

Congregational Tidings



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

A weekly newsletter



October 30, 2019

All Saints' Sunday
November 3, 2019
10:30 am

**Pastor Scott Spence will
present the message:**

A Great Multitude

Scripture Reading
Revelation 7:9-17

Worship Leader
Gina Greene

Deacon-In-Charge
Beth Hurley

Acolytes

If you would like to
acolyte this Sunday or an
upcoming Sunday, please
let Michelle in the office
know. Thanks!

November Ushers
Bruce Jensen
Jim Stevenson
Bob Tefft
Rich Thuesen



This Sunday:

On November 3rd First Congregational UCC will observe All Saints' Day during worship. We will read aloud the names of those in our First Congregational UCC family who have died in the past year. All Saints' is an opportunity for Christians to pause, give thanks, and to look forward to the day when we will be among the company of the faithful in God's eternal realm.

Next Sunday:

Stewardship Sunday

Prayerfully consider your 2020 pledge then, if you haven't already, fill out a 2020 pledge card and put it in the box in the church library. You may also call the office and give Michelle your pledge over the phone. Please complete your pledge by November 10th.



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November 8th & 9th



Why? Weekend: A Visioning Event

If you have not already sent in your RSVP, please do so to michelle@firstcongucc.org ASAP.

Partners in Education

* 15 Students from Bunger are interested in becoming journal buddies this year. Please see Tim Ahrens to sign up to be a buddy!

* Bunger Middle School is hosting a dinner on **November 5th at 6:30 pm** and would like some volunteers to help serve the dinner. If you could help serve only (no prep), please see Tim Ahrens.

Blessing Bags

For the next few weeks, we will collect travel-size toiletries and personal care items from the following list:

Soap, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Floss, Mouthwash, Hair brushes, Warm socks, Gloves, Warm hats, Hand/feet warmers, Wet wipes, Bottled water, Chapstick, Lotion, Deodorant, Band-aids, 1 gallon-size zip-top bags, and Individual snacks like granola bars

You can bring donations to the church office. Once we have collected the items, we will need volunteers to help pack the bags with these items and a flyer with information about Love Inc.

Megan Grey broadcast LIVE from the Met

Just two years ago, Megan Grey was our Alto Section Leader in the choir. Now she is in her second year as a Young Artist at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City!

The Met broadcasts some of its operas live during their first Saturday afternoon performance each season. This year, Megan will have a small role in the new production of *Madam Butterfly* by Puccini. The Opera will be broadcast live on Saturday, November 9 from 11:55 am to 3:35 pm directly to the College Square Marcus Theater in Cedar Falls. Cost is around \$20 — less than a seat at the Met!

Madam Butterfly tells the story of an English Naval Officer stationed in Japan in the 1800's -- the days of the Tall Ships. He develops a relationship with a Japanese girl, calling her *Madam Butterfly*. Megan appears towards the end of the opera as the Officer's English wife who has come to visit. The final solo by the heartbroken *Butterfly* is one of the finest soprano arias in opera. Who knows? In future years we may see Megan in a major role!

Public Office Hours

Join Pastor Scott at Cup of Joe (*Cedar Falls*) today and Sidecar (*Downtown, W'loo*) next Wednesday, 3-5pm.

Special Guest Speaker

On Sunday, December 1st, our supply pastor will be poet, minister, activist, and teacher Joe Davis of Minneapolis, MN. Joe Davis will be leading worship, using the arts--poetry, in particular, as a vehicle for leading us in worship. In June 2018, several from the choir traveled to Holden Village in Washington State for a week of camp--worship, fellowship, workshops, and outdoor activities, and Joe Davis was our artist in residence for the week. Several of us said "we must have him visit us", and so he is!

Besides being our preacher of the day, he will provide a writing/poetry workshop during Sunday School for adults and teens interested in writing poetry. You don't have to be an accomplished poet to attend the workshop, or ever have written poetry before. Just come with your willing spirit to learn and experience something new. If you would like more information about Joe, you can speak with Cliff Highnam, Evie Waack, Beth Lauterbach, or Anne Hoekstra, or visit Joe's website joedavispoetry.com.

Adult Book Study Class

The Sunday class has started a discussion of Barbara Brown Taylor's *An Altar in the World: a Geography of Faith* during the Sunday School hour. We meet in the Friendship room.

