

Congregational Tidings

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*



A weekly newsletter



January 8, 2020

**First Sunday after
Epiphany**
January 12, 2020
10:30 am

Pastor Scott Spence
will present the
message:

The Old and the New

Scripture Reading
Mark 2:1-22

Worship Leader
Evie Waack

Deacon-In-Charge
Janice Akin

Acolytes
Dale and Evie Waack

Greeters
Cindy Thompson
Nancy Heinick

January Ushers
Craig Jensen
Dave Panicucci
Jeff Thompson
Rocky Petersen

UCC Officers Call for Prayer, Fasting for Peace during Epiphany

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins: To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.*
Howard Thurman

We call upon the congregations,
the members and the clergy of
the United Church of Christ to
join together in a time of
prayer and fasting for
PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



"To bring peace among the people" - such is the calling of the disciples of the one we know as the Prince of Peace.

Having celebrated Christmas and the birth of Jesus, now preparing for the season of Epiphany, we call upon congregations, the members and the clergy of the United Church of Christ to join together in a time of prayer and fasting for peace throughout the world.

Threats to that peace are numerous and can be felt in all corners of the globe. Today especially we are mindful of the global unrest ensuing given the [latest actions](#) of the United States and Iran. Both governments have taken steps that the other could determine to be an act of war – a war this world does not want, does not need and will not win. It is a war that many fear, once started, could trigger disasters felt in every part of the world.

We are calling on all affiliated with the UCC to use prayer either in worship or their prayer life during the season of Epiphany as a means of advocating for peace in these days.

We also invite all willing and able to commit to a day of fasting for peace – a personal commitment of spiritual practice and discipline.

Please also feel free to [contact](#) your elected representatives and let them know that you are participating in prayer and fasting for peace and encourage them to use the power of their office to do what they can to avoid further escalation which could lead to war. In the words of a beloved hymn, "Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me."

Your humble servants in Christ,

The Rev. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President

The Rev. Traci Blackmon
Associate General Minister

The Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson
Associate General Minister

Scott's January Public Office Hours:

Scott will hold Public Hours as follows:

*1/8 - Cup of Joe (Cedar Falls)

*1/15 - (No Community Office Hours)

*1/22 - Sidecar (Downtown, W'loo)

1/29 - Fat Cup (Fletcher Ave., W'loo)

If anyone has a suggestion of a new place to hold Community Office Hours this year, please let Pastor Scott know.

Bible Study

Make plans to attend our Winter Wednesday Night Bible Study Series! Join us tonight as we take a look at the Prophets of the Old Testament. What were they saying to their communities- and how can their words mold our faith today? Class begins at 6:45pm in the Lounge. See you there!

2020 Offering Envelopes

2020 Offering Envelopes are now under the bulletin board outside the main office.

Annual Meeting Reports

The Annual Meeting will be held the last Sunday in January. **Attention all Board Chairs** - I would like to have your annual report by Fri., January 10th. Thank you!



Flower Chart

The 2020 Flower Chart is now available in the Crossroads area. Please stop by and sign up now to secure the special dates in your life!

Organ Revoicing Committee

The committee will meet on Tuesday, January 21st and January 28th at 4pm in the Friendship Room. Contact Bob Brock for any questions or information.

Blessing Bags

During the Why Weekend, we made Blessing Bags which are simply bags with emergency supplies (hand warmers, socks, etc.) for you to keep in your car and give to someone in need. If you need another one or never got one but would like one, please let Michelle know so that we can make another batch of them. ~Missions Committee

Contribution Statements

End-of-year giving statements will be mailed out next week. Let me know if you have any questions once you receive them.

~ Michelle

Fleming Closet

Attention- Saturday, January 11 @ 9am, we will begin cleaning and reorganizing the Fleming Closet (the closet right outside the choir loft). You are welcome to join us, donut holes, coffee and orange juice will be provided. If you have items in the closet that you want to remain, you may contact Michelle in the church office and she will make a list for us.

****Please note--the church history boxes will NOT be touched****

*A New Year begins tomorrow.
I hope there is joy not sorrow.
Texted my baseball player, Kevin,
his birthday is today.
He was drafted by the New York Mets,
by the way.*

*Cherish the time you have with family
and
friends.
Relationships are important.*

*Forgive those who have hurt you.
May they know how to forgive too.
I pray the new year brings Hope, Peace,
Joy and Love to all.*

Be prepared to answer Jesus' call.

By Lois Johnson
December 31, 2019

Sunday School

Gathering (9:00 - 9:15 am)

Youth and adults initially will meet in the chapel.

Classes (9:15 - 10:15 am)

Students 3rd - 5th grade will gather in the chapel with Katie Thomas.

Children ages pre-K - 2nd grade will meet with Jayne Slaughter in the downstairs children's nursery / classroom.

