



United Church Courier

God is still speaking.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Choose to be a Part of Theologian-in-Residence Weekend, February 20-21
(Details on page 6.)

Sunday Schedule:
9:00AM Continental Breakfast
9:30AM Sunday School Classes
10:45AM Worship

You're all invited

Program Council is Saturday, Feb. 6 from 10 a.m. to noon in Fellowship Hall.

A Twelve Step Program to Member Recruitment and Engagement

Program Council is made up of all board representatives, officers, representatives, delegates and anyone who wants to attend. To help you start thinking about the easy parts of this topic, see 10 Tips on page 4.

Sunday, February 7 is Souper Bowl of Caring at UCC!

This movement is transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving. All of the collections are donated directly to the charity of each group's choice.

The UCC youth will collect your pocket change and dollar bills before and after worship. Last year we collected non-perishable food donations as well. That was such a success that we are going to do it again! The money and food will be divided between MICA and Bethesda Community Food Pantry. Things that you might want to consider donating: peanut butter, hand soap, paper towels, cans of soup, and canned fruits and vegetables. We will look forward to your donations on February 7!

Downtown Ash Wednesday Supper and Service is February 17

We'll be with the congregations from First United Methodist and First Christian at First Christian Church, 611 Clark Ave. The UCC Worship and Music Board is bringing our share of the meal. The Ash Wednesday soup supper begins at 5:30 p.m. Worship service is at 6:30 p.m. Plan to attend this meaningful time of fellowship and worship as we enter the season of Lent. On Wednesdays, Feb. 24 through March 24 soup suppers are at 5:45 p.m. in UCC Fellowship Hall with meditation at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.



FROM THE PASTOR

Within our congregation we do a lot of things together. We do Bible study and other learning events. We share food at breakfast, potlucks and soup suppers. We help others with "Food at First" and delivering "Meals on Wheels." We have workdays to help maintain our building. We could list many other things we do together, but the most important thing we do together, the thing that makes us different from other organizations we belong to, is that we worship together every Sunday and at many other special services. The word "worship" is derived from Old English words meaning, "worth-ship". Worship is giving worth to something. Central to our worship is the worthiness and respect we give to God; however, in our worship we also have our worthiness affirmed by God and practice giving respect to all other people. This Lenten season, which begins on Feb. 17, will give us additional opportunities to come together in worship. We will again join with our friends at First Christian Church and First United Methodist church for three services. On Ash Wednesday we will join together at First Christian Church for a soup supper at 5:30 and worship at 6:30. On Maundy Thursday, April 1, we will worship here at our church at 7:00 p.m. Easter sunrise worship will be at First United Methodist at 7:00 a.m. For the five Wednesdays, from February 24 – March 24, we will gather for a soup supper in the Fellowship Hall at 5:45 p.m. After supper, at 6:30 p.m., we will move into the sanctuary for a devotional Lenten worship. These services will be 20 to 30 minutes in length. They will include many of the elements of worship we are familiar with. There will be singing, praying and scripture reading. There will also be some things different from our usual worship. We will use candles in a new way and there may be some other fire. Rocks, water and colorful pieces of cloth will invite us to focus our devotion. There will be some silence and opportunities for speaking. They will include themes of identity, confession, forgiveness, community, and calling.

Plan to come and experience worship in some new ways, which may give added "worth-ship" to our experience of faith and devotion.

Rev. Paul Johnson

From the Music Director

The chancel choir has been invited to sing at the Northminster Presbyterian Church Christian Song Fest on Sunday, February 21, at 2:00 p.m. NPC is located at 1416 20th Street in Ames. Our choir will sing two pieces, including *Upon This Rock* by Pepper Choplin, which they prepared for the Good Neighbor Benefit Concert. The public is invited. A free will offering will benefit ACCESS (Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support). Refreshments will be served afterwards.

--Lesley Lackore

2009 Annual Report to the Congregation Available

in the parlor or church office after the congregational meeting Jan. 31.

New Sanctuary Christmas Tree and Window Candles Thanks to Funds in Memory of Fran Morgan

Fran Morgan loved the Christmas season. It seemed fitting the service celebrating her life was during the season the UCC sanctuary was decorated for Advent and Christmas. And also fitting that part of the funds given to the church in her memory were used to purchase a new 12-foot pre-lit Christmas tree for the sanctuary and 15 LED (light-emitting diode) candles for the sanctuary window sills.

