



# The Spire

## Pastor's Word

On Saturday night I returned from two weeks in Scotland. I managed to make it to worship the next morning, a little jet lagged (maybe a lot jet lagged), but happy to be back and worship with you.

I went with a group organized by my brother-in-law Brett. Many of those in the group were a part of Brett and my sister Amy's church in Indiana. We did some sightseeing in Glasgow and Edinburgh and then spent a week in Iona.

The medieval Iona Abbey was in a state of disrepair, with portions in rubble and was long out of use. It was rebuilt in the 1930's by unemployed shipbuilders and craftsmen from Glasgow along with seminary students, led by Rev. George McCloud. An ecumenical community was built there and continues to today, focusing on worship, peace and social justice, and care for creation. Iona has become a center for worship, producing music and worship materials. There are several songs from Iona that we sing regularly in worship.

The Iona Community offers a retreat each week for guests who stay at the abbey. Our group of 13, from ages 3 to 83, made up about a third of the guests at the Abbey that week. We shared lodging, meals, and worship each morning at 8 am and evening at 9 pm. There were some program options, but most of the time we were free to explore the island, visit with other guests, take the boat to the isle of Staffa to see the puffins, and take in the beauty of the place. Each person staying at the Abbey had a task for the week, generally a 30 minute daily job. Some cleaned bathrooms, some cleaned up after a meal or chopped vegetables. I was part of the sacristy team. We welcomed guests to worship, straightened hymnals, replenished votive candles, and so forth. I was basically an usher and greeter for the week.

The abbey church is not heated. We wore coats and sock hats. Some wore gloves. But there was a warmth and power to the worship. Beyond the abbey guests, there are many visitors to the island and some of these will attend worship.



Iona Abbey (D Russell 2026)

May 2026

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### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

200 Lynn Avenue

Ames, Iowa 50014-7188

Worship Sundays 9:45 am

PHONE: 515-292-9612

E-MAIL: [office@fbcomes.org](mailto:office@fbcomes.org)

WEB: [fbcomes.org](http://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*

(cont. P.2)

I had a chance to visit with Steve, a former Southern Baptist pastor turned Episcopal priest who has now retired in Lisbon, Portugal. I met Rona, a 92-year old Scottish woman now living in London who came to Iona along with her son. Iona was on her bucket list.

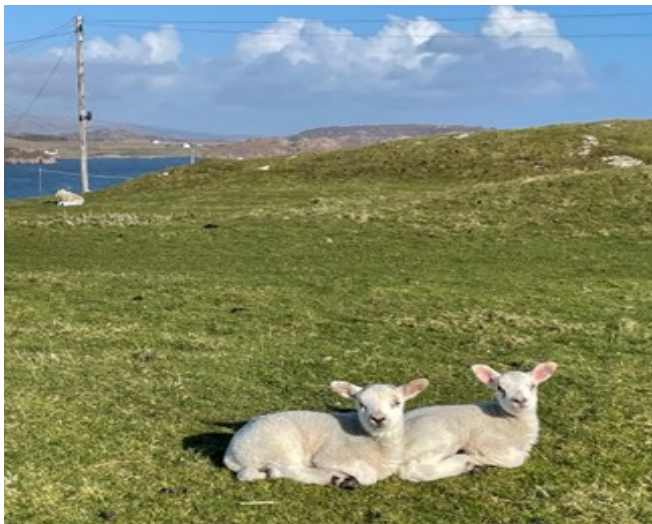
The abbey guests and volunteers formed a wonderfully diverse community in which the focus was not agreeing on each point of doctrine, but on loving our neighbors, caring for God's world, and appreciating the value of each person as a child of God. In our group staying at the abbey, there were folks from 9 countries and 9 US states. We were Baptist, Nazarene, Quaker, Independent Christian, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Church of Scotland, Church of England, Church of Denmark, Swiss Reformed Church, and probably more. A few were not particularly religious but appreciated the community and the focus on peace, social justice, and caring for creation – and felt better about the church after a week at Iona.

