



# United Church Courier

**God is still speaking.**

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

**Sunday Schedule:**

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

**OGHS**

**One Great Hour of Sharing  
March 14  
UCC offering for international programs**

### Lenten Soup Suppers and Meditation

On Wednesdays 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.

### United Church of Christ's Comma Café Opens for One Night

Saturday, March 6 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Enjoy visiting, poetry readings, poetry open mic, live music, local art and snacks.

Enjoy poetry from Third Stanza: Dennis Mausby, Linda Voit, and music and poetry by Lee Enslow. Share a favorite poem during the open microphone portion. Listen to folk music by Greg Lamont, electric blues performed by Paul Rowland, violin interludes by Becky Bridges and the piano stylings of Lucas Peterson. A variety of art will be on display coordinated by the artist who won best of show at the 2009 Octagon Art Festival, Mary Weisgram. Food, snacks and beverages too. All proceeds from food and refreshments will go to the UCC Youth Group.

### Join the Intergenerational Palm Sunday Celebration

Join us in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, March 28 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. for the 2nd Annual "Palm Sunday Celebration!" There will be lots of crafts for children of all ages, a continental breakfast (provided by Christian Education Board members) and plenty of good conversation! Let's kick off Holy Week with some fun before the Palm/Passion Sunday worship service at 10:45 a.m.!

### Search Committee for Called Pastor Named

The Search Committee will be commissioned during worship on March 7. See page 5.



## FROM THE PASTOR

### **Some Thoughts about Evangelism**

In our congregation we are beginning a conversation about “evangelism.” That’s not a word we have used a lot in the United Church of Christ. For some of us it may conjure up images street corner preacher or of being pestered with the question: “Have you accepted Jesus.” But evangelism is a good word. It simply means sharing the gospel: the good news of God’s grace and love.

**Evangelism begins with the conviction that God loves and accepts us.** It is first of all a statement about God, and what it says about God is not that God thinks humankind so wretched that it deserves death and hell, but that God thinks humankind and the whole creation so good, so beautiful, so precious that it is worth dying for.

**Evangelism is personal.** It is the work of all of us together, but it is also the work of each of us as individuals who have much to share about the importance of God and faith in our life. It is not the work of some of us in the congregation. It is the work of all of us.

**Evangelism calls us to listen.** It is not about telling people what they should believe or even that they should believe. It begins with listening to stories and spiritual struggles of people we encounter with respect and compassion.

**Evangelism is a matter of words and deeds.** Telling others what God has done is only one part of the task of evangelism. Certainly evangelism means speaking words of faith. But Jesus not only told others about God, he also demonstrated God’s love. We are called to live in such a way that others see God’s love in our lives.

**Evangelism creates anxiety and includes risk.** John Bowen (in *Evangelism for “Normal” People*) writes about rediscovering the stories of the first witnesses to Christ’s life, death and resurrection in the book of Acts, and realizing that evangelism is inevitably linked with risk. It’s risky to share our story. It may leave us feeling vulnerable and exposed. It’s risky to reach out and help someone. It’s risky to admit that we don’t know all the answers. Bowen says, “The fact seems to be quite simply that the kingdom of God does not progress unless Jesus’ people are prepared to take risks.” So we are exploring the risks we are willing to take to share the good news that God welcomes and accepts all people.

-Rev. Paul Johnson

**Super Bowl of Caring a Success!**

Thank you to EVERYONE who donated on Super Bowl Sunday! We collected \$136.04 towards team "Colts" and \$374.71 towards team "Saints" (I guess this congregation knew which team would end up #1!) for a total of \$510.75! Wow! What a great display of generosity!!! The money will be equally divided between MICA and Bethesda Community food pantries to help local residents. We will deliver the checks along with the food donations that you provided to these two organizations this month. THANK YOU for all of your support!!!

-- Ames UCC Youth Group

**Five New Members Joined the Church January 31**

*Dan and Genya Coffey*

Genya is in her second year teaching fourth grade at Sawyer Elementary School, and thoroughly enjoys watching and being a part of her students' learning and exploration of their world. Originally from Minneapolis, Genya has been an Iowan since her family moved to West Des Moines when she was in middle school.

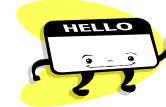
Dan has been a humanities librarian at Iowa State University since 2000, working closely with another UCC member, Ed Goedeken. He feels incredibly lucky to have gotten this job, and can't believe he's been here for 10 years. Dan was born and raised in Rochester, N.Y. and spent his undergraduate and graduate years at SUNY Buffalo before answering the call of the Midwest. Genya moved to Ames when she and Dan were married in 2005. They are joyfully expecting the arrival of their first child in May.

