

Ames United Church of Christ 2014 Annual Reports

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Interim Pastor

Besides addressing the normal Interim Tasks (Coming to Terms with History; Discerning the Congregation's Purpose and Identity; Supporting Leadership Change and Development; Reaffirming and Strengthening Denominational Links; and Committing to New Leadership and New Ministry), it seemed that the greatest needs upon my arrival were to stabilize the finances and help get the Team model working. It was great to have such a capable Stewardship and Finance Team to work with, and to have the Executive Board be able to present a balanced budget.

The Teams are still a work-in-progress, but they seem to have gained a lot more traction. I'm also pleased to have a functioning Personnel Committee.

An issue that arose early in my time was the need to deal with the growing pains of how to incorporate small children into worship, while also allowing older members enough quiet to be able to hear and focus. It was wonderful to see the Christian Education Team embrace this issue with such energy and creativity, launching the new Godly Play curriculum. This curriculum provides a worship-centered experience to the children when they are separated from the main worship service, while also giving them a deeper understanding of worship so that they can participate more fully when they are in the main service. We are already seeing the fruits of this new venture.

Other highlights of the year for me: offering a Membership Exploration Class with the Invitation and Welcome Team, and receiving five new members; holding Taize services during Lent with the help of the Worship and Music Team; and launching a new small group, Friends for the Journey, led by Sharron and Bill Slinger.

I hope you know how blessed you are with your staff—it's a joy to work with them; and I am so grateful to have Phil Spike as Moderator. His thoughtful leadership makes my job so much easier.

As the Pastoral Search Committee continues their work, I feel confident that your next Pastor will step into a congregation that is both stable and vibrant, and ready to move forward into the future that God has in store for you.

-- Respectfully Submitted, Terry Hamilton-Poore

Minister to Children and Families

This year was about taking a look at our Sunday morning programming for the children and youth and making some changes! In June, Genya Coffey and I traveled to Milwaukee to attend a training event about a curriculum titled, Godly Play. We were so impressed that we decided to make changes to our Sunday morning schedule to include Godly Play stories with our children ages 4 through 5th grade. In addition to having the stories during Sunday School, on the first Sunday of every month the children are invited to go upstairs to our Godly Play room after the Children's Lesson in worship for an extra story. The stories are told using very simple objects and afterwards they can respond to the story using art supplies, play dough, read stories, or retell the story on their own. The Godly Play stories are divided into three categories 1.) Sacred Stories (Creation, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, etc.), 2.) Parables (Mustard Seed, Good Shepherd, etc.) and 3.) Liturgical (Baptism, Church Year, etc.) and have been well received by both the children as well as the adults!

Other changes to our Sunday mornings include a new Middle School Sunday School class that allows our Middle School Youth to be together discussing current topics and tying them into scripture lessons. We have four high school youth taking confirmation with Rev. Terry Hamilton-Poore during the Sunday School hour and for our littlest children we continue to have our pre-school class.

Our youth, along with Youth Minister Linda Hanson, spent a lot of time this Spring being creative raising funds for their mission trip to the Heifer International ranch in Perryville, Arkansas. The youth cleaned up after all of our Lenten soup suppers and were busy around town leaving purple toilets in the yards of congregation members that did not pay their "insurance". Those that went on the mission trip included: Abby Buchele, Jacob Buchele, Kesia Hanson, Alison McHenry, Cecilia Monroe, Kathryn Shields and chaperones Bruce and Linda Hanson. With Linda's resignation in the Fall we were able to quickly fill the position when Emily Kenneke agreed to step back into the role of Youth Director.

Other highlights of the year include: Vacation Bible School with our friends at First United Methodist Church (this was a particular highlight for me because after 11 summers of leading VBS my son, Will, was old enough to participate!), continuing to organize Congregational Dinners for our church members and friends, starting our second year of Wednesday Afternoon Club, and handing out 6 Bibles this Fall to our Kindergarten and 3rd grade children! I always love to mention when we have a new baby added to our group and this year we are so excited to welcome Leo Johnson!

It has been a joy to have additional Sundays to lead you in worship and preach! I continue to feel God working through each of us and within our congregation. Praise be to God!

-- Hannah Hannover

Music

Make music to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, – Psalm 98:5

We are blessed to have organist Sunny Stewart and our chancel choir leading us in song for worship. In addition to singing for Sunday services, the chancel choir:

- Joined with choir members from First United Methodist Church and First Christian Church to sing for our joint service for Maundy Thursday.
- Sang with members of the First Christian Church in summer choir during our joint services in July.
- Participated in the Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Benefit Concert on November 9, where the massed choir from the 15 participating choirs was directed by Lesley Lackore.
- Presented a special music service for Christmas.

During 2014, we said goodbye to choir members Lyle Allen, Ken Brooke and Jenny Ladd, and welcomed new member Allie McHenry and returning member Laura Deal. Chancel choir members also shared their gifts in providing special music for worship services, in addition to Tom Meyer and the vacation Bible school kids. We also welcomed flutist Elizabeth Morse and soprano Emily Schuldt who shared their musical talents.

With the leadership of Sunny Stewart, music continues to be an important part of our Sunday school program. The Sunday school children have shared their growing enthusiasm for music during Sunday worship.

We appreciate the support of the congregation, especially the parents of our children and the families of the members of the chancel choir, as we all make a joyful noise to the Lord!

-- Lesley Lackore, Music Director

Moderator

The past year has seemed like a very busy year in the life of our church but perhaps it is just my perception because I was more aware of all of the happenings. This year as Moderator, I more fully appreciate how many of your volunteer hours it takes to manage the programs of the church. If you will allow me the turn of phrase: **“It takes a whole congregation to make a church function.”** I would like to thank everyone that contributed their time, treasure and talents. With the preparations for the 150th Anniversary Capital Campaign and Celebration, the search for a new called minister and the normal good things accomplished by our congregation, it has been a head-spinning year for me. The Christian Education Team has substantially revised the children’s programs with the new “Godly Play” curriculum materials. The Financial Stewardship Team started the year with a projected budget deficit of almost \$20,000 and ended the year recording an increase in pledges of over \$30,000 and a balanced budget for 2015. The Theologian-in-Residence had a very memorable and well-attended program with Phyllis Tickle. We voted to make significant changes in the way we fund local and regional outreach using our loose offering and special offerings. These were just the short-term accomplishments for the year. There were many, many other activities that made 2014 meaningful as a year in our collective life as the Ames United Church of Christ.

