



# The Spire

First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

April 2022  
Volume 68, No. 4

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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E-MAIL: [office@fbcames.org](mailto:office@fbcames.org)  
WEB: [fbcames.org](http://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.*



# HOLY WEEK

We invite you to join us for Holy Week worship:

### Palm Sunday, April 10

Worship with Palm Processional, 9:45 am

### Maundy Thursday, April 14

Worship with communion, 6:30 pm

### Good Friday, April 15

Pre-recorded service by Ames Area Religious Leaders Association; speakers on "The Seven Last Words of Christ" include Pastor Dave. A link to the service will be shared later.

### Easter Sunday, April 17

Easter Breakfast, 8:30 am  
Celebration Worship, 9:45 am

Easter Worship will include a baptismal service for Lucy Stegemöller, Tyler Anderson, and Lucas Anderson!

## Easter Breakfast



After being unable to celebrate Easter together in person the last two years, we will have an Easter celebration complete with our traditional Easter breakfast! The breakfast will be at 8:30 am. It will not be buffet style as in past years; food will be served at the window. If you plan to attend, please sign up on the bulletin board, note on the registration pad, or [e-mail the church office](mailto:office@fbcames.org). This will help us as we prepare for the meal.

## Pastor's Word

There is, amazingly, only one month remaining before my sabbatical begins. April 24 will be my last Sunday, with my sabbatical beginning May 1. I will return on Sunday, July 24. This will be my last *Spire* column for awhile.

What follows is an effort to give some perspective and answer some questions you may have about my upcoming sabbatical.

I am now in my 23<sup>rd</sup> year as pastor of First Baptist. This is the longest pastorate in the church's 154-year history, and I attribute that longevity in part to having had two sabbaticals over the course of these years – opportunities for personal and spiritual renewal that have been wonderful experiences. Beyond that, for the church to offer these sabbaticals says a lot about the kind of church this is – a caring and supportive church, which is another big factor in my having been here so long. In fact, the deacons approached me last summer and given how tough the pandemic had been, they encouraged me to take a sabbatical - even without knowing that according to our policy, I would be eligible for a sabbatical in 2022.

The past two years have been tough ones for churches in general. For many churches, attendance is down, finances are tight, and there has been increased conflict, including fighting over COVID mitigation measures. Many pastors have been caught in the middle on this, and have found leading in a time for which they were not necessarily prepared to be very stressful. The number of clergy leaving the profession is alarming – one 2021 survey showed that 38 percent of pastors had “seriously considered” leaving the ministry in the past year. That was a 9% increase from the 2020 survey (which at 29% was already high). Pastors have certainly been a part of the “Great Resignation.”

Our church has weathered these past months better than many congregations. In person attendance is at this point far less than before the pandemic, but when Zoom is included, overall attendance is actually up. Members have been generous and we have done well financially; we have actually increased our mission giving, including assistance for those in need here in Ames. We have not had the division a lot of churches have experienced, and we have shown faith, flexibility, and grace toward one another as we have navigated some difficult days. God has blessed us even through some hard times. Nevertheless, it has not been easy.

All of this is backdrop to saying that after the last two years, I am looking forward to time away to recharge my batteries. Having turned 60, I am thinking of this sabbatical as a time to rest and get ready so that I can finish strong. To use a basketball metaphor (and why wouldn't I?), if my first sabbatical was after the first quarter and the second came at halftime, this will be the break before the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

My goals for this time are rest, reflection, and renewal. We will take a trip to the North Shore in Minnesota and I will attend the Music Conference at Green Lake. We will have a chance to visit family and I will do some genealogy work in Illinois. A good part of the time, I will be in town. I hope to do a little woodworking and some projects at home. I will do some reading and I am also looking forward to worship where I am not “in charge.” There are things I hope to do, but more than a big to-do list, I am looking forward simply to time for rest and renewal.

The hope for a pastoral sabbatical is that it may be a renewing time both for the minister and for the church. To that end, the worship committee, deacons and others have been working to plan for the coming months. There will be some outstanding guest preachers, but for most of the Sundays church members will be leading in worship. The plans are exciting! We will be sharing some of these details soon.

