



## September 2020

Volume 66, No. 8

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
200 Lynn Ave.  
Ames, IA 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.

### Outdoor Worship Plans

Our Re-Opening Committee has been meeting regularly over the past months, looking at the various preparations and precautions necessary for meeting in person as well as keeping an eye on the level of the virus in Iowa and in Story County. Earlier in the summer, the committee felt it prudent to wait until school started before moving ahead with any plans, with the expectation of a spike in cases as ISU students returned to Ames. Meeting in late August, the committee felt that while the level of virus activity in our community would not make in-person worship in the sanctuary safe for some time, we might reasonably be able to meet for outdoor worship in the near future. Research has shown that outdoor gatherings are far safer than indoor gatherings, and we are blessed with a nice shaded area in our front yard – where we are used to having our Worship under the Trees Service each fall.

A survey was offered in worship on August 30. The question posed was: "If conditions allow, the Re-Opening Committee hopes that we can meet for worship in the church front yard beginning September 20. An online worship option would still be available. Which of the following best represents your response?"

A total of 43 Zoom users responded. This represented around 75 people and was 75% of the 57 Zoom logins in worship that day. That is an excellent response rate, and it might be added that some users joined the meeting by telephone and were unable to take the poll. Thanks to all who participated!

Interestingly, 25% of those who participated in the poll live out of town. This is actually fairly representative of the number of out of town friends who have been joining us for worship. This has been one of the pleasant surprises and great joys of these past months, as we have been able to connect with and worship with friends and family - and even make some new friends who don't live in Ames.

Of those who live in Ames, the responses were:

- 61% *I would be likely to attend an outdoor service in which social distancing is practiced, all wear masks, and precautions are taken.*
- 19% *I would not be comfortable attending such a service at this time.*
- 19% *I would not be likely to attend any in-person service until a vaccine is widely available.*

(percentages add to less than 100% due to rounding)

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The majority of those who live in town are interested in meeting for worship outside. Those indicating they would likely attend represented around 40 people, and not everyone in worship took the poll.

I'd like to make some comments both on what outdoor worship will look like, and then on that important phrase, "if conditions allow."

### **Outdoor "Hybrid" Worship**

First of all, worship will not look like what we are used to when we gather together. Many will not be able to attend in person, and we will continue with Zoom, making an effort to include those who are at home in our worship (we will still take prayer requests over Zoom chat, for example). Our survey shows that around half of our congregation will be online. So we might think of this as a "hybrid" service.

For those who will be worshipping in person, here are some of the important modifications we are making to stay safe:

- Everyone will wear a mask. We will have masks available for those who may need one.
- We are encouraging everyone to bring a lawn chair. We will have some chairs available if you aren't able to bring one.
- We will sit at least 6 feet apart from one another, and more is better. There will be some guidance on spacing and where to sit. There is plenty of space for everyone.
- There will be some music, with musicians at a distance from the congregation, but we will not have congregational singing.
- The building will be open for restroom use only, on the first floor. We are asking everyone to avoid entering the building if possible.
- Parking along the fence on the south drive will be reserved for those with lesser mobility. Those who can are asked to park in back of the church and walk around the building.
- There will be no refreshments after the service. You may visit with friends after the service at a distance but please keep this brief as we will have a shorter service in an effort to limit time together.

### **"If Conditions Allow..."**

Since the Re-Opening Committee made plans for the poll, and even since the poll was taken, there has been a large spike in COVID-19 cases in Story County. For a couple of days, Ames led the nation in new cases per capita. This is alarming to all of us, of course. While meeting outside with masks and distancing is far safer than meeting indoors, we do not want to put anyone in harm's way. As much as we would like to see one another in person, it is more important to protect everyone's health. If the level of new COVID cases continues at the level it has been over the past week, we will delay the date for holding outdoor services. The Re-Opening Committee continues to monitor data from state and local sources and is in conversation over conditions in which we may safely meet in person, outside.

Please note that **no one is expected to attend in-person worship**. We are not thinking of this as the "norm," and a large number of folks will still be on Zoom. And if you have any symptoms whatsoever, please stay home.

The other part of "if conditions allow," of course, is the weather. The remaining "season" for outdoor worship runs into October, with some mornings crisp and other maybe a little too crisp. And of course rain is always a possibility. We will get word out by early Sunday morning or before via email, Facebook, and on our website if a planned outdoor service is being moved to Zoom because of weather. We can foresee having several weeks of outdoor worship and then going back to Zoom as it gets colder.

If you have any questions or comments regarding our plans, please contact me or one of the Re-Opening Committee members: Jere Maddux, Joe Parrish, Mindy Phomvisay, Elizabeth Stegemöller, Wes Johnson, and Aaron Stegemöller. This has been a year unlike any other, and the way we move forward as a church is a work in progress – it's all experimental at this point. But we give thanks that God is with us as we walk this road together.

