



first CHURCH



the
LIGHT
newsletter



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Worship Sundays at 10:30 AM Mabaan at 12:30 PM



Can Change Lead to Chance?

By *Christine Anders*

In his book Recreating the Church, Dr. Richard Hamm causes us to wonder if the church is obsolete. If churches and other organizations don't adapt to their current reality, they become obsolete and irrelevant. In the book he discusses two types of obsolescence experienced by the church.

1. Contextual Obsolescence – Churches become contextually obsolete by losing touch with, and ceasing to serve, the needs of many or all of the people who live in their mission area. Here is an example. Many congregations live in a changing neighborhood. If a congregation becomes so focused on those who are already members and ignores the new people moving in to the

neighborhood, over the course of time, the church may find itself to be an island in the midst of a sea of racial or ethnic difference. It may not only be a racial or ethnic change. When new people move in, it may create a socioeconomic, age-based or other population shift.

The further removed a congregation becomes from the people in its local mission area, the bigger the change that will be required to reconnect and engage in mission that speaks to the needs of its community.

2. Generational Obsolescence – The church has not changed much since WWII. It still addresses issues and needs relevant to the WWII generation. For instance...The WWII generation loved institutions and institutional life. They joined churches and clubs. In contrast, the post-war generations have little trust in institutions and little interest in joining groups.

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The WWII generation enjoyed committee meetings but later generations are more interested in hands on mission involvement rather than institutional life per se.

Let's look at how generations differ. Each of these generations is shaped by similar early experiences and have the same world view. As a frame of reference consider these generations:

Builders – born between 1915-30
 Silent – born between 1930-1945
 Boomers – born between 1945-1965
 Baby busters – born between 1965-1982
 Millennials – born between 1982-2000
 Generation Z – born after 2000

Here are some generalized generational differences:

Builders – Preferred face to face communication (meetings), experienced God through the institutional church (worship and even meetings).

Boomers – Prefer to use the phone to communicate, distrust institutions therefore attend worship 1-2 times a month. Like options.

Busters – More financially conservative. Like small groups.

Millennials – texting (immediate), willing to give institutions such as the church a chance but the church must

show that it is genuinely concerned about their spiritual needs. Enjoy small multigenerational groups. Want to come to leadership roles quickly. Have a renewed interest in mystery. Like music to be more contemplative. Prefer short term jobs, not committees.

Generation Z – Diversity is their norm. Live in a digital world. Shrewd consumers. Institutions must not be hypocritical.

Contextual and generational obsolescence are recipes for disaster. Once the church becomes obsolete, it becomes an empty vessel that can no longer be used by God to transform the world.



When was the last time you drove around First Church's neighborhood and took note of the demographic changes that are occurring?

How has our neighborhood changed? How can we serve the needs of our new neighbors? How might we restructure the "way we do business" that would be more appealing to post-modern generations? What does the "way we do business" say to millennials and members of Generation Z?



First Church is on a mission to transform the world into a more just and loving place. How do we do that? We do that by offering our time, our talents, our gifts, our service and our witness to our local community and the world.

Each year the Outreach Committee makes available to members and others opportunities to be difference makers. Over the next several months, the Light will feature a series of articles entitled "Church on a Mission." We will share with you more about the ways First Church is making a difference in our community and the world.

Central Iowa Shelter and Services

In early 1990 a small group of people met, trying to respond to a tragic event in Des Moines. That winter, five men, who were intoxicated, and thus denied entrance to existing homeless shelters, were forced to stay outside in the cold, and they died. First Church was one of eight churches that responded by creating Churches United, a travelling

shelter during the winter. Each week one of the churches offered a place where homeless people could sleep and were provided supper and breakfast. Soon they realized that a more permanent solution was needed, and plans and fund raising began for an emergency shelter in downtown Des Moines. Churches United Emergency Shelter opened in 1995, with a veterans' dorm, meals and case management. In 2006 the name was changed to Central Iowa Shelter and Services.

