



Christian Fellowship Church Of Eldora



**July/August
2026**

**A Newsletter of the
Christian Fellowship Church
1415 12th Street, Eldora, IA**

**Pastor Susan Schnieders
cfcpastorsusan@gmail.com**

**Pastor Patrick Schnieders
cfcpastorpatrick@gmail.com**

**Church Office: 641-939-2057
eldoracfc@heartofiowa.net**

**FB: Eldora IA Christian
Fellowship Church**

Web: eldoraiacfc.org

Attention Equals Love

Pastor Susan Schnieders

Pat and I will soon teach a few workshops at a conference in Wichita, KS, primarily around the topic of attention. “Paying attention” to this topic for well over a decade, we’ve come to recognize it as an important element of the spiritual life. We teach practices that help people strengthen the ability to be good attention payers to God and to one another. And we’ve found that the consistent, intentional practice of learning to pay attention to God and others helps us and those we practice with grow spiritually.

Dallas Willard said, “The first act of love is always the giving of attention,” something you’ve probably heard from us before. If this is true, then Christians need to be exceptional attention-payers because Jesus said that full obedience to God is wrapped up in the (greatest) commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Our distracted age has made attention and love difficult. Our pockets and purses carry devices that ping, ring and vibrate, delivering a constant stream of material and information, both threatening and entertaining, watched on hi-def screens in vibrant color. Our brains are designed to attend to sharp sensory cues first—a good thing, because when you’re walking in the dark, the rustle in the bushes might not be the neighbor’s friendly kitty! But it’s no wonder that we’re so distracted; we’re hounded by technology constantly grabbing for our attention. What’s scary about that is, if the first act of love is the giving of attention, then what are we learning to love?

At every given moment, all that sensory input is vying for processing space in our brains, and it’s managed by three networks: the alerting network, which controls readiness to act; the orienting network, which picks out specific input (like hearing your name in a crowded room); and the executive network, which is what we call focus—concentrating on one thing in the midst of competing stimuli. That’s a lot going on. The good news is that our capacity for attention isn’t fixed. We can strengthen our executive network so that we attend to what’s important and therefore love what’s important.

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Scripture reflects this dynamic. Paul says in 2 Cor. 10:5, "...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." In Colossians 3:2 we're admonished to "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." And to the Philippian church Paul writes, "And finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." What gets our attention gets our love, and what we regularly attend to becomes increasingly real to us.

A friend once said that our attention is our most precious resource. It helps determine what we love and how we love. None of us feels more loved than when we have the full attention of someone who wills what is good for us. God's attention towards each one of us never wavers; he isn't limited by a brain that gets fatigued, which is why his love is unfailing.

If you want to become a better spouse, parent, grandparent, friend—if you want to love like Jesus—train your attention. Become a radical attention-payer to Scripture and creation to see and know God's limitless goodness and love for you so that it spills over to others wherever you go.



Fall Potluck



Looking for members to join the church's:

- Trustees Committee
- Outreach Committee
- Memorial Committee
- Missions Committee
- Staff Parish Committee
- Worship team

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ

Matthew 5:14–16

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Members present: Val Soesbe, Blaire Donaldson, Dave Dunn, Jim Johnson, Pastor Pat, Pastor Susan, Mary Swartz, Scott Swartz, Steve Foster, Rosanne Foster, Jim Brown, and Trista Nelson. Jerry Kramer and Rick Shaw also attended.

Dave Dunn called the meeting to order, and Pastor Pat led with a scripture and prayer.

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

FINANCE – Scott Swartz gave the financial report. Year to date income was \$106,925, total expenses, \$100,696. Balance in the general fund at the end of June is \$37,133. Jim Johnson made the motion to accept the financial report, Steve Foster seconded. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS – Rick Shaw gave a report for the missions committee. He and Jerry Kramer spoke about the missions and outreach committees helping to fund pool passes next year for those in need. They would like to have a fund raiser early in the year to pay for this venture. The missions committee will also be financing the Ukraine camps again next year.

Pastor Susan spoke on having more organization in the various committees. She suggested having organizational guidelines such as: A chairperson, Have meetings at least quarterly, A mission statement

Pastor Susan also gave an update on the Alternative Pregnancy Center. They are doing so well, they would like to be open two days a month instead of just one. Everyone thought this was fine so the plan is for them to be open on the first and third Wednesday of the month.

There was discussion on forming a committee to run the benevolent/hope fund. To start, it was decided to include the Pastors, Mary?, and Dave Dunn.

OLD BUSINESS – The boiler pump should be fixed by heating time.

The roof still leaks some.

The parsonage water is being replaced Friday.

Cameras should be installed on Tuesday.

The Ketels will be performing Sept. 13, 3:00 – 4:30; donations to the food shelf.

The pastors will be gone on September 27. Arlen Daleske will be filling the pulpit.

Val made the motion to adjourn, Rosanne seconded. Dave adjourned the meeting.