Learning Center, Men’s Fellowship, Women’s Fellowship, Youth Group, Sunday School, Insight Bible Study, Choir, Drum Circle, Food at First, Peace Bell Ringing, Wednesday Bible Study, WAC, Wednesday Morning Work Crew, PFLAG, Meals on Wheels, Young Adult Meetup, Newsletter Assembly, UCC Book Club, Souper Bowl of Caring, Friends for the Journey, Congregational Dinners, Emergency Residence, Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Valentine Date Night Fundraiser, Caregivers, Lenten Soup Suppers, AMOS, VBS, 4th of July Parade, ABC (Attic to Basement Church) Sale, LGBTA Fellowship, Youth Mission Trip, Blessing of the Backpacks, Habitat for Humanity, Easy as Apple Pie, OXFAM, Students for Progressive Christianity, Fall Clean Up Day, Hearty Eucharist, Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Benefit Concert, Alternative Gift Market, Angel Tree, and Worship were just some of the activities listed on the church calendar for the year that distinguish us as the Ames United Church of Christ. **Whoever you are or wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!**

-- Respectfully submitted Philip Spike, Moderator

2014 Annual Reports for Ames United Church of Christ

Clerk

Active Members, 01/01/14..... 209
Inactive Members, 01/01/14..... 1
Affiliate Members, 01/01/14..... 5

Members Received During 2014-2015..... 5
 Marlys Benck 07/27/14
 Dajsa Deuel 07/27/14
 Enrique Ramon Hernandez 07/27/14
 Ashlen Rutherford 07/27/14
 Richard C. White 07/27/14

Transfers..... 6
 Carolyn Parmenter 01/16/14
 Roger Parmenter 01/16/14
 Bob Beyer 01/16/14
 Rachel Beyer 01/16/14
 Nancy E. Brown 02/22/14
 Nancy Hart 09/10/14

Removed by Request 7
 Andrew Ryder 01/17/14
 Lindsey Adams 01/17/14
 Alicia Cast 01/20/14
 Matthew Potoski (affiliate) 01/20/14
 Alyson McClair 04/28/14
 Andrew Lamont 11/30/14
 Meg Monroe 12/31/14

Removed by Executive Board 2
 Nick Grall 11/18/14
 Jackson Thomas 11/18/14

Deaths 3
 Julia Carlander 02/15/14
 Valree Mae Blewett-Dickson 03/18/14
 Ruth Mosher Brown 04/10/14

Total Active Members, 12/31/14 197
Total Inactive Members, 12/31/14..... 1
Total Affiliate Members, 12/31/14..... 4

Baptisms5
 Griffin Pierce Richards 06/29/14
 Lila Katherine Richards 06/29/14
 Landon LeRoy Johnson 12/07/14
 Leo James Johnson 12/07/14
 Erin Luisa Bauer 12/28/14

Marriages.....5
 Rachel Leigh Jones and Nicholas Charles Schelle
06/07/14
 Kendra Carlson and Mark Gansen.....06/14/14
 Kelsey Manecke and Derek Morgan06/21/14
 Alison Carleton and Cyndie Drury07/04/14
 Tom Edmondson and Lynn Alan Peterson
10/18/14

-- Lynette Spicer, Clerk

Association and Conference Delegates

Your elected Church Representatives for 2014 were Jim Peake and Greg Lamont. They represent the Ames United Church of Christ as voting delegates and participants at the UCC – Iowa Conference (state-wide) and the UCC – Iowa – Central Association (made up of UCC churches in several mid-Iowa counties).

The Central Association met in Madrid in November of 2014 while the Iowa Conference met in Des Moines in November. Jim Peake attended both of these events along with Cornelia Flora and Terry Hamilton-Poore.

The role of the Church Representative is a very interesting position. You are able to serve in the local, Association and Conference settings of the church. You sit on the Ames UCC Executive Board, and participate in the workings of the Central Iowa and state-wide Church as well.

-- E. James Peake

Financial Secretary

Distribution of Annual Pledges

Amount of pledge	# in 2014	# in 2015
Greater than \$20,000	1	1
\$6,000 - \$13,000	7	13
\$4,000 - \$5,999	13	13
\$3,000 - \$3,999	10	11
\$2,000 - \$2,999	19	11
\$1,500 - \$1,999	12	4
\$1,000 - \$1,499	11	12
\$500 - \$999	12	13
\$499 & below	9	12
Total Number of Pledges	94	90

Number of pledges in prior years

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
98	93	95	97	96	83	84	95	100

Total Pledge Amount for 2015 as of Jan. 21, 2015 = \$287,634

-- Nancy Heathman, Financial Secretary

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Treasurer Report for 2014

	<u>YEAR</u> <u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>YEAR</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	
INCOME:			
Budget Income			
2014 Pledges (paid in 2014)	\$248,478.78	\$251,804.00	99%
2014 Prepaid Pledges (2013)	\$12,450.00	\$12,450.00	100%
Non Pledge Contributions	\$13,569.00	\$12,145.00	112%
Prior Year Pledges	\$790.00	\$500.00	158%
Loose Collection	\$3,805.94	\$4,400.00	86%
Transfers Other Funds	\$18,138.48	\$18,138.00	100%
Rent	\$9,914.16	\$8,700.00	114%
Investments (int,dvd)	\$930.55	\$500.00	186%
Rummage Sale (ABC)	\$1,443.75	\$1,751.00	82%
Other Income	\$37.79		
Total Budget Income	\$309,558.45	\$310,388.00	100%
Prepaid Pledges 2015	\$14,000.00		
Total Operating Income	\$323,558.45		
Expense:			
Budget Expense			
Member Services	\$288.38	\$700.00	41%
Secretarial Staff	\$32,987.68	\$31,752.00	104%
Office Expense	\$8,367.96	\$7,589.00	110%
House Expense	\$38,806.54	\$40,175.00	97%
Utilities	\$21,392.60	\$18,100.00	118%
Lawn Care and Snow Removal	\$1,800.00	\$1,250.00	144%
Christian Education Program	\$3,217.36	\$3,040.00	106%
Christian Education Personnel	\$41,046.90	\$41,535.00	99%
Worship Program	\$568.30	\$600.00	95%
Music Program	\$1,753.61	\$1,925.00	91%
Music Personnel	\$18,949.92	\$19,500.00	97%
Financial Stewardship	\$352.46	\$450.00	78%
Ministerial Staff	\$86,457.18	\$83,260.00	104%
Association/Conference	\$150.00	\$350.00	43%
Caring Network	\$270.56	\$250.00	108%
Evangelism Expense	\$2,235.46	\$2,450.00	91%
Executive Board Discretionary Exp.	\$200.00	\$200.00	100%
Sexton	\$11,458.32	\$11,859.00	97%
Treasurer & Financial Secretary	\$3,427.68	\$3,428.00	100%
Subtotal Budget Expense	\$273,730.91	\$268,413.00	102%
Giving Beyond Our Building	\$30,539.21	\$29,525.00	103%
Total Budget Expense	\$304,270.12	\$297,938.00	102%
Prepaid Pledges 2014	\$12,450.00		
Total Operating Expense	\$316,720.12		
Net Budget Income	\$5,288.33		
Net Operating Income	\$6,838.33		

