

August/September, 2018 Newsletter
Algona First Congregational United Church of Christ
315 S. Moore Street, Algona, IA 50511
515-295-2845

<http://www.algonaucc.org>

E-mail for Pastor: algucc@netamumail.com

E-mail for Secretary: uccalg@netamumail.com

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

Pastor Chris Burtnett

Home Phone 515-395-3403

Cell Phone 712-269-5719

FROM THE FRONT PORCH

In the English alphabet, A is the first letter.....Z is the last. I learned that in early elementary school. In the Greek alphabet, Alpha is the first letter and Omega is the last. I learned that in my Biblical Greek class in Seminary!

In the book of Revelation, God describes God's self three times as "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." (Rev, 21:6a; 22:13; New Revised Standard Version) Putting a little twist on these verses, I would title this August/September 2018 newsletter as the Omega and Alpha, Ending and Beginning edition. Why? Because August is an ending month, a month that, in many ways, marks the end of summer and September is a beginning month, a month of the beginning of things we associate with fall.

Although summer doesn't officially end until September 23rd this year, for all intents and purposes, we understand August to be the end of summer. Vacation season comes to an end for most folk, summer vacation from school ends for students, county and state fairs have wrapped up. (save for a few) All signs to us that summer is over.

While summer is not an official season of the church year, some church activities will end this month too. Our summer Bible Study, summer break from Sunday school, Seekers, and women's fellowship are a few examples. The summer break for several teams (Christian Education, Worship and Music, and Pastor Parish Relations Committees), will end, as we begin to gear up for the beginning of the new church program year. Our annual Call Park worship service on the 26th also marks the unofficial end of summer for our congregation. August is indeed an Omega month.

September, however, is an Alpha month. Signs of new beginnings appear. Weather changes, crop changes, the beginning of harvest, footballs and volleyballs flying through the air, the Clay County Fair (I did say "save for a few" a several paragraphs ago, didn't I?), and Band Day (September 29th) are a few.

Here at First Congregational Church United Church of Christ, signs of new beginnings also appear. We will begin our 5th year of ministry together, Sunday school and Seekers start up again on September 9th, fellowship nights resume (12th), the Peace Pole Service (16th), Ministerial Association meetings (20th), Women's Fellowship (20th), Clergy Cluster gatherings (27th) herald a new program year.

Alpha and Omega, Omega and Alpha. Beginnings and endings, endings and beginnings. No matter which way one puts it, they are a part of our lives, inside and outside of the church. Through them all, God has been there, is there, and will be there. As we continue to experience beginnings and endings in our personal and collective lives, rest assured that God, our ultimate Alpha and Omega, is with us. Celebrate, give thanks, and move forward confidently, rejoicing in that knowledge.

Pastor Chris

June/July Board Highlights

June

- Pastor David Grindberg (1st Lutheran) and Pastor Chris have had some preliminary discussions about a possible pulpit exchange.

- Nativity display for Founders Day will be Saturday, July 14th from 1-4 pm.
- Our next 5 for 5 offering (Neighbors in Need) will be on the first Sunday of October.
- Tree removal, door locks, Handicapped entrance sign and garage door spring need to be addressed
- Pastor Chris is looking into purchasing a portable PA system for our church.
- A new office chair was purchased for the pastor's office.
- Peace Pole Service will be on September 15th at 4:00 pm.
- Pastor Chris will be on vacation August 6-13.
- Property Committee will meet soon.
- Northwestern Association Clergy and Congregation Reviews will be filled out and returned to the Committee on Ministry.
- Due to dwindling attendance for the Evangelism and Outreach Team suggests that the organ concert be replaced with a panel discussion of leaders from different religions. No date has been set. Details are being explored.

July

- A new "Be the Church" banner has been donated to our church, replacing the old one that had deteriorated. It will be stored inside during the winter months to keep it in better condition.
- The summer Bible study has been going well. Pastor Chris is considering offering another study in the Fall.
- The Iowa Conference business meeting will be October 13th in Des Moines.
- Property Team met and composed a list and prioritized things that need

attention in the church buildings and on the grounds. Some are minor, some are major. Some can be done by volunteers, some will have to be hired.

- Entry door locks have been replaced. One key now opens any outside door. Garage door spring has been replaced. Handicapped entry sign has been installed.
- Pastor Chris will bring recommendations for the purchase of a Portable PA System to the next Board Meeting.
- Our Call Park Worship Service will be August 26th at 10:00 am. Meat will be provided. Bring side dishes and/or a dessert.
- Pasto Karen Dearchs will lead worship when Pastor Chris is on Vacation (August 12th).
- Holly Filson-Heath and Pastor Chris reviewed and revised charges and policies for Weddings and church property use. The Board will consider their adoption at the August meeting.
- An old list of custodial responsibilities was discovered recently. Pastor Chris condensed the list and shared it with our Custodian, Misty Bachman. She will review and offer suggestions. This will be discussed further at the August Board Meeting.
- Next Board Meeting is August 15th.

