

# Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

February 2024

Tripoli, IA

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

Sandy Martin	Nadine Schnurstein
Larry Kammeyer	Barb Hill
Mary Ann Meyer	Keith Stahlhut
Dean Boris	Kesler Schulmeister
Sheryl Johnson	Lilia Acero Andrade
Daryl Weidemann	

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

Brandon Burrows	Keenan Gienau
Matthew Coulthard	Colton Henry
Kristian Heidemann	Alyssa Jones
Kaitlyn Kime	Chazten Wells

We hold in prayer our members in home...

Darlene Bahlmann	Velda Lynch
Jean Bentley	Orlyn Milius
Verlyn & Phyllis Buls	

We continue to pray for the families and communities where lives and sense of safety have been shattered.

Lent. For Christians, the Lenten season can conjure up a variety of thoughts and traditions. The 40 days of Lent (not counting Sundays) begin on Ash Wednesday and take us through Holy Saturday. An annual journey for most Christians. It is a season in which to spend time reflecting upon how to experience a deeper relationship with the Holy One.

Often people “give up” activities or tangible cravings for Lent – social media, chocolate, television viewing, coffee, alcohol, shopping for non-essential items. You know the list. I recently read an article by Rev. Magrey deVega<sup>1</sup> that offered suggestions of what one might give up during Lent for the sake of one’s own spiritual maturity and personal development. I found this worthy and share Rev. deVega’s thoughts with you to reflect upon as a part of your Lenten journey.

### **Give up the need to be right all the time.**

Yes, claim your voice, assert your convictions, and engage the issues that matter to you. But once you’ve been heard, consider the possibility that you might have something to learn from someone who disagrees with you. That’s often how we learn our most important lessons in life. (James 1:19)

### **Give up your reluctance to ask for help.**

You cannot always be self-sufficient. You are not superhuman. You do not have inexhaustible reserves. Turn to loved ones for support, seek the wise counsel of others, and don’t be afraid to ask for help. (Psalm 69)

### **Give up your fear of failure.**

Mother Theresa said, “God does not call us to be successful; God calls us to be faithful.” You may sometimes gauge your self-worth by what you have achieved and how you have succeeded. You might subconsciously depend on the affirmation of others to feel good about yourself. But your worth does not equal your work, nor are you defined by your failures. Some people live a whole lifetime before they come to realize that. Save yourself the heartache later. Learn it now. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

### **Give up comparing yourself to others.**

Forget the Joneses. They are not worth keeping up with. Find contentment in what you have, and who God has created you to be. While there is nothing wrong with being self-motivated and goal-oriented, don’t evaluate your life in comparison to others. It’s not worth it. (James 4:2-3)

*(continued)*

**Give up the need to have things all figured out.**

Embrace mystery. Dance with your doubts. Acknowledge that you do not and cannot know it all. Resist the temptation to rationalize the irrational parts of your faith, and recognize that some of the greatest things in life are those things that cannot be explained or fully understood. Things like God's love for you, and how God is with you even when you don't believe it. (Romans 11:33-36)

**Give up your fears of the future.**

These are frightening times for many people. There is great nervousness about the way things are in the world. We all have our fears, but we don't need to be defined by them. For God is a God of hope. (Matthew 6:33-34)

**Give up anesthetizing yourself to pain and suffering.**

The long shadow of suffering is cast in many shades, like loneliness, grief, abandonment, and betrayal. None of us enjoys going through difficulties, and our instinct is often to numb ourselves from the pain in ways that are actually self-destructive: giving in to addictions, accumulating possessions, pursuing temporal pleasures, and cocooning ourselves from the rest of the world. These might anesthetize us in the short term, but they prevent us from allowing that pain to help us stretch, grow, and trust in God. (Romans 5:3-5)

**Give up the need to be in control.**

This one is at the heart of the season of Lent. It is a reminder that we ultimately are not in control of what happens to us. We cannot control others, and we can hardly claim to have full control of ourselves and our future. We must ultimately surrender our control over to a God who has created us and claimed us from the beginning. (Matthew 16:24-25)