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<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12/31/13</u>	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12/31/14</u>
Cash		
First National Bank Checking	\$91,389.10	\$69,527.15
Ameriprise CDs & Money Market	27,972.82	28,122.39
Ameriprise Cash Brokerage Account	94.24	18,158.09
Total Cash Assets	\$119,456.16	\$115,807.63
Investments		
UC Funds Adult Equity Fund	\$48,061.99	\$49,617.69
UC Funds General Equity Fund	48,724.61	49,679.54
UC Funds Adult Balanced Fund	90,236.70	91,822.38
UC Funds Gen'l. Balanced Fund	86,578.97	88,100.37
UC Funds Fixed Income Fund	90,213.27	91,529.32
UC Funds Int'l. Equity Fund	42,437.37	39,249.95
UC Funds Cash & Equiv. Fund	6,607.37	7,878.77
Progress Energy CVO 200 shares	65.00	77.60
13 shares AT&T	457.08	436.67
Total Investments	\$413,382.36	\$418,392.29
Total Assets	\$532,838.52	\$534,199.92
 <u>LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES</u>		
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$7,638.18	\$17,917.50
Total Liabilities	\$7,638.18	\$17,917.50
 Fund Balances		
Operating Fund	(\$5,605.42)	\$522.30
Investment Income Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest Spending Funds		
Allan Fund	11,402.59	11,402.59
Bath Family Educational Fund	27,356.43	28,415.39
Outreach Fund	2,451.31	2,451.31
Adult Progam Endowment Fund	146,115.49	150,528.27
 Interest Accumulating Funds		
Endowment Fund	144,226.42	146,113.87
Memorial Gifts Fund	10,391.93	14,047.25
Kitchen/Parlor Fund	766.90	775.84
Capital Gain & Loss Fund	65,974.14	49,140.54
Building Escrow Fund	10,992.96	22,712.02
Office Escrow Fund	2,363.04	1,882.34
Instrument Maintenance Fund	9,088.60	9,697.51
 Special Operations Funds		
Sabbatical Escrow Fund	11,877.31	11,877.31
Soup Supper Fund Balance	(23.55)	60.45
Funeral Fund	1,290.20	1,290.20
Flower Fund	(189.90)	(189.90)
Key Deposit Fund	200.00	200.00
Theologian in Residence Fund	1,790.57	3,426.55
Miscellaneous Fund	8,298.02	6,822.89
Confirmation Fund	323.27	323.27
Previous Year Outreach Fund	6,145.75	7,702.13
Allan Interest Fund	9,264.73	9,505.76
Pastoral Discretionary Fund	2,126.41	2,260.41

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Christian Education Funds

Bath Family Interest Fund	4,074.89	673.02
Sunday School Fund	259.17	259.17

Temporary Church Funds

150th Capital Campaign	50,000.00	30,305.25
Geist Campus Ministry Fund	2,293.15	1,787.95
Buiding Repair Fund	205.02	0.00
Website Upgrade Fund	343.25	343.25
Undesignated Outreach Fund	1,165.48	1,785.48
Audio-Visual System Fund	(77.72)	0.00

Regular Appeals

Habitat for Humanity	150.00	0.00
Good Neighbor Fund	(0.10)	0.00
Personal Outreach	160.00	160.00

Total Fund Balances	\$525,200.34	\$516,282.42
Total Liabilities & Fund Balances	\$532,838.52	\$534,199.92

-- Jim Dickson, Treasurer

Team Advisor (Team Coordinator)

The duties of the Team Advisor as stated in the church by-laws are:

1. Serve as an organizational assistant to the team coordinators.
2. Have a sense of all projects of the teams.
3. Use historical reference to ensure all desired programs and projects are being considered.
4. Keep a record of the year's projects and missions for the benefit of future moderators and team coordinators.
5. Consult on scheduling of projects and missions based on the plans of all teams.

This past year the team coordinator met with the team leadership, coordinators and vice-coordinators, to support and challenge them as they provided leadership for the church. Two all church events that showcased the teams, projects and the volunteers needed to help each team's tasks and brainstorm new visions were held in 2014.

Developing a master tracking system of church events, creating opportunities for better communication and helping teams recruit volunteers are continuing goals for the next year.

-- Respectively submitted by, Ellen Barnhart

Christian Education Team

The Christian Education Team has had another exciting year!

Throughout this year we have tried to offer alternative learning for adults. We continue to have our adult Learning Center each Sunday morning and for a brief time we also offered a Bible study on Sunday mornings under the leadership of Enrique Hernandez and Amy Erica Smith. During the week Interim Pastor Terry Hamilton-Poore leads a Bible study on Wednesday mornings and Ellen Barnhart leads a dvd discussion group on Thursday afternoons.

Another adult learning opportunity was the UCC Book Club. It normally meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2:00 pm for a discussion of that month's book. Members of the group decide among themselves about what books the group will read.

Thanks to Barbara Faidley and her ongoing efforts to keep our Church Library organized and visible! Several times throughout the year Barbara highlight seasonal books in the parlor with her creative idea of "books and bread" or "brownies and bread"!

Our youth took a fabulous week long mission trip to Perryville, Arkansas over the summer. This Fall our current Youth Minister, Linda Hanson, turned in her resignation and the committee hired Emily Kenneke, a familiar face to our youth program.

In June I attended a Core Training Event for Godly Play in Milwaukee with Hannah Hannover. We were so impressed and energized by this curriculum that we decided to implement it with our pre-school and elementary children on Sunday mornings. We have had amazing discoveries with the children as they learn about Bible stories as well as liturgical action stories.

Our church participated in a week-long Vacation Bible School with our friends at First United Methodist across the street. It was a week of learning about "God's Wonders". Thanks to Bradley Duckstein for being our fearless game leader for the entire week!

Hannah continues to lead Wednesday Afternoon Club on Wednesdays after school. Many thanks to those adults that help her on a regular basis: Carl Tipton, Jerry Chase, Ellen Barnhart, Dajsa Deuel, and Ashlen Rutherford.

Builder's Sunday (formally known as Rally Sunday) was a lot of fun. We were able to share the pieces to a few of our Godly Play stories with all of you and demonstrate the story of Creation. We continue to look forward to how these stories will stir within our children and work within our entire congregation.

-- Genya Coffey, Coordinator, Christian Education Team

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Financial Stewardship Team

Members: Jim Peake, Larry Trede, Diana McHenry (Vice-coordinator), Doug Powell (Coordinator); Ex officio: Rev. Terry Hamilton-Poore, James Dickson (Treasurer), Nancy Heathman (Financial Secretary), Phil Spike (Moderator)

Responsibility: Manage the solicitation, receipt, and deposit of financial contributions; provide routine management of the church's financial affairs and compile the annual budget.

Actions throughout 2014:

- Beginning in February with the help of last year's coordinator, Sharron Slinger, we undertook a planning process to be completed by Pentecost Sunday. The resulting 2014 "Good News!" objectives have been diligently acted upon by the FST throughout 2014.
- At the February 18 Executive Board Meeting, Treasurer James Dickson reported that the Louise Dengler estate made a significant contribution to our church. "The family has said to put this money to use where it is needed most. Financial Secretary Nancy Heathman will post this to memorial gifts [rather than to the endowment fund] in February." At the March 18, 2014 Executive Board Meeting joint committee motions were approved that set aside \$3,000 for carpeting the main level of the church office building and \$700 for insulating the attic space of the church office building. Both projects were completed by the Property Team in 2014. The Louise Dengler Memorial also funded the \$292.24 cost of the new name tags cart in April.
- In March we distributed the book entitled "Whose Offering Plate Is It?" – New Strategies for Financial Stewardship to active FST team members as part of this annual planning undertaking. On March 28 and 29 team members Hamilton-Poore, Spike, McHenry, and Powell attended an Iowa Conference seminar entitled "Faithful and Generou\$" at the Ankeny UCC, again as part of this annual planning undertaking.
- In mid-April, Kim Spangler from SoJo and McHenry and Powell from Financial Stewardship met with Moderator Spike to discuss separating Local and Regional Outreach from the annual operating budget ... much like Our Churches Wider Mission has traditionally been handled. Thus began our preparations for the then upcoming annual campaign and an on-going implementation dialog as we now enter 2015.
- Jim Peake facilitated the beginning of our annual budgeting exercise in May ... roughly 4 months earlier than has been done traditionally. Diana McHenry, in addition to her Memorial Fund responsibilities, committed to the promotion of how generous giving enables both internal and outreach missions. And Larry Trede committed to working with Pastor Hamilton-Poore and Financial Secretary Heathman to bring a more personalized approach to our 2015 annual pledge fund drive.
- At their August meeting the Executive Board approved the annual financial review led by Larry Trede and Troy Strum.
- Diana McHenry worked with our Minister to Children and Families, Hannah Hannover and Christian Education Coordinator Genya Coffey to fund the Godly Play Curriculum from Memorials. Everything was up and running for the restart of Sunday School in the Fall.
- Funding of architectural services in support of the 150th Capital Campaign has consumed nearly half of the \$50,000 seed contribution that was left to our church in December, 2013.
- The Good News! at year end is that Ames UCC has managed to keep expenditures less than actual contributions and other income for 2014. And as we head into 2015, we do not anticipate using investment income from 2014 to help balance the 2015 budget.

