

# Congregational Tidings

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



A weekly newsletter



February 19, 2020

**Mardi Gras Sunday**  
February 23, 2020  
10:30 am

Pastor Scott Spence  
will present the  
sermon:  
*Who Am I?*

**Scripture Reading**  
Mark 8:27-9:8

**Worship Leader**  
Cliff Highnam

**Deacon-In-Charge**  
Evie Waack

**Greeters**  
Dale & Evie Waack  
Diana Paige  
Leah Spence

**February Ushers**  
Gordon Lauterbach  
Kelly Conrad  
Jonathan Yarngo  
Peter Steva



## Mardi Gras Sunday

This coming Sunday is Transfiguration Sunday, and what better way to celebrate the glory and brilliance of Jesus than a little New Orleans-inspired party? During worship, we will be blessed by music from a UNI jazz ensemble. After worship we will continue to celebrate with a Mardi Gras-themed lunch featuring jambalaya and red beans and rice (vegetarian and meat will be available) and king cakes. Most importantly, we will take up a special offering that will go to our UCC mission partners at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS who work “to strengthen neighborhoods, seek justice, and transform lives.” Invite your friends, family, and neighbors and join us for lunch.

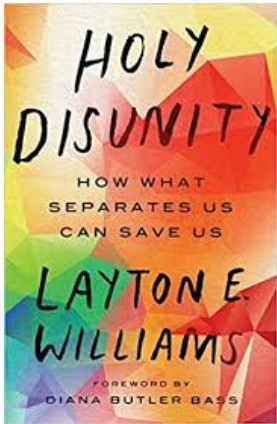
**\*\* Please RSVP to the church office by  
Thursday, Feb. 20 for the luncheon \*\***

*~Missions and Religious Education Committees*



# Ash Wednesday Service: February 26th at 6:00pm

The imposition of ashes will be offered and communion will be served.



## Lent Book Study

Our Lent Book Study will take a look at *Holy Disunity: How What Separates Us Can Save Us* by Layton Williams. Williams is a PC(USA) pastor whose book is appropriate for our divided times.

From the title description: *These days, there's no dirtier word than "divisive," especially in religious and political circles. Claiming a controversial opinion, talking about our differences, even sharing our doubts can be seen as threatening to the goal of unity. But what if unity shouldn't be our goal? In Holy Disunity: How What Separates Us Can Save Us, Layton E. Williams proposes that our primary calling as humans is not to create unity but rather to seek authentic relationship with God, ourselves, one another, and the world around us. And that means actively engaging those with whom we disagree. Our religious, political, social, and cultural differences can create doubt and tension, but disunity also provides surprising gifts of perspective and grace. By analyzing conflict and rifts in both modern culture and Scripture, Williams explores how our disagreements and differences—our disunity—can ultimately redeem us.*

The book can be purchased through the Church Office for \$15 or through Amazon. Class begins March 4th and All Are Welcome!



## LENT PREVIEW:

Lent is traditionally a time of spiritual focus and reflection, a opportunity for Christians to adopt a new faith practice or discipline. Each Sunday during this season our worship will focus on the idea of fasting—the concept of reducing or ending a habit or routine. Traditionally this has been associated with food but with the help of the Gospel of Mark we are going to look at many different types of fasting.

**If you know of a family member or friend that are thinking about getting back into the church habit, this is a great opportunity to invite them to FCUCC! All Are Welcome.**

- March 1:** *Fasting From... Our Stuff* Mark 10:17-31
- March 8:** *Fasting From...Being First* Mark 10:32-52
- March 15:** *Guest Preacher Evie Waack* Mark 12:1-17
- March 22:** *Fasting From...Our Image* Mark 12:28-44
- March 29:** *Fasting From...Judgement* Mark 13:1-8, 24-37
- April 5 (Palm Sunday):** *Fasting From...Power* Mark 11:1-11



## Pastor Scott's February

### Public Office Hours:

Scott will hold Public Hours from 3 to 5pm unless specified as follows:

\*2/19 - Lincoln Perk (218 E. 4th, W'loo)  
-Special Hours 2pm - 4pm

\*2/26 - Sidecar (Ridgeway, W'loo)

## Lenten Project: "Feed the Hungry"

The Social Justice Committee of Blessed Sacrament Community is asking for your help to package meals to help meet the needs of the poor in our area. Kids Against Hunger is a national organization that coordinates food "packaging parties", creating meals that are designed not only to be nutritious but also feed many people for minimal cost. A group of 10 can help package 2000 meals per hour! Volunteers are needed on Packaging Day, March 11th from 10am for set up, 12:30 to 8pm for packaging and 8pm until done for cleanup. If you would like to participate, contact Derek Mineart (Project Coordinator) at [dsmineart@gmail.com](mailto:dsmineart@gmail.com) with the names of your volunteers and the desired shift (either 12:30 to 2pm or 6:00 to 8:00pm).

*For more information, please see the flyer on the bulletin board in the Crossroads.*

## Organ Revoicing

The Task Force will meet next Tuesday, February 25th at 4pm in the library.

## Church Directory

Michelle is working on the new directory during the month of February. Please call or email her with any changes.