I tried to journal a bit each day and to record small miracles I experienced. Many had to do with the beauty of the place: blue skies, green grass, emerald waters, a vivid rainbow, the joy of sheep everywhere in the middle of lambing season. On the way to a beach we hiked through beautiful green pasture land that doubled as the island's golf course – a bunch of sheep were congregated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> green (the green and fairway were one and the same). On Iona there had been hardly any sunshine for two months and it had rained for about 10 days straight when we arrived. We proceeded to have an entire week of sunshine and everywhere you looked it was like a beautiful postcard.

And then there were miracles in the history of it all. The cathedral in Glasgow had many windows without stained glass. They had been destroyed in the Reformation, and as I reflected on the religious fighting that has taken place down through the years, it is a miracle that the church survives what Christians can do to it.



Iona Abbey Church Interior (D Russell 2026)



Lambing Season in Scotland (D Russell 2026)

The unity we experienced at Iona in the midst of great diversity was another miracle I will take with me. I look at our church, a great variety of folks with different backgrounds and interests and gifts. The time I spent at Iona was a reminder for me that like that community, our community here at First Baptist is really a miracle of God's grace. I am thankful for every one of you and your part in that. Thank you to Susan and Randall for preaching in my absence and thank you all for the time away to make this trip to Scotland and to Iona.

Blessings,  
Dave





*Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday*

					1 	2
3 9:45a Worship/ Communion 10:45a Church School 11a Student/Young Adult Meal	4	5 8:00a Men's Breakfast	6 10:00a Virtual Coffee Shop 2:00p PD Singing 6:00p Choir	7	8	9 9:00 Planning Meeting  
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> 9:45a Worship 10:45a Fellowship 11a Church School  	11	12 6:00p Pastoral Relations Comm. 7:00p Trustees	13 10:00a Virtual Coffee Shop 2:00p PD Singing 6:00p Choir	14	15	16
17 <i>Music Sunday</i> 9:45a Worship - Christian Ed Recognition 10:45a Church School  4:00p GNEA Block Party  	18	5 8:00a Men's Breakfast	20 10:00a Virtual Coffee Shop 2:00p PD Singing 6:00p Choir	21	22	23 11:00a Jenna McCarley Memorial Service
24 <i>Pentecost</i> 9:45a Worship 10:45a Church School	25 <i>Memorial Day</i>  	26	27 10:00a Virtual Coffee Shop 2:00p PD Singing 6:00p Choir	28	29	30
31 9:45a Worship 10:45a Ice Cream Social Fellowship					<b>ISU Graduation May 14—16</b> <b>AHS Graduation May 25</b>  	

# Upcoming Events

## MUSIC CAMP 2026



Music Camp is a hands-on experience in music and related arts for children grades K-6 (completed). Campers will experience a wide variety of music. In past years, we have learned about jazz, gospel, Caribbean, Celtic, brass, folk, rock, classical, bluegrass, and more, with great special guest musicians. Our goal is to provide campers with a wide variety of fun musical experiences, including our annual Campers' Talent Show.

- Special musical guests
- Choir groups
- Musical games
- New friends
- Great snacks
- Cool camp T-shirt



We invite you to join us for a great week! The registration deadline is June 1. Space will be available after that day, but we cannot guarantee a T-shirt for late registrations. Please call if you have any questions at 515-292-9612 or email [office@fbcomes.org](mailto:office@fbcomes.org). More information and online registration is available on our website at [fbcomes.org](http://fbcomes.org), or you may use the QR code to register. Registrations will be accepted until the start of camp, but to be assured your camper will receive a t-shirt, register by June 1.



Dave Russell and Mindy Phomvisay,  
Co-Directors

### June 15—19

### 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

**Everyone is welcome!**

**Invite a friend!**

**We need help with Music Camp!** If you can serve as a counselor, kitchen staff, or general helper, please see Mindy or Pastor Dave. You can also invite friends and neighbors to attend the camp!



There will be a **Church Planning Meeting** on **Saturday, May 9, 2026**, at 9:00 a.m. Boards, committees, and all are welcome to attend!