-- Doug Powell, FST Team Coordinator

Invitation and Welcome (Evangelism) Team

The Team Coordinators decided to use as a “working title” for the Team the term “Invitation and Welcoming” (Evangelism) Team to better represent our activities. At our organizational Team meeting in February it was determined that:

1. Lynette Spicer would be asked to continue in helping us determine and set up “advertisements”.
2. Phil Spike would be asked to continue the major role in developing and maintaining “the church website and Internet presence.”
3. Amy Erica Smith would plan to attend as many “Students for Progressive Christianity” at ISU meetings as possible and be our “connection.”
4. Pastor Terry Hamilton-Poore would attend the Religious Leaders Association at ISU representing the Ames UCC.
5. “Mentoring new members” was transferred from the Member Services Team to the “Invitation and Welcoming” Team.
6. Pastor Terry updated the letter for the new member packet.
7. We would develop a team of “hosts” who would sit in various regions of the sanctuary and welcome visitors. We designated these folks as “Pew Pals” and Amy Erica Smith invited about 20 folk to be a part of that group. A luncheon meeting was held after church on March 31 to kick off that effort and encourage interest in other activities with the “I&W” Team.

An ad was placed in the Ames Tribune before Easter Sunday.

A three part Membership Exploration class was developed and led by Pastor Terry with Hannah Hanover, Amy Erica Smith, Ellen Barnhart, and Bill Yungclas assisting and was held on Sundays in May and June with as many as ten prospective members attending. This resulted in a new member class of five being accepted into our church family on July 27. For the first time Mentors were assigned to each new member.

An ad was placed in the ISU Student Planner, which is free to all ISU students. This provided exposure in three media: the printed planner, the AroundCampus website, and the AroundCampus mobile app. Eighteen public service announcements were sponsored on central Iowa Public Radio from September 1 through September 12 inviting people to visit Ames UCC.

The Welcome Table is staffed on Sunday mornings from one half hour before the worship service until 15 minutes after worship to welcome visitors, make name tags for them, encourage them to sign the guest book with address and email address. The Pastor sends “Thanks for visiting” letters the following week. After visiting 2-3 times, permanent nametags are made for visitors. We have started using 2-4 of the same people as hosts of the Welcome Table to provide consistency and knowledge of visitors from week to week. Pew Pals and Welcome Table Hosts help visitors meet members during Coffee Fellowship after worship and inform them of various other church activities, which might interest them.

An ad was placed in the Ames Tribune to invite people to the Christmas Eve service and a promotional piece was placed on the website about Advent at the Ames UCC.

Another three week Membership Exploration Class series is planned for January with membership intake on January 25 and Mentors assigned to the new members.

-- Submitted by: Bill R. Yungclas, Team Coordinator

Member Services Team and Caring Network Team

The Member Services Team assumed responsibility for organizing the 2014 Lenten Soup Suppers. Small connection groups were asked to provide and serve one meal during Lent with the intention of strengthening the organizations of existing connection groups—i.e. Executive Board Officers and Conference Representatives, the Choir, Women's Group, LGBT Group, Men's Group, Young Adults Group. Youth Group cleaned up after each meal and thereby received all donations from those attending soup suppers. Connection group members especially appreciated being able to attend worship services rather than clean up. Both suppers and services were well attended.

A nametag cart was purchased using memorial gift funds making name tags more portable and used more often at different functions.

In partnership with the 150th Celebration Committee, the Member Services Team participated in a number of activities this summer.

The church was a part of this year's Historic Old Town Neighborhood Association Home & Garden Tour—Sunday, June 22 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. An open house provided refreshments and entertainment.

The church also joined in the Ames Sesquicentennial Celebration during the 4th of July weekend. Ellen Barnhart and Peg Powell coordinated all details, including volunteer recruitment for the church's parade entry—a beautifully decorated, birthday cake float, celebrating Ames UCC's 150th anniversary.

A 150th Celebration Play—*The Bell at Sixth & Kellogg* was performed at the Chautauqua event that moved from Bandshell Park to City Auditorium—Saturday, July 5th at 3:30 pm. More than twenty-five volunteers participated in the production. Thanks go to all of the performers and stage crew, including our videographer, Phil Spike.

The annual I-Cubs tailgate and game scheduled for August 17 (Food Pantry Day) was cancelled since all free (Food Pantry) tickets were pre-purchased.

The team participated in Builders' Sunday in two ways. The team provided few alternatives to the traditional coffee fellowship; several different examples of snacks were served along with coffee, tea, lemonade and water. The display table signed up numerous members to serve coffee fellowship, set up a prayer chain, organize a cribbage group, provide valet parking in the winter participate in a baking/cooking class, and organize general activities.

The annual Chili Cook-Off & Pie Bake-Off, Saturday, October 25th was a great success. Interest and attendance were up from recent years. Fourteen pies and twelve pots of chili competed for honors.

The 150th Anniversary Celebration Kick-Off, Sunday, November 26, featured a well-attended potluck lunch following the all-church play—*The Bell at Sixth & Kellogg*.

Caring Network operated as a part of the Member Services Team; however, it still maintains separate leadership thanks to Kristin Shields and Christa Anderson. The only thing to change, it no longer sends a separate representative to Executive Council meetings.

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The Caring Network provides various services for UCC members and friends. In 2014 these services included:

1. Providing 1 or more meals: for people who were ill or in the case of 3 families had new babies. This usually involved 2 meals per week for 3 weeks or so. Many people were involved in preparing and delivering meals.
2. Performing yard work: in one case raking a yard and in another case 6 people doing 2 hours each of mulching and raking.
3. Providing pet care - 6 people provided dog walking services 2 times daily on a rotating basis for 11 days.
4. Setting up rides to appointments and for errands: 2 people received rides for several months. One of these people continues to receive rides on at least a weekly basis. The Caring Network sets up rides, and then the person needing transportation often works out an ongoing schedule. The Caring Network also found rides for one time appointment needs for several church members. In addition, church members often see a need and offer rides without the Caring Network being directly involved.
5. Moving individual pieces of furniture on 3 occasions for 2 different church families.
6. Moving one couple 2 times in 2014. The 1st move required 8 people to work 4 ½ hours each. The second move took 8 people working 2 hours each.

All these services involved many church members, some of whom volunteered without even being asked. For transporting furnishings whether single pieces of furniture or whole moves volunteers did heavy lifting and even provided trucks/trailers when needed.

-- Respectfully submitted by Jan Bauer, Christa Andersen and Kristin Shields

Property Team

The property team works to operate and maintain the building, grounds and associated equipment. With a large aging structure, this can be challenging. We work very closely with the sexton, David Cook. Dave provides a wide range of skills and knowledge to our organization.

