

Congregational Tidings



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

A weekly newsletter



www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa

October 31, 2018

**Thirty-first Sunday
in Ordinary Time
November 4, 2018
10:30 am**

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

Elisha Heals Naaman

Using the text:
2 Kings 5:1-15a

Worship Leader
Greg Holt

Children's Lesson
Cliff Highnam

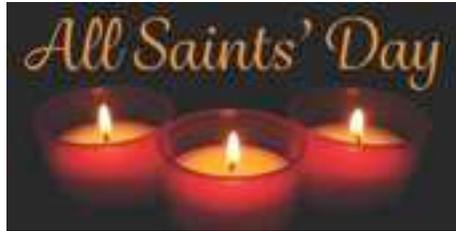
Special Music
Sine Nomine
Chancel Choir

Deacon-In-Charge
Kerri Mennenga

Acolytes
Josh Medhus
Erin Brock-Medhus

Greeters
Barb Mardis
Leah Grace Spence
(Sanctuary)

Sue Hummel
(Crossroads)



Remember Me

On November 4th First Congregational UCC will observe All Saints' Day during worship. I realize that our Protestant ears might perk up a bit after hearing the word *Saint* mentioned in regards to worship. So

allow me a moment or two of your time to clear up any misconceptions.

In the days of the early church, believers began to celebrate Saints' Days in order to mark the anniversaries of the death of martyrs—those who had died in defense of their faith. As time went by the church calendar became more and more crowded with these days. Pope Gregory established All Saints' Day in the 9th century in order to simplify things.

So how does this tradition translate to the UCC? Our faith community will take this time to lift up not only the famous from ages past but also give glory to God for the ordinary, holy lives of believers in this and every age. **During worship we will read aloud the names of those in our First Congregational UCC family who have died in the past year. This will be accompanied by the ringing of a bell. You are also invited to stay after worship for a special Community Lunch provided by the Religious Education Board.**

Our lives are incredibly busy. Our culture tends to not give us time to properly mourn and celebrate the people that matter to us. **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.**

Because I have young kids I watch a lot of Disney movies. One of my recent favorites is *Coco*. It's about a young boy, his family's history, and the Mexican holiday called *Dia del Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead). I give the film two thumbs up—just bring some tissues with you when you watch.

Not to spoil the ending but there is one song that I think really gets to the heart of why we celebrate All Saints'. It called "Remember Me" and it works to help remind me that we all part of that great cloud of witnesses described in scripture: *"Remember me/ Though I have to say goodbye/Remember me/Don't let it make you cry/For even if I'm far away, I hold you in my heart...Know that I'm with you the only way that I can be/Until you're in my arms again/Remember me"*

As always my door is open if you want to talk. God bless.

Pastor Scott



*** End of Daylight Savings Time ***

Daylight Savings Time ends this weekend on Sunday, November 4th. please be sure to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday night the 3rd!

Potlucks with the Pastor

There are two more chances for us to get to know each other a little better, for me to learn more about our church, and for us to share our dreams and hopes for the future of this church. **We will start around 6 with a potluck meal in the Fellowship Hall and will begin our chat around 6:30ish.** I envision us wrapping up around 7:30. The church will provide for childcare.

*Thursday, November 1st:

*Thursday, November 8th

If you have not attended one of the potlucks, I encourage you to please RSVP with Michelle (michelle@firstcongucc.org or 319-234-8927) in the Church Office with your name, date, and what you are bringing so that we have a good idea of what to expect. I look forward to some fine Iowa cuisine and even better conversation! God bless.

~ Pastor Scott

We Need Your Help...

Veteran Affairs and the Church Row neighborhood are working together to remodel a home at 1417 West 4th St. and make it available to a veteran family at an affordable price. We need your support. Please volunteer to help or give a donation. For more information call or text Ed Dams 319-231-6572, or email edams@mchsi.com.

Women's Book Study

When: 9-10 am on Sundays

Where: Friendship Room

We will be reading the latest book from Rachel Held Evans called *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*. It is available at Amazon starting at \$9.99 depending on the version you buy. Come ready to talk about the first chapter. Bring a friend and I'll bring snacks!

~ Tara Spence



Joe Smith

Please Grab your Name Tag...

In order for Pastor Scott and his family to get to know us better, we will have the name tag board in the library for the next few Sundays. Please pick up and wear your name tag and return it to the board before you leave each Sunday.

Thank you!

** Stewardship Sunday is November 11, 2018 **



Prayerfully consider your 2019 pledge then, if you haven't already, fill out a 2019 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 Stewardship Sunday!

Adopt-A-Family

We will be partnering with Bunker Middle School once again this year for the Adopt-A-Family program. With donations from the church, we will purchase gifts for families in need. Envelopes will be in the Library or you may call or email Michelle if you would like one mailed to you. Please place your donation in the offering plate on Sunday or return to the office by November 18th. Thank you!

Sunday School

Gathering (9:00 - 9:15am)

Youth and adults meet for singing, praying, and mission news in the chapel

Classes (9:15 - 10:15 am)

CHILDREN

Students 6th grade and up will gather upstairs in the Murphy Youth Room with Paul & Hannah Prescott. The youth will learn how being "Plugged In" to God can make their lives even better!

Children ages pre-K - 5th grade meet with Jayne Slaughter in the upstairs Sunday School Room. We will learn to tie scriptural truth into our own lives.