***Complete minutes of the Board meetings are available in the church office.**

OUR TREASURER's REPORT

As of June 30th account balances

Checking \$2,298.14

Regular Savings \$11,140.56



WORSHIP AT CALL STATE PARK

On August 26 we will have worship at Call State Park at 10:00 am. Please bring a side dish or dessert. Meat will be finished.

NATIVITY DISPLAY Christmas in July 2018

Our 'Christmas in July' Nativity and angel display was beautiful once again. Thanks to everyone who helped with set up, sharing their treasures, hosting and dismantling. It takes a team to make it all come together and there is nothing like the team we have here. We also appreciate the members of the community who participated in sharing their treasures. Each item in the display was so very special but one group of angels was very unique. Pat Bilsborough in her younger years played the string bass and her collection of angels has each of them holding a string bass. We had more nativities than ever and the angels were a beautiful addition. There were many compliments throughout the afternoon by our visitors. Those sharing were already talking about next year so we will have our 5th nativity display next July. Think about what you might share!

Root Beer floats on the lawn brought many looking for and enjoying the cool, tasty treats. They ran out of ice cream and had to get more! Thanks to our awesome Fellowship Committee for doing this. The 'Art in the Park' event helped draw people our way and was a very nice addition to the weekend.

Pat Bilsborough's angels



Gathering at the Peace Pole
Sunday, September 16 we will come together for the 4th annual 'Gathering at the Peace Pole' on the west lawn of the church. We gather to pray for peace in our individual lives, our communities, our state, our country and our world. We gather ahead of the September 21 World Day of Peace

with gratitude for what we have and prayer for what could be in our world. Everyone is invited to join in this time of prayer, music and fellowship. Ice cream sundaes featuring fresh raspberries will be served.

weather was cool, and the dancers were in complete unity with their prayers. Our church was remembered with prayers said for all of you. If any of you are interested in more information I am more than happy to share. Mitakuye Oyasin, Phil

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

The start of school is just around the corner. Let's turn in whatever 'Box tops' for Education you have collected so we can deliver them to the school. The red box is in the parlor to collect them. The box tops can be turned in anytime but September 10 will be the date for our first delivery. This will be an ongoing project and box tops will again be delivered at a later date. Thank you for your help with this project.

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

On Sunday, August 26th, the worship service will be held at Call Park at 10:00. Special music will be provided by "Just Cause". Following worship, a potluck will take place in the Shelter House. Drinks will be provided, and Pastor Chris will do smoked pork. Plan to bring a side dish to share and your table service if you are able. We hope for a beautiful day for hiking on trails and fellowship in the park.

Fellowship Nights will begin again on Wednesday, September 12th, at 5:30 pm. It will be a fun and interesting evening with an "indoor picnic" of beef burgers, beans, and chips. Join us! As Fellowship Nights continue, please contact the office or one of our committee members if you are interested in providing food. We are also looking for speakers or program ideas for each month.

THANK YOU

On behalf of Strongheart and the Saunsoci family, I have been asked to say thank you very much for the generous contribution of \$570.00. It was used to help with the costs of the last meal provided to all the People and the first meal for the Sundancers who had fasted from food and water for 4 days and four nights. Sundance this year was beautiful. The

August

2
0
1
8

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 10:00 am Worship - Communion Food Pantry Christian Ed meeting	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 10:00 am Worship	13	14 Pastor Burnett at the Chocolate Season	15 2 pm Bible study 7 pm Board meeting	16	17	18
19 10:00 am Worship	20	21 Pastor Burnett at the Chocolate Season	22 7 pm Adult discussion at Chuck West's	23 		25
26 10:00 am Worship at Call State Park 	27	28 Pastor Burnett at the Chocolate Season	29	30	31 	



September

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00 am Worship - Communion Food Pantry	3 HAPPY LABOR DAY	4	5	6	7	8
9 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School	10	11 Pastor Burtnett in Calumet 4 pm Missions and Memorial meet	12 5:30 pm Fellowship meets	13	14	15
16 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15AM Children's Sunday School 4PM Peace Pole Gathering	17	18 Pastor Burtnett at the Chocolate Season	19	20 8:30 am Ministerial meeting here. 2:30 pm Women's Fellowship	21	22 
23 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School	24	25 Pastor Burtnett at the Chocolate Season	26	27 10 am Clergy meeting in Humboldt	28	29
30 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School Potluck after worship						