But the need continued to grow and in 2012 the Shelter moved across the street to its present location at 1420 Mulberry. Now with 42,000 square feet, instead of 8,000, and 207 beds, instead of 96, CISS is providing services to over 2,000 homeless women and men each year. Services now include emergency shelter, transitional housing for Veterans, and 38 Project Based Section 8 Voucher efficiency apartments. In addition there is an on-site health clinic, food pantry, clothing closet, classrooms and a 30-foot growing dome. Group counseling, case management and life skills instruction are also part of the services. And, of course, supper and breakfast are provided, in part by local churches and organizations.

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Some statistics indicate the scope of its work. For the year 2019 – 2020, 2,323 people were served; 1,500 people gave 18,664 volunteer hours of service; 153 veterans were served; 248 people increased their income upon exit; and 312 moved from shelter to housing. In 2014, with assistance from Pioneer, a unique program, Mulberry Farms and Food, was started, with 10 raised beds under the 30-foot dome. Its purpose is to provide healthy, locally grown food for the Mulberry Street Café, the kitchen program at CISS. Staff and clients work together to operate the program, which harvested 10,228 pounds of food this past year.

The Outreach Committee's budget includes \$300.00 for CISS, and some years CISS is included as an option for giving through the Alternative Gift Market. Shirley Christoffersen and her crew provide a supper meal each month, often including milk and juice for the following breakfast. Thanks, Shirley!



THANK
you.



**Fall Celebration
Worship – Picnic – Carnival!**

On Sunday, September 19th, our worship will be held at Union Park in the Margaret Swanson Shelter at our usual worship time of 10:30am. There is seating and rest rooms available inside the shelter which is located just to the north of the carousel.

Bring a blanket or lawn chair for outdoor seating. You will also need to bring your own table service/glass/napkin.

Worship will be followed by a picnic lunch prepared by the Caring Committee members. Menu: Hot dogs, baked beans, potato chips, cookies, popcorn. Beverages: Water, Iced Tea, Lemonade

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After lunch, a variety of activities are available for "kids of all ages"!

- Heritage Carousel rides.
- A variety of games – with prizes! Including: "Plinco", Disc Frisbee, Bingo, Croquet, Corn Hole.
- Cookie/Cake Walk – In years gone by, did you ever participate in a cake walk? During a cake walk you walk in a circle and land on a square and pick a cake. We will have a bakery walk at our picnic. If you want to participate just bring a baked good; a cake or cookies or bars. If bringing cookies or bars have a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 12.
- Splash pad (Parents please note that children cannot ride the carousel with wet clothing so if they want to ride,

they should do that before they visit the splash pad.)

- Children's play area.

Remember
to **RSVP**

So we may plan appropriately, **please call the church with your reservation no later than September 12th**. You may also register on the worship attendance slip.

**Helper
Signup**

The Caring Committee would appreciate some assistance. If you can help with any of these things, please contact Christine.

1. Help setting up and cleaning up.
2. Help with food preparation and delivery to the park.
3. Help with games.
4. Assist our older members from their cars to the shelter.

International Day of Peace

We are not each other's enemies, war is not the answer, the urgent work of peace-making is essential to the survival and well-being of humanity. These are truths recognized by all those who work for peace.

Please join the Des Moines Peace Committee as they celebrate International Peace Day on Tuesday, September 21st at 6:30 PM. The event will be held at the Peace Garden at Cowles Commons.

The Service will feature statements by young people who have participated in DMARC's Interfaith Summer Camp, with special music provided by Bridges of Harmony. It will express a vision of peace and a position against war shared by all faith traditions. We will renew our commitment to be instruments of God's peace.



Gardening for Good

Gardening for Good

First Church members will once again help harvest vegetables to be distributed through local food pantries and other partner agencies. On Saturday, October 9th we will carpool from the church to a farm outside of Madrid. We will leave the church at 8:30 am. Depending on the covid status, when we are done we will (may) have lunch in Madrid and then return to Des Moines.

This is an enjoyable day spent in the fresh fall air with your church family. It's a great experience for children too. Hope to see you on the 9th of October. Please sign up on the attendance slip or call the church office so we know how many people to expect.