Two groups that have done a lot to maintain our facilities deserve special mention. Dinah Kerksieck, Steve Rogers-Smith and others have done a great job taking care of the landscaping around the building. The Wednesday morning work crew does a wide variety of tasks, from changing exterior banners to major demolition and building. Both of these groups have a small core group, and would welcome additional help on an occasional or frequent basis.

Projects completed

- Completed conversion of florescent lights to more energy efficient models
- The team took care of cleaning the building during the Sexton's vacation
- Replaced carpet in first floor of the office building. Team members prepared the area. A contractor installed the carpet.
- Insulation added to the attic of the office building. Team members prepared the space; including installing vents in the windows, installing a box around the stairs, caulking cracks, and putting down a vapor barrier; a contractor blew in the installation.
- Repaired broken and loose floor tile in fellowship hall.
- Removed robe cabinet and damaged walls in choir room, due to mold problem.
- Asbestos containing floor coverings were removed in choir room, youth room and adjoining hallways. The team did the preparation work; a contractor did the actual removal.
- Had energy audits done on church and office buildings. We are slowly implementing some of the recommendations. Some top recommendations were: clean and tune heating and cooling systems, consider more attic insulation in church, caulk and weather strip doors and windows
- Updated building use policy and fees.
- Many small repairs and improvements, too numerous to mention, have been made.

Projects still in works

- Completion of Choir room work including: new floor covering, rebuild east wall, finish replaced wallboard, move in furnishings.
- Completion of Youth room work including: new floor covering, rebuild wall behind cabinets, rebuild partition around lounge area, reassemble and move in furnishings.

Projects pending and continuing challenges

- Additional help is always needed. This includes building maintenance and repairs, gardening/landscaping, locking the building after worship, evaluating policies and insurance coverage, and other tasks.
- Replace a section of gutter on the north side of the church. This gutter is badly deteriorated and leaking over choir room windows.
- Getting storm water from the roof, off the property is an ongoing problem. The downspouts from the northwest side were not reconnected to the storm drain when the drain under Kellogg Avenue was replaced several years ago. The downspouts now discharge on the ground causing erosion and water problems in the building. The city has been unresponsive to questions from us.

-- Ken Birt, Property Team leader

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Social Justice and Outreach Team

Members: Paul Lasley, Bill Slinger, Jan Bauer, Jan & Cornelia Flora, Diane Birt, Jennifer Gelwick-Luecke, Galina Spike, Lynette Spicer, Debby Garwood, Yolanda Clabaugh, Alyssa Dragin, Terry Potter, Allen Trenkle, Megan Sloat and Kim Spangler

Responsible to support social justice issues in the world and empower members to respond as Christians with concern and active caring.

Distribution of Funds:

Communion

75% of Communion Offering is given to Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance and 25% to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Special Offerings

Dollar Amount

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$2241
Strengthen the Church	\$864
Neighbors in Need	\$1221
The Christmas Fund	\$1304
Christmas Eve Offering	\$1804

Christmas Eve Offering given to the Emergency Residence Project.

Outreach Fund giving: fewer funds were available in 2014 so giving was decreased overall as compared to 2013. Funds available for Outreach 2014 were \$4000.00 for Local Outreach and \$1373.00 for Regional Outreach. Last year we were able to contribute \$2100.00 on Regional Outreach and \$7950.00 for Local Outreach. Outreach funds are lower than in 2014. 2015 should be a strong year for Outreach with our 150th Capital Campaign being in progress. Funds were distributed as listed below.

Local Outreach donations for 2014

Access	\$600.00
Ames Boys and Girls Club	\$250.00
Ames Ecumenical Housing	\$250.00
Emergency Residence Project	\$600.00
Food at First	\$250.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$250.00
Heartland Senior Center	\$250.00
Mid-Iowa Community Action, MICA	\$550.00
National Alliance on Mental Health, NAMI	\$250.00
Planned Parenthood	\$250.00
Story County Community Housing	\$250.00
Youth and Shelter Services, YSS, LGBT	<u>\$250.00</u>

Subtotal for Local Outreach

\$4000.00

Regional Outreach donations for 2014

Bread for the World	\$473.00
Pilgrim Heights	\$350.00
Threshold Learning Center, Zearing, IA	<u>\$550.00</u>

Subtotal for Regional Outreach

\$1373.00

The above contributions do not include budget line item contributions we make to OCWM (State, National, World), Seminary or Amos.

-- Kim Spangler, Chair

Worship and Music Team

Responsibility: Provide support to the pastor in planning & providing meaningful worship experiences, including special worship services, and to oversee the coordination of weekly volunteers, the Sanctuary Arts Committee and the Theologian-In-Residence program.

Worship and Music at Ames UCC this year has been an eventful ride. We have bid adieu to a pastor, welcomed an interim minister, held several ecumenical services, worshiped in parks, broken bread together, baptized children, celebrated our Youth, honored our 150 year heritage, sung carols in a candlelit sanctuary, and ushered in yet *another* new year. Quite a list!

We began 2014 by welcoming the Rev. Terry Hamilton-Poore as our interim minister, quickly enjoying her love of diverse worship elements in a traditional format and style. We can clearly see her deep love of various styles of music in working to create strongly visioned services. Rev. Hamilton-Poore has helped us continue the strong heritage that is Worship and Music at Ames UCC, as we prepare our hearts and minds for the celebrations of our 150th anniversary.

Lenten & Easter Events

Congregational soup suppers were held throughout Lent, with free will offerings benefitting the Youth Group, as they raised funds to visit the Heifer Project Ranch. The Youth provided much needed clean-up services. Many thanks to *all* of those who contributed their wonderful skills, as well as their time and treasure! Weekly Taize services were also held, taking time for meditation, prayer, and the contemplative practice of candle lighting. Average attendance was similar to 2014 at about 30 each week for the services. Communion was also held each Sunday throughout Lent.

Ecumenism was again the “name of the game” for Holy Week, beginning with Maundy Thursday services in our sanctuary. Good Friday followed up with a procession of the cross throughout downtown Ames, continued with prayer stations here at UCC, and concluded with a prayer vigil at First Christian Church. On Easter morning, a joint sunrise service was held at First United Methodist church, with their men’s fellowship providing a breakfast. The Ames UCC celebrations began with an egg hunt for all the children, with over 200 eggs to be found! A full house followed for the worship service on the bright, sunny morning.

Summer Happenstances

The summer of 2014 began by bringing two traditions together: Pentecost and the 2nd Annual Worship at Hobbits’ Hill. Member George Belitsos and his husband Peter Wolfe welcomed us back for a festive outdoor worship experience. As in the year prior, over 100 guests came to worship, enjoy a potluck picnic, and receive llama kisses. Thank you to all the helping hands – we had nearly 20 volunteers – for making this event such a success. And thank you to George and Peter for having us.

The children & youth of Ames UCC continue to play an integral role in our worship services. From participation in educational programs like Godly Play to laughter in the Children’s Moment to providing special music, our next generation is truly at the heart of the vibrancy of our congregation. Wednesday Afternoon Club (WAC) provided bell choir music, Sunday School children sang songs with Sunny and Hannah, and even our vacation Bible school (“Workshop of Wonders”) made an appearance. And the trend has continued with our older Youth, planning and providing services focused on their mission trip to the Heifer Project Ranch. They have also provided assistance with serving communion, served as liturgists and readers, and we look forward to seeing them in action again soon.

