

FAITH TALK

Faith United Church of Christ

February 2017

Tripoli, Iowa

Well, here we go!

Faith UCC church committees have reported on their work in 2016 and talked about their plans for 2017...the members have elected the council members for the coming year plus a new one-year term for our financial secretary and treasurer. The budget has been approved. AND we celebrated that in 2016 we did not need to borrow funds from our savings account just to pay the light bill – the first time in years!

So...we're off!!!!

Now what? What are we going to do together to make 2017 a very special year?

Do you have ideas? Maybe a new program you'd like to see take shape at Faith UCC? Maybe it's a monthly time for coffee (or tea or soda) and conversation about a specific topic. Maybe it's a gathering that organically develops a topic. Maybe a book club. Or a dining group. Movie group. The ideas are pretty endless. Or maybe you have ideas for new mission projects? Speakers you'd like the church to host for our congregation and the community?

Would you like to learn more about the United Church of Christ denomination? The history of Faith United Church of Christ? Other faith traditions?

What do you want to do for the next 525,600 minutes of 2017 (minus January and a few days)?

Have an idea or ideas? Here are your newly elected Council members to talk them over with...

Elders

Brian Bunce
Lisa Chapin
Roger Goudschaal
Holly Johnson
MaryAnn Meyer
Marlene Snelling

Trustees

Steve Hill
Rich Milius
Melvin Ohlendorf
Dean Shinstine
Keith Stahlhut
Larry Struck

And, of course, there's me. Your pastor. Always eager to hear your ideas and talk with you about how we might move them into a reality!

Pastor Marilyn

ps – On the next page you will find the February article from our church president, Holly Johnson. Now as Barb Rich can attest, neither Holly nor I was aware of what the other was composing. Yet as you read both articles, you'll notice a common theme. I love the way the Spirit was at work in both Holly and me – because how else are you going to explain it? And if you're still not convinced, take a look at the opening sentence of each article. Hm... God IS still speaking!

From our President

Here we go! The Faith United Church of Christ council will begin the 2017 meetings on February 6. Even if you are not on council, there are plenty of additional opportunities for you to be involved with your church community! During our annual meeting on January 22, you heard from fellow members about the work that is happening every day in our faith community.

I'd like to offer a challenge as we enter this new year. Please seek out a new way of being involved in our church. This could be as simple as attending a fellowship group, bible study, helping with the mobile food pantry, helping the hospitality committee, lending a hand with a special project or volunteering to help with Sunday School. This is not a comprehensive list of opportunities, but listing everything that happens within our church or through our members work would require a few pages! I look forward to new ideas, new interactions and the impact we can have on each other and our world.

Holly Johnson

WOMEN OF FAITH

The Women of Faith will meet on Wednesday, February 8 at 6:45 pm. All women are invited to attend this meeting as we move forward in planning for 2017. We will have our business meeting, election of officers, a short devotion and a light refreshment. Please pray about being a part of this amazing group!!

The **FAITH UCC WOMEN OF FAITH** bring to the church the opportunity to support **HIS HANDS FOOD PANTRY** in Oran through donations.

Each month the items collected are blessed during our 3rd Sunday worship before delivery to the food pantry. For the month of February, His Hands Food Pantry has requested donations of

Paper Products: Paper towels, toilet paper, baggies, etc

Thank you for your support of this important Mission Project of the church.

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From His HANDS FOOD PANTRY IN ORAN...

Totals for December
Families served: 76
Individuals Served: 201
Total pounds distributed: 5,554

NE IOWA FOOD BANK MOBILE FOOD PANTRY (MFP)

If you know of a family or single person struggling with food insecurity, please let them know of this opportunity to receive. Volunteers are a vital part of making the MFP successful. We extend a HUGE thank you to the many volunteers of all ages who give of their time and talents for the MFP! If you can assist in unloading the truck, setting up the food tables, distributing the food items, helping clients carry items to their car, and/or loading remaining items onto the Oran His Hands Food Pantry truck, we invite you to stop by between 4-6 pm on February 23 and lend a hand!

Faith United Church of Christ

Council Meeting Minutes

*January 2, 2017

Members in attendance - Melvin Ohlendorf, Sue Schwarze, Marlene Snelling, Mary Ann Meyer, Dean Shinstine, Brian Bunce, Holly Johnson, Steve Hill, and Roger Goudschaal. Non-voting: Pastor Marilyn and Barb Hill.

