

Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

January 2021

Tripoli, Iowa

In this issue:	Page
Pastor's Message	1
Prayers	1
Outreach Ministries	3
Council Minutes	4
Thank you notes	5
Financial info	6
January Birthdays	6

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

Cam Richards
Carol & Larry Kammeyer

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

Brandon Burrows
Matthew Coulthard
Keenan Gienau
Kristian Heidemann
Ethan Henry
Austin Kingsbury
Kaitlin Westendorf

We hold in prayer our members in home...

Jean Bentley
Richard Buhr
Verlyn & Phyllis Buls
Betty Holm
Velda Lynch
Orlyn Milius
Marty Smalley
Gar Snyder

We mourn with Marty Smalley and family the passing of Larry. From Cherokee to Hampton and finally Tripoli, Larry helped shape the lives of countless students, including many reading these words. Let us celebrate the time we shared with this beloved child of God and his continuing life in God's heavenly realm!

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers...

There is a Facebook meme* that has been going around the past month or so...

Nobody claim 2021 as "your year."
We're all going to walk in real slow.
Be good. Be quiet.
Don't.
Touch.
Anything.

There's humor in it. And a bit of reality.

In a culture that celebrates a new year and makes January 1 resolutions that often do not last to February 1, many of us are approaching 2021 with a rather hesitant walk. A new year which might once been leaped into envisioning exciting changes and goals achieved and hope born again, now may be approached with a huge slice of apprehension.

Let's be real. The clock ticking from 11:59 pm on December 31 to 12:00 am on January 1, is not going to suddenly make everything better. That only happens in a Hallmark movie. But for many of us, the new year does symbolically provide a clean slate upon which to write our story. Yet this year, I find myself reflecting upon the importance of not beginning over but rather continuing on. Yes there are many troubling aspects of 2020 that I think we can agree we don't want to be experiencing throughout all of 2021, but I believe there are some things we must take with us into this next trip around the sun.

While we have lamented the loss of public and private gatherings...hugs and high-fives...worship as we grew up expecting it to be...shopping and dining out and cheering on our favorite team in person to name a few, think about what many of us have been able to do.

Through technology and creativity and patience (learning something new isn't always the easiest, is it?), many of us have been able to connect visually and verbally to important people in our lives. We have celebrated birthdays and recitals and holidays in a new, socially-distanced way.

We've come to appreciate more fully the doctors and nurses who work hard each year but who have been under overwhelmingly great pressure during these pandemic times. We have prayed for them. And in our prayers we have included the myriad of background workers – the kitchen staff and housekeeping and custodians and many others who have kept the hospitals going. Folks we might not have been as aware of in the past.

(continued)

We've redefined the phrase "essential" workers. Recognizing it not only includes local police and emergency management and firefighters and ambulance crews, but it also includes the retail workers, postal workers, restaurant staff, and countless others who kept businesses and services available despite the risk to their own health.

We thank God for the teachers! The teachers, staff, and administration of not only our Tripoli schools but all places of learning who have found creative and sound ways to continue to do what they love best – teaching our children. No easy task, but they did not surrender. And, of course, big kudos to the parents who suddenly found themselves in the role of substitute teachers. Brought a whole new level of respect for teachers, right?

And, of course, we have found new ways to be the church. New ways to worship. New ways to meet. And learn. And give. It has not always been smooth, but to date we have hurdled the bumps and will undoubtedly do the same for those that pop up in the future.

For me personally, I have developed an even closer bond with God. Not only in thinking how to do church and be church with all of you, but in my own personal relationship. I cannot tell you how many times I have felt God's love wrapping me up, reassuring me and guiding me to "a still more excellent way." I hope that in the midst of the COVID chaos, you too have heard God's still-speaking calming voice.

My friends, as we move into 2021, I believe it is so important that we carry with us these new understandings...these adjustments to the way it's always been...the "gosh, I never thought of doing it THAT way!" realizations. Sometimes we get so focused on the way things have been that we fail to clear our eyes to what might be. If we learn from these past months...if our relationship with God is more developed, more trusting, more listening...if we feel a deeper appreciation of the importance of family and friends...if we can place value on those hardworking everyday folks we have perhaps previously looked past...then our loneliness and our tears have not been pointless.