Blessings,  
Dave

## **Elizabeth Stegemöller and PD Choir to Appear on Program with Renee Fleming**

Renowned soprano and arts & health advocate Renée Fleming is hosting a series of webinars called [\*Music and Mind Live with Renée Fleming\*](#). The online series features the acclaimed singer and National Medal of Arts honoree in conversation with scientists and practitioners working at the intersection of music, neuroscience, and healthcare. Experts in fields such as childhood development, healthy aging, pain and anxiety management, and rehabilitation share their findings, and episodes include live Q&A from viewers.

The September 8 episode will include a conversation with our own Elizabeth Stegemöller about her research with music and Parkinson's disease patients. This will include the debut performance of a virtual choir of 170 people with Parkinson's, including those who (in non-COVID times) meet to sing each week at First Baptist. Elizabeth and her graduate students have been working hard to put this video together during the pandemic. Aaron Stegemöller will be the guest soloist in the virtual choir. We are thrilled for this opportunity for Elizabeth and the PD Singing Group!

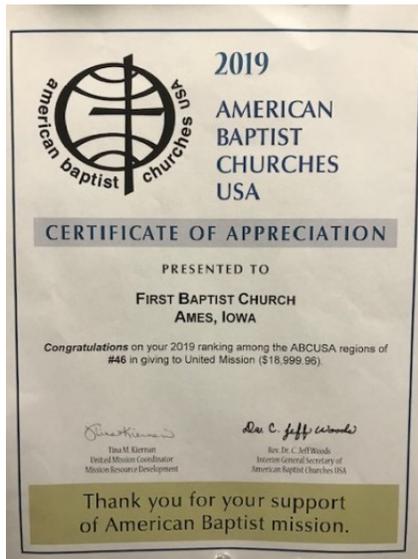


To join *Music and Mind Live with Renée Fleming*, go to [www.facebook.com/ReneeFlemingMusic](https://www.facebook.com/ReneeFlemingMusic) or visit [www.youtube.com/TheKennedyCenter](https://www.youtube.com/TheKennedyCenter) on Tuesday, May 19 at 4:00 pm (CDT). The episode with Elizabeth and the PD choir as well as past episodes are recorded and available to watch online. (There is a new episode each Tuesday at 4 pm).

## **Next Virtual Trivia Night September 26**



Our next monthly Trivia Night will be on Friday, September 26 at 6:30 pm, via Zoom. The questions come from a range of general knowledge topics, with a few “churchy” questions thrown in. 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.



### THANK YOU!

We recently received a certificate from ABC/USA congratulating our church on being one of the leading churches in gifts to United Mission. In 2019, FBC ranked second among churches in our region and #46 in churches across the denomination in support of United Mission with gifts totaling \$19,000. United Mission is the way that ABC churches support all that we do together as American Baptists, both in our region, in the United States and Puerto Rico, and around the world. Thank you for your continuing support of our church's ministry both near and far.

## September Anniversaries

Jill and Michael Leininger	6
Dick and Jeanette Gee	10

## September Birthdays

Katherine Thompson	2
Stephenie Keat	3
Alexis Lee	5
Lucy Stegemöller	10
John R. Anderson	12
Jenna McCarley	19
Dave Russell	22
Ethan Phomvisay	22
Rosemarie Starrett	24
Anadia Daniels	25
Kent Johnson	29
Barbara Woods	29
Elizabeth Stegemöller	30



### Church School News

We begin a new year of Church School classes on Sunday, September 13. This will be a very different year for our Christian Education program, of course, but through Zoom, conference calls, and perhaps an occasional outdoor distanced gathering, we will continue to meet together and learn together. Details on Zoom links or conference call details will be available in the September 13 bulletin, or contact the church office. Each class will determine how they will proceed in light of possible outdoor services, which may necessitate time changes for classes.

**Theology Class** – this group focuses on issues of faith and belief, mostly using a video/discussion format. The group will determine together the topic/resource it will use this fall. Stephanie Goodman is the facilitator. The class will meet via Zoom.

**Library/Bible Study Class** – The class is completing a study of the book of Haggai and will determine what it will study next. Class members share leadership. The group will meet via conference call.

**Children/Youth** meet via Zoom with Jan Thompson.

**College Students** – Student gatherings have revolved around meals in the past, which is problematic in the current environment. College students will meet via Zoom on September 13 to check in and plan future study/activities.

The Fall edition of our quarterly devotional booklet, **The Secret Place**, is now available. You may contact the office and then stop by to pick up your copy, or we would be glad to deliver it to you.



## CROP Walk 2020

Like many events this year, the 2020 CROP Walk will be different. Those walking will not be meeting at Brookside Park for an event with 150 walkers, and the Ames CROP Walk will be largely virtual. But the mission has not changed; we're still working to end hunger in Story County and around the world.