Here is the Book Study Outline:

11/3: Chapters 1 & 2 (*Vision & Reverence*)
11/10: Chapters 3 & 4 (*Incarnation & Groundedness*)
11/17: Chapters 5 & 6 (*Wilderness & Community*)
11/24: Chapters 7 & 8 (*Vocation and Sabbath*)
12/1: Chapters 9 & 10 (*Physical Labor & Breakthrough*)
12/8: Chapters 11 & 12 (*Prayer & Benediction*)

Sunday School

Gathering (9:00 - 9:15 am)

Youth and adults initially will meet in the chapel.

Classes (9:15 - 10:15 am)

Students 6th grade and up will gather upstairs in the Murphy Youth Room with Diana Paige.

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.

Pastor Scott's Adult class has merged with the **Women's class** and meets in the Friendship Room.

Weekly Events

Wed., October 30

3-5pm - Public Office Hours at Cup of Joe (*Cedar Falls*)
6:00 pm - Potluck
6:30 pm - Choir Practice
7:00 pm - Pastor's Class Youth Group

Thurs., October 31

6:00 Bells Practice

Sun., November 3

9:00 am - Sunday School
10:30 am - Worship
All Saints' Sunday w/communion

Legislating Injustice

Issue #966 | October 24, 2019

Amanda Sheldon

National Disaster and Refugee Ministries, Wider Church Ministries

*Woe to those who make unjust laws,
to those who issue oppressive decrees,
to deprive the poor of their rights
and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,
making widows their prey
and robbing the fatherless.*
(Isaiah 10:1-2, NIV)

In the Refugee Quiz that I share with churches, one of my favorite questions is, “Under which President were the most refugees resettled to the U.S.?” Answer: Ronald Reagan, who oversaw the admission of over 200,000 resettled refugees in one year and signed the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980. Folks in your church might have stories and connections to some of the refugees who came to the U.S. that year, over half from Asian countries. Or maybe that story is about you and your family. Nearly all these stories end with something akin to, “It changed our lives and deepened our faith in ways we couldn’t have imagined.”

Three weeks ago, the Administration set the Presidential Determination for the number of refugees who can be resettled to the U.S. in FY20 at just 18,000 individuals—the lowest number ever—and a not-so-veiled attempt to gut the U.S. resettlement system from the inside out. Organizations that have been welcoming refugees for decades have to lay off qualified caseworkers and lose valuable volunteers, and the network of resettlement sites is weakened for coming years. This says nothing of the devastation for refugee families who have endured not only the horrors of war and persecution but have spent years waiting to be reunited through the long, arduous resettlement pipeline.

That same day, the President signed an Executive Order stating his administration “would seek the approval of state and local governments before resettling refugees in their communities.” This does not prevent resettled refugees from moving to whichever community works best for them once they arrive in the U.S. It only gives a platform to hateful and fearful individuals to publicly state how much they don’t want “those people” in their communities.

While most white people in the U.S. were raised to believe that what is legal equals what is just, communities of color have long known that morality and justice are often not the driving factors behind U.S. policymaking. The Bible contains numerous stories of communities creating unjust laws to punish those they perceive as less deserving. In those stories, God repeatedly shows up to remind us that this is wrong. It is wrong to harm the most vulnerable. It is wrong to not love our neighbors as we would love ourselves. Not only is it wrong for us to legislate our human sins of fear, greed, and envy into law, but this makes God angry. God not only weeps for how we have turned away from God’s way to indulge in our own sinful behavior, but God is angry at both our arrogance (“they” are not like us) and at how we harm our own neighbors.

Woe to us who are so arrogant to believe that God’s anger will not find us as we make policies to turn aside the needy from justice. Policies that separate us from each other, and subsequently, from God, hurt all of us in the end. For more information on this topic: www.ucc.org/refugees.

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

**BAZAAR
BUZZ**

Fun and Fellowship

Looking for an easy way to contribute to the bazaar this year? Then come join your friends and other craft enthusiasts in creating beautiful Christmas cookie mix jars; a new item up for sale at the bazaar this year! We will meet at the church to fill the jars with dry ingredients, label, and decorate them for the holidays! It won't be too time consuming and all materials are provided. If you would like to be part of this fun group, contact Beth Hurley at 319-234-6223 or hurleyb52@yahoo.com.

Festival of Trees

Have a brilliant and festive idea for a Christmas tree? Decorate, bring to the church when done, and let the competition begin!! It is a raffle, so you buy the ticket or tickets, and enter for the tree of your choice. You don't have to make a tree to be a part of the raffle, but you get the bragging rights! Some trees are available...full size, pencils,, and table tops. Theme, decorations, and tree skirts are up "fir" you to decide! Talk to Connie Jo or Jayne to see what is available if you don't have a tree to use. Look for raffle sales to begin!!