Members absent – Brenda Sievers and Jodi Heinemann

Opening Prayer – Pastor Marilyn.

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Secretary minutes were reviewed. MSC

Treasurer report was reviewed. MSC

Trustee's Report – A copy of the preliminary 2017 budget was presented to the council with discussion and suggestions following. The doors and windows to the Ed Building will be arriving soon.

Elder's Report – Report on attendance at Christmas services was given. Chili-Oyster Supper on Feb 12, 2017. Serving will be from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Ash Wednesday is March 1.

Liaisons – The Cemetery Committee will be meeting.

Pastor's Report – Committee reports should be in the church office by January 10. Jonna Jensen, UCC Associate Conference Minister for NE Iowa Association will be attending the February council meeting.

Old Business - Scouts are having their Chili dinner at the VFW. Council will be checking into hearing impaired devices for the sanctuary.

New Business – Nominating committee will be seeking candidates to fill the vacancies on the church council.

Motion to adjourn – MSC

Submitted by Sue Schwarze, Council Secretary

*These minutes have not yet been approved by the church council.

MSC = Motion, Second and Carried



Faith UCC

First Annual Chili and Oyster Soup Supper

A long-standing tradition at St. Paul's UCC in Sumner, the annual Chili and Oyster Soup Supper has now been added to the Faith UCC calendar! We invite you to join us on Sunday, February 12 from 4 to 6 pm. Tell your neighbors, tell your friends, bring your family! Supper includes soup, homemade bread and dinner rolls, salad, relishes and dessert. Cost is \$8.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children 10 and under, preschool free.

If you are able to donate items to help make this supper a success, there is a signup sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Waverly Health Center

Alzheimer's/Dementia Music Therapy and Caregivers Support Group meets the first Tuesday of the month from 12:20 to 1:30 am in the Tendrils.

Feb. 6 – Activity Tips and Ideas for Individuals with Dementia/ Alzheimer's

Parkinson's Caregiver and Support Group meets the second Saturday of the month from 10 am to noon in the Tendrils.

Feb. 11 – Finding Your Balance with Parkinson's

Stroke Support Group meets Tuesdays from 11 am to 12:30 pm. in the Tendrils.

Feb. 14 – Tips for Living After Stroke

Darkness to Light - Stewards of Children

Stewards of Children is a prevention training program facilitated by Cedar Valley Friends of the Family that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse, the types of situations in which child sexual abuse might occur, effective strategies for protecting children from sexual abuse, and that abuse victims can heal from their experiences. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, March 14th from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at Trinity United Methodist Church at 1400 W. Bremer Avenue in Waverly.



Each year, thousands of people give selflessly of themselves by making a blood donation with LifeServe Blood Center. Through this simple act, donors create the vital link between life-giving blood and the hospital patient who needs it.

Every two seconds, someone, somewhere needs blood. Will you help?

Faith United Church of Christ will be hosting a LifeServe blood drive on Wednesday, February 22, 3 pm to 6 pm. Schedule your appointment online at www.lifeservebloodcenter.org or call 800.287.4903. Walk-ins also welcome.

Blood Donors Save Lives!

Sacred Space

5 Spiritual New Year's Resolutions

From David Wolpe, Max Webb Senior Rabbi of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles...

1. Engage with people more than pixels.

Looking at a phone is quick and undemanding. Texting is easier than talking – it gives you intimacy without danger. This year, resolve to spend more time looking into someone's eyes when you communicate with them. Replace an extended exchange on text with a meeting for coffee. Make a promise of presence.

2. Take your soul seriously.

It is easy to pretend that what we watch and how we speak have no effects on us. But the constant pounding of hatreds and dehumanization that marks so much of our media have consequences for our character. Part of who you are is the sum of the influences you choose: what you watch, who you associate with, how you speak about others both publicly and privately. Life is a continuous journey of soul shaping, and this year, resolve to keep your deep journey in mind. Turn away from something seductive but corrosive – Twitter rants full of bile, or people who continually insult those around them, or depictions of violence that take savage delight in suffering. You only get one soul; don't squander it in things unworthy of its majesty.