The Adult class meets in the Friendship Room.

Weekly Events

Wed., January 8

3-5pm - Public Office Hours

6:00 pm - Potluck

6:30 pm - Choir Practice

7:00 pm - Pastor's Class
Youth Group

Thurs., January 9

6:00 pm - Bells Practice

Sat., January 11

9:00 am - Fleming Closet
Clean-Out

Sun., January 12

9:00 am - Sunday School
10:30 am - Worship

Mon., January 13

Community Meals

Tues., January 14

6:00 Trustee Meeting

Worship SCHEDULE

January 12

Jesus Heals and Teaches

Mark 2:1-22



January 19

Parables in Mark

Mark 4:1-34

January 26

Jesus and the Gerasene Demonic

Mark 5:1:20

Special Music by: Damascus Road



Ordination and Installation of Hannah Hannover

Sunday, January 19th at 3:00 pm ~ Ames UCC in Ames, IA

A cake reception will follow. An offering will be collected to benefit Ames UCC's Pastoral Emergency Fund.

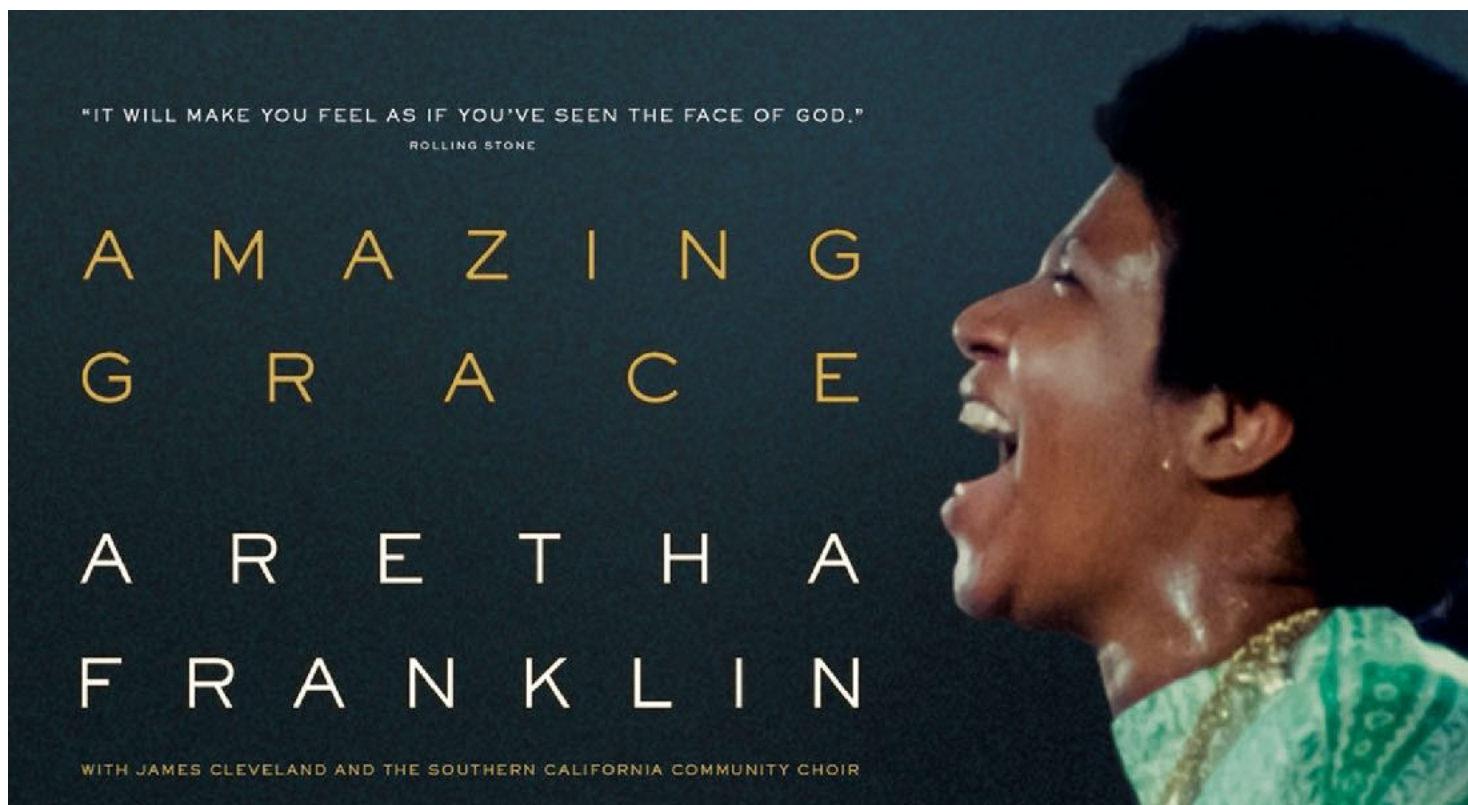
We celebrate Hannah's completion of the ordination process and Ames UCC's call for Hannah to be officially installed as Associate Minister.