**Give up the need to make everyone happy.**

It's not like you can, anyway. Your job is not to be all things to all people and please everyone you know. God calls you to live a life of integrity, uncompromising in your commitment to Jesus Christ. For God, after all, is the only one you need to please. (Galatians 1:10)

**Give up all the non-essential noise in your life.**

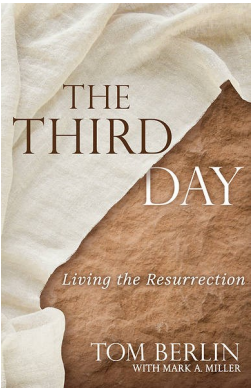
This may be the toughest thing of all to give up, but it may be the key to a deeply moving Lenten season for you. Your life is inundated by competing voices and blaring noises from the culture around you. Pay attention to your breath. Take walks. Drive without the radio on. Set the cell phone down when you're at the family table. Watch less television, read more newspapers and books, and look people in the eye when you talk to them. Most of all, pray to God, "Silence all voices but your own." Turn down the volume of your life, and connect to a God who knows you better than you know yourself. (Psalm 46:10)

Dear ones, I pray that you found something in this list that spoke to you and encouraged you as you prepare for your Lenten journey. Whatever you decide to give up or, perhaps, add to your life (daily Bible readings, increased prayer time, volunteering, Lenten book study, attending church regularly), during those 40 days may you find yourself drawn into a deeper relationship with our loving Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

*Pastor Marilyn*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/8041/ten-other-things-you-might-give-up-for-lent>

### Lenten Book Study



As we approach Lent, we hope you will add the Faith UCC weekly Lenten Book Study to your calendar. We will meet each Wednesday evening at 7 pm beginning February 21 and ending March 27. For this year’s Lenten Book study we will be reading, “The Third Day — Living the Resurrection.” Written by Tom Berlin, the book focuses on the experiences of several characters around Jesus during his final days, their despair at losing him, and the surprise and joy that awaits them in the Resurrection. The study traces the events around Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, and Thomas, along with Paul and the disciples at Emmaus, and how the Resurrection transforms their lives. Each week we will also watch a video narrated by the author (as in previous years, due to copyrights laws the online viewing of the book discussion will begin following the in-sanctuary viewing of the video.) While purchasing the book is not a requirement, if you are interested the paperback book is available through Cokesbury for \$13.49 or \$11.99 for the eBook. The office will be placing an order on February 7 if you would like to be included. If monetary restrictions prevent you from purchasing the book, please contact Pastor Marilyn.



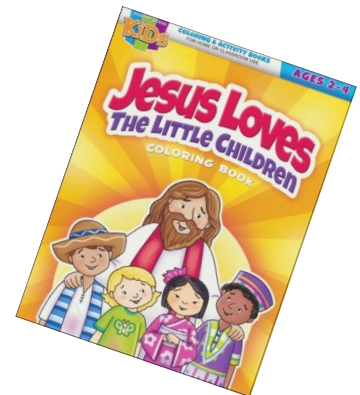
Thank you Faith congregation for the monetary gift at Christmas . Your thoughtfulness is appreciated. May the New Year bring health and happiness.

Lisa Chapin



### Middle School Project

The next project of our Faith UCC Middle School students is to restock the activity packets for our Sunday worshipping youth. Plans also include new shelving built by Alfred Gloede. The students are inviting the congregation to supply new crayons, mechanical pencils, coloring books, and activity books. If you would like to contribute supplies or funds, please put them in the marked Narthex tub or drop them off in the office. Thanks, Middle School students for making a difference!