In 2019, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of CROP Walks around the country, and the tradition will continue. These walks (sponsored by Church World Service) raise funds to address hunger in local communities and around the world. Twenty-five percent of funds raised in our local walk will go to local agencies Food at First, Bethesda Community Food Pantry, Good Neighbors Emergency Assistance, SHOP, MICA, and Calvary Food Shelf.

While there will be no event at Brookside Park on Oct. 11, we will still be walking and remembering those who walk long distances to access healthy food and clean water every day. Participants are encouraged to take a walk anytime Oct. 1-15 and walk wherever they would like. You can register to walk as part of our First Baptist team or make donations to support walkers from our church or to our team at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/amesia/fbc>.

You can also get a paper sponsor form and collect contributions the old-fashioned way if you prefer – just contact the church office (you can also contact the office to sponsor our walkers). Regardless of how you sign up and collect donations, please let the church office know if you are walking. We may be able to set up an opportunity for our FBC group to walk together.

## Mid-American Baptist Churches Celebrate 50 Years at Virtual Gathering October 3

Our Regional Gathering, set for Saturday October 3, marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the merger of the Iowa Baptist Convention and Minnesota Baptist Convention. Because of COVID-19, the celebration has been moved to a virtual format. The theme is *Strength for Today, Hope for Tomorrow*. The Keynote Preacher will be our good friend Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford. Soozie was the guest preacher for our church's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. She is the Executive Minister for the ABC of Indiana/Kentucky and our former Associate Executive Minister here in Mid-America.

The Gathering will include the normal business of the region, including the election of officers and region board members. We are excited that **our own Rev. Susan Russell is the nominee for Regional President!** Those in attendance may also take part in virtual workshops on a variety of topics. The Gathering will include presentations and greetings related to our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and end with a virtual communion service.

The online nature of the Gathering and the fact that the meeting will be relatively short (plans are to begin around 10 am and for the proceedings to last no more than a couple of hours) makes this virtual gathering much more accessible than our usual region meeting. Our church is allotted 20 delegates to the Regional Gathering. All who want to attend are welcome; the first 20 registering from our church will be designated as delegates with voting privileges (the business portion is very minimal.) Online registration should be available around September 15, and we will get registration information out as soon as it is available.



### Financial Report for 7 Months

Pledges Received	\$114,322
Expected from regular pledges for 7 months	\$109,639
Other Contributions and Plate Offering	\$18,185
Parking Lot and Rental Income	\$13,209
Miscellaneous and Designated Income	\$1,282
Memorial Funds received	\$1,200
Unbudgeted Mission Gifts Received	\$3,853
FBC Endowment Fund received	<u>\$500</u>
Total income received 7 months	\$152,551
Budget for 7 months	\$148,930
Budget expenditures	\$129,262
Unbudgeted Missions expenditures	\$3,853
Memorial Funds expenditures	\$3,916
Reserve Funds expenditures	\$514
Expenditures from other funds	<u>\$521</u>
Total Expenditures	\$138,066

**Thank you** for your continuing support of our church! You may mail tithes and offerings to the church at 200 Lynn Ave., Ames, IA 50014, Attn: Financial Secretary; give via the Bill Pay option at your bank, or via the PayPal button on the church website at [fbcames.org](http://fbcames.org).



### AMOS Update

Thank you to everyone who took part in our CCC Workshop on August 23! More than 20 people joined to learn about the 1930's and the New Deal, to share our own stories, and to reflect together about what a local "New Deal" might look like today. A special thanks to our planning team and to presenters Becca Whitaker and Barbara Woods!

Over the 39 AMOS institutions in Central Iowa (religious congregations and community non-profit groups), over 300 people have so far participated in CCC Workshops, with more scheduled. The next step in the CCC Campaign is a Delegate Assembly where results of the campaign are shared and we think about how we might begin to address the concerns raised through the process. The AMOS Delegate Assembly is on Sunday, September 13 from 3:00-4:30pm via Zoom. [You may register in advance](#) for this meeting.



# September



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b>  2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop 5:15p Pastoral Relations Com 7:00p Re-Opening Com	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  6:30p Weekly Devotion	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9:45a Worship, Communion	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>  2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop 4:00p PD Choir Performance Online 7:00p Trustees	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  6:30p Weekly Devotion	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:45a Worship 11a Church School Kickoff  3:00p AMOS Delegate Assembly	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>  2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  6:30p Weekly Devotion	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9:45a Outdoor Worship (tentative)	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  6:30p Weekly Devotion 7:15 Deacor Meeting	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:45a Worship	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>  2:00p Virtual Coffee Shop	<b>30</b>			

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

**Our Church Staff:**

Rev. Dr. David Russell	Pastor
Mindy Phomvisay	Director of Music
Emma Phomvisay	Music Associate
Hope Deets	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian



**Live Worship Sunday mornings 9:45 am via ZOOM**  
**Details for connecting on our church website at**  
[fbcomes.org](http://fbcomes.org).