But for the next month, I am still here! I am looking forward to the weeks ahead and to the celebration of Easter. But I did want to update you now on what is ahead. I ask for your prayers for me during the time of sabbatical, and I will be praying for all of you.

I am so grateful for this opportunity the church has offered. Thank you!

Blessings.  
Dave



# Congratulations!

Congratulations to our spring high school and college graduates! Our graduates will be recognized in worship on April 24. If you are aware of other graduates in our church family, please notify the church office.

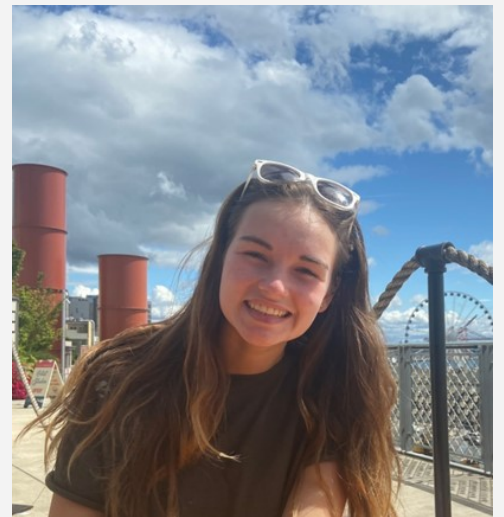


**Emma Phomvisay** has grown up in our church. She will graduate from Roosevelt High School in Des Moines. At Roosevelt she was involved in activities including orchestra, theater, speech, and several choir groups. She was named to the All-State choir the last two years. Emma will play the role of Sophie in Roosevelt's upcoming production of *Mama Mia!*

Emma has been a member of our church choir since she was in grade school and serves in our church in many ways, including as a regular worship leader. When the pandemic began, she joined our staff as our Music Intern. She produced virtual choir videos, was our weekly soloist during Zoom-only worship, and serves as our in-meeting Zoom manager. Emma plans to major in Music Therapy in college and is still deciding on a school.

We celebrated **Morgan Ambourn's** graduation last spring, and we are celebrating another graduation this year! Morgan is a native of Eden Prairie, Minnesota. After earning her BS in Computer Engineering in 2021, she returned to Iowa State and will graduate this spring with a Masters in Computer Engineering. In her graduate program, she conducted research and worked as a teaching assistant.

Morgan has been involved in our church through all five years of her time at Iowa State. She has been a dedicated choir member even through the year of Zoom-only worship, participating in virtual choir videos. She has been a scripture reader and worship leader. Last summer she worked remotely for Microsoft. Following graduation, Morgan will be moving to Seattle to work for Microsoft as a software engineer.



**Jacelyn Rudderow** is a native of Pedricktown, New Jersey. She will be graduating from ISU with a BS in Biological Systems Engineering. While at ISU, Jacelyn was a member and officer of Cardinal Swing Society, Cantamus Women's Choir and a member of ASABE. One of her favorite memories from ISU is singing at Carnegie Hall with all four ISU Choirs and the Symphony Orchestra.

Jacelyn has been very involved in the life of our church throughout her time at ISU. She has sung solos, served as a worship leader, and been a part of our choir when her schedule allowed. She will be moving to Austin, Minnesota in July to work for Hormel Foods as an Associate Quality and Process Control Supervisor. She hopes to become an involved community member in Austin by joining a church, the local curling club, and hopefully a local theater group. She would like to thank the members of FBC for supporting and embracing her throughout her four years in Ames and says "I will dearly miss you all!!"





**April 3:**

*Worship Leader:* Jacelyn Rudderow

*Ushers:* Julie Johnston, Aaron Stegemöller

**April 10:**

*Worship Leader:* John Whitaker

*Ushers:* Jere Maddux, Bob Parrish

**April 17:**

*Worship Leader:* Susan Russell

*Ushers:* Jerilyn Logue, Tom Logue

**April 24:**

*Worship Leader:* Jan Thompson

*Ushers:* Stephanie Goodman, Jon Pritchard



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
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**WORK DAY**

We will have a Spring Work Day soon. Be watching for further details. There is plenty of yard work to do—if you can help, please join us!

