



The Spire First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

FBC Continues to Meet Virtually

Governor Reynolds has announced that churches and houses of worship are free to meet in person again, with social distancing measures in place. This does not mean that churches will be deciding to do that at this time. Judicatory leaders from several denominations, including our region's Executive Minister, Jackie Saxon, issued a statement "asking congregations and members across the state to take faithful action by refraining from in-person religious gatherings, including worship." [Click here](#) for that full statement.

At our last deacons meeting, the decision was made to remain closed for in-person gatherings until at least the end of May, and to make a decision for June at the deacons meeting at the end of May. (This meeting came before Gov. Reynolds' announcement.) With cases of the virus still on the rise, we want to put the health and safety of both our members and the wider community first.



We will continue with our "Pandemic" Schedule of:

Sundays: Worship 9:45 am, Church School 11:00 am

Tuesdays: Virtual Coffee Shop, 2:00 pm

Thursdays: Devotion and Prayer, 6:30 pm

All church-wide activities are via Zoom; check with your class or contact the church for details on connecting to Church School classes, which are by Zoom or conference call.

[Click here](#) to connect to Zoom for worship, Virtual Coffee Shop, and Thursday Devotion

OR open the Zoom app and enter

Meeting ID 302 054 4990

Password 381038

You do not need a computer or smart phone; you may also connect by any phone at 312-626-6799 and entering the meeting ID when prompted.

May 2020

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

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www.fbcames.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.

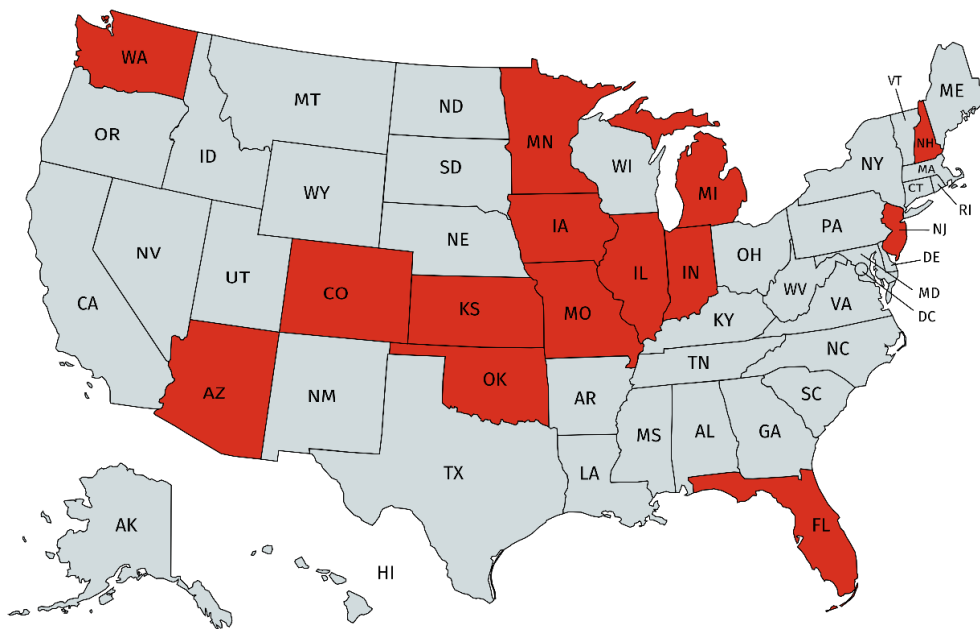
As we seek to follow the way of Jesus, we welcome all people to fully participate in our fellowship: all ages, colors, backgrounds, political affiliations, and physical and mental abilities; male and female, gay and straight, rich and poor, single and married. We are all God's children, and all are welcome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

Pastor's Word

The past weeks have been very difficult. On almost a daily basis I hear of friends and colleagues who have contracted the virus or have a family member with COVID-19, and I'm sure your experience is much the same. I think of medical personnel and essential workers who are literally putting their lives on the line. I feel for those who must make a choice between working in an environment where they may catch the virus or giving up their job and their income. I feel for many who do not have that choice and have lost their jobs. And we are all feeling uncertainty and anxiety for the future.

In such a time, we turn to God, and God is there, "an ever-present help in times of trouble." I have been heartened by our weekly worship together. Amidst this pandemic, we are setting modern-day attendance records via our Zoom worship services. I recognize that part of this is because there isn't much else to do on a Sunday morning. But I know that the bigger factor is that we are all looking for connection during this time – connections with one another and with God. One of the bright spots has been seeing and worshipping with friends from literally across the country – members who have moved to far-flung places, students who are at home for the semester, and former students who are taking the opportunity to worship with us.

Out of curiosity, I made a list of states that have been represented in our worship over these past weeks. This is shown in the following map.



