

First Congregational UCC

TIDINGS

A weekly newsletter for our church family and friends

December 11, 2024



FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa

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

This Sunday:

December 15, 2024

10:00 am

Join us at First Baptist
(434 Baltimore, W'loo)
for our Annual
Collaborative
Christmas Cantata!
(Please note the time)

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Wednesday, Dec. 11

5:30pm - Bells Practice
(No Other Wednesday
Night Activities)

Saturday, Dec. 14

6:30 & 8:45pm - Fever
Candlelight Concerts

Tuesday, Dec. 17

7:30am - Men's Breakfast
at Village Inn (W'loo)

6:00pm - Trustee Meeting

Wednesday, Dec. 18

5:30pm - Bells Practice

6:15pm - Dinner

6:45pm - *The Gathering*

7:30pm - Choir Practice



CHRISTMAS CANTATA

On Sunday, December 15th the choirs and congregations of First Congregational Church, First United Methodist Church, and First Baptist church will again be combining in worship and music at First Baptist (434 Baltimore St, W'loo) to celebrate the Christmas season!

Please plan to join us for fellowship, worship, and community with our fellow Church Row congregations at this very special worship experience this Christmas season. This will be in place of our regular worship service.

The time of this worship is at 10:00am.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Please join us for our Christmas Eve service on December 24th at 7:00pm. Our Touch of Brass Handbell Choir will ring from 6:30 to 7:00pm.

OFFICE CLOSED & TIDINGS SCHEDULE

The office is closed until December 18th. There will be NO Tidings the week of December 18th.

TRUSTEE MEETING

The December Board of Trustee's Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 17th at 6:00 pm.

FILL THE PANTRY

Give thanks- for all we have! Share your bounty with others by remembering your food for the food pantry.

Please bring things that are easy to make and eat such as cereals, instant potatoes, pancake mix, granola bars, canned veggies and fruits, rice, crackers, and canned meats and meals. Thank you.

UCC CHRISTMAS FUND

The Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross Offering) has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, health premiums, supplementation of small annuities, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

We will collect this offering on **Sunday, Dec. 22nd** or you may mail your check to the church. If you would like to give to this special offering, please mark "UCC Christmas Fund" in the memo of your check.

SEND A CHRISTMAS CARING CARD

Take a minute to send a Christmas card to someone you have been missing at church. The cards and materials are available in the church library.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

FCUCC will be participating with Bunker again this year. Please consider making a donation. You can mail your offering in or put an envelope or check in the offering plate on Sundays with "Adopt-a-Family" in the memo.

JOB FOUNDATION STORE

The Job Store is the reward to the 6th-8th graders as they attend their financial lessons each week during the school year. They get to spend their "Job Bucks" quarterly. Connie Jo Peirce is willing to shop for store items if you would like to bring in a donation. The next Job Store Event is January 15th. Please put your check in the offering on Sunday marked "Job Store" or mail in your donation. Thanks!

The graphic features the 'first.' logo in a dark blue cloud-like shape at the top left. A vertical line with three dots runs down the center. To the left of the line, the word 'Advent' is written in a cursive font, followed by a starburst icon and the word 'DEVOTIONAL' in large, bold, green capital letters. Below this, it says 'Week Two: Peace'. To the right of the line, there are three rounded rectangular buttons labeled 'enter', 'join', and 'share'. Each button is followed by a short paragraph of text. The 'enter' button is followed by a Bible verse: 'John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."' The 'join' button is followed by a paragraph: 'In a world full of turmoil, the peace Jesus offers is different—it transcends circumstances and brings deep, lasting rest to our hearts. This peace is not found in temporary things, but in the relationship we have with Christ. As we prepare our hearts for His arrival, let us also receive His peace anew.' The 'share' button is followed by two questions: 'In what ways are you experiencing peace—or a lack of it—this Advent season?' and 'How might you share the peace of Christ with someone this week?'. At the bottom right, the name 'Pastor Brandyn' is written.

first.

Advent

DEVOTIONAL

Week Two: Peace

enter

John 14:27
"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

join

In a world full of turmoil, the peace Jesus offers is different—it transcends circumstances and brings deep, lasting rest to our hearts. This peace is not found in temporary things, but in the relationship we have with Christ. As we prepare our hearts for His arrival, let us also receive His peace anew.

share

In what ways are you experiencing peace—or a lack of it—this Advent season?

How might you share the peace of Christ with someone this week?

Pastor Brandyn

Getting To Know You

GETTING TO KNOW: NANCY STEVENSON

I was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and I grew up with 2 older sisters. Our parents pushed us all to get teaching degrees, so my first degree was for teaching high school math and economics, but I never did that! When Jim worked for Corning Glass in Corning, NY, I took the H & R Block tax course, and that was the start of me doing tax returns for the last 50 years.

We moved to Cedar Falls in 1977 and soon our son John, and later our daughter Emily arrived. I was mainly a stay-at-home mom but I continued to work during tax season at various accounting firms. I eventually got an accounting degree from UNI. It was from getting to know a member of our church who was a tax volunteer in her retirement years that I decided I would also be a tax volunteer when I retired. We volunteers have to study and pass several IRS tests each year. I am in charge of the Cedar Falls AARP Tax-Aide site, where we do about 450 returns each year. A few years ago, I was recognized by the governor after 20 years of service as a tax volunteer. One of my memorable experiences was doing a tax return for a young single mother, a nurse, who was going to use her tax refund to buy a crib for her 9-month-old baby.

Jim and I now have 3 grandchildren: Sam (age 11), Molly (age 9), and Lucy (age 2). A few years ago, we moved across the street from our son John and his wife Jenn (a Cedar Falls dentist), so we get to see Sam and Molly often. Our daughter Emily and her husband Dave live in Parker, Colorado, so we only get to see them a few times a year. During the pandemic they started coming to Iowa and “working from home” for a week or two. We now take care of Lucy while her parents work during the day, and then the 9 of us have dinner together.

I am the treasurer of a women’s organization, and I belong to a book club that was started by some members of our church. My sisters live in California and Illinois, and we are all in book clubs. When we 3 get together on Zoom, one of our favorite topics to discuss is what we have been reading!



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

It's time to order your Poinsettias!!!



Please fill out this order form and place in the offering plate or call Michelle at the church office. Orders may be placed any time by Wednesday, December 18th. (\$15.00 per plant)

We will be ordering live poinsettias and you may take your poinsettia(s) home with you after the Christmas Eve service. Let's fill the sanctuary with beautiful poinsettias this year! Order yours today!

Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church (*write "poinsettia" in the memo*).

Poinsettia(s) given by: _____

"In Memory of...": _____

"In Honor of...": _____