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July and August flew by, but time-honored traditions stayed in place, including joint worship services during July with First Christian Church. A combined choir was also featured all four weeks. August included a combined worship service at Brookside Park with FCC and First Baptist Church.

Autumn & Advent

Thanksgiving Sunday was a special day in the life of our church. As we broke bread (and other “goodies”) during our annual tradition of a hearty Eucharist, attendees were treated to a showing of *The Bell at Sixth and Kellogg*, an original play by Jan Bauer that showcased the beginnings of our congregation back in 1865. Many thanks to the nearly 30 volunteers who brought food, helped with setup and cleanup, serving communion, and to Jan and the actors in the show. What a special worship service!

The annual Advent party and decorating was held on the first Sunday of Advent. Many hands made very light work, and fun was had by all! Thanks to the many, as well as to Minister to Children & Families, Hannah Hannover, for organizing the activities and food!

As has been our custom the last several years, our children’s Christmas pageant was held on a Sunday during Advent. This year’s production was “The ABCs of Christmas,” a light-hearted retelling of the manger story through the workings of the alphabet. Thank you to Hannah Hannover, Genya Coffey, and Linda Shenk for pulling it all together.

The Chancel Choir also presented a lovely Christmas cantata, “In the First Light.” While their rehearsals have been moved due to the ongoing renovations in the music room, we are glad they continue to provide our worship with regular offerings and special music. Many thanks to the choir, and to Music Director Lesley Lackore and accompanist Karen “Sunny” Stewart for all of your hard work!

Odds & Ends and Some Closing Thoughts

Average attendance stayed steady at 125 in Sunday morning worship.

The Worship Planning Committee has switched to meeting on a monthly basis. Regular participants in 2014 included Rev. Terry Hamilton-Poore, Minister to Children & Families Hannah Hannover, Music Director Lesley Lackore, Keyboardist Karen “Sunny” Stewart, WAM coordinator Bradley Duckstein, and WAM vice-coordinator Laura Beason. If you have an interest in learning how services are pulled together, or you have comments and suggestions, please feel welcome to these meetings; they are open for all.

I am currently in need of a vice-coordinator for the 2015 year, as Laura Beason has graciously agreed to serve as vice-coordinator to Member Services. Thank you, Laura, for all you have done in service to Worship and Music! Inquiries into the vacancy, and the duties it holds, can be made directly to me, the church office, or any program staff member. I’d love to have someone join me!

As the new year begins, I give thanks for the many, many hands that heard the call to action in last year’s report. Ames UCC is a bright, vibrant, busy church, and it runs smoothly thanks to many volunteers each week. As we move forward, I encourage everyone to take a look at the new online signup for Extravagant Welcome (or inquire with the office) and consider volunteering. Training is always available, time commitments short, and the work absolutely essential to the vitality of our worship experiences. Many thanks, now and always, for the work done and that yet to be done!

-- Respectfully submitted, Bradley Duckstein, Coordinator, WAM

150th Anniversary Capital Campaign Committee

In 2014 this committee built upon the 2013 work with the congregation to identify priorities for a fund raising campaign to address the question:

What can we do today to sustain and grow an active progressive membership for tomorrow?

The 150th Capital campaign used qualifications-based criteria to select an architect, John Lott, Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C. who was approved for engagement by the Executive Committee at their meeting on February 18, 2014. We then worked with Benjamin Design to develop concepts that embodied the priorities of the congregation and could be priced. The concepts and estimated costs were presented to the congregation in June, 2014 for further input.

Using the input received and based on the original congregational input the committee developed priorities for fundraising (below). The strategy will be to raise funds and use the agreed upon prioritization to determine where the funds are spent based on the amount raised in the 150th Capital campaign. These were presented to the congregation at a congregational meeting on Sunday, November 2, 2014. The congregation voted for (59 votes), opposed (3) and abstain (1).

Type of Improvement Listed by Priority	Estimated Construction Cost	Beyond Our Church 20%	Total Fund Raising Needed
1. Improve Facility Exterior	\$105,000		
2. Youth Room	15,000		
3. East Entrance Enclosure	125,000		
4. Sanctuary Seating, A/V systems	123,000		
5. Sanctuary Ceiling & Lighting	94,000		
Subtotal	\$462,000	\$115,500	\$577,500
6. North Parlor Extension	205,000		
Subtotal	\$667,000	\$166,750	\$833,750
7. East Sanctuary Extension	233,000		
Subtotal	\$900,000	\$225,000	\$1,125,000
8. West Side Balcony/Doors	260,000		
Total Estimated Cost	\$1,160,000	\$290,000	\$1,450,000

The 150th Capital Campaign has engaged Reverend Priscilla Bizer, Capital Fundraising Executive, Office of Philanthropy and Stewardship and Church Building & Loan Fund, United Church of Christ National office for a no-cost, no-obligation visit on January 16-18, 2015 to discuss stewardship in general and capital campaigns in particular. She will discuss the services available for a nominal fee from the National UCC office to assist with fund raising.

-- Diane Birt, chair of 150th Capital Campaign

150th Anniversary Celebration Committee

The Skeleton committee for planning a celebrations of the Ames UCC's 150 celebration met informally in the Spring of 2014. It consists of Dinah Kerksieick, Jan Bauer, Jan Breitman and Laurie Olk. Laurie agreed to lead the meetings. Those that have joined the committee are Jennifer Gelwick-Luecke, Corneila Butler Flora, Nancy Heathman, Doug Heathman and Tom Meyer. This committee meets at the church the 2nd Monday of every month at 4:30pm.

July 4th found a parade float for the Ames' 150th. It was designed and created by Peg and Doug Powell and Ellen and Steve Barnhart.

July 4th weekend also found members of the church performing a historical play "Corner of Sixth and Kellogg" written by Jan Bauer, as part of the city's Chautauqua festival in conjunction with the 150th celebration as well as being on the Historic Downtown tour.

November 2014 was the kick off for the year of celebration with a performance of the 6th and Kellogg play again. The celebration is planned to culminate in November of 2015.

Sub Committees are forming in the following areas for the upcoming year, but subject to change:

Plans are being made for a banner with an image from the Hubbell Telescope, knowing that a view of space acknowledges our past while looking to our future. The committee met with Greg Lamont about creating clay artwork commemorative pieces for sale. We are also exploring creating a t-shirt and note cards of artwork of our church.

Special Banner, Memory Keepsakes, Time Capsule, Memory/Photo History Book, Historical Displays, History Fact, Celebrations of the Church, 150 Hours of Community Service, Flash Mob, Duff Park renaming, 4th of July Parade Float, Art Show, Music Showcase, Variety Show, Game/Bingo Night, Commemorative Stained Glass window, Historical Play #2 and Banquet Celebration.

