

Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

February 2022

Tripoli, Iowa

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| In this issue: | <u>Page</u> |
| Prayers | 1 |
| Volunteer Opportunities | 3 |
| Council Minutes | 4 |
| February Birthdays & Anniversaries | 7 |

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

Carol & Larry Kammeyer
Nadine Schnurstein
Cam (Brenda & Kevin Sievers'
son-in-law)
Dean Boris (Mary Ann Myers'
son-in-law)

Jane Petersen
Julie Bradley
McKinna Benson
Walter Blessing (Terry's brother)
Marilyn Lahmann
LaVera Buchholz
Jayden Stahlhut

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

Brandon Burrows
Matthew Coulthard
Keenan Gienau
Kristian Heidemann
Austin Kingsbury
Chazten Wells
Kaitlin Westendorf

We hold in prayer our members in home...

Jean Bentley
Darlene Bahlmann
Verlyn & Phyllis Buls
Virgil Ducker
Velda Lynch
Orlyn Milius
Marty Smalley

We hold in prayer Jerry & Marlene Snelling and Clark & Kathy Snelling as they mourn the passing of their sister, Betty Koschmeder.

We hold in prayer Jay & Jean Ranard as they mourn the passing of Jay's sister, Dena Tiedt.

BRRR! Is it just me or does it feel like we were in January FOREVER!!!!

It's cold. It's snowy. It's Iowa!

So...how are you spending your time when it's below zero and the thought of bundling up to venture outside just to get the mail or take out the trash sometimes feels like too much? Did your delayed Christmas plans all happen? Were you able to stay up until midnight to welcome in 2022?

Did you make a resolution as the new year began? How are you doing on accomplishing it? Sometimes we start out strong, but often our resolutions are a bit too far-reaching aren't they? Frustration begins to set in and by February we are just over it. (Or is that just me? Please tell me it isn't just me!) Well, this year I'm trying a different approach on striving for a better self and I invite you join with me!

During January, we've been reflecting on some of Paul's words from 1 Corinthians. In Chapter 12 he writes, "*What I want to talk about now is the various ways God's Spirit gets worked into our lives.*"¹ The apostle is keen to help the members of the congregation discover the Holy Spirit in their lives and passionate to teach them how to live their best lives as followers of Jesus. So sure is he in the truth of his teachings that at the end of Chapter 12 he writes, "*I will show you a still more excellent way.*"²

"*I will show you a still more excellent way.*" How might we interpret Paul's words in our own lives?

A few years ago, I began hearing friends talk about selecting a word in January that they would reflect upon during the rest of the year. A word that would guide them along their new journey around the sun with the intent of helping them shape a better life for themselves and in so doing, have a more positive effect on others they encountered in their life. In recent years I have learned of pastors who provided words to parishioners. Words not selected by human hands but selected at random – in other words trusting the Spirit to provide the guidance.

In an article published in The Presbyterian Outlook, Rev. Kristin Stroble³ writes of once receiving the word "restraint." At first she wanted to throw it back into the basket. Restraint? What was that supposed to mean? Restraint made her think about being held back or being bound. The word did not feel like the gift she thought it was supposed to be. And yet, she discovered over time the word continued to work on her heart and her mind. She began practicing *restraint* at church coffee hours and forgoing doughnuts. She used *restraint* to stop herself from getting second helpings at potlucks. She writes that "*restraint* gave [her] permission to look at how unhealthy [she] had become and do something about it."

(continued)

When she began to see *restraint* as a gift rather than a curse, it freed her to change her eating habits without apology...leave work earlier to exercise...and focus not just on her spiritual health but also her physical health. In her year of *restraint* she lost 90 pounds and for the first time in a long time achieved a healthy weight. She writes, “I’m not one for New Year’s resolutions because – let’s be honest – they always seem to fail. Instead, these words have become my practice for the New Year.” By seeing her annual word as a gift, she has kept her eyes open and has seen God in unexpected ways and places. They’ve been challenging, life-giving, and transformative.

Pastor Kristin went on to share stories about how an annual word helped to shape members in her congregation including a member who received the word *courage*. The woman was in the midst of cancer treatments when the word was given to her on a card. She took that card with her to every doctor appoint. She kept the word by her side as she entered hospice care and the word *courage* was by her side when she died.