As of this writing, nearly 2 million people worldwide have died. The tragedy that has encircled this globe is unprecedented in our lifetimes. Let them not have died in vain. Let us honor them, doing everything we are able to do to make this world a better place for all of God's children. Let us walk into 2021 with 2020 still tucked into our back pocket as a constant reminder of where we have been and where we are going with our lives.

In the coming months when life as we know it begins to look and feel a bit more like what we've grown accustomed to in our lifetimes, let us each pause and reflect upon all that 2020 held for us. All the frustrations and anger and joys and sorrows. We simply cannot pack 2020 away and act as if it did not exist. It is our reality. And it will shape our new reality in the coming months. But by learning from it and being better people because of what we have learned, we will be that much closer to helping to maintain the world our benevolent God first visualized, created, and called "good."

Blessed New Year to each of you!

Pastor Marilyn

* A "meme" is a humorous image, video, piece of text, etc., that is copied and spread rapidly by internet users.

Outreach Ministries

At the December 17th **Tripoli Mobile Food Pantry** we served 27 households (62 individuals). The next Mobile Pantry will be Thursday, January 28, 5-6 pm. Distribution will continue to be from the back parking lot. Questions? Call the church office at 319.882.3585.

From Beth Goudschaal:

Thank you!!! A huge thank you to all those who donated gift bags for the mobile food pantry clients. We had an overwhelming response. We received a total of 61 bags! We had 27 clients come through. They are always grateful for our generosity. The remainder of the bags were given to Friends of the Family in Waverly. Your generosity demonstrates the goodness of this church. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. *Beth*

* * * * *

In November, **His Hands Food Pantry** in Oran served 87 households (250 individuals) and distributed 11,947 pounds of product. His Hands serves residents of Denver, Fairbank, Frederika, Maynard, Oran, Randalia, Readlyn, Sumner, Tripoli, and Westgate. Tuesday nights, 5-8 pm. Friday mornings, 9-noon. If you have questions or an immediate need, contact Pantry directors, Roger at 563.920.8522, or Mary at 563.920.3857.

* * * * *

From the **Helping Hands Clothing Closet** located at 2028 Viking Avenue in Sumner...

Helping Hands Clothing Closet had 119 client visits during December and our volunteers gave 48 hours of their time. The clothing closet is well stocked with winter clothes.; please stop by if you need some assistance with clothing. Thank you to everyone who has given the clothing closet monetary donations, to Merry Stitchin' for the child sized quilts, to the Mitten Project for the boxes of mittens for men, women and children and the donations of clothing. We will be open our regular hours weather permitting and we continue to follow all CDC guidelines. Thank you for your support and Happy New Year!

The Closet is open every Tuesday morning from 9 am - 11am; every Wednesday evening from 6:30-7:30 pm; and the 1st Saturday of each month from 9 am - 11am.

* * * * *

The **LifeServe Blood Drive** was held at Faith UCC on Wednesday, Dec. 16. All reservation times were booked and the staff was kept quite busy! In fact, we had the best results since 2009! Awesome!!! LifeServe reported 26 donors which resulted in 38 blood products, including two double cell donations, 4 plasma donors, and 4 Convalescent plasma (plasma from patients who have already recovered from COVID-19. Giving this convalescent plasma to hospitalized people currently fighting COVID-19 may help them recover.) Thank you all!

We have received the dates of the 2021 blood drive dates. Mark your calendars for February 19, June 16, August 18, and December 15.

Faith United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2020

Members In Attendance via ZOOM: Roger Goudschaal, Steve Hill, Keith Stahlhut, Vicki Oleson, Brian Bunce, Lisa Chapin, Dean Shinstine, Ashley Penrod, Tracy Buchholz, and Trevor Bunce

Also In Attendance via ZOOM: Barb Hill

Member(s) Absent: Juanita Mohlis

Opening Prayer: President Roger Goudschaal

Meeting called to order at 6:41 pm by President Roger Goudschaal.

