

Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

December 2024

Tripoli, IA

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

Carol Kammeyer	Dean Shinstine
Nadine Schnurstein	Keith Stahlhut
Mary Ann Meyer	Paula Bruns
Shirley Brown	Sheryl Johnson
Kesler Schulmeister	Darlyce Liddle

We hold in prayer our members in home...

Darlene Bahlmann	Velda Lynch
Orlyn Milius	
Verlyn & Phyllis Buls	

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

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

~ John 1:1-5

This passage has long been one of my most treasured. Especially at Christmastime when the glow of Christmas begins illuminating homes and trees and churches. As I see the reflecting of the light of Jesus, there is a comfort that fills my heart.

As we begin our journey through Advent with nights growing ever longer and increasing chaos ever mightier, where might you encounter God's warm light illuminating your way through this season of hope? As you prepare your heart for the Jesus, the Light of the world, how do you find the light that was so desperately needed in the beginning...and in the darkened world of Jesus' birth...and today?

For me, sometimes I find the light in long-standing traditions with family, friends, neighbors, and church. Sometimes it is standing in the hallway listening to children blending their sweet voices in practice for their Christmas program. Or sometimes it is while walking home at night, gazing up at a starry sky, and pondering what ancient prophets might have gazed at those same twinkling lights.

My prayer for each of you is that you, too, will allow yourself to fully lean into this reflective Advent time. Even in the midst of the hectic preparations take some quiet reflective time each day to seek out God's warm light illuminating your path. Maybe your discoveries are similar to mine. Or maybe a God glow will light up for you in an entirely different and unexpected way. I pray that you will remain alert, expectantly watching for those illuminating God signs that can only be offered by the One who always has, always does, and always will love you more than you can imagine. I pray that you hold tight to those God gifts and carry them with you throughout Advent, the Christmas season, and into all of your days that follow. Always remember those words from John, "The life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

~ Pastor Marilynn



Faith United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
November 4th, 2024

Members in Attendance: Jerry Lahmann, Kathy Westendorf, Bonnie Travers, Brenda Shinstine, Traci Bahrenfuse, Conrad Marsh, Dean Shinstine, Sharon McLavey, and Dave Kirchhoff

Members in Attendance via Zoom: None Also in Attendance: Barb Hill

Absent Members: Pastor Marilyn, Eli Bahrenfuse, Kara Marsh, and Vicki Oleson

Meeting called to order by Jerry Lahmann

Opening Prayer

Approval of the October 7th Minutes: Updates made and corrected. Sent revisions to Pastor.

Motion to approve by Kathy Westendorf, seconded by Traci Bahrenfuse.

Treasurer Report: Motion to approve by Dave Kirchhoff. Seconded by Conrad Marsh.

Add line items for interest and dividends received under 49510 Offerings, to differentiate between offerings and other debits.

Trustee Report: Working to get the Trustee's together to fix the entry way roof to the west end Ed building. Nest thermostat in the sanctuary of the church installed and functioning on a timer for both heat and air. If adjusted it will fault back to the preset temperatures. Looking into smart hours through Alliant to save additional funds. Church basement concerns with moisture, looking into corrective actions and finding where it is getting in. Pastor's agreement package should be reviewed annually, has not been completed. Solar system audit estimate, 22,500 watts, 50 panels, expected projection 30,297 kWh, total install would be \$67,500. There is 30% federal tax grant, and potential REAP grant bringing it down to roughly \$15,000. We currently have three separate accounts at Alliant. This option would need to be all on one account and metered together. The solar panels would also have to be set up on the ed building, 50 panels total. Looking into roof structure and additional insurance needed to confirm total savings.

Elder Report: Sending a post card to all members stating we will be reaching out via a phone call to receive feedback and any ideas they have to help strengthen the church. Traci working on website and meeting with Steve and Pastor to discuss what they would like to see in the website. Advent activity, making a centerpiece, planning to do this on December 1st.

Pastor's Report: None.

Old Business: By-laws reviewed and updated. Motion to approve by Traci Bahrenfuse. Seconded by Dave Kirchhoff.

New Business: American Savings Bank requested a formal form for the President and Vice President to sign to allow Ruth Kirchhoff to manage the Memorial Committee CD's and funds.

Motion to adjourn by Dean Shinstine, seconded by Jerry Lahmann.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted:
Traci Bahrenfuse



Women of Faith Annual Christmas Party

The Women of Faith will hold their annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 14. The fun and fellowship will start at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Brunch will be served, followed by bingo and a \$15-\$20 gift exchange. An offering will be taken for the Activity Fund at Tripoli Nursing and Rehab. **All** women of the church are invited.