A woman whose husband had recently passed away received the word *perseverance*...a student headed off to college was given *responsibility*...the music director received the word *harmony*. Coincidence? Or the work of a silent but always active Holy Spirit?

During a recent Faith UCC worship service, the children help me to distribute baskets throughout the congregation containing envelopes with a word inside. That distribution in itself was filled with the movement of the Spirit as the children eagerly moved up the aisles and up the balcony steps to make certain everyone had the opportunity to select a word! Most people took an envelope and several have shared with me the word they received and how they believe it will help to shape their lives in the coming year. I am excited and eager to discover how the Holy Spirit will use these words to enliven each individual life, the life of the church, and beyond!

If you were not in worship to receive a word, might you want to join us on this exciting adventure? I recognize for some of you this idea may cause you to stretch a bit outside of your level of comfort but if you are intrigued by what you might discover, I would love to text/email/mail you a word. Or you can stop by the office and pick one out of the basket yourself.

You just might find the process a transforming experience for you. A still more excellent way.

What have you got to lose?

Maybe the better question is...what might you gain?

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Marilyn

¹The Message by Eugene H. Peterson

² New Revised Standard Version

³ Kristin Stroble currently serves as the pastor of Eastminster Presbyterian Church in East Lansing, MI.

<https://pres-outlook.org/2016/01/star-words-a-spiritual-practice-for-epiphany/>

Volunteer Opportunities at Faith UCC

SINGING – With Lent and Easter approaching, Beth Goudschaal is hoping to find members and friends of Faith UCC who enjoy singing either in a choir, small group, or as a soloist. Letters recently were mailed to pre-pandemic choir members inviting them to sing again, but maybe there are some folks who haven't before participated and are feeling the nudge to sing! Interested? Questions? Contact Beth at bgoudschaal@gmail.com or call her at 319.415.3834.

BELL CHOIR – Singing not your strength but you still want to make beautiful music for the congregation to enjoy? If you can count, you can be a participant in the bell choir. No music reading required. We have a beautiful set of bells but no one to play them. Again, if you are interested or have questions contact Beth.

USHERS – Each Sunday two Council members hold the role of head worship ushers but except for the first Sunday of the month, two additional ushers are needed to assist. Usher responsibilities include welcoming worshippers into the sanctuary; assisting with the gathering of gifts during the time of offering; aiding those who need to use the elevator (training will be provided); lighting and/or extinguishing the candles in the chancel; directing people to restrooms, Fellowship Hall, etc., and pointing out the children's area to visiting young ones. An usher's helpful presence will help to enhance the Faith UCC worship experience. Interested? Questions? Contact the church office at 319.882.3585 or faithuccchurch@gmail.com. Ready to volunteer? Check out the Volunteer clipboard in Fellowship Hall.

LITURGIST – Each Sunday the liturgist leads the congregation in the Call to Worship and reads scripture. Barb will get the readings to you and Pastor Marilyn promises to include phonetic pronunciations for any of those tricky Biblical names!

COFFEE TIME – It is so good to be able to gather once again in Fellowship Hall following worship. Coffee, treats, and conversation are a wonderful way to close our Sunday morning time together. After-worship snacks include sweets, cheese, crackers, vegetable – the ultimate decision is yours. You don't need to be a baker or a chef – store-bought options are always welcome! Interested? Questions? Contact the church office at 319.882.3585 or faithuccchurch@gmail.com. Ready to volunteer? Check out the Volunteer clipboard in Fellowship Hall.

SUNDAY SCHOOL – Volunteers are always welcome to join the teachers on Sunday mornings. Tasks might be helping with a craft, reading a story or scripture, bringing and/or setting up snacks. Interested? Questions? Contact Helen Milius, Kara Marsh, Traci Bahrenfuse, Kayla Milius, or Bonnie Travers.

CHURCH COUNCIL – To complete our Council, we are looking for a member to serve as a Trustee. The Council meets on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 pm. Trustees typically meet at 6 pm prior to the Council meeting. Interested? Questions? Contact one of the current trustees, Jerry Lahmann, Keith Stahlhut, or Brenda Shinstine.

Faith United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2022

Members in Attendance: Roger Goudschaal, Lisa Chapin, Vicki Oleson, Kara Marsh, Eli Bahrenfuse, Steve Hill, Conrad Marsh, Keith Stahlhut, and Jerry Lahmann.