Pretty cool, isn't it! It is gratifying to know that the connections that people have made at our church continue to be important to them, even after they have moved from Ames. It is humbling to realize that our ministry has been extended to folks living literally coast-to-coast.

It is hard to know exactly when we will be gathering in person again. But while we would much rather be together in person, and while we miss hugs and handshakes and singing together, it has become clear that meaningful ministry can take place in creative ways through the use of technology. I'm not sure what this will mean for churches going forward, but in the midst of a difficult time, God may be leading us to deeper levels of connection and community.

Blessings,
Dave

IT'S A
BOY!

Congratulations to Chris and Catie on the birth of Charles Patrick Parrish! Charles arrived on April 24, about a month early, weighing 5 lb. 7 oz. Mother and baby are doing well. Bob and Rita Parrish are proud grandparents!



Betty was very involved in her community. She held leadership positions in the League of Women Voters, National Council of Negro Women, YWCA, and state historical boards and commissions. She was especially interested in history and genealogy and was a co-founder of the New Jersey Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society. She was proud that she attended the March on Washington with Dr. King.

Sometime after her husband's death and after she turned 80, Betty moved to Iowa for a new adventure. Her nephew Jerry Jones lived here and was a member of our church. Betty quickly became involved in FBC and was a delightful person and faithful member. She got involved in the Ames community, participating in writers groups and the League of Women Voters, among other things.

In her late 80's and after Jerry's death, Betty was set to move to a retirement community in Kansas City, along with a friend in Ames. At the last minute, her friend was unable to go, but Betty made the move anyway, beginning yet another adventure and getting involved in the community at John Knox Village. She has been away from Ames for some years now, but some of our members have continued to keep in touch with her. She died on March 21. We are thankful for her life and witness.

In Memory of Betty Johnson, 1920-2020



We received word recently of the death of Betty Johnson, who moved several years ago from Ames to John Knox Village in Lee's Summit, Missouri. She was 99 years old.

Betty lived a remarkable life. She was a secretary for the War Production Board in Washington, D.C. during World War II. She was married after the war, and after earning degrees at Rutgers and NYU she served as Director of Admissions at Orange County Community College in Middletown, N.Y. until she retired.

May Anniversaries

Stephenie and Brian Keat	5
Elizabeth and Aaron Stegemöller	19
Tom and Martha Gleason	29
Bob and Rita Parrish	29

May Birthdays

Catherine Parrish	6
Antorniece Lee	9
Roberta Ridley	11
Maxwell Keat	21
Amari Martin	23
Dick Gee	25
Michael Thompson	28
Beth Douglass	29

Since most of you have not been to our building in some time, we thought we'd share some of the signs of spring. The hostas planted last year on the west side of the educational wing are coming up, and so far the rabbits have left them alone! There is a shrub with beautiful blooms outside the library window. And the flowering pears on the north side of the driveway are showing off!



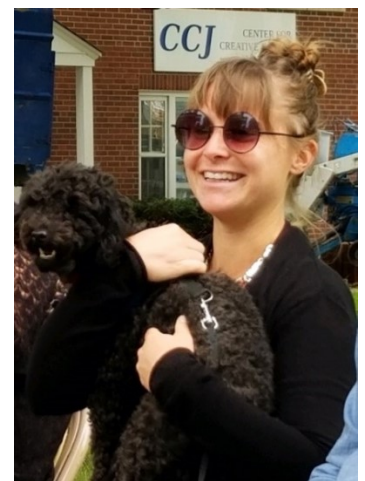
Congratulations, Graduate!

Our congratulations to Patricia Izbicki, who is graduating from Iowa State with a Ph.D. in Neuroscience. Patricia has served as our choir accompanist since she came from Pensacola, Florida to begin graduate school at Iowa State five years ago. Her job title does not adequately describe her contributions to the musical life of our church, and Patricia has blessed us in ways far beyond music. We have appreciated her enthusiasm, compassion, caring spirit, and commitment to excellence. One of her efforts that we fondly remember is the Public Pianos project that she began in Ames. Our Music Camp students painted one of the pianos.

Patricia has excelled as a student and as an instructor. She had a first-author, peer-reviewed article published in a journal recently, as well as having an article published in *Scientific American*. She has also taught piano students here at our church.

We received great news last week when both Patricia and her fiancée Andrew Zaman accepted research positions at Iowa State! So she will be with us for a while longer. We will recognize Patricia in worship this Sunday, May 3.

(If you know of other spring graduates, please contact the church office.)



Patricia with Ziggy, our choir mascot.

Library News

The Ames Public Library is now closed, but our church library is available if you need something to read. I am willing to get together a few books and drop them off for you. Give me a call and tell me the kinds of books you like to read and I'll bring several to choose from.