Annual Meeting Reports

If you are responsible for submitting Annual Reports for the Annual Meeting, please send them to the office by January 6. The church email is faithuccchurch@gmail.com. Thank you!

Transitions...

With the announced retirement of Pastor Marilyn, we know there are questions that arise regarding the process of finding a new minister and what will transpire in the intervening time. The Iowa Conference of the UCC has been notified of Pastor Marilyn's departure and representatives have begun their work to guide us through this process. The congregation will be notified as plans are developed. As with previous pastoral searches, we know that the search will take time. The ultimate goal is to provide a healthy transition for our church.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Council President Jerry Lahmann at 319.269.1398; Vice President Eli Bahrenfuse at 319.240.4716; or any council member.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, December 1 – On the first Sunday of Advent we will gather in the sanctuary for worship, communion, and our annual Hanging of the Greens! We hope you will join us as we explore the meaning behind many of our Christmas traditions including the colors of the season, the Christmas tree, and wreaths. Following worship we will gather in Fellowship Hall for a scrumptious potluck and then participate in an intergenerational craft project for each person to take home. It is a delightful way to begin this beautiful season!

Sunday, December 8 – On the second Sunday of Advent our worship will be gifted with musical offerings and readings from our children.

Sunday, December 15– On the third Sunday of Advent our Adult Choir will add to our holiday season through their gift of music.

Thursday, December 19 – At 7:00 pm we will gather in the sanctuary for our Blue Christmas service. This service is for those who find the Christmas season to be a challenging time due to the death of a loved one...a broken relationship...the loss of a job...or any of the many life situations that can separate us from the joyful festivities of the season. This service offers reflective time to tenderly feel all of our emotions while we honor the birth of God's son.

Sunday, December 24 – At 7 pm, we will gather in the sanctuary to celebrate God's son, the Prince of Peace, through scriptures, carols, and communion.



December Birthdays

December 1	Kristi Foelske Sandy Ladage
December 7	Bob Kammeyer
December 9	Breckyn Liddle
December 10	Larry Piehl
December 11	Laurie Buhrow
December 12	Ryan Osborn
December 16	Hayden Liddle
December 17	Brittany Quigley Trevor Bunce
December 18	Kristi Bass
December 20	Verdeen Ohlendorf
December 24	Beth Goudschaal Mary Moeller
December 26	Jessica Raymond
December 27	Scott Chapin
December 28	LaVera Buchholz
December 29	Ken Mohlis

December Anniversaries

Dec. 6	Gary & Sandra Snyder
Dec. 31	Scott & JoEllen Behn

Church Council/Terms

President	Jerry Lahmann
Vice President	Eli Bahrenfuse
Recorder	Traci Bahrenfuse

Elders

Vicki Olesen (Head Elder)	2nd term expires Jan. 2026
Traci Bahrenfuse	1st term expires Jan. 2026
Kara Marsh	2nd term expires Jan. 2027
Sharon McClavey	2nd term expires Jan. 2027*
Bonnie Travers	1st term expires Jan. 2025
Kathy Westendorf	1st term expires Jan. 2025

Trustees

Dave Kirchoff (Head Trustee)	1st term expires Jan. 2026
Eli Bahrenfuse	2nd term expires Jan. 2025
Jerry Lahmann	2nd term expires Jan. 2025
Conrad Marsh	2nd term expires Jan. 2026
Brenda Shinstine	1st term expires Jan. 2025
Dean Shinstine	1st term expires Jan. 2026

*Sharon is completing a term

Faith United Church of Christ FinancesGeneral Fund 2024

	<u>November</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Offerings	\$9,593.43		
Expenses	\$10,853.44	\$12,517.89	(\$1,664.45)

Year-to-date 2024

Offerings	\$127,772.60		
Expenses	\$146,754.50	\$148,061.97	(\$1,307.47)

Cemetery Operations Fund 2024October 2024

Portfolio Value	\$64,753.41
Checking Account Balance	1,166.39
Savings Account Balance	<u>1,152.44</u>
TOTAL	\$67,072.24

Worship by the numbers...November 2024

	<u>In-person Attendance</u>	<u>Online Viewing</u>	<u>General Offering</u>
Nov. 3	58	25	\$1,927.00
Nov. 10	Unknown	30	\$1,983.00
Nov. 17	69	21	\$2,442.00
Nov. 24	60	22	\$1,860.00

Faith UCC Staff

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