ADULTS

Adults will meet in the chapel. Join Pastor Scott and Evie Waack to discuss how the Bible relates to our lives today.

Weekly Events

Thurs., November 1

6:00 pm - Potluck with Pastor (M-R)

Sun., November 4

9:00 am - Sunday School
10:30 am - Worship Service
(All Saints Service)

Wed., November 7

5:30 pm - Bells
7:00 pm - Choir

Thurs., November 8

6:00 pm - Potluck with Pastor (S-Z)

BAZAAR NEWS:

Silent Auction

** Ideas for the Silent Auction are endless: A themed basket, a dinner event, yard work or snow shoveling, a special piece of art or photography- as you come up with ideas- please contact Gina Greene.

ggreene1124@gmail.com.



NEW THIS YEAR

Each year our baked goods tables have been quite a hit! This year we are offering a "Healthy

Alternatives" section for those who are looking for healthier ingredients or who have special dietary needs! So we need bakers who would like to contribute to this table. These could be any baked goods that would be:

- Gluten-free
- Refined white sugar-free
- Organic or vegan
- Whole wheat
- Contain especially healthy ingredients such as yogurt, honey, etc.

Be sure to label your items and list any special ingredients that make it a 'healthy alternative' as well as any that might contain an allergen such as nuts. If you have any questions, contact Beth Hurley.



CALLING ALL BAKERS!

It's time to start looking through your recipe books, and deciding what you will be making and donating to our baked goods table for the bazaar this year! We are in need of all types of goodies such as pies, breads, cookies, and items for our healthy alternatives section. Be sure to wrap your items nicely and label them! Any questions, talk to Jill Jensen or Beth Hurley.

A Statement from the National Leadership of the UCC

UCC leaders release this statement after a mass shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue ended eleven lives and wounded six other people during services on Saturday, October 27.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

This morning, during Shabbat prayers, the sanctity of a temple was violated. This morning, as babies were named and people gathered with love, hate invaded their joy. This morning a lone gunman, armed with an assault weapon, several guns, and hate, entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Penn., and opened fire on a gathered community who had every right to expect they were safe in the temple.

But they were not. We are not.

This morning, eleven people were killed, six more were physically wounded, and a community has been changed forever. Hate takes a lot from us. Whether that is hateful rhetoric, or hateful policies, or hateful actions, hate demands a high price. And when hate enters our sacred worship spaces as it did today, and as it did at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church two years ago, and as it did earlier this year at The Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City, hatred never compromises and always consumes.

In moments like these, when we are grieving so deeply the lives that have been taken and the people who have been wounded, we realize how we have all been made to feel a little less safe. In moments like these, when anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and racism and xenophobia and transphobia are on the rise, sanctioned by policies and political and religious rhetoric designed to instill fear of one another in our hearts and minds, we must remember that God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power and of love and of a sound mind. And as difficult as it may be in this moment to see beyond our loss, our collective strength is in what remains. "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

Not love simply as an emotional response, but love as a collective resolve. Love that refuses to be consumed by hate. Love that removes the barriers between our faiths and our fears. Love that causes us to see the Divine in one another and, having seen what is holy in the other, refuses to let hate win. Love that demands accountable and respectful speech from those in authority. Love that demands sensible gun control in a country that has lost its way. Love that says when one hurts we all hurt, when one grieves, we all grieve, when one is unsafe, we all are unsafe. Love that gives life and refuses to let hate breathe.

The United Church of Christ stands with our Jewish siblings today in that love as we mourn this terrible tragedy in our midst. And we will not run. We will not hide. We will not shy away from confronting the toxic, white Christian supremacy that is masquerading as faith. We are here with you. We are praying with you. We are mourning with you. And we are loving with you until every street and every synagogue and every mosque and every sanctuary is free of hate. We are with you until love wins, and this is a just world for all. This is our collective faith. This is our collective hope. This is our collective love. And the greatest of these is love.

Faithfully yours,

The National Officers of the United Church of Christ

The Rev. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister and President

The Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister, Justice and Local Church Ministries

The Rev. James Moos, Executive Minister, Global Engagement and Operations

The Council of Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ

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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

In Adult Sunday School we considered the wisdom of King Solomon. Scripture states that God gave him wisdom; yet I do not believe that this wisdom just happens. Solomon grew up in the Jewish tradition which most likely shaped his ethics.

In light of disturbing national news — threatening mailings sent last week and the killings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh this weekend — we need to consider and reflect on our actions and judgements. What drives our responses when we feel threatened or uncomfortable? Where does our wisdom come from? In Sunday School we gratefully reflected on wise mentors in our lives: Adults from our childhood and even theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr. The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi or The Serenity Prayer can also provide wisdom.

We then drew up “Three Essential Things”, wisdom which blesses us. Celtic saints and desert monks expressed their commitments in terms of the number three, a sacred number in the Celtic tradition. Columba of Iona asked God for virginity, wisdom and pilgrimage. Abba Benjamin commended to his sons as he was dying: Be joyful at all times, pray without ceasing, give thanks for all things. [Christine Valters Painter, *The Soul’s Slow Ripening*, (Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2018), 143.]

Here are our “Three Essential Things” from Sunday School:

- * Patience, Live in the Moment, Be Thankful
- * Honesty, Openness, Trusting
- * Reflection, Trust in the Future, Thanksgiving
- * Ask “What is Life-Giving?”; Pay Attention; Listen to the Still Small Voice

What “Three Essential Things” bless you with wisdom?