### *Lent and Holy Week Schedule*

Wednesday, February 14	Ash Wednesday service (7:00 pm)
Sunday, February 18	1st Sunday in Lent — Adult Choir and Children’s Choir sing (10:00 am) Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15
Wednesday, February 21	Lenten Book Study — Mary Magdalene (7:00 pm)
Sunday, February 25	2nd Sunday in Lent (10:00 am) Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25 ; Mark 8:31-38
Wednesday, February 28	Lenten Book Study — Simon Peter (7:00 pm)
Sunday, March 3	3rd Sunday in Lent — With Communion (10:00 am) Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22
Wednesday, March 6	Lenten Book Study — Thomas (7:00 pm)
Sunday, March 10	4th Sunday in Lent (10:00 am) Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21
Wednesday, March 13	Lenten Book Study — On the road to Emmaus (7:00 pm)
Sunday, March 17	5th Sunday in Lent — Adult Choir sings (10:00 am) Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Psalm 119:9-16; John 12:20-33
Wednesday, March 20	Lenten Book Study — Paul (7:00 pm)
Sunday, March 24	Palm Sunday (10 am) Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Mark 11:1-11; John 12:12-16
Wednesday, March 27	Lenten Book Study — Jesus (7:00 pm)
Thursday, March 28	Maundy Thursday service (7:00 pm)
Friday, March 29	Good Friday service (7:00 pm)
Sunday, March 31	Sunrise service (7:00 am) Easter breakfast Easter service — Adult Choir sings (10:00 am) Acts 10:34-43; Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18; Mark 16:1-8

*Scripture readings are based upon the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) for Year B. The United Church of Christ participates in the Consultation on Common Texts, which has designed the RCL. For more information on the Lectionary, go to [www.commontexts.org](http://www.commontexts.org)*

Faith United Church of Christ  
Council Meeting Minutes  
January 2, 2024

Members in Attendance: Jerry Lahmann, Kathy Westendorf, Brenda Shinstine, Bonnie Travers, Vicki Oleson, Conrad Marsh, Beth Goudschaal, Kara Marsh and Dave Kirchhoff

Members in Attendance via Zoom: Traci Bahrenfuse and Eli Bahrenfuse

Also in Attendance: Pastor Marilyn

Absent Members: Dean Shinstine and Barb Hill

Opening Prayer

Meeting called to order by Jerry Lahmann

Approval of the December 4th Minutes: Correction submitted by Dave Kirchhoff, verbiage on the solar panel section was incorrect. Updated and resubmitted today by Traci Bahrenfuse.

Motion to approve after correction by Beth Goudschaal. Seconded by Brenda Shinstine.

Treasurer Report: Motion to approve by Bonnie Travers. Seconded by Brenda Shinstine. Looking into adding the last Sunday of the month (12/31) offerings to the report. Also, confirming the correct debits and credits are marked in the correct locations on the report. Should be showing 93% to budget, showing we are under budget. Council wants to confirm we are staying to budget but also supporting the future of our church and community.

Trustee Report: Reviewing the budget and analyzing the potential for more savings for this year's budget. Budget review/approval with the congregation will be held Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> after church.

Brainstorming ideas on a Faith UCC Spiritual Outreach Program. This committee would focus on updating and maintaining the active/non-active members, tithing, visiting shut-ins and members unable to attend church in body, pledging, and more.

Some electrical issues being seen in parts of the church. Property committee getting involved to look into what could be causing this issue.

Elder Report: Signing up for Head Ushers for the year.

Confirming end dates for Council members to ensure our records are accurate and up to date.

Still researching possibilities for music during church and sponsoring music in the park or something similar for the community.

Hope Overflow still performing February 11<sup>th</sup>, during the church service.

Liaison Report: None

Pastor's Report: Thanks to everyone who helped with the Advent season. The new Christmas Eve service was received well by many. Ash Wednesday is February 14<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas tree will need to come down soon, help will be needed. Will need to be down by Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Old Business: Moved to next month due to time constraints.

New Business: Moved to next month due to time constraints.