The proposed Timeline of Special Events for 2015 is as follows, but subject to change

- January/February - Historical Display on Celebrations of the church,
- March - 150 Hours of Community Service begins
- April - Art Show
- May -
- June -
- July - 4th of July Parade
- August -
- September - Variety Show
- October - Music Showcase
- November - Closing play, Banquet Celebration

-- Respectfully Submitted Laurie Olk

ABC Sale

ABC stands for Attic to Basement Church Sale. The sale was held in August the weekend before ISU started. Three Co-chairs were Barbara Yungclass, Cornelia Flora and Barbara Faidley. It was very successful. Notices were sent out for donations starting in May. As donations were brought in, all items were sorted into tubs by type of item. Once the tub was full then volunteers priced all those items. Volunteers worked at sorting and pricing items all summer long. We met each Wednesday morning. Labels were left on the tubs so when we carried them downstairs to the Fellowship Hall, it was very easy to put the tubs near the appropriate table for display. We checked with the Farm to Folk organizers in June and gave them the dates of the sale and they arranged to have their delivery in another location that week. That meant we had the entire week before the sale to work in the Fellowship Hall. The sale was on Friday from 4pm – 7 pm, Saturday from 8am – 12 noon. Sunday morning the sale was open for church people. We opened it for Food at First participants on Sunday afternoon and everything was FREE. This was new this year. We waited until Monday morning to pack up things and take them to Good Will and other locations. This seems to be a better time to pack up and not after church on Sunday. Everything was cleared up by Monday at 1:00. We used the Tom Randall Community truck to delivery boxes to Habitat for Humanity. It was a very successful sale. We raised more than \$1,800.00 for the church. \$400.00 of that amount was used for charitable donations. Volunteers are the key to the success of this sale. Many hands did make light work. Thanks to all of you.

-- Submitted by Barbara Faidley

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Pastoral Search Committee

Members: Bradley Duckstein, Ed Goedeken, Elaine Hieber, Diana McHenry, Rachel Schelle, Linda Shenk, Allen Trenkel.

Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ Associate Minister Rev. Jonna Jensen and Rev. Bridgett Stevens.

In late November of 2013, the search committee met with Iowa Conference associate Minister Jonna Jensen, moderator Ken Birt, and incoming moderator Phil Spike. We discussed the search and call manual, the process for developing a church profile, and the procedure for receiving and reviewing ministerial profiles. The first meeting of the search committee was on December 3, 2013, and we were commissioned on January 19, 2014.

During the course of the committee's work, we have had to make a number of adjustments. Our youth representative could not participate on the committee due to illness, so we developed other methods for providing youth representation. Our conference liaison, Jonna Jensen, went on sabbatical for three months in January so we worked with associate conference minister Rev. Bridgett Stevens during that period. In December, a member of our committee resigned due to relocation and Diana McHenry filled that position in February. In February, a new ministerial profile was implemented resulting in the committee working with two ministerial forms for searching pastors.

Our first task as a committee was to develop a local church profile. This document is critical to the search process and successful call of a pastor. In order to involve our congregation in this process, we conducted interviews with church leaders, staff, our departing pastor, youth, young adults. We also requested each family unit to complete a questionnaire. Pastor Terry and the members of the pastoral search committee organized and hosted "A Morning to Remember" on Sunday, March 2. Over 50 people participated, and together we developed a meaning statement and a timeline. The meaning statements helped us identify qualities, trends and reoccurring themes important to our congregation. The process also helped in the recognition of areas where improvement or change is needed. We used the information and data gathered to assess our strengths and challenges, formulate a vision for our leadership statement and prepare our church profile. Based on the congregations' feedback related to our future goals and what we value most in a pastor, we developed criteria to be used to evaluate our candidates.

In April, we submitted a final draft of the profile to the executive board, and Pastor Terry and staff and conducted follow up meetings with both groups. We submitted the profile to the congregation in April, and conducted a learning center session on May 4. The profile was submitted to the conference office the first week in June and it was electronically distributed nationally.

As of December 2014, we have received and reviewed 64 profiles, many of which were submitted to us at the request of the searching minister. We have requested and reviewed additional materials, including sermons, church bulletins, newsletters and other information from 12 candidates. We conducted Skype interviews with three candidates, and conducted one in person interview.

Our committee is a very cohesive group that enjoys working together, and we are committed to performing this search with openness and integrity. We continue to meet weekly and trust that God will guide both our candidates and our search committee so that we will be blessed with a wonderful pastor for our church.

-- Submitted by Elaine Hieber

Theologian in Residence

The Theologian-in-Residence (TIR) program of 2014 was successful on many levels, despite several significant changes from the previous years. It was our first year without Nancy E. Brown's leadership. However, the TIR Committee benefited from written guidelines and procedures left by Nancy. During the February 22-23 TIR weekend, Nancy was recognized with a plaque for her many years of vision and service. Jonathan Page also provided sound advice and a number of publicity recommendations that we were able to incorporate prior to his departure.

The success of the 2014 program can be recognized by the following measures:

- 1) Verbal and written comments from attendees about the speaker, Phyllis Tickle -- "fabulous," "marvelous," and "transformative."
- 2) The attendance on Saturday remained high for all sessions (Session 1—150; Session 2 – 142; Session 3 – 135; Learning Center – 40; and Sunday worship – 138).
- 3) A local bookstore sold out all copies of all but one of Phyllis Tickle's books on its table.
- 4) The publicity the TIR weekend received was unprecedented, including an interview with Phyllis on Iowa Public Radio and two front-page articles in the *Ames Tribune*.
- 5) Contributing to the warm feelings about the event were several unique features this year. Our pioneering program was cited in *The Christian Century* issue of February 19. On Sunday, February 16, the congregation dedicated a plaque listing the speakers and themes of the 30 years the program has been offered. Paul Lasley created the wooden base of the historical plaque as well as an announcement plaque, and a "thank you, Nancy Brown" plaque. The three plaques are now mounted on a wall in the parlor. Participants enjoyed cookies at the 10:30 a.m. break.
- 6) The success of the weekend would not have happened without the hard work of over 40 volunteers and staff. The individuals were named in an article that appeared in the March issue of the *Ames UCC Courier*. The final figures of the donations and luncheon revenue as well as expenses are yet to be determined. At this point the TIR Committee is pleased to announce that donations and revenue has exceeded \$5400 to date and may reach \$6000. The cost of the program this year is at \$7000. There is a specific fund that covers deficits such as this. Over the years, honorarium and travel expenses for speakers have increased significantly. Other costs are our expanded printing and publicity efforts that have resulted in new attendees. We ask members of the congregation to consider a donation to the Theologian-in-Residence program to help us maintain our signature event.

The TIR Committee must always look ahead. At the TIR Weekend, we were pleased to announce the dates for the TIR Weekend of 2015 – Saturday, February 28 and Sunday, March 1, 2015. As part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the congregation, we have chosen to highlight the role and significance of music, especially congregational singing, in the life of the Church. Ruth Duck of Garrett Seminary of Evanston, IL, a noted hymn writer (14 texts of hymns in the *New Century Hymnal*) and Cynthia Wilson, the Dean of Students at Garrett and accomplished singer and pianist, will be our theologians in residence.

In the months after March 2014 the TIR Committee took three additional actions: a) adding a member representing the community-at-large – Louis Banitt; b) developing a budget procedure; and c) adding an online registration process for attendees for TIR Weekend 2015. New members appointed to the TIR Committee include Eric Abbott and Nancy Marks. Amy Erica Smith completed her term of service.

-- For the TIR Committee, Charles Kniker, Coordinator

Ames Ecumenical Housing

Ames Ecumenical Housing is a nonprofit organization founded by 15 Ames churches including ours. It governs Keystone of Ames and Stonehaven Apartments. The building of Keystone, which was opened in 1984, was spearheaded by the Rev. Roy Key from First Christian Church. It has 56 studio and one-bedroom apartments. Stonehaven was established in 1992 and has 54 one-bedroom apartments. The apartments are federally subsidized and their operations and finances are monitored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Residents must be age 62 or older or younger adults with mobility impairment. Residents generally pay 30% of their income for rent and HUD pays the balance. The assistance is generally limited to families whose incomes are at or below 50% of the area's median income.