Council Members Absent: Ashley Penrod, Dean Shinstine, and Beth Goudschaal.

Also present: Pastor Marilyn and Barb Hill. Present via Zoom: Brenda Shinstine.

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor Marilyn and called to order by Roger Goudschaal.

Additions to the Agenda: Under New Business, new council members. Under Old Business, table Council Reorganization until the February council meeting.

Approval of the December minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as stated by Keith Stahlhut, seconded by Kara Marsh, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: 2021 is the second year that the church did not need an Operating Loan. Motion to approve the report as stated by Jerry Lahmann, seconded by Eli Bahrenfuse, motion carried.

Trustee's Report: Steve Dahlstrom fixed the water issue in the women's bathroom in the Fellowship Hall. Ryan Smith will be coming to look at the water softener and to replace a pressure valve. There is a water stain on the south side of the ceiling in the narthex, will try to find the source of the stain.

Elder's Report: Head Ushers for the month are Keith Stahlhut and Lisa Chapin. Kara Marsh reported the Sunday School children will sing on Sunday, January 23. The Sunday School children put up a tree for Valentine's Day. Roger Goudschaal reported that he will lead Adult Education starting in February.

Liaison's Report: Roger Goudschaal reported that the cemetery funds are doing good.

Pastor's Report: Discussion on the annual meeting and worship service. It was decided to live stream a shortened worship service, turn off the live stream and then have the annual meeting on Sunday, January 16, 2022. Pastor Marilyn talked about Ash Wednesday and the Lenten study and Wednesday evenings.

Old Business: The 2022 Proposed Budget was discussed. Motion by Lisa Chapin to approve the 2022 Budget as stated, seconded by Steve Hill, motion carried. Tabled council reorganization until the February council meeting.

New Business: Outgoing council are Roger Goudschaal, Dean Shinstine, Steve Hill and Ashley Penrod. Two names were submitted for consideration to be added to the ballot for Elder's. One name was submitted for consideration to be added for the ballot for Trustee. Discussion on finding another name to fill the Trustee ballot/position.

Motion to adjourn by Steve Hill, seconded by Jerry Lahmann, motion carried.

The meeting was closed with Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Chain

PLEASE NOTE – Faith UCC Council meetings are now held in lower level of the Ed Wing, first classroom on the left.

Faith United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2022

Members in Attendance: Vicki Oleson, Lisa Chapin, Keith Stahlhut, Jerry Lahmann, Steve Hill, Roger Goudschaal, Conrad Marsh, Kara Marsh, Ashley Penrod.

Council Members Absent: Beth Goudschaal, Eli Bahrenfuse, Dean Shinstine.

The meeting was called to order by President Roger Goudschaal.

Approval of the 2021 Annual Meeting: Motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2021, meeting made by Larry Struck, seconded by Tamara Rosol, the motion was carried.

Approval of the May Congregational Meeting: Motion to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2021, meeting was made by Kaye Osborn, seconded by Barb Hill, the motion was carried.

Approval of the August Congregational Meeting: Motion to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2021, meeting was made by Helen Milius, seconded by Steve Hill, the motion was carried.

President's Report: Roger reflected on some of the highlights of the report. Thanked Pastor Marilyn and Steve Hill for all the extra work making sure the live stream videos were done for Sunday mornings. Roger also reiterated that it has been a couple tough years with Covid and trying to do the best possible for church.

Property Committee Report: Brian Milius reported that the Bell Tower repairs have been completed. Sometime in the near future Dave Kirchhoff and Brian will look at the downspouts around the church. Brian also mentioned that the louvers on the Bell Tower are in need of painting. Tuckpointing should be done sometime in 2022.

Sunday School Report: Helen Milius reported that Sunday School began on September 12, 2021. There are around 15 students at this time. Helen gave a breakdown on what Sunday mornings during Sunday School are like. The students helped with the worship service in December. The Middle School students are working on community projects.

Memorial Endowment Report: Phyllis Schnurstein thanked the members of the committee for all their hard work during the year. Phyllis also thanked the members of the families of Richard Buhr, Betty Holm and Betty Roder for their donations toward the live stream equipment.

Cemetery Report: Roger Goudschaal gave a financial breakdown of how the year has been going. There was some tree cleanup done at the cemetery. The funds for the cemetery are doing good.