Carol Strait, Secretary

July 2026 Summary Report



NON-BUDGET ITEMS		YTD	
Misc Designated Income		\$8,265	\$8,515
Community Meal			
HOPE expenditures	\$650		\$795
Benevolence Giving	\$7,065		\$8,415
Misc projects (Boilers)	\$17,983		\$500
Trust Fund Income			
HOPE income			
Trust money used			
Estate bequest			
Donations toward building fund Boiler	\$4,600		
rummage sale income	\$1,572		\$1,758
Donations toward trust			
as of 7/31/26			
General Fund Balance	\$37,133		\$44,992
Outstanding bills	\$0		\$0
real balance	\$37,133		\$44,992
Fund Balances			
Building Fund	\$5,772		\$12,683
HOPE Fund	\$3,891		\$3,652
Savings Account	\$6,427		\$7,022
Memorial Fund	\$12,605		\$13,911
Youth Fund	\$9,317		\$9,460
Mission and Nurse Funds	\$2,723		\$2,720
Trust Fund	\$132,194		\$129,309
Davison Scholarship Trust	\$76,358		\$76,371



September Birthdays

Sept. 01 - Hannah Lloyd
 Sept. 02 - Robin LaVelle
 Sept. 06 - Adam Clemons
 Sept. 08 - Jill Grego
 Sept. 10 - Logan Roling
 Sept. 10 - Hattie Walther
 Sept. 11 - Mike Strait
 Sept. 12 - Holden Hillmer
 Sept. 12 - Rick Soesbe
 Sept. 13 - Mark Hobson
 Sept. 18 - Harper Izer
 Sept. 21 - Sophie Anderson
 Sept. 21 - Rachel Inks
 Sept. 21 - Norene Johnson
 Sept. 24 - Matthew Allbee
 Sept. 24 - Tyler Minteer
 Sept. 24 - Ava Warren
 Sept. 25 - Avery Lafrenz
 Sept. 25 - Brandon Lafrenz
 Sept. 26 - Patricia Magnuson
 Sept. 29 - Larry Cranston
 Sept. 30 - Michael May, Sr.

Sunday, Sept. 06
Communion/Bread of Life
 9:30 Worship Service

Thursday, Sept. 10
VA Van

Sunday, Sept 13
 9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Sept 20
 9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, Sept. 23
 9:30 am Women's Coffee

Thursday, July 23
 3:00 pm Prayer Ministry

Sunday, Sept 27
 9:30 Worship Service



Sunday, Oct. 04
Communion/Bread of Life
 9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Oct. 11
 9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Oct. 18
 9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Oct. 25
 9:30 Worship Service
Wednesday, Oct. 28
 9:30 am Women's Coffee



October Birthdays

Oct. 02 - Julie Peters
 Oct. 04 - Ellen Przybyszewski
 Oct. 05 - Janice Piper
 Oct. 06 - Phillip Prosser
 Oct. 10 - Brittany Warren
 Oct. 11 - Ivan Miller
 Oct. 12 - Jean Gehrke
 Oct. 13 - Caleb Humphrey
 Oct. 14 - Ann Raisch
 Oct. 15 - Tisha May
 Oct. 15 - Karen Reece
 Oct. 24 - Barbara Ketels
 Oct. 25 - Kristin Tidman
 Oct. 26 - Renee Minteer
 Oct. 26 - T.J. Warren
 Oct. 27 - Barbara Neymeyer
 Oct. 28 - Pastor Pat
 Oct. 30 - Jodee Hess



Special Blessings



Karen Reece at the pulpit.



Ron & Barbara Nicholis
Pastor Susan's parents



Coffee sign designed and crafted by
Joan Riskedahl and Steve Foster.



More new artwork by Joan Riskedahl!

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1415 12th Street
Eldora, Iowa 50627

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Random Facts

- 1. Earth's rotation is changing speed.** It's actually slowing, and this means that, on average, the length of a day increases by around 1.8 seconds per century.
- 2. Ironically, the fear of long words is called Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia.** The 36-letter word was first used in the first century BCE to criticize writers with an unreasonable penchant for long words.
- 3. Avocados are a fruit, not a vegetable.** They're technically considered a single-seeded berry, believe it or not.
- 4. The Eiffel Tower can be 15 cm taller during the summer.** That's due to thermal expansion, meaning the iron heats up, and the particles gain kinetic energy and take up more space.
- 5. Australia is wider than the moon.** The moon is 3400 km in diameter, while Australia's diameter from east to west is almost 4000 km.
- 6. Human teeth are the only part of the body that cannot heal themselves.** That's because teeth are coated in enamel, which is not a living tissue.
- 7. It's illegal to own just one guinea pig in Switzerland.** It's considered animal abuse because they're social beings and get lonely.



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62. A Discussion About Sabbath (Lord over Sabbath)

ABJATHAR	DOING	MEET
ALLOWED	EAT	MERCY
BREAKING	GRAINFIELDS	PICK
COMPANIONS	GREATER	PRIEST
CONDEMNED	HEADS	REQUIREMENTS
CONSECRATED	HUNGRY	SABBATH
DAVID	INNOCENT	SACRED
DAY	LAW	SACRIFICE
DESECRATE	LORD	TEMPLE
DESIRE	MEAN	WALKING

62. A Discussion About Sabbath (Lord over Sabbath)

Matthew 12:1-8 NIV

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Mark 2:23-28 NLT

One Sabbath day as Jesus was walking through some grainfields, his disciples began breaking off heads of grain to eat. But the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look, why are they breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath?"

Jesus said to them, "Haven't you ever read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He went into the house of God (during the days when Abiathar was high priest) and broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. He also gave some to his companions."

Then Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!"