



The Spire

First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

February 2021
Volume 67 No. 2

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

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515-292-9612
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WEBSITE:
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.

Pastor's Word

In the Lenten daily devotional books that we will be distributing this year, Amy Julia Becker writes,

Repent. It's a fire-and-brimstone word, a kind of old-fashioned religious word, a word I associate with street preachers and accusations. But in a literal translation, to repent is to turn around. We often think of it as turning away from sin. But whenever we turn away from something, we also turn towards something. What happens if I start to think of repentance as a turning towards God? Turning towards light and life and hope and joy and love? Then it begins to make sense that Jesus would call this good news.

We were in the middle of Lent last year when the pandemic hit us, and we moved to virtual gatherings. The last year has felt heavy – it's almost as though Lent 2020 never actually ended. But as that season rolls around again, we have an opportunity this year to perhaps look at Lent in a different way. I like the idea that instead of focusing on what we turn away from, we focus on turning toward light and life and hope and joy and love—toward God – and that we see Lent not as a season of “giving up,” but as a season of growth.

We will not be meeting in person for Ash Wednesday. The worship committee looked at options including sending home ashes to do-it-yourself, but none of the options we considered seemed a good fit for our congregation. What we decided to do was to create Lent at Home kits that will include containers of soil along with flower seeds. Rather than putting on ashes, we will take the ashes (soil) and plant seeds as part of our Ash Wednesday service on February 17.

We will not have our Thursday devotional that week, but starting on Thursday February 25, our weekly devotional time will be at 7 pm. Each week through the season of Lent, we will have a conversation about the devotional readings from the past week as we journey through the season together.

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Annual Meetings can sometime be a little dry, but we had a lively Annual Meeting on January 31, held via Zoom. We reviewed a year like no other and expressed gratitude for a fruitful year of ministry and mission, despite the difficulties brought on by the pandemic and other challenges.

Among other things: our average attendance since the pandemic began was the highest since 1991 (helped out by our out of state members and friends who join us each week), and with lower expenses and increased income, we ended the year with a surplus.

Out of this surplus, we voted to move \$10,000 to replenish our Maintenance Reserve Fund. This fund goes toward projects that are required to maintain our facilities. *(continued p. 2)*

We also voted to give \$10,000 from our surplus to mission causes, focusing primarily on local needs. We will give \$2,500 each to the Story County Emergency Fund for Immigrants, Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Food at First, and American Baptist United Mission. Having been blessed as a church, it is a real joy to be able to help others in need and support our shared ministries with partners near and far.

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Our Office Manager, Hope Deets, has a note in this *Spire* with news that she is leaving for a full-time position with the city of Ames. Hope began last January, and most of her work here has been during the pandemic. After two and a half months on the job, everything changed. I appreciate her willingness to be flexible and do what needs to be done. She has worked from home at times, and because of the pandemic, many of you did not have a chance to meet here, but we appreciate all of her efforts on behalf of our church and pray for God's blessings as she begins this new opportunity.

I look forward to seeing you (on the screen) on Sunday!

Dave



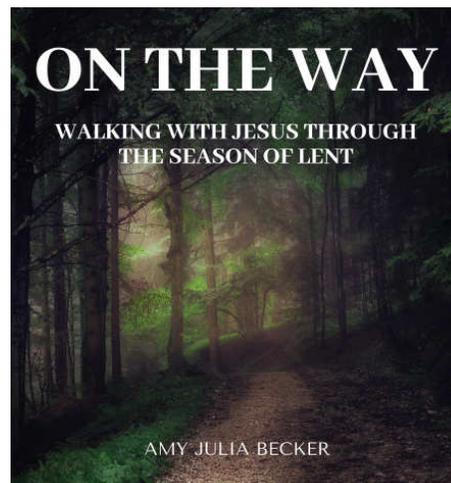
As we did for Advent, we will be putting together “**Lent at Home Kits**” to help us as we journey together through the season of Lent and Holy Week – at home. The kit includes a book of daily devotions, a craft/coloring activity, and soil, containers, and seeds. Rather than imposing ashes on Ash Wednesday, we will plant seeds in the ashes/dust/soil and watch the seeds grow through the season.

The kits will include mosaic tiles to be colored with markers, colored pencils, or crayon. We will all turn in our tiles and they will be put together to form a large poster that we will display on Easter Sunday.

We will have a **drive-through pick-up for the Lent at Home Kits on Sunday, February 14 from 1:30-2:00 pm**. You may also pick up a kit at the church by appointment or have your kit delivered. Please call the church at 515-292-9612 or [send an email](#) by February 10 if you would like a kit.