Sing! Prayer and Praise Coming to Your Church Pew Thanks to Collins Family

The Ames UCC has 120 new song books thanks to a donation by the Collins family in memory of long-time church member Ed Collins who died Nov. 4.

Sing! Prayer and Praise made its debut at General Synod 2009. There are 217 songs in the collection. A little more than 100 have not been previously published. Thousands of songs were evaluated for *Sing!*

Sing! Prayer and Praise is a supplement to whatever hymnal your church uses. Worship music need not be separated into "traditional" and "contemporary," for it all works together for the glory of God! The songs in *Sing!* will work well alongside the hymns of the church.

--from *Sing! Prayer and Praise* questions and answers on www.ucc.org.

What is Praise Music?

Praise music is a memorable, melody-based composition which is musically accessible without being simplistic; it has a fresh sound incorporating less-traditional rhythms and harmonization. Praise music makes one "feel" something with a goal of establishing a deeper relationship with God. It can move one to thought, action, and reflection based on the text or theme.

The language of praise music is inclusive and accessible. It encompasses traditional religious vocabulary; explores non-traditional, contemporary images of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; and draws from the rich imagery found within sacred Scripture.

Praise music seeks to embody the covenantal values of the United Church of Christ: Justice and Peace, Multiracial/Multicultural, Open and Affirming, Accessible to All – as we seek unity; celebrate diversity; honor inclusion; hope for relational, loving communities; and explore multiple images and understandings of God."

~Adopted by the UCC Praise Song Advisory Team, July 22, 2007

10 tips for all congregants to welcome worship guests

1. Wear your nametag
2. Smile
3. Make eye contact
4. Personal warmth — look like you enjoy meeting guests
5. Take initiative to welcome people you don't know
6. Don't ask "Are you new?" or "Is this your first time here?"
7. Say "I don't think I know you, I'm (insert your name here)"
8. Talk to guests after worship concludes
9. Ask if he/she has any questions you can help answer (childcare, coffee fellowship, etc.)
10. Invite guests to the welcome table if they've not stopped on their way in, to coffee fellowship, to see the nursery, to see other parts of the church

The logo for the Social Justice & Outreach Board is a black oval with a white border, containing the text "Social Justice & Outreach Board" in a white serif font.

Social Justice & Outreach Board

Blankets+ Offering February 14

Jan. 15, 2010 news release -- Church World Service (CWS) is sending funds to local partners in Haiti as it continues to assess the situation; partner SSID in Dominican Republic is sending pre-positioned CWS Kits and Blankets from its warehouse in the capital of Santo Domingo to Haiti.

CWS-supported efforts will include the construction of temporary water systems, providing water purification materials, tents and food packages. Additional efforts will be announced.

Don Tatlock, CWS Latin America and Caribbean program manager, is coordinating CWS efforts in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. (end of segment of news release)

Blankets+ (formerly called Tools & Blankets) is a special mission opportunity coordinated by Church World Service. CWS works with partners to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote peace and justice around the world.

For more than 60 years, Church World Service has worked in partnership with local communities to identify their needs and access the resources they need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster.

Angels Among Us During Advent

The Social Justice and Outreach Board partnered with People Place to celebrate the 2009 Christmas season. An Angel Tree was set up in the church parlor with ornaments indicating the “wish lists” of two families in need of our love and community support. The “Red” family had four children, girls ages two and four, boys ages six and eight, and their parents. The “Green” family included girls ages 10 months and 2 years, and a four year old boy, and their parents. Church members provided 22 gifts to help the families celebrate the birth of Jesus and enjoy the joy and hope that Christmas offers. Please give thanks to the angels among us.

People Place provides life-affirming programs to help family members build on their strengths and develop new strengths. Like the Children’s Defense Fund, People Place believes “children grow best in families... and families grow best in communities that invest in them”. People Place is a family resource center of Lutheran Services in Iowa and is located in the educational wing of our church.

--Donna Starck

The Alternative Gift Market is an international non-profit organization that inspires support for humanitarian and environmental causes. The organization offers charitable gifts instead of materialistic gifts that help people and causes around the world and locally. This year was a great success, thanks to many generous people in Ames. Our congregation raised \$1622. Altogether, there were 9 Ames churches participating: Northminster Presbyterian, Collegiate Presbyterian, St. Cecilia Catholic, Collegiate United Methodist, First United Methodist, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Lord of Life Lutheran, Bethesda Lutheran, and the United Church of Christ. Our community raised a total amount of \$22,684 for both local and international organizations.