3. Increase your kindness.

If you wish to feel kind, do something good. The great secret of moral growth is that it often begins from the outside. Rather than your joy leading you to smile, your smile can lead you to joy. Behave generously even when you do not feel like it and the habit will grow as will your innate quality of kindness. The act can be small or large; it can be a charitable contribution or a gentle word or help with a heavy bag on an airplane. Do it.

4. Choose someone to forgive.

All of us have legitimate grievances in our lives. Some people are very hard to forgive but you need not begin with the toughest cases. Small acts of grace will grow. Forgive the guy who cut you off in the street; after all, you have cut people off as well, on purpose or inadvertently. Forgive the person who made an unkind remark about you. Choose a place to begin. The more you forgive, the less the world can injure you; forgiveness is a soft shield for your soul.

5. In forgiving, include yourself.

Fight against perfectionism. Leave a dropped stitch in the knitting of your life. There will always be more possibilities to get something wrong than to get it right. Allow yourself the latitude of mistakes, without self-punishing. God is supposed to be perfect, not human beings. Have expectations of yourself, but don't enforce them with a hammer.

The New Year is coming. You have not wasted a single day of the future. So here is your chance to live purposefully. Will you achieve this every day? Of course not (see #5 above). The key resolution is not to triumph or to always succeed. Resolutions of the spirit come down to one thing: in this New Year, grow.

From the Wider Church...

Each week a staff member of the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ posts a "Current News" article on the Conference website, www.ucciaconf.org. The following was posted on Friday, January 27 by Rev. Brigit Stevens, Associate Conference Minister.

It has been a crazy week in politics. And you were probably hoping for, or even expecting, an article here that would finally be a break from all the political talk.

I have heard in many circles, from many sources, an old refrain, "Pastor, you should stay out of politics." Or, "Pastor, your sermons/newsletter/Facebook posts/etc. are too political. We just need to hear about God and Jesus, not politics." And, particularly in seasons when national politics are stressed, many pastors worry about not endangering their congregation's tax-exempt status with politically charged statements.

But, here's a problem:
The Gospel is political.

Throughout our Holy scriptures, God is shown interrupting everyone's daily living to direct, guide, reorient, encourage, and even punish our political systems, the ways humanity chooses to relate to and govern one another. God does this because God loved us ALL into being and loves each and ALL of us as beautiful creations. God cares how we treat one another. And it is clear throughout all of the scriptures that God particularly cares how those in power treat those who are vulnerable.

Being a follower of Jesus Christ wasn't a feel good, personal devotional experience for the early disciples. It was a way of protest. It was a way of living each and every day oriented toward caring for others and self in recognition of the divine experience of being human. It was a disruptive and dangerous political, as well as personal, choice to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

It still is.

Notice the words I use to describe Christian life are action verbs: care, love, follow. They are not feelings. They are animated movements, inspired and motivated by faith that is alive in beautiful bodies and souls that are members of the Body of Christ.

Do something today to BE the Church.

Make a phone call.

Write an email.

Show up at a rally.

Send in a donation.

And do it in the name of, but more importantly, on behalf of the most vulnerable of our communities. That is what God continues to call us all to do. In personal, public, and even political ways.

My faith tells me that Black Lives Matter, because God made those beautiful bodies and souls and when they are wounded, I am wounded.

My faith tells me that LGBTQ friends and family deserve protection, love, and equal rights because God made those beautiful bodies and souls and when they are wounded, I am wounded.

My faith tells me that men, women, and children born on other coasts, speaking different languages, and wearing different clothing from me deserve safety, shelter, and peace because God made those beautiful bodies and souls and when they are wounded, I am wounded.

My faith tells me that women and girls have the same right and responsibility to care for their bodies and health as men and boys because God made those beautiful bodies and souls and when they are wounded, I am wounded.

My faith tells me that I must act, not just feel, in order to be a follower of Jesus Christ, so I will act, demanding the politics of the land that I live in offer care and safety to all of God's Creation. As a follower of Jesus Christ, I can do no less.

Blessings for the Journey,
Brigit Stevens, Associate Conference Minister

Let us pray...

If you would like to add a name to our monthly prayer list, please contact the church office at 319.882.3585 or email faithuccchurch@gmail.com. The names will typically remain on our prayer list for three months, however we recognize that there are situations and concerns that continue for a longer period of time. If you would like your prayer request to be extended, please notify the office at 319.882.3585 or Pat Warner at 319.882.3162.

