

# Faith Talk

Faith United Church of Christ

January 2026

Tripoli, IA

## Connect with us!

### Church Office phone:

319-882-3585

Office Staffed:

Tuesday & Thursdays 9am to 3 pm  
Temporarily Nights and Weekends

### Cell phone:

319-327-4441

If you cannot reach the office,  
feel free to call the cell phone.

### Website:

<https://faithucctripoli.org/>

### YouTube:

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

Carol Kammeyer	Dean Shinstine
Nadine Schnurstein	Keith Stahlhut
Cheryl Dahlstrom	Megan Anderson
Doretta Brandhorst	Gerald Liddle
Shirley Brown	Roger Davis
Dan Goskurth	Gary Snyder

We hold in prayer our members in home...

JoAnn Steward  
Verlyn & Phyllis Buls Marlys Ryan

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

Brandon Burrows	Charten Wells
Matthew Coulthard	Colton Henry
Kristian Heidemann	Alyssa Jones

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

We express our sympathy to Brian & Angie  
Buchholz and family on the passing of  
Angie's father, Moli/"Butch".

## Love-Words-Actions

*They will know we are Christians  
by our love. 🎵*

But also by our words,  
And by our actions.  
Love. Words. Actions.

I admit I sometimes fail.  
We all do.  
We are human after all.  
But - I am speechless  
at the callous disregard for human life.  
Total. Complete. Callousness,

Mass shootings.  
Monday. Tuesday.  
Wednesday. Thursday.  
Friday. Saturday. Sunday.  
To the point of numbness.  
Almost.

Violent deaths.  
Heartbreaking deaths.  
Total disbelief.  
Followed by an outpouring of love.  
And then - then -  
The disturbing clang of vitriol.

Vitriol rains down.  
Shocking. Disturbing. Unforgivable.  
Have we finally reached the limit?  
Please Lord.  
Let this be the end.

How will they know we are Christians?  
By our love,  
by our words,  
and by our actions.  
The world is watching -  
what will they see?

*"You can't go back and change the beginning,  
but you can start where you are and change the ending."  
CS Lewis*

Let's strive to change 2026 with love, words and actions.

Brenda Sievers  
December 16, 2025

Faith United Church of Christ  
Council Meeting Minutes  
December 1, 2025

Members in Attendance: Kathy Westendorf, Traci Bahrenfuse, Vicki Oleson, Dave Kirchhoff, Mike Westendorf, Bonnie Travers, Conrad Marsh, and Jay Ranard

Members in Attendance via Zoom: Sharon McLavey, Kara Marsh

Also in Attendance: Barb Hill, Kendy Miller, Al Hoeper, Dean Bulz and Dave Drape

Absent Members: Dean Shinstine, and Brenda Shinstine

Opening Prayer

Meeting called to order by Dave Kirchhoff

Meeting with St John Siegel: Discussion on sharing a Pastor. Kendy spoke about how to share one pastor with two congregations and how it will look; how will we move forward? There is no set path to be successful in merging. Need to confirm we are a match and we share the same passions, mission and values. There is another church open to join this conversation as well. Conversation is great, nothing set in stone. Will need to be more flexible if sharing a pastor. Could be creative and adjust to the needs of all congregations. Kendy willing to help lead conversations to help direct congregational involvement. Both churches would still complete a profile and it would be stated full time but shared with another church. Profiles are all on-line and will need a start date when posting this profile. Mission, introduction and making our profile authentic to our church and really invite and draw potential Pastors to our Church. Survey being sent to Dave to share with the congregation on what they are willing to be flexible on and what they aren't interested in changing/adapting to. Still need to form a search committee to start the profile. January 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm is the next meeting with St John Siegel.

Approval of November 3rd Minutes: Motion to approve by Jay Ranard. Seconded by Kathy Westendorf.

Treasurer Report: Motion to approve by Conrad Marsh. Seconded by Bonnie Travers.

Trustee Report: Renters applied for a grant through United Way and they call on supporters to help cover any expenses for families in need. \$1300 received to be put towards past due rent. \$350 more coming to cover the remaining balance and to help cover next months as well.

Church 360 pilot test is starting. There are nine test members. Free month started November 24<sup>th</sup>. Barb is working on a sample chart of accounts to start reporting and check the ledger etc. Can assign members to specific accounts for the financials. Need a decision before the first of the year to have a clean break. Cost is based on household number not each member.

Thursday 12/4 9am to discuss budget.

Elder Report: Kids singing December 14<sup>th</sup>, and serving Fellowship that Sunday.