Motion to adjourn by Beth Goudschaal. Seconded by Kathy Westendorf.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted:  
Traci Bahrenfuse

*These minutes have not yet been approved by Council.*

Faith United Church of Christ  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
January 21, 2024

Council Members in Attendance: Kathy Westendorf, Bonnie Travers, Vicki Oleson, Conrad Marsh, Beth Goudschaal, Kara Marsh, Traci Bahrenfuse, Eli Bahrenfuse and Dave Kirchhoff

Also in Attendance: Pastor Marilyn, Barb Hill

Absent Members: Dean Shinstine, Brenda Shinstine and Jerry Lahmann

Meeting called to order by Vice President Eli Bahrenfuse

Approval of the January 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Approval of February 5<sup>th</sup> 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Approval of July 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 Special Meeting Minutes

Approval of September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023 Special meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve by Jay Ranard, Seconded by Tammi Rosol.

President's Report: In Jerry's absence, Eli Bahrenfuse stepped in to share the Council's gratitude to the members of Faith UCC and Pastor Marilyn.

Trustee Report: Conrad Marsh thanked the congregation and members of the trustee committee for their support, hard work and speedy resolution to issues they faced in 2023. Furnaces were paid almost completely by the generous donations of the members of Faith UCC. Conrad spoke to the many projects that were completed through 2023 including the bell tower, furnaces, and removing of the old landscaping.

Elder Report: Was reviewed by the congregation with no questions.

Property Report: Was reviewed by the congregation with no questions.

Hospitality Report: Was reviewed by the congregation with no questions.

Education Team: Was reviewed by the congregation with no questions.

Memorial Endowment Report: Phyllis thanks and acknowledged the members of the Memorial Committee. She also apologized to Keith Stahlhut for not including Trevor in the initial report. Phyllis spoke on the landscaping project and the new brochure that the committee created, printed and shared with the congregation. This brochure explained what an endowment is and also shared contacts to learn more if interested. The committee also worked on updating their bylaws. This was approved by council. Eli asked for a motion to approve. Motion approved by Steve Hill. Seconded by Jay Renard.

Cemetery Report: Roger Goudschaal gave a financial breakdown of the report. Correction needed on the Proposed Operating Budget – 2024. The 2023 actual column is the budgeted amount and the next column is the actual.

Jean Renard asked "Since the CD showed better results, would it be better to move the money market to a CD?" Roger responded "That it was up to the congregation what was done with the money but he advised that we should look at all previous years and not just one bad year.

Dave Kirchhoff asked "Are we looking into possible other options for the acres we rent currently?"

Roger responded "+/- 5 acres are currently rented at \$1,200/month. Currently not looking into any other options but again can if the congregation is interested."

Bonnie Travers asked “Who handles our investments and shouldn’t we trust them to make good financial decisions on the church’s behalf?”

Roger responded “Dane Johnson is our financial representative. He is very proactive about the market and moves money when needed.”

Women of Faith Report: Was reviewed by the congregation with no questions.

Faith UCC Giving Report: Donna Sassman stated “We should be sending the end of year giving statements to everyone, even if they didn’t donate at all.”

Roger responded “We currently don’t do that in order to save money on paper and postage.”

Mary Chapin asked “On the listed members not giving is that members and new youth members?”

Roger responded “No, confirmands are not listed as individual members. It would be the family.”

2024 Faith UCC Budget: Jay Ranard asked “The new proposed budget doesn’t have the funds for the air conditioners, under building maintenance. Jay proposes that \$12,750 be added to the budget.

Roger asked “Why would we add it this year and not add the furnaces last year?”

Roger also stated “The program we use for the budget records isn’t as clear as it could be. We write checks to associations and these show as expenses but should also be listed as revenue, its donations from the church being sent out.”

Jay answered “Because we didn’t know ahead of time of the issue for the furnaces to be added last year.”

Seconded by Jerry Snelling. Four opposed to this motion, majority rules and \$12,750 will be added to the budget.

Karen Milius asked “Page 33 of the budget shows other expenses, what were those expenses?”

Barb Hill answered “Page 37 shows the itemized list of all listed under other expenses.”