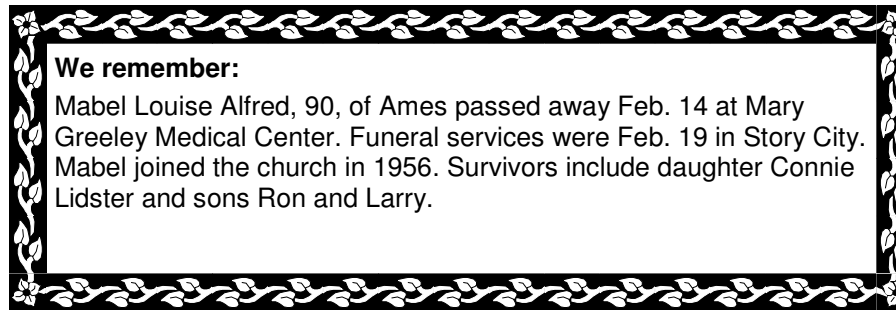
*Joel and Tracy Johnson*

Joel and Tracy Johnson are graduates of Western Illinois University. Tracy graduated in 1994 with a bachelor's in parks and recreation. Joel graduated in 1992 with a bachelor's in history and physical education and a master's in 1994 in college student personnel. Tracy is originally from Crystal Lake, Illinois. Joel is from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. They have lived in Lincoln, Nebraska and Mankato, Minnesota. Joel currently is the Director of Student Services and Programs for the College of Engineering at Iowa State. Tracy currently stays at home with children Brandon 12, Ryan 10, Emma 6, and Reese 2. The Johnsons were a part of the UCC congregation in Mankato, Minnesota prior to moving to Ames.

*Eugene Pottinger*

Eugene Pottinger came to Ames looking for work. He had been living in northern Minnesota. The first Sunday he came to the Ames UCC he told Pastor Paul Johnson that he wanted to have a conversation about faith in Jesus. Eugene was homeless and living in a tent. After conversation and prayer with Pastor Paul, he said that he had not been baptized and wanted to be baptized and join the church. Eugene was baptized during worship on Jan. 31.





From the Minister to Children and Youth

**Join us on Sunday, March 21 for CAMP SUNDAY!**

Pilgrim Heights has a camp designed just for YOU! Information will be available soon on how YOU can sign up! Look in the parlor for a Pilgrim Heights display. If you register by Sunday, March 21 you will be entered into a drawing where one lucky camper will win FREE registration! Our church pays half of your registration fee...so, take a look at your summer calendar and find a time to enjoy camp!

From the Music Director



First Christian Church director of music Colleen McRoberts invites singers from the community to take part in the presentation of Paul Winter's Missa Gaia (Earth Mass) as a community witness of care for and stewardship of the earth, on Sunday, April 25, at 7:00 p.m. Missa Gaia is a 45-minute musical work combining eight-part choir, instrument ensemble and voices from nature. Michael Golemo from the ISU music faculty will be the featured soloist on soprano saxophone. Attendance is required at five of the eight rehearsals scheduled for Sunday afternoons from 2-4 p.m. starting on February 21. All rehearsals and the performance will be held in the sanctuary of First Christian Church, 611 Clark Avenue. If you would like to sing or for more information, contact Colleen McRoberts at (515) 290-6032 or [music@fccames.org](mailto:music@fccames.org).

--Lesley Lackore

**Evangelism is God's idea, not ours**

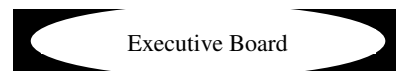
An excerpt from the Center for Renewal at Grand View University, Des Moines blog post --

Evangelism is not simply one individual saving another individual, but is rooted in, radiates from and is an invitation into a community where justice and love prevail over selfishness and individualism.

*What does this mean for individual Christians?* How can I, as a follower of Jesus, become more like Jesus in the way that I show and tell God's love to others?

*What does this mean for our congregations?* What can we do to create and nurture faith communities where love of God and love of neighbor shine like a beacon—a community that will be intriguing and attractive to those who are looking for God, and for a better life?

A resource the blogger cites is *Evangelism for "Normal" People* by John Bowen



### **UCC Pastoral Search Committee Named**

On February 16, the UCC Executive Board approved a committee to search for a called pastor. The committee members are a spectrum of the congregation with diverse ages, occupations, length of membership and service with the church.. They also have qualities of collegiality -- people who participate in discussions as well as listen to and contemplate the opinions of others.

Current congregation responsibilities are listed behind members' names so you can see the connections and relationships. Most all members have served the congregation previously in varied positions.

#### **Search Committee**

Lee Alekel from Green Team  
 Walter Anderson from Worship and Music Board  
 Nolan Dickson from Transition Team, Youth Group  
 Nancy Hart from Member Services Board  
 Elaine Hieber  
 Phil Spike, UCC congregation representative, (chair of interim search committee two years ago)  
 Kris Strum

The search committee will be commissioned during Sunday worship service March 7. The search committee's first meeting will be with Ron Eslinger (acting Conference Minister) and Tony Stoik from the Iowa UCC Conference office.