Why? Weekend Reflection

I was hesitant to attend the Why? Weekend because I didn't know how it would be structured and I didn't know what we, as a church, would gain from it. I wasn't able to attend on Friday yet I took a leap of faith and just went Saturday for the whole day. I'd heard that Friday's session had left everyone feeling good and ready to do more work which made me excited to be there. The big question posed the night before, "what has the church done to make you the most proud?" was first on the agenda of the morning. We had time to talk in our groups which gave me time to catch up and think about how I would answer as I listened to what others shared at our table. The next hour or so we listened as each group, each person, shared their stories. It was fascinating to hear about what was valued and many stories made us laugh and cry a little at the memories. It wasn't about Bible verses or duty; it was about how warm and connected it made us feel.

This telling of our stories was my favorite part of the day because it reminded me why my family has made the choice over the years to keep showing up, sitting in the pews, and being a part of our church life. We can find God everywhere but there has to be other reasons to be here. It's about the people, the strong friendships we've made over the years, the stories we've created together and hopefully will continue to make. First Congregational United Church of Christ has been a community and is still a community of people who care about each other. By afternoon, we were discussing a mission statement which emphasized more of our differences and, while we didn't come to a wonderful consensus, it demonstrates that we still have work to do together as the family we've become. All of us are diverse, unique, and open to what comes next...

~Michelle Holt



Thoughts from the Pastor's Desk

As I type this letter to you I can hear our Grin and Grow friends playing, my to-do list includes Lent and Annual Congregational Meeting planning, and the days are ever so slowly getting longer. We have definitely entered 2020 as a church community with both feet quickly moving forward. In the spirit of the New Year and beginning things with a fresh start, here are several bits and bobs for your consideration:

*Many thanks to everyone who attended and helped out with both of our Christmas Eve services. Special thanks to our Youth Director Katie Thomas, Music Director Luke Overton, Organist Hudson Lorenzo, the Chancel Choir, the Bell Choir, our amazing youth, the Ushers, the Deacons, and anyone else that played a role and that I'm forgetting. **Thank you!**

***Make plans to attend our Annual Congregational Meeting & Potluck after worship on January 26th!** Included in this edition of *The Tidings* is a reflection from Michelle Holt about our *Why Weekend?* in November. We will be discussing and voting on whether to adopt this *Why?* statement as a congregation at the meeting. Stay tuned for more reflections from church members in the upcoming weeks-your passion for this project is very evident.

***The Winter Wednesday Night Pastor's Class will take a look at The Prophets starting January 8th.** Who are these people from the Old Testament? What were their messages and motivations? Are they relevant for us today? Class begins at 6:45 in the Lounge-all you need to bring is an open mind! All Are Welcome.

***Finally-I wanted to include a movie recommendation as you start 2020.** Our ever-growing Netflix queue (I swear I'll finish one day!) brought Tara and I *Amazing Grace* last week. This is a concert film from 1972 starring Aretha Franklin as she records a live gospel album. For various technical reasons the footage was not released until 2018 but trust me it was well worth the wait.

If you in any way love gospel, the Queen of Soul, or just good music I cannot recommend it highly enough. You will feel like you have *gone to church* as we say down South.

See you Sunday! As always my door is open if you would like to chat.

Pastor Scott

First Congregational UCC
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WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

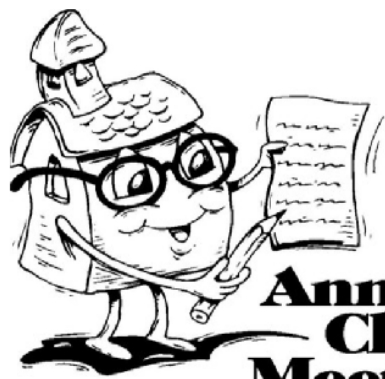
Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here

Create an endowment of love. Please consider including our church in your estate planning.

F I R S T C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C

Annual Meeting & Potluck Sun., January 26, 2020



Annual Church Meeting

The potluck will be held right after the church service with the Annual Meeting to follow.

Last Call...

Calling All Church Members!!! If you would like to serve on a board or a committee this upcoming year, step right up! It's a good way to get involved in church projects and a great way to be generous with your talents. There are openings in several of the groups. Please contact Diane Highnam at 319-240-2849 or diane.highnam@cfu.net. You can also contact the church office. THANKS for your help!

All Board Chairs, please have your report to Michelle by this Friday, January 10th.