

Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

April 2025

Tripoli, IA

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

Carol Kammeyer	Dean Shinstine
Nadine Schnurstein	Keith Stahlhut
Mary Ann Meyer	Shirley Brown

We hold in prayer our members in home...

Darlene Bahlmann	JoAnn Steward
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.

This Season of Lent

We are in the season of Lent. I mistakenly said in children's Sunday school this past Sunday that we are in the season of Easter. The children were excited to hear about the Easter season. However, I then realized we are in the season of Lent! I felt the level of excitement leave the room when I corrected myself saying we are not ready for Easter yet, we must travel through the season of Lent, before we can celebrate Easter!

Ash Wednesday reminds us of our own mortality. We receive ashes on our forehead in the sign of the cross, while the words ashes to ashes, dust to dust, and to dust you shall return are spoken. Throughout the 40 days of Lent we travel the wilderness with Jesus. We may also feel alone in the wilderness during this season of Lent.

These past few weeks our church and our community find ourselves traveling in the wilderness with overwhelming loss and grief. We have lost loved ones, who in our minds have passed too soon. They appeared to be in the prime of life. We were not ready for their earthly life to end. We wanted more anniversaries, more graduations, more conversations, more celebrations, we wanted more time.

Why is sudden loss so hard, why do accidents happen, why does cancer seem to win? Is God confused, does He make mistakes? Isaiah Chapter 55 vs 8-9, tells us: For your thoughts are not my thoughts, neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts.

This is where our society and our church beliefs clash. Society tells us if we work hard, value family and church we will be blessed with a successful and long life. The Bible tells us that in our minds we are unable to understand God's ways. Scripture also tells us His timing is always at the right time.

It is through Isaiah 55 vs 9 that we begin to make sense of God's perfect timing. Heaven is higher than earth, God's ways and thoughts are higher than our ways and thoughts. We get focused on earthly things. How can we live for heavenly things? How do we share Christ's love to others?

As we travel through Lent to get to Easter we are reminded of Christ's love for us. Through his suffering, death, burial, and resurrection we can celebrate Easter! We are welcomed into Christ's glory! We have the promise of eternal life! That's why my friends we must travel together through Lent, doing the hard work so we can be excited for Easter, just as the Sunday school children.

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God brings us light in the darkness and the darkness can not outshine it! During these times it seems dark, as if God is hiding. There have been times in my life when I was looking high and low for God, and no matter where I looked it seemed as if God wasn't there, however looking back now I can see God was hiding in plain sight. I don't know why I didn't see God. God was working through the people around me to help and comfort me. Perhaps God is in the people around us. Perhaps God is hiding in plain sight: in the people at the bowling alley, at a ballpark, in a small group bible study, in our community, and in our church. How can you let God work through you to help the people who so desperately need to see God? Amen.

Bonnie Travers

Lenten Service Schedule

April 2	Bonnie Travers—Lent Study
April 9	Bonnie Travers—Lent Study
April 17	Bonnie Travers—Lent Study
April 18	Good Friday— Service with Grace Lutheran 7:00 pm at Grace

Sunday Supply Pastor Schedule

April 6	Rev. Amy Wiles with Communion
April 13	Mike Westendorf
April 20	6:30 am Easter Sunrise—Mike W. 10:00 am Rev. Brad Braley
April 27	Rev. Cathy Young
May 4	Rev. Amy Wiles with communion



EASTER LILIES

If you would like to purchase an Easter Lily for Easter morning worship, please contact the church office 319.882.3585 or faithuccchurch@gmail.com.

Order forms are also available in the sanctuary. If you would like your plant to be in honor/memory of someone, please include that information with your order. The cost of the lily plant (minimum of 5 blooms) in a 6" pot is \$14.50. Orders need to be received on later than Monday, April 7th.

Thank you, Roger.

The Council would like to thank Roger Goudschaal for arranging the Variety Show Choir to sing "Precious Lord" during worship on March 30th. We appreciate the sharing of the time and talent of the choir, and the congregation enjoyed hearing the Sanctuary filled with this special song.

THANKS!

Faith United Church of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2025

Members in Attendance: Kathy Westendorf, Brenda Shinstine, Conrad Marsh, Dean Shinstine, Vicki Oleson, Sharon McLavey, Dave Kirchhoff, Jay Ranard, Mike Westendorf and Kara Marsh

Members in Attendance via Zoom: Bonnie Travers Also in Attendance: Barb Hill

Absent Members: Tracie Bahrenfuse

Opening Prayer by Dave Kirchhoff . Meeting called to order by Dave Kirchhoff .

Approval of the February 3rd meeting Minutes: Motion to approve by Jay Ranard Seconded by Brenda Shinstine. Motion approved.

Treasurer Report: Current balance at bank - \$14,997.46 before Sunday's deposit.

