

October/November, 2018 Newsletter
Algona First Congregational United Church of Christ
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Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

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FROM THE FRONT PORCH

The world is full of idioms! No, this isn't a typo and what I really meant was idiots, although one could argue that point. Idioms are "an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the usual meaning of its constituent elements" like, kick the bucket, beat around the bush, best of both worlds, or feel a bit under the weather. There is a plethora of idioms. Google the word and see what you can find.

Some idioms can offer useful advice such as, don't count your chickens before they hatch, don't put all your eggs in one basket, let sleeping dogs lie, take it with a grain of salt, give the benefit of the doubt, look before you leap, or don't cry over spilt milk. We've heard them so often that we don't need to pause long to translate what they mean. However, I believe it is useful on occasion to do just that.....take some time to ponder and weigh the advice they give us and apply their teachings to our own lives.

A quote that is credited to Fran Lebowitz, "think before you speak" is not an idiom, but it offers some good advice good advice for most any occasion. Let's apply it to our experience of worship.

Recently, a friend, raised some questions with me. "Do people really think about what they are saying when reading the unison prayers together in worship? Do they really consider the meaning when saying the Lord's prayer, singing the words of the hymns, and speaking an affirmation of faith, or are they just reciting the words without giving much, if any, thought to them? They're good questions.

There is a certain continuity and flow to worship that makes it difficult to pause to ponder the meaning of each and every word or phrase, not to mention the amount of time it would add to the service. But there are ways to take some time with the words of worship that give one opportunity to ponder their power, allow one to consider the claims they make, and their effect on us and who we are as people of faith. We may not be able to do it in the moment, but taking some time to read through the words of worship prior to the beginning of the service and letting them sink in a bit could lead to a deeper, more meaningful worship experience. If not before worship, why not after? Taking the bulletin home and reading through it again can offer the same benefit.

One of the devotionals I use in my daily spiritual practice offers some suggestions for using it in scripture study and prayer. I think they would be useful for worship reflection as well. They are: pray for openness to God's word; read through the order of worship (my adaptation) twice, the first time to become familiar with it, the second time for words or phrases that arrest your attention; meditate on it or sit quietly, breathing deeply; listen attentively for what God is saying to you through it; thank God for the grace given.

Our culture prefers immediate response and understanding. Our faith doesn't. (nor should it) It requires discipline, time, thought and discernment. Thinking before one speaks the words of worship or considering what one said afterward might help us to grow in our faith, develop a deeper understanding of who we are, what we believe, what we claim, and connect us more closely to God in the process.

The beginning of a new program year in the church is a good time to begin new faith practices. Why not give this one a try?

Pastor Chris

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

August

- Continuing to address property needs: installing LED lights as needed, estimate for garage roof, new curtains in library, estimate for accessible bathrooms in CE/Fellowship Hall and sidewalk.
- First semester Sunday school teacher schedule is complete. Kids will be split into two classes (younger and older) on Sundays when necessary. Classes begin September 9th. Last Sunday of classes for the semester will be December 16th. Sunday morning adult class (Seekers) will follow same schedule. The Wednesday evening adult group continues to meet.
- Approximately \$500 was given towards the final Sundance meal.
- Continuing to research the possible purchase of a portable PA system for use in fellowship hall and outdoors when needed.
- The annual peace worship service will be September 16th at 4:00 p.m.
- The Board approves the proposed new fee schedule for the use of the church building and property.
- The Board approved adoption of the revised custodial guidelines.
- Pastor Chris and Pam will be taking a week of vacation September 24th through October 1st.
- The Algona CROP Walk will be held on October 14th.

September

- We'll celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism in worship on October 7th.
- Have received an estimate for replacing the church building basement windows and are still waiting for several other estimates for

physical property improvements. These are for informational purposes only at this time.

- We continue to deal with roof leaks in the sanctuary.
- Three special offerings are scheduled before the end of the year. Neighbors in Need (October 7th), Christmas Family (December 9th), and The Christmas Fund (December 23rd).
- Parsonage south lawn tree removal is still pending.
- Our church will host the CROP Walk on October 14th.
- Budget and stewardship time is approaching. The Financial Team will meet soon to begin work on the proposed 2019 budget.
- The secretary's computer has some issues. Steps are being taken to correct the problems.

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

OUR TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurers Report as of August 31st

Checking balance \$3,908.33
Savings balance \$9,140.56

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship met September 20, 2018. Pastor Chris gave a short devotion. Treasurer's report was given. It was decided to set aside \$900 from the Trash and Treasure Sale for the Peace Pole project. \$200 to Sandy Buchanan for rest of the curtains in the library/meeting room. We will also do a Scarecrow again. Meeting adjourn.

Also, Women's Fellowship will again be collecting new or gently used linens/bedding to be delivered to the Care Team in the middle of November. Items may be laid on the front pews of the sanctuary.

clouds white, framing our church in splendid, peaceful glory. The singing and the following ice cream and strawberries made us all thankful for what we do have and sorry for what others don't. Peace.

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

The next Fellowship Night will be Wednesday, October 10th, at 5:30 pm. We are looking forward to Phil Heath talking to us about our Omaha friends, the Sansouci family. Plan to join us for a bowl of chili and to hear Phil! Bring a friend!! Sunday, October 29th will be the church potluck. Bring a dish to share and your table service.

There will not be a Fellowship Night in November. But mark your calendars for our annual Thanksgiving potluck on Sunday, November 18th, following worship!

PEACE POLE GATHERING



The Peace Pole gathering took place on Sunday afternoon at 4 pm. Yes, the sky was blue, the

October

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 County Coalition meeting at noon	3 7 pm Adult discussion at Chuck West's	4	5 Care Centers Services in the morning	6
7 9:00am Seekers 10:00 am Worship - Communion Food Pantry Baptism	8	9 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	10 5:30 pm Fellowship 7 pm Board meeting	11	12	13 Iowa Conference meeting
14 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School 2 pm Crop Walk	15	16 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	17	18 8:30 am Ministerial meeting 2:30pm Women's Fellowship	19	20
21 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School Strengthening the Families meal	22	23 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	24	25 10 am Clergy Cluster in Humboldt	26	27
28 9:00 am Seekers 10:00 am Worship 10:15 Children's Sunday School Potluck	29	30 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	31			

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Turn clocks back
4 8:30am Seekers 10:00 am Worship - Communion Food Pantry	5	6 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	7 7 pm Adult Discussion at Chuck West's	8	9	10
11 8:30am Seekers 10:00 am Worship	12	13 COM meeting in Calumet	14 5:30 Fellowship 7 pm Board meeting	15 2:30 Women's Fellowship	16	17
18 8:30am Seekers 10:00 am Worship Thanksgiving potluck	19	20 Ecumenical Thanksgiving service	21	22 Thanksgiving	23	24
25 8:30am Seekers 10:00 am Worship	26	27 Pastor at the Chocolate Season in the morning	28	29 Clergy Cluster in Humboldt	30	