Meet Our New Director of Music Ministry

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce the hiring of Ben Allaway as our new Director of Music and Composer-in-Residence.

Most recently Ben has been serving as the Director of Worship and Music at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Forest City. Prior to his time at Immanuel, he held the title of Director of Music and Composer-in-Residence at First Christian Church here in Des Moines.

Ben is a freelance composer with seven major publishers and his music has been sung by many top choirs, including St. Olaf Choir, Wartburg Choir, Concordia Choir, Luther College Choirs, Harvard Men's Glee Club and others.

His music has been featured on programs with His Holiness The Dalai Lama, Garrison Keillor, Hillary Clinton, Maya Angelou, Hal Holbrook and Simon Estes. His Heaven and Earth: Mass on the Celtic Journey aired on Iowa Public

Television in 2012. He also was commissioned to write music for the 20th Anniversary of the World Food Prize. Ben has also written jingles for Kawasaki and GMC Trucks among others. Currently he is writing a musical based on the life of Martin Luther King, Sr.

He has served on the faculty at Graceland University, Grinnell College, Waldorf College and was the Choirmaster and Founder/Artistic Director of The Music Academy of St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral.

For a number of years he was the music critic for the Des Moines Register, Opera News and other outlets. He is recognized as a national leader in the development of ethnically diverse music for choirs and served as past chair of Ethnic and Multicultural Repertoire and Standards for North Central Division, American Choral Directors Association.



Ben is married to Julianne Allaway and is the father of Isabel, Amelia, Cassie, and Ian (Kacie). He is also grandfather to Jemma and Sunny.

Ben will begin his work in September. We welcome him and look forward to experiencing the many gifts he brings to First Church.



MLK Freedom Bus Tour

The First Church Anti-Racism Task Force would like to invite you to join us on the MLK Freedom Bus Tour, November 8 – 12, 2021.

Participants will engage in a week-long journey exploring iconic human and civil rights spaces in Memphis, Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma. In addition to museums in most of the cities, we will also visit the Lorraine Motel in Memphis; the 16th Street Baptist Church and Kelly Ingram Park in Birmingham; the Equal Justice Initiative's new Lynching Memorial in Montgomery; and the iconic Edmund Pettus Bridge and Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, among other interesting sites.



The trip will be led by Rev. Abraham Funchess. Rev. Funchess has served as an Executive Director of Christian Community Development in Waterloo and as Pastor of the 2nd Baptist Church in Ottumwa. In 2003, Funchess was appointed by UM Bishop Greg Palmer to serve at Jubilee UMC in Waterloo, where he still serves. Rev. Funchess has also served as Division Administrator of the Iowa Commission on the Status of African Americans within the Iowa Department of Human Rights under Governors Tom Vilsack and Chet Culver. In June of 2010, Funchess was appointed to the position of Human Rights Director for the City of Waterloo. In 2015, he received from Governor Branstad, the State of Iowa Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Achievement Award. He also received from the Iowa Annual Conference the Bishop James Samuel Thomas Leadership Award.

The trip cost is \$399 and includes travel, hotel stays and museum admissions. Food is not included. The trip starts and ends at Allen College in Waterloo.

Questions: Talk with Christine

Discipleship@DMFirstChurch.org

515-244-6209



FUMC
Anti-racism
Task Force

The Land We Live On

By Eugene E. Fracek (Dakota)

"America, Love It or Give It Back". That was on a bumper sticker I saw in the 1970s or 1980s. It's become a favorite. I am Eugene Fracek, an enrolled member of the Dakota Tribe of South Dakota. I was born on the Rosebud Reservation. I teach a course on American Indians for Simpson College and give informational presentations to various groups and organizations to educate and create an awareness of Indian culture for non-Indian people of all ages.

Land is central to the culture of Indian people in America. There is so much more to tell, historically, but the most recent egregious loss of land as we know it occurred during the "reservation period" of 1890 to 1934. Indian people had already been removed from the land they lived on and loved before the Indian Wars ended in 1890, but now *all* were forced to live on reservations. This was the result of the systemic, purposeful reduction of Indian *perceived* ownership of land. I say *perceived* because Indian people in America do

not think of land the same way that non-Indian people do. This difference is based on a non-Indian perception of what land is used for. For example, "Vacant Land", that you might see on a For Sale sign or billboard, in the non-Indian sense, implies that it is of monetary value or for a particular use.