Our current version of Quickbooks does not allow for a Cash Flow Statement report to be pulled. There was a \$300 donation from Becker Funeral home. Donation was deposited into a non budgeted line item 11006 Improvement Fund. Motion to keep donation in line item 11006 by Jay Ranard and seconded by Conrad Marsh. Motion approved. Motion to approve the treasurer report by Kathy Westendorf Seconded by Dean Shinstine. Motion approved.

Trustee Report: Midwest basement will be in April 1st to do an estimate inside. Dave Kirchoff is still working on finding someone to work on an outside estimate. Parsonage as of right now shows nothing major to be repaired, paint, carpet, fixture replacement and deep cleaning. Council and Property Committee will need to do a joint effort to finish the clean out.

Discussion was held on the need of additional Handicapped parking in the back lot during Special events. A motion to add two Handicap parking signs placed by the back door to accommodate parking needs during special events by Mike Westendorf and seconded by Sharon McLavey.

Cemetery Committee accepted Harris Mowing bid for mowing this season. His bid comes in at \$325 for each time he mows. Previous company Turf was \$975 a month flat rate.

Elder Report:

Silent auction/meal on March 23rd funds will be donated towards the basement improvements.

Discussion was help on Funeral Ushers. Current Ushers are looking to step down. Replacements will be needed, along with creating a list of responsibilities and job duties.

Lenten Meals will be held Wednesday nights from 5:30-6:30 with bible study at 6:30. Maunday Thursday service Lesson with Bonnie, Good Friday Service at Grace.

Kendy Miller will fill Pulpit Supply on 3-16-25, will do instillation of new council members. Discussion and guidance in regards to Conference Training, Lay Leaders, Sacrament Servers could be sought out from the UCC Council.

Discussion on Visits to shut-ins, monthly service, hospital visits- who could coordinate and carry out. Choir visiting on Tuesday nights.

Bylaws Committee to review, seek guidance from Kory, conference advisor.

Day Camp for Summer 2025 will need to be finalized and registration will need to be sent out soon.

Ash Wednesday will be in the Sanctuary and with the impending storm the call will be made by noon.

Brenda Shinstine made a motion to allow Barb to work extra hours as needed. Mike Westendorf seconded.

Motion to adjourn by Kara Marsh. Seconded by Kathy Westendorf.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted: Kara Marsh

* Minutes not yet approved by Council

Informational Meeting

3/16/25

Sermon message: Finding Faith in the Shifting Seasons: Grief, Growth, and Grace.

Meeting opened by Dave Kirchhoff

Council has met with the Conference and asked for Kendy to join today to help answer any lingering questions and proper process and steps forward.

Kendy responded by the profile library – shortage of Pastors right now, not just in the UCC but all dominations. The UCC starting in November – IA, NB, and SD we have only 3 profiles right now. Two more in December. How do we as churches faithfully serve with the shortage of Pastors? Where we are now and where we were twenty years ago.

Congregation, please continue to ask questions, learn, grow and investigate avenues that are available to us. Council to get feedback and ideas from the congregation. What are we looking for as a church going forward and who are we.

Dave spoke to which avenue we are wanting to move towards. How can we serve this community best and the two avenues being either settled pastor or shared pastor. Referenced the flow chart and we are at the interim pastor section currently. Finding an interim minister may be a bit tricky as well. Anything other than a settled pastor is handled by the church council. Pulpit supply, bridge pastor etc. is the duty of the Council. When a search committee comes into play is when we are ready to look for a settled Pastor. When you are exiting a long-term pastor as ours, the Conference advises an interim or bridge pastor to help us align on what our future looks like and what we want in a settled Pastor.

Council working to understand if a transitional committee to help the council prepare for when we are ready for a search and call committee is necessary and something the congregation would like to see.

Opening to questions from the Congregation:

Bonnie: Looking at the transition within the Congregation, if anyone is interested in becoming help for pulpit supply or sacraments, visitations etc. let the council know. Sacramental servants can be trained to do those services. The church council could also identify two or three active members that they feel would be willing and able to cover these duties. Then 13 hours of training would need completed before coverage can be provided.

Lay-Led church resources to carry on without pastoral leadership. Shifting back to Lay-Led congregations are doing the work, and lots of resources available to do this. There are churches that have two members step up and take over all pastoral duties. An authorization would need completed.

Don Bunce- Pastor Marilyn came from seminary. Any possibility of a student to come here? Kendy – fewer students in seminary and many of them are going into services not locally. Leaning towards Misson work etc.

Kathy asked about pulpit supply but we could not do sacraments. Kendy- In order to do both, you would need to get the Lay-Led or licensed training. This is a call for up to 7 years but not permanent.

Anyone can cover pulpit supply, let the council know if interested.

Dave closes with the fact that this is an awesome opportunity for our church. Let council know if there is anything special you want to see in services. Thanking Kendy for leading our service and leading this discussion. Council will not make any decisions without congregation agreement.

All members are welcome to look through the parsonage garage to look at furniture and other items, everything is up for grabs. We are available to help load as needed.