During the Fellowship Time on June 7, we will have a **Craft and Hobby Show**. We invite you to display crafts and information about hobbies you are involved in. All ages are welcome! If you would like to have a display, please sign up on the bulletin board.

In March I announced that I would be retiring, with my last Sunday at the end of September. While I am looking forward to retirement, this is a bittersweet time because I love this church and will miss being your pastor. One of the more recent practices I have implemented for the summer months has been a "Sermon Suggestion Box." I have not done this every year, but I have enjoyed this and I know many of you have as well. For this last go-round of summer preaching I will again be offering the suggestion box. You can place a question or a sermon topic in the box and I will use the suggestions as the basis for some of the upcoming sermons. I can't promise to get to all of the suggestions, but I will do my best.



Pastor Dave



Bring a Chair!

**5th Annual GNEA BLOCK PARTY**

25 years good neighbor emergency assistance, inc.

**Sunday May 17th 4-7 PM**

**Clark Ave Between 6th & 7th & Fareway**

**KIDS ACTIVITIES**  
Face Painting, Balloon Animals, Duck Pond and more!

**LIVE MUSIC**  
from Perfect Strangers

**FREE FOOD**  
Pizza, Cookies and Drink!

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

Venmo Donation @gnea-org

Credit Card Donation gnea.org/giving

**PERFECT STRANGERS** (FULL HOUSE)

First Baptist Church is a founding member of Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance. Join them in celebrating the continuing success of their homelessness prevention programs. GNEA helps 130+ households each month with financial assistance for rent, utilities, food, gasoline, CyRide tickets, and phone cards. See you there!



**Spring Graduates** If you are graduating this spring or know of graduates in our church and extended family, please contact the office.



# 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	Musical Intern
Elizabeth Stegemöller	Choir Accompanist
Lori Allen	Office Manager
Erin Topp	Custodian

## Office Hours

Tuesday	9:30am to 1:30pm
Wednesday	1:30pm to 4:30pm
Thursday	9:30am to 12:30pm
Friday	9:30am to 11:30am



We offer a monthly lunch for college students and young adults. Our next lunch will be following worship and fellowship on **Sunday, May 3.**

## Upcoming Events



<b>May 9</b>	Church Planning Meeting
<b>May 17</b>	Music Sunday
	Presentation of Bibles to 4th Graders
	Recognition of Christian Education Workers
<b>May 31</b>	Ice Cream Social during Fellowship
<b>June 7</b>	Craft and Hobby Show during Fellowship
<b>June 15—19</b>	Music Camp



Our Virtual Coffee Shop meets on Wednesdays at 10 am. It is an opportunity to visit with friends over Zoom. Participants include regular attenders who generally cannot be here in person. We always welcome new folks to join us! Use the regular Sunday morning Zoom link.

## Serving This Month

### May 3:

*Worship Leader:* Rita Parrish

*Ushers:* Dawn Doerr-Johnson, Julie Johnston

### May 10:

*Worship Leader:* Ryan Smith

*Ushers:* Jere Maddux, Bob Parrish

### May 17:

*Worship Leader:* Phyllis Schrag

*Ushers:* Jerilyn Logue, Tom Logue

### May 24:

*Worship Leader:* Susan Russell

*Ushers:* Daniel Echedon, Erin Johnson

### May 31:

*Worship Leader:* Randall O'Brien

*Ushers:* Beth Douglass, Jan Thompson



## May

Catherine Parrish	6
Roberta Ridley	11
Lucille Taylor	14
Maxwell Keat	21
Dick Gee	25
Michael Thompson	28
Beth Douglass	29



The **Celebration of Life for Jenna McCarley** will be Saturday, May 23 at 11 am here at First Baptist. Bob and Jenna joined our church in 1956. Over the years she was a youth leader, choir member, deacon, church moderator, and had a great concern for social justice. She made trips with the Baptist Peace Fellowship to the Soviet Union and to Nicaragua. She was also one of the founders of the Center for Creative Justice. Jenna died on October 13.