Women of Faith Report: Karen Milius spoke on behalf of the committee. Still not meeting at this time, maybe quarterly or as needed. There was a basket auction with the proceeds going toward the Women of Faith to help with their expenses for the various outreach that is done. Karen thanked the committees that are active for all their work.

2022 Faith United Church of Christ Budget: The 2022 budget was presented. Barb Hill noted one correction that needed to be made. Line item 64600 Sunday School, line 64655 Sunday School Mission expenses should be listed under line item 64650 Sunday School/Vacation Bible School. There were no questions about the budget.

Roger Goudschaal thanked Barb Hill for all her help in getting the PPP loans and for her working with American Savings Bank. The loans were forgiven due to being used as they were intended to be used.

Motion to approve the 2022 Budget made by Conrad Marsh, seconded by Ashley Penrod. There were no comments or questions, the motion carried.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Roger Goudschaal reported that Faith Church is still on the docket for KARR Tuckpointing. Kenneth Buhrow had a concern about the piano being too loud in the sanctuary due to the microphone placed near it. Roger Goudschaal explained that the microphone was placed to enable online viewers to hear the piano. Kaye Osborn commented that she appreciates being able to now hear the music on the live stream. Pastor Marilyn and Steve Hill will be looking at finding a solution to balance the sound for both the in-sanctuary and online viewers.

Nominating New Members for Church Council: Elders outgoing council members are Roger Goudschaal and Dean Shinstine. New Elders: Bonnie Travers and Kathy Westendorf. Trustees, outgoing council members, Steve Hill and Ashley Penrod. New Trustee: Brenda Shinstine. There is still one position to fill for a Trustee. Financial Secretary, Roger Goudschaal. Treasurer, Barb Hill. Roger Goudschaal asked for nomination from the floor for all positions, there were none.

Roger asked that all who were in favor of the nominations respond by saying “Aye”, the nominations were carried.

Due to council members not present due to illness, Thanking the Retiring Council Members and Presentation and Blessing the 2022 Church Council will be held on Sunday, January 23, 2022.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Marilyn reflected upon the challenging times the congregation has endured during the past two years. She encouraged us to not only celebrate returning to some of those long-standing traditions but to also find new ways for the congregation to continue to do what we do best – locating opportunities to assist each other as well as those outside of the church walls. She thanked the leadership and remaining committees for their efforts to keep the church moving forward as we seek to be the church God is calling us to be.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion to adjourn was made by Melvin Ohlendorf, seconded by Ashley Penrod, the motion was carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Chapin

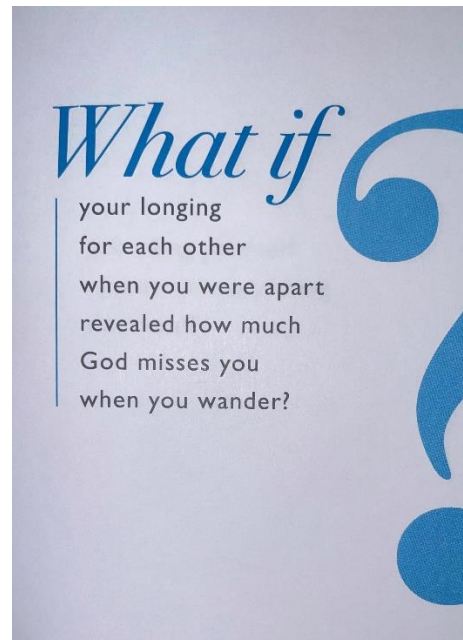


Need help with your heating bill or your water bill? Contact Karen Henry of the **Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation** at 563.387.4924 or email. Look for additional information on the north bulletin board in the narthex.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Tim Quigley
- 5 Theodore Oburra-Ladage
- 6 Marty Smalley
- 7 Cheryl Dahlstrom
- 9 Steve Hill
Marlene Snelling
- 10 Jay Ranard
Traci Bahrenfuse
- 11 Sandi Snyder
- 12 Carol Kammeyer
Asher Milius
- 14 Bailey Klein
- 15 Mason Penrod
- 16 Spencer Snelling
- 18 Kailey Heidemann
- 20 Darlys Buhrow
- 24 Kristi Ladage
Alexander Johnson
- 28 Joyce Kammeyer

**Happy
Birthday!**



~ "Post-Pandemic Ponderments"
from the Stillspeaking Writers' Group, UCC