New curriculum for Sunday School geared towards one room learning to accommodate children of all ages with limited volunteer leaders.

Start working on bylaws, confirm vision and mission for our Church and job descriptions for staff.

Hanging of the greens cancelled due to weather– Marlene and Kathy completed the tree and wreaths.

Vicki to continue to schedule pulpit supply, since she has been the main contact thus far.

Mike and Roger leading Christmas service.

Women of Faith Fundraiser was very successful. Over \$3,000 received.

Ash Wednesday – February 18<sup>th</sup> – working to find pulpit supply to cover this.

Lenten meals will be assigned to committees – Kathy will work to get this scheduled and communicate.

Council members terms expire. How is backfilling to be determined.

Traci, Conrad and Vicki terms expire.

Liaison Report: Kendy Miller from the conference met via zoom to discuss endowments.

Old Business: Pulpit supply going very well. Pastors reaching out to us to look for open Sundays.

New Business: None.

Motion to adjourn by Traci Bahrenfuse. Seconded by Jay Ranard. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted:  
Traci Bahrenfuse



### **Lunch Box Contributions**

The Lunch Box Fund raised \$50.00! Thanks to everyone who has contributed. The school is very appreciative for this help.

Thanks, Beth Goudschaal

### Coffee Fellowship Servers

Jan. 4	Dave Groskurth & Carol
Jan. 11	Ellen Kalkbrenner
Jan. 18	Jay & Jean Ranard
Jan. 25	Dean & Brenda Shinstine

**Thank you for serving!**



### **Sunday Supply Pastor Schedule**

Jan. 4	Rev. David Fettman
Jan. 11	Rev. Brad Braley
Jan. 17	Rev. Amy Wiles
Jan. 25	Rev. Brad Braley



The Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 18th at 10 am. Printed Annual Reports will be available on Sunday, January 11th. Following the worship/meeting, we will gather in Fellowship Hall for a potluck. If you are unable to attend the meeting and would like a report, contact the office.

### Year End Statements

Year-End Giving Statements will be available in the Narthex beginning Sunday, January 11th. After January 31, they can be picked up in the office. If you are unable to pick up your statement, we can mail it to you.



Thank you to Faith Congregation for the generous Christmas gift. I appreciate your thoughtfulness. I missed seeing all your smiling faces who usually stop in over Christmas. I also thank you for your cards, thoughts and prayers during my surgery leave. It is good to be back to almost normal .

Thanks again! Barb Rich

### Office Hours

I will be returning from surgery leave on Jan. 6th. The office will be returning to regular hours on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 am to 3 pm. Stop in and say hello. It is great to be back!

Barb Rich

hello...  
**I'M BACK!**

### January Birthday's

Jan. 3	Marian Meyer
Jan. 6	Phoebe Drape
Jan. 7	Alfred Gloede
Jan. 8	Brian Milius
Jan. 14	Ron Quigley
Jan. 15	Max Moeller
Jan. 19	Mary Ann Meyer
Jan. 20	Katlyn Marquis
Jan. 21	Donna Sassman
Jan. 23	Kathy Westendorf
Jan. 24	Shawn Marquis
	Delaney Marsh
Jan. 25	Paisley Liddle
Jan. 27	Brian Buchholz
Jan. 30	Shane Buchholz
	Marlys Ryan

### Faith United Church of Christ Finances

#### General Fund 2025

	<u>December</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Offerings	\$11,192.63		
Expenses	\$14,334.81	\$16,040.43	\$1,705.61

#### Year-to-date 2025

Offerings	\$ 123,467.76
Expenses	\$ 103,226.55

#### Cemetery Operations Fund 2025

##### November 2025

Portfolio Value	\$59,174.13
Checking Account Balance	51.70
Savings Account Balance	<u>1,505.83</u>
TOTAL	\$60,731.66

### Worship by the numbers...

#### October 2025

	<u>In-person Attendance</u>	<u>Online Viewing</u>	<u>General Offering</u>
Dec. 7	52	48	\$ 1,360.00
Dec. 14	72	32	\$2,595.00
Dec. 21	53	24	\$3,795.00
Dec. 24	100	40	\$1,794.00
Dec. 28	42	23	\$1,140.00

### Church Council/Terms

President	Dave Kirchhoff
Vice President	Vicki Oleson
Recorder	Traci Bahrenfuse

#### Elders

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 McLavey	2nd term expires Jan.31, 2027*
Bonnie Travers (Head Elder)	2nd term expires Jan. 31, 2028
Kathy Westendorf	2nd term expires Jan. 31, 2028

#### Trustees

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	2nd term expires Jan. 31, 2028
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