



Christian Fellowship Church Of Eldora



Nov/Dec 2025

A Newsletter of the
Christian Fellowship Church
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DIVINE INTERRUPTIBILITY

By Pastor Susan Schnieders

Our fall book study included a chapter on lying. It was illuminating (and convicting) to reflect on all the ways and reasons we don't tell the truth (which happens more than we think). I realized I often am not being truthful by responding with "no" when someone interrupts me, asking if I'm busy or if they're bothering me. I mean, we're always "busy." If you're living, you're busy; we're always occupied, doing *something* every second of every day, even if it's just sitting, staring out the window. So, when the phone or doorbell rings, regardless of what I'm doing at that moment, yes, I'm "busy." But the second question exposes my *feelings* about being interrupted, and feelings always reveal our hearts and the stories we're telling ourselves.

Here's some of the storylines that run in the background for me, causing irritation with an interruption: this issue (person) is not worth my time and attention; if I don't get this done now there will be unpleasant consequences; my wellbeing is more important than your wellbeing right now. In other words, completion of my agenda ensures my status, my safety, and my security. Any threat to these things causes fear and its compadre, anger.

However, consider this: "Jesus gave himself almost entirely to what we consider interruptions. He trusted that the what the Father allowed to cross his path was... from the Father. Jesus always seemed willing for things to get messy" (Marcia Lebar). Many of Jesus's healings were interruptions as were many other significant encounters throughout his ministry. In Mark 4:35-41, the disciples frantically wake Jesus up (how are you when jolted awake?) to save them from drowning in a storm. He calms the storm and exhorts them to greater faith—not in their circumstances, but in their Lord.

This welcoming of interruptions reflects the nature of the Father; after all, Jesus said that he could do "only what he sees his Father doing... whatever the Father does the Son also does" (Jn 5:19-20). Do you sometimes worry that you're bothering God with your prayers? That what you have to say or ask is too small or insignificant; that God can't be bothered with your little issue when there's so many bigger problems in the world? Jesus's life demonstrates that he and his Father will never dismiss an interruption from us because they are hurried or too busy for us; and they're always willing to be with us in whatever mess we might find ourselves.

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Jesus’s sleeping in the storm illustrates his worldview – the world with all its mess and chaos is a perfectly safe place to be if you have relinquished your agenda for God’s. He had no fear of the storm *or* of being tired. He trusted that God would give him what he needed in every circumstance, which is why Dallas Willard said the one word he would use to describe Jesus is “relaxed.”

If we root ourselves in these truths—Christ dwells and delights in me, and I live in God’s strong, unshakeable kingdom which is never in trouble, and neither am I—then we can adopt Jesus’s worldview: that God’s love makes us safe and gives us everything we need. *Then* we can trust that whenever interruption occurs it is the very work that God has for us to do in that moment, freely unhanding our agendas because we know the interruptions *are* our work. We, like Jesus, can be interruptible people with an uninteruptible peace.



September 2025

	YTD	BUDGET 2025	2024 YTD
Income			
Pledges, Offerings and Donations	\$135,391		\$112,972
Expenses			
Staff Expenses	\$96,626	\$132,628	\$82,413
Buildings and Utilities	\$25,279	\$43,150	\$25,649
Worship	\$1,620	\$5,600	\$2,026
Ministries and Misc	\$1,982	\$4,275	\$2,427
Total Outflows	\$125,507	\$185,653	\$112,515
Fund Balances as of 9/30/25			
General Fund	\$45,738		\$32,045
Building Fund	\$12,734		
HOPE Fund	\$3,592		
Savings Account	\$2,135		
Memorial Fund	\$13,506		
Youth Fund	\$9,461		
Mission and Nurse Funds	\$2,720		
Trust Fund	\$130,611		
Davison Scholarship Trust	\$75,372		
NON-BUDGET ITEMS			
HOPE expenditures	\$825		
Missional Giving	\$9,440		
Misc projects	\$9,767		

Christian Fellowship Church of Eldora Council/SPRC; September 3, 2025, 4:30 pm

Members present: Pastor Susan, Pastor Pat, Dave Dunn, Valerie Soesbe, Rosanne Foster, Jim Johnson, Trista Nelson, Mary Swartz, and Scott Swartz.

Dave Dunn called the meeting to order, and Pastor Susan began with a prayer.

The minutes were reviewed. Trista Nelson moved to accept last month's minutes; Val Soesbe seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

TRUSTEES –

Dave Dunn will contact Randy Tjaden about the leak that is still present in the balcony.