Diane Highnam has offered to take a new picture for your listing. If you are interested in a new picture, please contact Diane or Michelle in the office to set this up.



One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ.

This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC. We will collect this offering on Sunday, March 22, 2020. More information can be found on the UCC website: <https://www.ucc.org/oghs>

## 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 Chapel.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Weekly Events

### Wed., February 19

3 - 5 pm - Public Office Hours  
6:00 - Potluck  
6:30 - Choir Practice  
7:00 - Pastor's Class  
Youth Group

### Thurs., February 20

6:00 - Bells Practice

### Sun., February 23

9:00 - Sunday School  
10:30 - Worship  
Lunch Following Worship

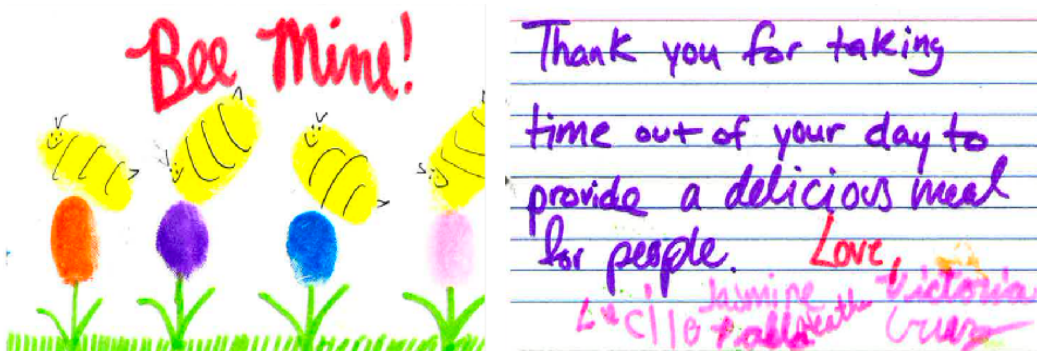
### Wed., February 26

3 - 5 pm - Public Office Hours  
6:00 pm - Ash Wednesday Service

## Community Meals News:

A little girl handed Tim Ahrens some handmade Valentine Cards at Community Meals last week thanking the workers for their service.

It is always nice to feel appreciated. Below is one of the cards:



## Heaven on Earth Chris Davies

Issue #982 | February 13, 2020

I believe that God is inviting us into visionary co-creation of worlds we do not yet know. I believe there are whispers of hope and moments that feel like fiction in the midst of the world that crushes us with a violent news cycle and puts people's trauma on the front stage for games of politicking. I am seeking those moments in the midst of the preparation to move masses towards justice for all.

*What would you have done if you were there? What are you doing now?*

These are questions of eschatology, questions of the end of days and heaven on earth, the Day that it is here but not yet, the work for our granddaughters, and our ancestors.

We are weaving in and out of time. History is overlapping itself and imploring, "What would you have done if you were there?" followed ever so closely with "What are you doing, now?"

In January, the leadership team of UCC Justice and Local Church Ministries went to Alabama. We walked through the Birmingham jails where [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) was held (and where people are currently incarcerated). We walked through the [Civil Rights Institute](#) and the [16th St Baptist church](#) where four girls, Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson and Cynthia Wesley ([#saytheirnames](#)) were murdered because of white rage.

We listened to those narratives, hearing a lingering question in the background: *what would you have done if you were there?*

We went down to Montgomery to the [Equal Justice Initiative's](#) Legacy Museum and [National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#). We spoke together about the clear line from the domestic slave trade of people of African descent to the mass incarceration and the profit-driven industry of prison, the legal system, and policing.

Therein lies the present question: *what are you doing, now?*

This Black history month, I am aligning with the call for white folks to do our own work and to amplify the wisdom and work of leaders of color. *What would you have done if you were there? What are you doing now?*

In the current time and place, how are we—how am I—acknowledging the systems, and the people who uphold them, profit from them, and witnessing them in silence? How do I show up and alongside whom? How am I moving resources and to what end do I put my energy? How do I—how do we—live in peace, knowing that people are still behind the wire?

The large-scale work can overwhelm me, but it's usually not about the big actions and reactions. It's about all the small actions, every day.

For a heaven on earth, a world beyond this one: gather the moments of hope. Imagine a world where all people are free. Find your own stake in the work, go internal and heal, take the time. Resist the systems that are designed to keep poor people poor and imprisoned. Invite people into a collective story that is amplified by our voices, our participation, our prayers, our work together toward a just world for all. Hold the hope and help hold up the healing for collective liberation. This is the call.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Chris Davies is Team Leader, Faith INFO (Faith Education, Innovation, and Formation) for the UCC.*

*The United Church of Christ has more than 5,000 churches throughout the United States. Rooted in the Christian traditions of congregational governance and covenantal relationships, each UCC setting speaks only for itself and not on behalf of every UCC congregation. UCC members and churches are free to differ on important social issues, even as the UCC remains principally committed to unity in the midst of our diversity.*

First Congregational UCC  
608 WEST FOURTH STREET  
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

## Worship SCHEDULE



**February 23**

*Mardi Gras Sunday*

Mark 8:27 - 9:8



**March 1**

*First Last and Last First*

Mark 10:17-31



**March 8**

*Bartimaeus Healed*

Mark 10:32-52



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