Minutes of November 2, 2020:

Motion to approve previous minutes by Steve Hill; Second by Tracy Buchholz. Motion Carried

Minutes of November 8, 2020:

Motion to approve previous minutes by Steve Hill; Second by Ashley Penrod. Motion Carried

Treasurer's Report:

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report by Dean Shinstine, Second by Vicki Oleson. Motion Carried
Discussion on finance. Trustees to draft a letter to be mailed to

Trustee's Report:

Motion to renew Kevin Holm for snow removal \$50 a time by Steve Hill, Second Tracy Buchholz. Motion Carried.

Education Building the roof is 28 years old. South west edge the rubber is peeling back. Motion to have Imperial Roofing company come and patch the damage area and estimated it less than \$1,000, second Ashley Penrod. Motion Carried.

Tuck pointing is under review for 2021.

Elder's Report:

No new business

Liaison's Report:

No new business

Pastor's Report:

45 advent sets have been picked up. Thank you to Lisa Chapin for helping to get readings.

Attending weekly COVID meeting.

Barb Rich is working one day a week in the office and then working on mailings and calling members from her home.

Sunday morning service is going well and Phoebe Drape is playing organ each Sunday in December. Also, getting a new cell phone to hopefully help with the sound issues.

Mobile blood bank will be here for a blood drive.

Old Business:

No old business

New Business:

Office copier lease ends Dec 31, 2020. Option 1 is \$120 for color. Option is \$90 for black and white only. Motion by Steve Hill to go with option 1, second by Lisa Chapin. Motion Carried.

Motion by Ashley Penrod to not have in person service for December, Second Keith Stahlhut. Motion Carried.

Adjourn:

Motion by Tracy Buchholz, Second Dean Shinstine. Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Bunce

Minutes have not yet been approved by Church Council



Thank you to the congregation of Faith United Church of Christ for the Christmas gift. The Christmas season certainly looked different this year at our house, but we are planning to have our kids home for “Christmas in July”. I missed everyone stopping into the office and saying hello – just know that I miss all of you. I want to wish everyone a healthy and happy New Year.

Barb Rich

Each year I am overwhelmed by the kind gestures, beautiful notes, and generosity of the members and friends of Faith United Church of Christ. I am so blessed to have each of you in my life and continue to be humbled that you allow me to be a part of yours. While this year’s Advent/Christmas seasons may not have been what we have grown to consider traditional, not even a pandemic could remove from our lives the joy of celebrating our Savior’s birth. I give thanks for those who helped me guide you through these seasons...Marlene Snelling and Joan Struck created such a beautiful altar and Advent wreath; Roger & Beth Goudschaal and Helen, Kayla, & Kimberly Milius shared with us their gift of song; Phoebe Drape filled our worship services with beautiful music; Barb Rich faithfully worked to create the MediaShout presentations; and Steve Hill not only forwarded through the slides for all of the Advent/Christmas services but found solutions for filming, sound, and always answering my “help!” texts speedily.

I feel so very blessed.

In gratitude and love,
Pastor Marilyn

<u>JANUARY BIRTHDAYS</u>	
3	Marian Meyer
6	Phoebe Drape
7	Alfred Gloede
8	Brian Milius Velda Lynch
10	Darlene Bahlman
11	Maguire Johnson
13	Judy Buhr Brad Buchholz
14	Ron Quigley
15	Max Moeller
16	Karen Bolte
19	Mary Ann Meyer
20	Katlyn Marquis
21	Donna Sassman
23	Larry Kammeyer Kathy Westendorf
24	Shawn Marquis
25	Paisley Liddle
27	Brian Buchholz
30	Shane Buchholz Marlys Ryan

Happy Birthday!

Faith UCC Financial Update through 12/29/20

	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$19,038.00	\$135,306.73 (includes \$11,500 from Federal Paycheck Protection Program)
Expenses	\$13,223.40	\$122,809.54 (these expenses reflect staff reductions due to COVID-19 that are not sustainable)
Painting Loan Balance	\$2,583.02	