Motion to approve budget by Jay Ranard. Seconded by Helen Milius

Old Business: Roger wanted to share that the council was given a hard task of improving the budget and finding cost savings. Roger wants to thank the council for going above and beyond in improving the budget.

New Business: None

Nominating New Members: Nomination for Roger Goudschaal for Financial Secretary, approved by congregation.

Nomination for Barb Hill for Treasurer, approved by congregation.

Marlene Snelling asked “Is there really eight people coming off council in 2025? Terms should be three years and staggered.”

Kara Marsh responded “With Covid some members stayed longer to cover the gaps. Made it hard to stagger like we would like.”

Jerry Snelling asked “Shouldn’t there be four new members every year?”

Conrad Marsh responded “Due to Covid year, members pushed through or left early. This made it so there were no new members this year.”

Lisa Chapin asked “Can you please list the coming on and going off dates for the congregation to see?”

Eli Bahrenfuse responded “yes, we can get that added.”

Pastor’s Report: Thanked the council for their hard work and the congregation for the thoughtful comments and questions. She is honored to work with us all. She shared a closing video.

Motion to adjourn by Roger Goudschaal. Seconded by Traci Bahrenfuse.

Respectfully submitted:

Traci Bahrenfuse

*These minutes have not yet been approved by Council.*

# Faith United Church of Christ

invites you to worship on  
Sunday, February 11 at 10:00 am  
when our special guests will be

## Hope Overflow

worship team from Wartburg College



We hope you will join us for music,  
scripture, and praise as we celebrate who we are and  
whose we are as children of God!

Faith United Church of Christ • 408 S Main Street • Tripoli, IA  
319.882.3585 • [faithuccchurch@gmail.com](mailto:faithuccchurch@gmail.com)  
(The building is accessible to all)



February Birthdays

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

February Anniversaries

Feb. 1	Vicki Oleson & David Konopke
Feb. 14	David & Susie Lohmann

Church Council

President	Jerry Lahmann
Vice President	Eli Bahrenfuse
Recorder	Traci Bahrenfuse
<u>Elders</u>	
	Beth Goudschaal (Head Elder)
	Traci Bahrenfuse
	Kara Marsh
	Vicki Oleson
	Bonnie Travers
	Kathy Westendorf
<u>Trustees</u>	
	Conrad Marsh (Head Trustee)
	Eli Bahrenfuse
	Dave Kirchhoff
	Jerry Lahmann
	Brenda Shinstine
	Dean Shinstine

Faith United Church of  
Christ FinancesGeneral Fund 2024

	<u>January</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Offerings	\$9,666.20		
Expenses	\$10,997.81	\$13,891.13	(\$2,893.32)

Year-to-date 2024

Offerings	\$9,666.20		
Expenses	\$10,997.81	\$13,891.13	(\$2,893.32)

Cemetery Operations Fund 2023December 2023

Portfolio Value	\$59,964.12
Checking Account Balance	143.59
Savings Account Balance	<u>2,648.28</u>

Furnace Loan—1/31/24

Loan	\$3,000.00
12/14 Interest expense	8.66
12/14 Payment	-1,270.00
12/28 Interest expense	5.40
12/28 Payment	-400.00
1/8 Interest expense	3.28
1/8 Payment	-445.00
1/16 Interest	1.60
1/16 Payment	<u>-600.00</u>
Total	\$303.94

Worship by the numbers...  
January 2024

	<u>In-person Attendance</u>	<u>Online Viewing</u>	<u>General Offering</u>
Jan. 7	58	63	\$1,460.00
Jan. 14	—	48	\$ 315.00
Jan. 21	52	40	\$2,487.00
Jan. 28	40	30	\$2,543.00

Faith UCC Staff

Pastor	Rev. Marilyn Sargent
Admin. Assistant	Barb Rich
Financial Secretary	Roger Goudschaal
Treasurer	Barb Hill
Custodian	Lisa Chapin
Director of Music	Beth Goudschaal
Musicians	June Buhr
	Phoebe Drape
	Dawn Holm
	Mary Jo Rathe