**Summer Camps**

FBC will provide a scholarship for half the registration fee for youth who attend our regional camps at Dayton Oaks and Forest Lake or conferences at Green Lake. If needed, we can provide a scholarship for the full amount of registration. Posters with camp information are available on the bulletin board or at [www.daytonoaks.org](http://www.daytonoaks.org) or [www.forestlakecamp.org](http://www.forestlakecamp.org).



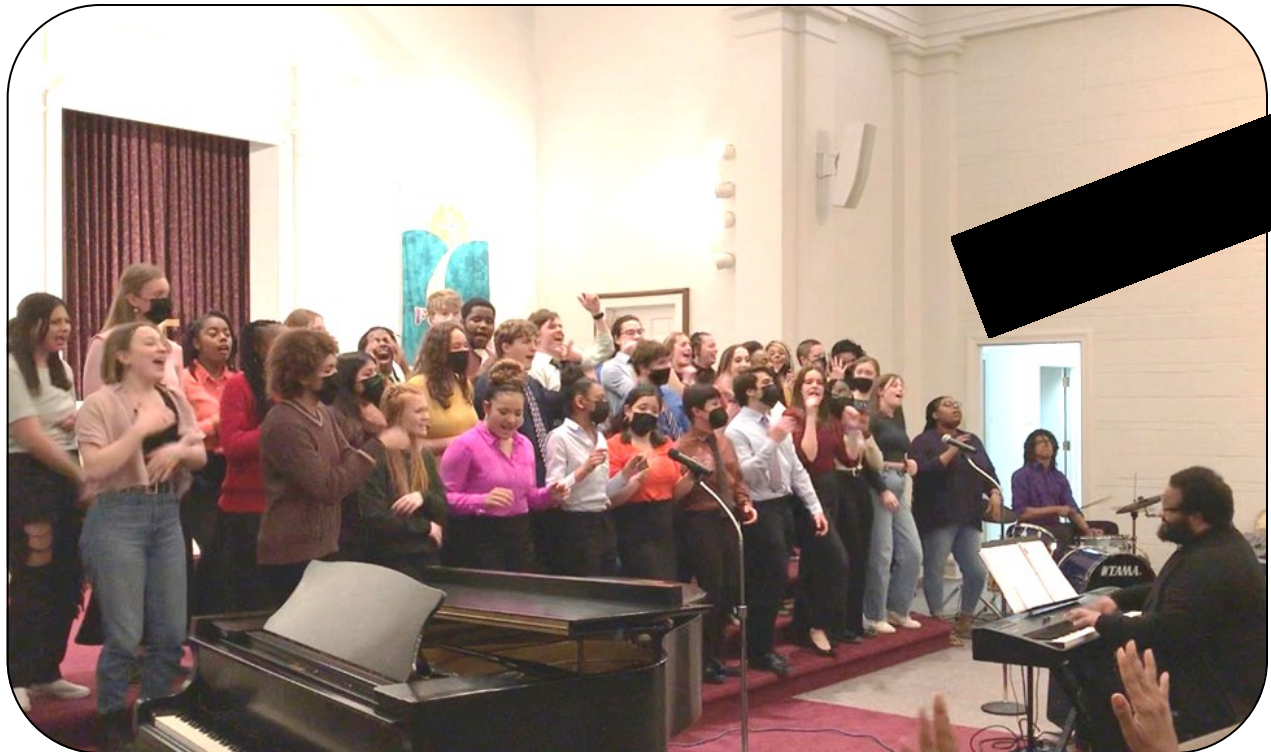


# APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3 9:45a Worship/ Communion 11a Church School 2-4p Ames Children's Choir "Ames Has Tal- ent"	4	5 8a Men's Breakfast 6:30p Lenten Study 	6 10a AARLA (Ames Area Religious Leaders Assoc.) 2p PD Singing 6:30p Choir	7 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2p PD Boxing 5-8p Women United	8 6:30 Virtual Trivia Night	9
10 9:45a Palm Sunday, Worship with Palm Processional 11a Church School	11	12 7p Trustees	13 2p PD Singing	14 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2p PD Boxing 6:30 Maundy Thurs- day Service	15  Pre-recorded ser- vice by Ames Area Religious Leaders Association	16 Passover
17 8:30 Easter Breakfast 9:45a Worship 	18	19 8a Men's Breakfast	20 2p PD Singing 6:30p Choir 	21 10a Virtual Coffee Shop 2p PD Boxing 5-8p Women United 7p Deacons	22	23 92 Work day
24 9:45a Worship Graduate Recognition and Send-Off for Pas- tor Dave's Sabbatical 11a Church School	25	26	27 2p PD Singing 6:30p Choir	28 10a Virtual Coffee Shop  2p PD Boxing 5-8p Women United		

