <i>3:00p Parkinson's Singing Group</i> 6p Lenten Study 6:45p Choir | <div>  <div> Regular Office Hours Tuesday—9am-Noon and 1-3pm Wednesday—9am-1pm Thursday—9am-Noon and 1-3pm Friday—8am-Noon </div> </div> | | |

First Baptist Church
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 |
| Hanna Saville | Child Care |



Annual Cook-off

Our annual cook-off is scheduled for Sunday, February 18 at 6 pm. The theme is “Come and See.” Participants are encouraged to bring a dish that has an element of “surprise” – a surprising dish, a surprise ingredient, maybe something that is a surprising item for you to make, etc.

We will vote on our favorite dishes by placing coins, cash, or checks in containers by each entry. All of the funds raised will go toward our spring break mission trip to Oklahoma.

We not only need folks to bring food, we need hungry people to sample and vote! We hope you will join us on February 18th for a fun and tasty evening, and a chance to support our mission efforts.