—Lucas Peterson, UCC Coordinator

The logo for the Christian Education Board is a black oval with a white border, containing the text "Christian Education Board" in a serif font.

Christian Education Board

Learning Center Adult Forum in Fellowship Hall

The program begins at 9:30 a.m. and is preceded by a continental breakfast of doughnuts, pastries, bagels, coffee, tea and juice. The breakfast is served by members of the group on a rotating basis and is supported by a free will offering.

February Learning Center Schedule

Feb. 7 Selva Lehman will lead us in a program in preparation for our Theologian in Residence.

Feb. 14 TBA

Feb. 21 The Theologian in Residence will present the program

Feb. 28 Kirk Daddow will present a program "15 Works of Art that all Christians Should Know"

Worship & Music Board



February 20 & 21 Theologian-in-Residence

The theme is "Biblical Faith and Ecological Hope: Rethinking Theology for the Healing of Creation". Our visiting theologian is the Rev. Peter S. Sawtell, founder and executive director of

Eco-Justice Ministries in Denver. He will give two presentations on Saturday morning (9 a.m. – noon) and one presentation in the afternoon (1:15-2:45 p.m.). On Sunday, Peter will be the presenter at Learning Center and preach during the worship service.

We will serve lunch at noon on Saturday. Tickets are \$8 per person. Lunch tickets will be sold following worship on the first two Sundays in February. The program is self-supporting so even though we do not charge a registration fee, we suggest that participants make a voluntary contribution of \$25 for the program on Saturday. This weekend is labor intensive so we will be looking for volunteers to assist in a variety of ways. There will be volunteer sheets in the church bulletins listing ways you can help. We hope you will choose to be a part of this event and learn too from the Rev. Sawtell. The full schedule was enclosed in the last newsletter, and it is posted on our church website.

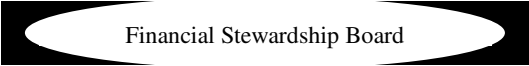
--Nancy E. Brown, Coordinator

Creative persons sought!

The Worship and Music Board seeks to enhance the visual experience of worship services in the sanctuary by adding new contemporary and/or seasonal pieces to our beautiful collection of banners and other fabric liturgical art. If you are interested in being involved in the design or production of some of these items, please contact Sue Lamont, chair of Worship and Music.

Property Board

Recycle Your Church Keys: If you have a key issued by the church and no longer need it, please return it to the church office. UCC keys have an A, B or C and usually a number stamped on them. It saves us the time and expense of producing more keys.



Financial Stewardship Board

Pick up Your Fourth Quarter Contribution Statements

Please help us save postage and handling time by picking up your contribution statement in the back of the sanctuary.



UCC Board

News Online from Iowa UCC Conference Office

'The Parish Paper: Ideas and Insights for Active Congregations' is online at the Iowa UCC Web site. January 2009 -- Become Comfortable with Conflict: Step One to Moving Beyond It!

February 2009 -- Should We Fine-Tune Our Church's Internal Culture?

The Iowa *UCC Reporter* for all UCC members in Iowa is now an online publication.

Find the Parish Papers and UCC Reporters under the publications tab on the Iowa UCC Web site. It's <http://www.ucciaconf.org/Publications.html>. If you want printed copies, you may contact the conference office at (515) 277-6369 or contact the Ames UCC office, (515) 232-9323.



Communities of Interest & Communities of Practice

UCC Book Club Invites Anyone Interested

The book club will meet the second Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. in the parlor

Feb. 10 -- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger from the time she is taken, at age nine, to live in Molching, Germany, with a foster family in a working-class neighborhood of tough kids, acid-tongued mothers, and loving fathers who earn their living by the work of their hands. The child arrives having just stolen her first book—although she has not yet learned how to read.

March 10 – *Home: A Novel* by Marilyn Robinson

The Iowa City author and member of the UCC has a new novel, an elegant variation on the parable of the prodigal son's return. Glory Boughton, now 38 and lovelorn, has returned to Gilead to care for her dying father. Her wayward brother Jack also finds his way back, though his is an uneasy homecoming, reverberating with the scandal that drove him away 20 years earlier.

In keeping with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, race, culture, ability or sexual orientation into our community of faith and affirm the worth of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We are open to the special gifts that each person brings and invite each one to participate in the life of our church.

United Church Courier

United Church of Christ-Congregational
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Ames, IA 50010

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