



The Spire

First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

April 2024
Volume 70, No. 4

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

200 Lynn Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50014-7188
Worship Sundays 9:45 am

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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

FBC folks met together on Saturday morning, March 23 for a planning retreat. It was a good morning and I'd like to share some of what happened.

We began with a time for "ice breakers." That sounds a bit odd, seeing that some of us have known each other for 10, 20, 30, or even 40 years, but it is amazing how much we don't know about one another, and it is always good to start an ambitious morning with a fun activity. Among other things, we grouped by which denomination we had grown up in, which decade we finished high school, and what our favorite pizza place was in Ames. We had to "get off the fence" and choose spam or Brussels sprouts, the beach or the mountains, and Taylor Swift tickets or Final Four tickets. And we lined up east to west based on where we were born, and then in chronological order of when we first attended First Baptist.

And then it got really interesting. We shared strengths of our church and things that we have to celebrate. Sometimes it is easy to think about difficulties and what we lack, but it can be helpful and energizing to think about what we have going for us. We came up with a pretty good list including things like music, care, fellowship, our staff, friendly and thoughtful worship, flexibility, diversity of ideas and an open and inclusive atmosphere, a place where everyone is welcome, a great tradition and legacy, generosity of both time and financial support, a beautiful sanctuary, mission engagement, wonderful children and youth, and more.

We talked about all of the changes we have faced in recent years in our culture and how this has affected our church. The number of folks who claim no religious affiliation continues to climb; in the US, 38% of those ages 18-29 and 32% of those ages 30-49 claim no religious affiliation. (And many of those who claim an affiliation rarely participate in a congregation.) We are still coming to terms with all of the changes brought on by COVID. Our in-person attendance is down from pre-COVID times, but we have a large contingent on Zoom, much larger than most churches. Like the rest of society, we are a lot less formal than we used to be both in the way we dress and the way we go about doing things.

In light of all of this, we thought about who we are as a church – in terms of mission, geography, how we go about accomplishing our mission, how we are sustained, and what makes us unique. A couple of comments that stood out for me in terms of uniqueness were "we are not that kind of Baptist church," and we are "small but mighty."

After all of this, we talked about challenges that we faced in an honest and open way, and then generated ideas of all kinds that were grouped in the areas of Worship/Education, Fellowship/Care, Outreach/Mission, and Facilities/Administration. For just one morning, we accomplished a lot. A detailed list of responses and ideas will be shared with our boards and committees, and this will be a good resource as we think about where God is leading us in the future.

All in all, the morning together left me feeling good about being a member of this community of faith and feeling blessed to be your pastor.

Serving together,

Dave

Center for Creative Justice Celebrates 50 Years!

Back in 1974, a small group that included Johnie Hammond, Jenna McCarley, and Rev. Bill Belli were looking at ways to help those who were released from prison be reintegrated into society. It was called the Committee on Criminal Justice. After some research, they came up with a plan to try to keep offenders from being incarcerated in the first place, and help them get their lives on track. CCJ was established as a community-based organization that provided probation supervision to lower level offenders, who were sentenced to probation with CCJ by the court. It began with a \$15,000 grant from American Baptists. In time CCJ added community-based mediation services and the name became the Center for Creative Justice.



Our church has had close ties to CCJ from its beginning back in February of 1974. Many members have served as volunteers and board members, and the pastor of our church is an *ex-officio* board member.

The Story County Legal Aid Society also began in 1974, offering legal services on civil matters to those who could not afford them. CCJ and Legal Aid will be celebrating their 50th Anniversaries together on **April 20** at a fundraising event held at Christy Hall, 220 H Avenue in Nevada at the Story County Fairgrounds. The event will run from 6-10 pm and there will be food, music, and a program celebrating the history of both CCJ and Legal Aid. Our own **Johnie Hammond** will be one of the speakers!

Our church is supporting CCJ and Legal Aid by sponsoring a table at the event. If you would like to attend, we have a few seats available at our FBC table. **Please see Pastor Dave (soon!) if you are interested.**

Summer Camp News

Our region has two camps: Forest Lake, just south of Ottumwa, and Dayton Oaks, near Dayton (45 minutes northwest of Ames). Both offer a variety of summer camps for children, youth, and families. Last summer we had youth attending both camps.

Our church will pay half the cost of camp for any youth, or more if there is a financial need. There is information and a list of the camp weeks for each camp on the bulletin board. For more information see Pastor Dave or a Christian Education Committee member.



Subscribe to our Region Newsletter!

The Body Builder is the newsletter of the Mid-American Baptist Churches, our American Baptist region. MABC includes around 115 churches in Iowa and Minnesota. *The Body Builder* is published electronically, usually at the middle and last of each month. We encourage you to subscribe to learn more about what is happening in churches around the region as well as region and national ABC news. You can [click here](#) to find past issues and click on the "subscribe" button to sign up and receive the *Body Builder* in your inbox.