A toilet has been purchased for the upstairs toilet and also the insides for the women's downstairs toilet. A

FINANCE –Trista Nelson moved to accept the financial report, Rosanne Foster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS –

Rosanne Foster suggested that the proceeds from the garage sale go into the Outreach budget. Some of the upcoming events are Trunk or Treat and Christmas Caroling. Rosanne made the motion to send the proceeds of the rummage sale to the outreach budget; Jim Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Rosanne also reported that the bells were considering having a soup dinner, but no final plan has been made.

Pastors will be gone September 28. Jim Brown will possibly give the message.

There is an account for the youth that can be used for food during the youth meetings.

Pastor Pat suggested that a subscription to a local paper could be helpful. Dave Dunn made the motion to subscribe to the Times Citizen, Jim Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

It was discussed that the church fund popcorn night at the theater. Scott Swartz reported that he thought the days were all covered, so the suggestion was tabled for this month.

OLD BUSINESS –

The new A-V proposal was discussed at length.

The projector will not be considered at this time

Live streaming will be included.

Total of \$14,340 with 2/3 up front and 1/3 after completed.

Jim Johnson made the motion and Scott seconded using \$5,000 from the last 2 years of trust proceeds, motion passed unanimously.

Trista made the motion to pay for the new camera system with the trust fund, the general fund, and contributions from the congregation. Val seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Planters outside the church will be put on hold until spring.

Tracy Morlan is looking into changing the signs coming into town to change UMC to CFC, and also adding the church start time to the new sign.

Middle and High School youth will begin meeting on Wednesdays, starting Sept. 10 at 6:30.

Thursday book study begins Sept. 11 at 5:30. Sunday book study was put on hold for now.

Sept. 21, Ketels performance/fundraiser will begin at 4:00. Gift in kind letter to the Ketels.

Children's church/SS begins Sept. 14.

Quarterly brunch potluck – Sept. 7

Direct mail door hangers are tabled to next month.

Pastor Pat moved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Strait, Secretary

Members present: Pastor Susan, Pastor Pat, Scott Swartz, Jim Johnson, Dave Dunn, Rosanne Foster, Steve Foster, Blair Donaldson, Jim Brown, and Mary Swartz

Dave Dunn called the meeting to order, and Pastor Pat read the devotions.

The minutes were reviewed. Pastor Pat moved to accept last month's minutes; Pastor Susan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

TRUSTEES –

Dave Dunn contacted Randy Tjaden about the roof leaks. Randy says he thinks they finally got it taken care of and Carol Strait confirmed that it didn't leak during the last rain.

The toilet in the downstairs ladies' room still runs.

FINANCE – Scott reported that the total income for the year is \$135,391 which is around \$23,000 more than last year. He has paid the first payment for the new audio/visual system. Jim Brown made a motion to accept the financial report, Jim Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS –

Carol brought up the subject of bats in the church. She suggested getting a couple of bat houses and have them mounted on the outside of the church. It was suggested to get an estimate from a batman about how to eradicate bats in the church. It was also decided to try the bat house, too.

It was discussed to get background checks on youth ministry workers. Pastor Susan and Carol will check on how to do this.

Blair Donaldson asked if it would be possible for him and Chelsea to get one of the pews that were removed from the sanctuary and kept at the church. After some discussion it was decided to let Blair & Chelsea take one of the pews and put out an announcement that the other one is available.

Rosanne Foster would like to form a short-term committee called Strategic Planning Committee that would decide how to organize the rooms of the church. Things are spread out all over and it would be nice to have a plan for where things could go. It was decided to form a short-term ad hoc committee with Rosanne, Pastor Susan, Val Soesbe, and whoever wants to join and change the name to Facility Planning Committee.

The food shelf demand has been going up. There are close to 150 families who are now using the service. As well as money for vouchers, the big need is hygiene items and laundry products. A meal for users of the food shelf was discussed. Everyone showed interest and it will be mentioned to see if anyone is willing to help with the meals.

OLD BUSINESS –

Scott has paid for the 1st payment of the audio/visual update and is now waiting for the company to receive the equipment.

Tracy Morlan sent Scott Swartz a plan for the signs coming into Eldora for the council's approval. He stated that the cost would be around \$1,000 for the signs and to also add the service time to the church sign. Scott will get a breakdown of the costs and report next month.