We thank these members for agreeing to serve on our behalf.  
 --Lynette Spicer, moderator

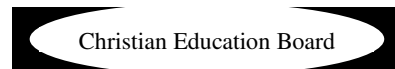
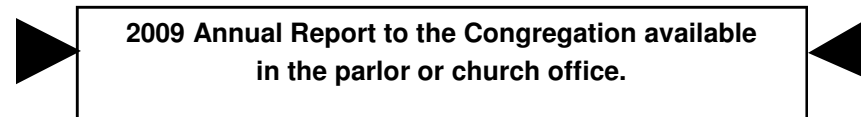
### **Church Treasurer Needed Beginning January 2011**

Greg Lamont will retire December 2010 after three years as the Ames UCC treasurer. The treasurer's position requires at least six hours per week divided about 90 percent bookkeeping and 10 percent reporting. The ideal candidate will be familiar with computer data entry and be detail-oriented. Previous bookkeeping experience would be a plus but is not required as comprehensive training will be provided.

This position has traditionally been filled by a member of the congregation and the Executive Board is currently seeking just such an individual. The Executive Board wants to know by April 15, 2010 if anyone in the congregation is interested in taking that position for 2011; a new treasurer could learn from Greg while he's still in the position. If the position cannot be filled from within our congregation, the Executive Board will need to determine how to realign staff positions to cover the work or outsource the work currently done by the treasurer. The position is salaried at \$2,000/year with FICA benefits. Greg and Jim Peake (treasurer before Greg) can answer questions about the specific duties. Members who have served as treasurer definitely give their time and talents to the church.

Let me know if you are interested or have questions.

--Lynette Spicer, moderator, hollysprings50010@yahoo.com



### **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.

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|----------|---|
| March 7  | Update on KHOI FM community radio                             |
| March 14 | Spring break, no program but the coffee pot will be on        |
| March 21 | Journeys of Faith   |
| March 28 | Intergenerational Palm Sunday Celebration (details on page 1) |

### **Easter Egg Hunt**

Donations for our annual Easter egg hunt will be taken throughout March. If you would like to donate candy (individually wrapped, please) or small toys that can fit into a plastic Easter egg you will find a box in the parlor marked, "Easter Egg Donations". Your donations are appreciated! Last year we were able to hide more than 100 eggs, thanks to your generosity!

Children ages 2-18 are invited to join us for our annual Easter Egg Hunt before worship on Easter Sunday, April 4. We will meet in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m. sharp! If you have friends or family visiting for Easter and there are children within these age ranges--bring them along for the fun! Everyone is welcome!!!



Member Services Board

### **Hindu Temple Tour Set for April 10**

Out of the corn fields and rolling hills near the Des Moines River valley stands an ornate, white building--a Hindu temple. Located south of Madrid off Highway 17, this beautiful structure will be the destination for a tour and lunch on Saturday, April 10. We'll leave the church at 10:30 and drive to the temple for a tour of this remarkable building, a presentation on the Hindu faith and a Hindu lunch. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. We should be back in Ames by about 2:30. We will coordinate a car pool. Be sure to mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend this interesting, interfaith opportunity. Look for more details and a sign up sheet in mid-March. For more information contact Kevin Voit at [kevinvoit@archerserve.com](mailto:kevinvoit@archerserve.com) or (515) 292-3059.



Property Board

Property board is looking for volunteers to help paint two rooms in the church offices on Saturday, February 27 at 9:00 a.m. If you're interested, let Mary Weisgram know. Her home number is (515) 232-1081.



UCC

### **Conference Minister Takes Sabbatical**

Conference Minister Rich Pleva will begin a three month sabbatical on March 1. The Board of Directors has appointed Ron Eslinger as Acting Conference Minister in Rich's absence. Ron will work approximately half time and will typically be in the conference office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. His responsibilities will include supervision of the conference staff, direct support to the congregations of the Central Association, leadership of the three ministers' groups in the Central Association, and support for the Central Association Committee on Ministry and the Conference Board of Directors.

The Iowa Conference is grateful to the Louisville Institute for a grant which will help subsidize the costs of the Acting Conference Minister and other costs related to the program which Rich will pursue while away. That program includes time spent in Amman, Jordan visiting family, and an Amtrak trip to the west coast and back. The remainder of Rich's time away will be spent in reading, walking and gardening - once the weather warms up!