Senior Moments



Senior Moments is back with another set of interesting guests on KHOI Community radio 89.1 FM, hosted by our own Phyllis Schrag.

This month's episodes include:

April 6: KHOI will take listeners to the Brucemore Mansion in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

April 13: Interview with Tim Grandon regarding funeral planning

April 20: Senior Moments visits with Dorothy and Bob Sperry, a retired husband and wife team

April 27: This episode brings our attention to quilts, how they are used and who makes and donates them. Bob Ollinger heads the Ames chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace. He discusses how he and other Ames residents make beds for Ames children who have no bed. Also, in that episode, Jennifer Buttolph explains how her non-profit organization, "From the Heart" makes bed sized quilts and donates them to various charities including Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

Senior Moments airs every Saturday at 11:00 a.m. on KHOI Radio.

Summer Time Prayers

The Board of Deacons wants to invite you to participate in "Summer Time Prayers." It is our hope that the membership and friends will submit prayers that, when collected, will be will be distributed as a compilation of prayers available to all.

"Summer Time Prayers" is a way to continue our individual and collective engagement in worshipping God. Prayer is an essential part of the worship experience. Through this effort, it is hoped that meaning can be found that helps us as we go about daily routines.

The submitted prayers may be general in nature or more specific if you desire. For instance: prayers for healing, for our government, for world peace, for summer travel, for times away and times of renewal, prayers reflecting on the beauty of nature, etc. Prayers of thankfulness, worship, or however you are led by the Spirit. As you consider this opportunity, give thought to how this activity can enrich your life and bring joy to others. There is not a specific length for prayers.

Writers can provide multiple prayers. We are hoping for participation by all ages. Prayers should be submitted to the First Baptist Church office by **May 15** and thus available for June, July, and August.

For questions, please contact Larry Schrag or Barbara Woods.



April



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 8a Men's Breakfast 2-3p PD Boxing	3 2-3p PD Singing 6p Christian Ed. Meeting	4 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2-3p PD Dance	5	6 
7 9a Choir 9:45a Worship/ Communion 10:45a Church School	8	9 2-3p PD Boxing 7p Trustee's	10 2-3p PD Singing 	11 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2-3p PD Dance	12	13
14 9a Choir 9:45a Worship 10:45a Fellowship Time 11a Church School	15 	16 8a Men's Breakfast 2-3p PD Boxing	17 2-3p PD Singing	18 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2-3p PD Dance	19 	20
21 9a Choir 9:45a Worship 10:45a Church School	22 	23 8a Men's Breakfast 2-3p PD Boxing	24 2-3p PD Singing	25 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2-3p PD Dance	26	27
28 9a Choir 9:45a Worship 10:45a Church School	29	30 2-3p PD Boxing				



April 7:

Worship Leader Erin Johnson
Ushers: Julie Johnston, Aaron Stegemöller

April 14:

Worship Leader Rita Parrish
Ushers: Jere Maddux, Bob Parrish

April 21:

Worship Leader Larry Schrag
Ushers: Jerelyn Logue, Tom Logue

April 28:

Worship Leader Beth Douglass
Ushers: Stephanie Goodman and Larry Schrag



Zoe Russell	2
Becca Whitaker	7
Jacelyn Rudderow	9
Rosemary Coffey	18
Elijah Phomvisay	20
Neil Logue	22
Alissa Parrish	26
Dawn Doerr-Johnson	28



Dianne and Fred Borgen 4

Church Directory Update

We are updating our church directory. Please check the printout on the table at the front of the sanctuary to make corrections or to change contact information. You can also contact the church office.



JOHN PAVLOVITZ
FINDING COURAGE AND
COMPASSION IN DAYS
CRUELTY IS TRENDING

**FREE DAY-LONG EVENT
IN AMES, IOWA!**

**SAT APRIL 6,
9AM-3PM**

**AMES UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**
217 SIXTH STREET
AMES, IA 50010

WWW.AMESUCC.ORG



Upcoming Event

Pastor, author and activist John Pavlovitz is the guest for this year's Theologian in Residence program at Ames UCC. The event is free, with donations welcome. You may attend the morning session (9 am – noon) or afternoon workshop session (1:00-2:30) or both. [Follow link](#) for details.



First Baptist Church

AMES

200 Lynn Avenue

Ames, Iowa 50014-7188

Our Church Staff:

Rev. Dr. David Russell	Pastor
Mindy Phomvisay	Director of Music
Emma Phomvisay	Music Intern
Elizabeth Stegemöller	Choir Accompanist
Sierra Livengood	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian



Worship Sunday mornings 9:45 in person or on ZOOM

Details for connecting via ZOOM at fbcomes.org