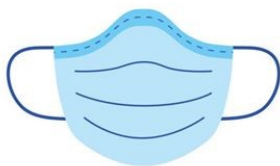


The Bridges 2 Harmony Gospel Choir from Roosevelt High School in Des Moines performed a concert here at First Baptist on March 25. The place was rockin'! The choir performed a variety of gospel genres and pretty well brought the house down. Thanks to Director Devon Stave and choir members, including our own Emma Phomvisay! In this photo, the choir is joined by ISU students who are Bridges 2 Harmony alumni and came for the concert. For more information on the choir, here is their [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).



### COVID-19 UPDATE

**Welcome to Worship!**  
We are glad you are here!



**Masks are welcomed  
but not required.**

Please note that we are welcoming but not requiring the wearing of masks. This policy fits the updated CDC guidelines. Also note that we will be having Easter Breakfast and that smaller groups in the church may have food at gatherings if they wish. (If the community COVID-19 level reaches the “high” level, this policy may change.)

We also ask you to be mindful of those who may be immunocompromised or otherwise vulnerable. The Singing Group and Boxing Group for those with Parkinson’s Disease, for example, are requiring masks. If you are aware of others around you who are vulnerable, please help care for them by wearing a mask.



## Forum on Baptist Response to the War in Ukraine

The American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, the Southwest, and Hawaii (ABCOFLASH) hosted a forum on Ukraine on March 23 that is available on YouTube ([click here to go to the recording](#)).

This session informs viewers about the history of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia and how Baptists in Europe and American Baptist Global Servants are ministering to refugees. There is information on how we may support the humanitarian response, and the session closes with prayers for Ukraine. Participants include:

- Van Tarpley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Bostonia, California, who teaches history at San Diego State University. Van has worked, studied, and researched in Lviv, Odesa, Moscow, and St. Petersburg and served as a missionary in former-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. He provides historical context for the current war and humanitarian catastrophe.
- Charles Jones, who serves with International Ministries as the area director for Europe, The Middle East, and Liberia. Jones gives an update on regional and national relief efforts related to the war in Ukraine.
- Nora and Pieter Kalkman, who serve with International Ministries with the European Baptist Federation. They will share about refugees coming to the Czech Republic where they live, and how Baptists in Europe are responding to the crisis.
- Amanda and Jon Good, who serve with International Ministries in Hungary. They, like many churches and individuals, are offering hospitality and hosting refugees in their home. They will share what God is doing through them to alleviate some of the sufferings of the refugees from Ukraine.

**If you would like to contribute to assistance for refugees from the war in Ukraine, you may give to our church with memo “OGHS-Ukraine”.**



### 22 Fleece Blankets from FBC sent to Ukrainian Refugees

22 child and adult size fleece blankets from our church were recently added to make over 300 new quilts, blankets, and comforters gathered for Ukrainian refugees in two-and one-half weeks. That number does not include the used quilts, blankets, and comforters donated and delivered to the Orphan Grain Train location in Clemons, Iowa. By the end of March, eleven carloads filled with those items as well as new underwear, socks, t-shirts, bedding, towels, diapers, and personal hygiene items made their way to a shipping container bound for refugee settlements in Moldova, Poland, and Romania. How did that happen so quickly? Word spread rapidly among women in a variety of church and quilt related organizations. The power of this amazing generosity will make a huge difference in the lives of Ukrainians who lost their homes, family members, way of life, and who are now refugees in neighboring countries. Thank you FBC for you contribution!







**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
Charyl Winterink	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian



**Worship Sunday mornings 9:45 in person or on ZOOM**

**Details for connecting via ZOOM at [fbcames.org](http://fbcames.org)**