We pray for healing and well-being for these beloved children of God...

DiAnna Arthur (receiving treatment)
Marlys Biermann (recuperating from surgery)
Jim Brandhorst (having tests at Rochester)
Richard Buhr (receiving rehab at TNH&R)
Scott Hyde (receiving treatment)
Eldon Meier (in Community Memorial Hospital, Sumner)
Bob Rathbone (receiving Hospice care at Bartels)
Betty Roder (in Community Memorial Hospital, Sumner)
Sue Sinwell (Dolores Schmidt's daughter)

We pray for members and friends of the church actively serving in the Military...

Brandon Burrows	Matthew Coulthard	Kaitlin Westendorf
Derek Ohlendorf	Adam Ohlendorf	Shane Buchholz

We hold in prayer those in residence...

<i>Bartels</i> (Waverly)	Lorraine Hastings	Betty Holm
<i>Hillcrest Home</i> (Sumner)	Les Biermann	
<i>Mallard Point</i> (Cedar Falls)	Mardell Kirchhoff	
<i>Tripoli Nursing & Rehab</i> (Tripoli)	Betty Hills	Orlyn Milius Jean Bentley
<i>Whispering Willows</i> (Fredericksburg)	Bernice Ambrose	
<i>Cobblestone Court</i> (Sumner)	Garnetta Snyder	

We also pray for all of God's children who are living in a world of chaos and anger and hunger and fear. We pray for those who call out to God and those who feel unworthy to lift their eyes to the One who loves them unconditionally. We pray for those who may be sitting at the desk next to us or living down the street or waking up in a community on the other side of the globe.

God of love and grace and promise, hear our prayers...

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We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of Bernice Schumacher as we join them in mourning her passing.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of Forrest Bolte as we join them in mourning his passing.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of Fran Kirchhoff as we join them in mourning her passing.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of Jim Lampe as we join in them in mourning his passing.

We extend our sympathy and prayers to the family of Drew Becker as we join in them in mourning his passing.

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

HEAD USHERS:

Ushers:

- 5 Church Council
- 12 Dean & Brenda Shinstine
- 19 Ken & Juanita Mohlis
- 26 Bonnie Travers

Greeters:

- 5 Nate & Lesley Milius
- 12 Brad & Kim Bunce
- 19 Don & Vernetta Bunce
- 26 David & Ruth Kirchhoff

Liturgists:

- 5 Roger Goudschaal
- 12 Susan Cline
- 19 Don Bunce
- 26 Larry Struck

Fellowship Time Servers:

- 5 Larry & Joan Struck
- 12 Jerry & Marlene Snelling
- 19 Bob Kerr Family
- 26 Bonnie Travers

Sunday School Treats

- 5 Vernetta Bunce
- 12 Sharon Funk
- 19 Lisa Chapin
- 26

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Tim Quigley
- 5 Jody Carpenter
- 6 Marty Smalley
- 7 Austin Coulthard
- Cheryl Dahlstrom
- Jeff Kuhrt
- 9 Steve Hill
- Marlene Snelling
- 10 Jay Ranard
- 11 Sandi Snyder
- 12 Carol Kammeyer
- Asher Milius
- 14 Baily Kirchhoff
- 15 Becky Osborn
- Janice Peters
- 16 Spencer Snelling
- 17 Lorraine Hastings
- 18 Kailey Heidemann
- Jodi Heinemann
- 19 Jeff Burrows
- Bob Kerr
- 20 Darlys Buhrow
- 21 Bernice Ambrose
- 26 David Sparks
- 28 Joyce Kammeyer

Scripture Readings for February

	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
Hebrew Scripture	Isaiah 58: 1-12	Deut 30:15-20	Lev 19:1-2, 9-18	Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm	Psalm 112:1-9 (10)	Psalm 119:1-8	Psalm 119:33-40	Psalm 2
Epistle	1 Cor. 2:1-16	1 Cor. 3:1-9	1 Cor. 3:10-11, 16-23	2 Peter 1:16-21
Gospel	Matthew 5:13-20	Matthew 5:21-37	Matthew 5:38-48	Matthew 17:1-9