Communities of Interest and Communities of Practice

### **UCC Green Team Wants You to Help Stash the Trash**

The UCC Green Team is organizing a group to participate in "Stash the Trash" on Saturday, March 27. This is part of VEISHEA Service Day ("Keep Iowa State Beautiful"), a campus-wide effort to keep campus and Ames litter free. Here is a brief description of this event:

Stash the Trash is a community-wide beautification project. Local residents and ISU students will work together to remove litter and other debris from neighborhoods, roadways and parks. It is a great project for organizations, groups and families.

We have some individuals who are interested, but we would really like additional participants. Please let Lee Alekel or Ted Peterson know if you are interested in participating in the UCC group to Stash the Trash.



### **UCC Book Club Invites Anyone Interested**

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

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.

April 14 -- *Horse Soldiers: The Extraordinary Story of a Band of U.S. Soldiers Who Rode to Victory in Afghanistan* by Doug Stanton

Special Forces soldiers who first put American boots on the ground in Afghanistan in 2001 fought alongside the Northern Alliance. The troops often riding on horseback achieved several important victories against the Taliban.



### **Main Street Cultural District events**

Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt – starts March 18

Fashion Show – May 2

Tune Into Main Street Concert Series - Thursday evenings, May 27 – July 29

Downtown ArtWalk - June 4

4th of July Festival – July 4

Downtown MusicWalk – September 16

Snow Magic – November 19 – 21

### **Annual World Day of Prayer is Friday, March 5**

World Day of Prayer is a movement of women from many faith traditions coming together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday of March. Prepared by the women of Cameroon in Africa, the 2010 service will begin with the first sunrise in the Pacific region and follow Earth's orbit, shining its light upon families worldwide under the theme "Let everything that has breath praise God."

Church Women United sponsors this worship service of music, meditation and prayer. Local host this year is Bethesda Lutheran Church, 1517 Northwestern in Ames, from 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. An offering will support international grants for women and children struggling to cope with justice, peace, healing and wholeness in their lives. Invite your friends of faith to join women worldwide for World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 5!

### **Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance**

The last calendar year marked the third I served as our church's representative to Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance (GNEA). It was the second year I served as vice-president of the organization and I also am a member of the fund raising and personnel committees.

As economic conditions affected more residents in Story County, GNEA has seen increased requests to provide services to households. Food vouchers, rent assistance, help with utility bills plus bus and haircut vouchers are all a part of the assistance the organization provides. They also make suggestions of additional resources in the community for additional help.

Full-time director, Mike Fritz, continues to reach out to faith groups, governmental organizations and other groups. The effort is two fold: to let the community know of GNEA services and to encourage financial support for the organization.

The GNEA board is made up of a variety of representatives from faith groups in the area. We are working to encourage involvement, financial and otherwise, from these groups.

In the past year the major fund raisers were the spring dinner at Lucullan's and the fall choral concert. I personally coordinated the gift wrapping fund raiser at Borders, which raised more than \$450.

I am proud and honored that UCC is not only one of the founding churches of GNEA but continues to be a major contributor to its ongoing mission.

Kevin F. Voit, UCC representative to Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance

### **Good Neighbor Benefit March 7**

A fund-raising dinner to benefit Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance is Sunday, March 7 at Lucullan's Italian Grill, 400 Main St. Event organizers hope to raise \$3,000 for Good Neighbor's Healthy Food Voucher Program which provides needy households with grocery vouchers for produce and meat. Demand for the vouchers rose 28 percent in fiscal year 2009.

Social time is 5:30—6:30 p.m. The family style dinner begins at 6:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$30. To purchase a dinner ticket, contact Kevin Voit at 292-3059 or stop by the Good Neighbor office, 508 Kellogg Ave. (across from the post office), from 9 to noon Monday through Friday.

**Don't forget to check us out on the web:  
www.amesucc.org**

**2010 Easter Lily  
Would You Like to Donate a Lily for Easter?**

I/We wish to provide \_\_\_\_\_ (#) Easter Lily/Lilies for use in our church service on Easter Sunday. Cost is \$10.00 (this cost covers the plant, tax and delivery charge).

**Order Deadline: March 25**

**Name:**

**In Remembrance of:**

**In Honor of:**



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  
217 Sixth Street  
Ames, IA 50010

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 153  
Ames, IA 50010

Return Service Requested

**STAFF:**

**Ministers** Rev. Paul A. Johnson, Interim Minister  
Hannah Hannover, Children & Youth Minister  
**Secretary** Becky A. Bridges

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Moderator** Lynette Spicer  
**Member Services** Kristin Shields  
**Worship & Music** Sue Lamont  
**Property** Roger Parmenter, Greg Luecke, Mary Weisgram  
**Financial Stewardship** Joyce Hertz  
**Christian Education** Ginny Shenk, Art Pohm  
**Social Justice and Outreach** Tom Hertz  
**Association and Conference Delegate** Phil Spike  
**Clerk** Kathie Drummond