But for Indians, "vacant land," has always meant that the land is not being used. For Indians, it's not what the land can give us, it's that the land is shared. We never thought of it as "owned".

Many non-Indian people love the land as we do. Farmers, cowboys, or those who wish to save our treasured resources in the name of land or climate preservation love the land, too. As Indians, we've always gotten along with the people who care as much as we do about the land.

But there are so many who only think of the *taking* of unused land as profit, progress, or power. They do not think of it as a shared resource from which we can all benefit and share. Government and Corporate entities have not slowed their interest in attacking and usurping tribal lands for their own use. Think Pipeline.

Taking land away from American Indians has undermined our entire culture. For Indians, land is more than just the ground we walk on. It is part of who we are as a people.

America, Love It or Give It Back.

What is This?



DM First Church Website

Some of you have by now noticed the black and white squares around the building with "DMFirstChurch" or "Online Giving" and even "August 22 Bulletin". These are QR Codes.

A QR Code, or quick response Code, is a Code that is quickly readable by a cell phone (hence the word "quick" in the name).

These days, the majority of QR Codes are scanned with a smartphone. There are a number of free apps for QR scanning for both Android and iOS devices (also with the camera). Most often, you simply open the app and it automatically scans the QR Code with the touch of a button. Your smartphone then opens to the website or webpage for you to view.

Online Giving:



September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Masks are required inside the building.</p> <p>Some meetings may be done via conference calls, emails, or other off-site venue. Please contact committee chair or Pastor for more information.</p>			1	2	3	4
				3:00 – 8:30 PM Meal Prep - Kitchen 6:30 PM FUMC serves Central IA Shelter – 1420 Mulberry St.		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Communion, Food Pantry Sunday 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship – Sanctuary 12:30 PM Mabaan Worship – Sanctuary	Labor Day Office Closed 11:00 – 3:00 Jan Shafer Activity – Fellowship Hall					
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship – Sanctuary 12:30 PM Mabaan Worship – Sanctuary	6:30 PM Outreach Meeting – CR1	9:00 AM Staff Meeting – CR 1 6:00 PM CCYC Meeting – CR 1			1:30 – 7:00 PM Trinity Meal Preparations - Kitchen 4:45 PM FUMC serves at Trinity (CFUM Supper Club)- 1548 8th St, DM	9:00 – 2:00 AGO Officer Installation & Lunch – Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall 12:00 – 5:00 PM Tom Gruis 85 th Birthday Gathering – Kenyon Hall
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:15 AM Sunday School Welcome back – Worship, Picnic, & Carnival – all at Union Park 12:30 PM Mabaan Worship – Sanctuary	LIGHT Articles Due					8:00 – 4:00 Visioning Retreat @ WDM UMC
26	27	28	29	30		
9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship – Sanctuary 12:30 PM Mabaan Worship – Sanctuary	10:00 AM Meal Prep - Kitchen 12 – FUMC serves at Connection Café, 815 High St., DM 5:00 PM Finance Mtg 6:00 PM Church Council	9:00 AM Staff Meeting – CR 1				



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DMFirstChurch.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DEADLINE FOR FUTURE LIGHT ISSUES IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH

Worship ~ We Welcome and Affirm Everyone
First Church - A Reconciling Congregation

First United Methodist Church, at the top of 10th Street in downtown Des Moines, strives to love others as Christ loves us and, in doing so, to be the Body of Christ in word and deed.

As the Body of Christ, we welcome and affirm all of God's children, knowing that each is created in the image of God. We welcome and affirm people of all gender identities, sexual orientations, ages, races, ethnicities, family configurations, and physical and mental capabilities to join us in full participation as we come together to worship God and then go out to share God's love in the world around us.

E-mail: info@dmfirstchurch.org



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