Lenten Study

For this year's Lenten Study, we will have conversations around our daily readings from *On the Way: Walking with Jesus through the Season of Lent*, by Amy Julia Becker. We will meet on Thursdays at 7 pm, beginning February 25. If you would like an electronic copy of the devotional book, you may order one [here](#).



Note of Thanks

Jan and I would like to express our gratitude for the expressions of sympathy that we have received from members and friends at FBC since my father passed away last month. We have been lifted and supported by you all.

Michael Thompson

Board, Committee Officers Chosen

Our Board of Deacons met in January and chose officers for 2021.

Chair: Joyce Davidson
Vice-chair: Becca Whitaker
Secretary: John Anderson

As deacon chair, Joyce will serve as our church moderator. Becca is our vice-moderator.

New trustee officers:

Chair: John Whitaker
Vice-chair: Rita Parrish
Secretary: Rodney Barto



A late update on our fall stewardship campaign: we wound up with a total of 37 pledges, including four new pledges, for a total pledge amount of \$202,644. This is our largest ever pledge total. We are grateful for the continued amazing support of our ministry through this difficult time.

Happy Anniversary!

Rosemarie and David Starrett 23



Ash Wednesday, February 17, marks the beginning of the season of Lent. We will have an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 pm on Zoom. As part of the service, we will plant the seeds that will be distributed in our Lent at Home Kits.

Note from your Office Manager:

I want to let you all know that I have accepted a full time position with the City of Ames and will have my last day at FBC next week. While I am excited to pursue this opportunity, I am sad to be leaving. I am so grateful to have been able to serve such a kind and welcoming community over the past year. I regret that I was not able to meet all of you in person, but I am blessed to have connected with you nonetheless. Thank you to everyone who welcomed me and helped me in my role here. I wish you all the best!

Warm regards,

Hope

February Birthdays

Aaron Stegemöller	6
Anastasia Lee	9
Tom Logue	9
Patrick Coffey	12
Kathy Clotey	15
Emma Phomvisay	17
Kaylinn Taggart	20
Michele Hassler	27



February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	 2p Virtual Coffee Shop	3 6:30p Choir	4 6:30p Weekly Devotion	5	6
7 9:45a Worship 11a Church School	8	9 2p Virtual Coffee Shop 7p Trustees Meeting	10	11 6:30p Weekly Devotion	12	13 
14 9:45a Worship 11a Church School 1:30-2p Lent at Home kit pick-up <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	15	16 2p Virtual Coffee Shop	17  7p Ash Wednesday	18	19	20
21 9:45a Worship 11a Church School	22	23 2p Virtual Coffee Shop	24	25 7p Lenten Devotion	26 6:30p Trivia Night	27
28 9:45a Worship 11a Church School						



The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song is a moving four-hour, two-part series from executive producer, host and writer Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor at Harvard University and director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research. The series will premier on PBS (Channel 11 locally) February 16 and 17 at 8 pm CST. The series traces the 400-year-old story of the Black church in America, all the way down to its bedrock role as the site of African American survival and grace, organizing and resilience, thriving and testifying, autonomy and freedom, solidarity and speaking truth to power.

Our church librarian, Catherine Parrish, has ordered the companion book for our library.

[More info](#)

A promotional graphic for the NAACP Freedom Fund Virtual Banquet. It features a portrait of Kemba Smith-Pradia, the 2021 Keynote Speaker, on the left. The right side contains a list of NAACP Gamechangers: Expanding Youth, Political Representation, Health, Public Safety, Voting Rights, Criminal Justice, Economic Sustainability, and Adult Engagement. Below this is the text "OUR MISSION CONTINUES... 20TH ANNUAL FREEDOM FUND EVENT". At the bottom, it says "VIRTUAL EVENT THURSDAY | FEB. 18, 2021 | 6:30PM" and provides the website "www.naacpamesiowa.com". The NAACP logo is in the top left corner.

NAACP Freedom Fund Virtual Banquet

The Annual NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet will be a virtual event this year. This virtual fundraiser is the most significant money raiser for our local chapter. Tickets are \$50 each and include a one year membership to the Ames NAACP branch, as well as a subscription to *The Crisis* Magazine. More details are available at <https://www.naacpamesiowa.com/>.



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
Hope Deets	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian



Live Worship Sunday mornings 9:45 via ZOOM
Details for connecting on our church website at fbcames.org.



Our next monthly Trivia Night will be on Friday, February 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.