- Catherine Parrish, librarian



Income and Expense Summary through April:

Total from regular pledges	\$68,960
Expected from regular pledges for 4 months	\$62,551
Other Contributions of Record	\$7,693
Loose Offering	\$157
Parking Lot Income	\$5,475
CCJ Rent, garbage, gas, electricity and water	\$3,770
Other – includes Memorials, Mission offerings, etc.	\$4,990
Total income received to date	\$91,045
Budget for 4 months	\$85,103
Total spent for budgeted items	\$76,397
Total spent for un-budgeted Missions (special offerings)	\$1,808
Total spent from Memorial Funds	\$3,766
Total spent from Reserve Funds	\$514
Total expenses to date	\$83,006

THANK YOU for supporting our church's ministry during this time apart! You may send tithes and gifts by check to First Baptist Church, 200 Lynn Ave., Ames IA 50014 (attention: Financial Secretary). You may wish to use online bill pay through your bank, which will send a check to the church. Several members do this, and you can set up automatic payments if you wish. You may also contribute via PayPal from our website at fbcames.org.

Event Cancellations/Postponements

The **Center for Creative Justice Chili Supper** scheduled for April 14 at our church has been postponed until this fall.

Our **Work Trip to Green Lake Conference Center** set for the first week of June has been canceled.

Music Camp was scheduled for July 6-10. This year's camp has been canceled. This would have been our 21st consecutive summer with Music Camp, and this was a sad but necessary decision. There is a possibility of holding a mini-camp this fall.

The **Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians Conference** at Green Lake was scheduled for July 19-25, and we have a number of members who attend that conference each year. FABM recently announced that this year's conference has been canceled.

[Forest Lake Camp](#) and [Dayton Oaks Camp](#), our region's two camps, have canceled events in March, April and May. A decision will be made soon about the summer camping season. If camps are held, the early-bird discount for registration will be extended throughout the summer. Our church will pay half of the registration cost for those who attend camp.



If You Need Assistance

Our deacons are calling members and friends to check on how we are all doing during this time. If you need assistance (groceries, etc.) please contact a deacon or Pastor Dave. We have several members who would be glad to assist.

Worship Notes

Worship by Zoom has been an adventure, and we are figuring things out week by week, but the opportunity to worship together and participate in real time with one another has been wonderful. To be able to share prayer concerns and pray together and to have folks read scripture, lead the call to worship or bring special music from their home has been a blessing. Many found our Maundy Thursday communion service to be especially meaningful. And it is not every day that you will see a dog running in circles with joy to the Hallelujah Chorus, as our choir mascot Ziggy did on Easter Sunday!

Communion Sunday: We will celebrate the Lord's Supper this Sunday, May 3. Please have ready bread (a cracker, pita, tortilla, or similar will be fine) and juice (if you don't have grape juice, any juice or any drink will work.)

Guest Preacher: On May 24, we will welcome to our "virtual" pulpit the **Rev. Dr. Randall O'Brien**. Randall is one of our newest members; he and Kay retired and moved here from Tennessee last summer. (Fortunately for us, they have a daughter, son-in-law, and five grandchildren who live in Ames!) An ordained minister, Randall has served as a pastor, interim pastor, religion professor, and university administrator, most recently as president of Carson-Newman University. Following a week of (online) continuing education for Pastor Dave, Randall has graciously agreed to preach that Sunday, and we look forward to hearing his message.



May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9:45a Worship, Communion, Grad Recognition 11:00a Church School	4	5 2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	6 6:30p Choir Rehearsal	7 6:30p Mid-Week Gathering	8	9
10 9:45a Worship 11:00a Church School 	11	12 2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	13	14 6:30p Mid-Week Gathering	15	16
17 9:45a Worship, CE Recognition 11:00a Church School	18	19 2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	20	21 6:30p Mid-Week Gathering	22  6:30p Virtual Trivia Night	23
24 9:45a Worship, Randall O' Brien 11:00a Church School	25 	26 2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	27	28 6:30p Mid-Week Gathering 7:15p Deacons Meeting	29	30
31 9:45a Worship 11:00a Church School						

First Baptist Church
200 Lynn Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50014-7188

Our Church Staff:

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



Virtual Trivia Night Set for May 22

During this of staying at home, we have nevertheless found a way to enjoy social activities. We held our first Trivia Night on April 17. Congratulations to the winning team of Rodney Barto, Martha Gleason, and John Anderson! By popular demand, we will hold a second trivia night via Zoom on May 22, at 6:30 pm. We will form teams, and the teams can discuss their answers to each round's questions in Zoom breakout rooms. We will use the same Zoom link that we use on Sunday mornings. Contact Pastor Dave for more information.