Thank You!! Hot Beef Lunch and Silent Auction

The Church Council would like to thank the Women of Faith for hosting this event. A special thanks goes to Karen Milius, Marlene Snelling, and Juanita Mohlis for planning and executing a successful fundraiser. Because of the food and time that was donated, all \$4,130 raised will go toward repairing the walls of the Fellowship Hall. The Council appreciated Karen, Marlene, and Juanita's work and the many ways that our congregation is pulling together to support Faith UCC.

A Special Thank You.....

Faith United Church of Christ had another great event. Our Hot Roast Beef Lunch and Silent Auction was a huge success. We want to thank each and everyone of you who joined us for this delicious lunch. Many thanks to the persons that donated items for the Silent Auction and a huge thank you to the winning bidders.

There was a lot of laughter, fun and great fellowship.

Thank you to the people that cleaned up after the lunch.

Our Lunch and Silent auction was all profit.

Thank you to the persons who donated the food.

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way.

This was so greatly appreciated!

A lot of helping hands...make for a 'Faith Loving' Family.

The Lord shares His Love for us through 'Special People' like you!

Thank you for your help, your gifts, your kindness and your support

for this "Faith Fun" Event.

Thankful
Grateful
and truly
Blessed

Meals and Services will be as follows:

All Meals 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Lenten Services in Fellowship Hall 6:30 p.m

April 2nd *Meal Served By _____ - Choir and Adult Sunday School Class

April 9th *Meal Served By _____ - Women of Faith

April 17th Maundy Thursday *Meal Served By _____ - Church Council Trustees

April 18th Good Friday Services 7:00 p.m. at Grace Lutheran

Easter Sunrise _____ Easter
6:30 am

Easter Breakfast—serving after Sunrise Service _____ Event Committee

Easter Worship Service _____ 10:00 a.m.

Please Volunteer

Faith UCC is in need of four to five volunteers to serve as ushers for funerals. Larry and Joan Stuck and Jerry and Marlene Snelling have served in this capacity for some time and would like to step down. They left a very complete list of the funeral duties, so this would be an easy way to volunteer at Faith. Thank you for considering this much needed volunteer opportunity.

Lunch Box Contributions

The Lunch Box Fund raised \$46.00! Thanks to everyone who has contributed. We will start again this month. Feel free to contribute.

Thanks, Beth Goudschaal



Coffee Fellowship Servers

April 6 Bob & Donna Sassman
April 13 Dean & Brenda Shinstine
April 20 Don & Vernetta Bunce
April 27 Rich & Karen Milius

<u>April Birthdays</u>	
April 3	Vicki Oleson
April 4	Kaye Osborn
	Tracy Buchholz
	Ameliya Reeves
April 5	Brian Bunce
April 7	Kimberly Milius
April 9	Catie Ott
April 12	Dean Shinstine
April 14	Susan Cline
April 16	Phyllis Schnurstein
April 18	Austin Foelske
April 19	Sandra Ryherd
	Charlotte Johnson
April 20	Steve Dahlstrom
April 22	Lincoln Drewis

Faith United Church of Christ Finances			
<u>General Fund 2025</u>			
	<u>March</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Offerings	\$10,448.34		
Expenses	\$ 12,143.42	\$12,532.42	\$410.00
<u>Year-to-date 2025</u>			
Offerings	\$31,197.95		
Expenses	\$32,566.38		
<u>Cemetery Operations Fund 2025</u>			
<u>February 2025</u>			
Portfolio Value		\$67,012.23	
Checking Account Balance		39.14	
Savings Account Balance		<u>1,353.43</u>	
TOTAL		\$68,404.80	

<u>April Anniversaries</u>	
April 5	Kenny & Darlys Buhrow
April 10	Scott & Lisa Chapin
April 22	Ed & Carol Brandt

Worship by the numbers...			
March 2025			
	<u>In-person</u>	<u>Online</u>	<u>General</u>
	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Viewing</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Mar. 2	40	32	\$3,062.00
Mar. 9	50	31	\$2,122.00
Mar. 16	70	33	\$1,957.00
Mar. 23	70	29	\$1,353.00
Mar. 30	69	35	\$1,426.00

<u>Church Council/Terms</u>	
President	Dave Kirchhoff
Vice President	Vicki Oleson
Recorder	Traci Bahrenfuse
<u>Elders</u>	
Vicki Oleson	2nd term expires Jan. 31, 2026
Traci Bahrenfuse	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2026
Kara Marsh	2nd term expires Jan.31, 2027
Sharon McClavey	2nd term expires Jan.31, 2027*
Bonnie Travers (Head Elder)	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2025
Kathy Westendorf	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2025
<u>Trustees</u>	
Dave Kirchhoff	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2026
Mike Westendorf (Head Trustee)	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2028
Jay Ranard	1st term expires Jan.31, 2028
Conrad Marsh	2nd term expires Jan. 31, 2026
Brenda Shinstine	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2025
Dean Shinstine	1st term expires Jan. 31, 2026

*Sharon is completing a term

Faith UCC Staff

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