The direct mail discussion has been tabled until after the holidays.

Blaire will check out the swing set at the parsonage and if it's not good, will tear it apart and dispose of it.

Dave adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Strait, Secretary



November Birthdays

- Nov. 03 - Christa Rogalla
- Nov. 03 - Scott Swartz
- Nov. 05 - Austin Haywood
- Nov. 11 - David Minter
- Nov. 12 - Jim Titus
- Nov. 15 - Shay Wical
- Nov. 17 - Brett Vinton
- Nov. 20 - Meghan Lloyd
- Nov. 21 - Kate LaVelle
- Nov. 21 - Mary Swartz
- Nov. 22 - Jim Brown
- Nov. 26 - Patty Titus
- Nov. 28 - Nick Piper
- Nov. 30 - Gracie LaVelle
- Nov. 30 - Jennifer Minter

Sunday, Nov. 02

**Communion/Bread of Life
All Saints Sunday**

**Daylight Saving Ends
9:30 Worship Service**

Sunday, Nov. 09

9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Nov. 16

9:30 Worship Service

Thursday, Nov. 20

3:00 Prayer Ministry

Sunday, Nov. 23

9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, Nov. 26???

9:30 am Coffee Fellowship

Thursday, Nov. 27

Thanksgiving

Sunday, Sept. 30

9:30 Worship Service



December Birthdays

- Dec. 01 - Kim Carr Clemons
- Dec. 01 - Levi Tidman
- Dec. 02 - Gayle Faris
- Dec. 03 - Jim Faris
- Dec. 03 - Kathy Hess
- Dec. 04 - Tanner Vinton
- Dec. 07 - Sophie Vinton
- Dec. 09 - Trista Nelson
- Dec. 20 - Emily Bowser
- Dec. 22 - Jared Swift
- Dec. 05 - Alma Donaldson
- Dec. 25 - James Wical
- Dec. 31 - DeAnn Roling

Sunday, Dec. 07

**Communion/Bread of Life
9:30 Worship Service**

Sunday, Dec. 14

**9:30 Worship Service
Children's Pageant**

Sunday, Dec. 21

9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, Dec. 24

5:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, Dec. 25

**Jesus' Birthday
Merry Christmas**

Sunday, Dec. 28

9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, Dec. 31

Happy New Year



She talked
to God daily
& that is what
made her
lovely.



A bird sitting on a
tree is never afraid
of the branch breaking,
because her trust is
not on the branch
but on it's wings.
**Always believe
in yourself.**



Special Blessings



Beautiful photo of the sanctuary taken by Pastor Susan's brother.



Valerie Soesbe & Patty Titus

These 2 ladies, along with their husbands, Rick & Jim, worked very hard for the successful fall rummage sale.



If you look up in the balcony during Sunday service, you will find the faithful tech crew, Mark & Janey Hobson.



Arlen Daleske and Scott Swartz.

Arlen was using Scott in a demonstration of "Life Is Not Fair"

Update on Ukraine

Dear Rick & Sue,

We're holding on here. Life in Chernihiv, and Ukraine as a whole, has become much harder and significantly more dangerous. Russia has intensified its attacks not only on military targets but also on civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Over the past month, Chernihiv has come under attack several times. As a result, we are experiencing severe power shortages and have electricity for only a small part of the day. The current schedule gives us 3 hours with electricity followed by 6 hours without — and this cycle continues throughout the day.

The weather has also turned much colder. Many people are without heating due to the ongoing attacks on Ukraine's energy system. During the day, temperatures are around +54°F, dropping to +39°F at night.

Unfortunately, the war has had a serious impact on children's education as well. Frequent air raid alerts and blackouts have made it very difficult to maintain a consistent learning environment. Many children are missing parts of the school curriculum, studying online when possible, or trying to do their homework independently. This is the reality we now face.

Still, we are alive and well — and we are thankful to God, and to all those who pray for us and support us as we continue to serve the people of Ukraine.

By God's grace, our ministry continues! Last Saturday, we held an after-camp gathering for children who attended our summer camps. However, attendance was quite low due to overnight and early morning drone attacks that day. Understandably, many parents were too afraid to let their children leave home.

In Christ, Roman



People shelter inside an invincibility centre, where they can use Internet connection, charge their devices and warm up, amid water and electricity supply outage, after critical infrastructure was hit during Russian drone attack, in Chernihiv, Ukraine October 21, 2025. REUTERS/Maksym Kishka