During the first part of its life the Ames Ecumenical Housing Board had to hire a professional management organization. Since December of 2007, the board has been completely responsible for the management of the properties under the supervision of HUD. There were also two separate mortgages and two separate sets of books for the two facilities. During 2009 both buildings were refinanced with a single mortgage at a lower rate of interest and the board was allowed by HUD to use just one set of books for all of its operations. The \$4,705,600 mortgage contained money to install a sprinkler system at Keystone and carry out other maintenance projects.

During 2010 our Administrator Brad Snodgrass retired and was replaced by Hope Brown who had been our bookkeeper. Brad continued to serve on a part time basis as HUD Coordinator for the organization. In 2011 both Hope and Brad retired and the Board hired K. D. Burkett as the new manager.

During 2014 the board has been negotiating a new mortgage with a lower interest rate. Carl Tipton replaced Jim Peake in November as our churches representative on the Board. Jim had served the maximum 6 yr term on the board. Ed Fawkes, the board president died suddenly at the end of the year.

If you know of persons who might be interested in this kind of low cost housing, it would be appreciated if you could let them know of its availability, as it is important for financial purposes that we keep the units occupied.

-- Respectfully submitted, Jim Peake, retired board representative

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AMOS

AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy), has 28 institutional members in the greater Des Moines and Ames areas. In Ames, eight churches belong (6 Protestant and 2 Catholic), along with the Emergency Residence Project and Story County Housing Corporation. AMOS is a line-item in our church's budget. AMOS accomplishments in 2014:

- 1) Elevated the issue of **affordable housing** as an important priority for the City of Ames as enrollment at ISU continues to explode. AMOS pushed for a commitment of CDBG (Community Development Block Grant, received annually by the City of Ames) funds for more affordable housing options for its lowest income residents. It succeeded in shifting the direction of CDBG activities away from physical infrastructure in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods toward rental assistance and Cy-Ride vouchers for low income persons, affordable housing rehabilitation, homeless prevention, and assistance to non-profits to repair or expand facilities. Persons from UCC who participate in the Affordable Housing Research Team include Diane Birt, Jan Flora, Terry Hamilton-Poore, Linda Hanson, Terry Potter, and Lynette Spicer. Below are activities and accomplishments in 2014:
 - a) Provided input to Ames City Council via listening session organized by the City on the five-year plan for the CDBG which is being initiated in 2015.
 - b) Initiating conversations with other groups in Story County involved with housing in Ames and Story County to collaborate in planning a conference on reducing housing instability in Ames.
- 2) Increased awareness of **immigration issues** in Ames through the AMOS Immigration Research Team. Linda Hanson and Cornelia and Jan Flora participated from UCC. Team activities in 2014:
 - a) Participated in meeting of pro-immigrant groups in the 4th Congressional District and attended a town meeting of Rep. Steve King in Ames (July 2014).
 - b) Persuaded Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald to a) not honor ICE (the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement) "holds" without a warrant being issued by a Federal judge, because they violate the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which forbids unlawful searches and seizures, and to b) support issuing visitors drivers permits to undocumented immigrants to increase safety on Iowa's roads, reduce auto insurance premiums, and assure that immigrants can get to work, take children to school and doctor, etc.
 - c) Organized a Community Conversation on Immigration in September attended by 60 people.

Other AMOS activities with an impact on Ames involved celebrating the opening of a Primary Health Care Clinic in Ames that will now provide both pre-natal care and labor and delivery care for all the pregnant women in Story County—a long standing initiative of AMOS; training the 200th Project IOWA trainee and holding the 5th graduation event; and educating 2,000 people across central Iowa on the Affordable Care Act helping them gain vital knowledge to enroll and gain access to affordable health care.

-- Submitted by Jan Flora

Emergency Residence Project

The past year marked the 29th year of Emergency Residence Project providing emergency shelter in Ames. A total of 2,102 people were helped in 2014. The three program areas of Emergency Residence Project continue to be:

- 1) Emergency Shelter for the homeless,
- 2) Transitional Housing for families without housing who have potential of finding and maintaining housing, and
- 3) Assistance to Individuals to prevent homelessness or loss of utilities.

The house at 225 South Kellogg is primarily to provide emergency shelter for men, however there is limited space in the basement with separate bathroom facilities for women or families. The length of stay in the house is intended to be two weeks or less (this past year there averaged 24.7 individuals/night who stayed an average of 12.4 nights). When the house is fully occupied emergency shelter is provided in local motels for up to one week (453 individuals helped). Emergency shelter was provided for 731 people with 9,055 nights of short-term shelter. Transitional Housing consists of six apartments in two buildings and provides housing for families, but more frequently women with children. The intended length of stay in transitional housing is one year (this past year the average was 36 individuals/night with an average stay of 13 months). There were 12 families (39 individuals) helped in Transitional Housing. Assistance to Individuals provides once per year financial assistance, to help with rent, deposits for rental units or payment of utility bills to continue or restore service (approximately 70% was used to prevent evictions or to assist with securing new housing following eviction). The remainder was used to prevent loss of or restore utilities. Financial assistance was provided to 1432 people living in 662 households. Limited funds continue to constrain the number of individuals that can be helped.

Two fulltime and two part time staff conduct the functions of Emergency Residence Project. Occasionally people are employed on an hourly basis to assist with night duty. The staff routinely works more hours than compensated. The shelter is staffed 24 hours per day. Staff works closely with other agencies in Ames and Story County that help with needs of the homeless and low-income individuals and families. They counsel families in Transitional Housing and help with referrals for those coming to the shelter for assistance. Volunteer help is welcomed and used.

The advisory board has 13 members representing 11 faith groups and two members at large. During the past year there has been one new member. Several board members have served as volunteers at the house to help with phone calls when staff is absent, assist with office work and cleaning.

Funding for Emergency Residence Project is provided primarily by United Way, Story County, City of Ames, donations from individuals and organizations and occasional grants from other sources. United Church of Christ-Congregational continued to be a major supporter of the shelter with donations from Social Justice and Outreach Team, the Christmas Eve offering, members providing Monday evening meals and individuals providing donations of money and supplies. The Ames community is very supportive of the shelter, however funding continues to be a challenge because of increasing costs for maintenance and operation of the shelter.

Major items considered by the advisory board this past year included selling the share Emergency Residence owned in the property at 231 S. Kellogg so Story County Community Housing Corporation could build a four-plex for low-income housing; further development of a benefits package for staff; provide means for individuals to donate stocks and bonds to the shelter and continued discussion of a potential succession plan to replace the Director when he decides to retire.

Erosion of affordable housing in Ames for low-income families remains a problem. How we respond as a community of faith is a challenge for all of us. Staff at the shelter and board members is willing to meet with individuals or groups and discuss possibilities of how they might help address these issues in our community.

-- Allen Trenkle, UCC representative to Emergency Residence Project Board

Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance

The mission of Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance is to provide emergency rent, utility, food and transportation assistance to our neighbors in Story County in an atmosphere of dignity, comfort and encouragement. It is supported by 24 faith groups, including Ames United Church of Christ Congregational, as well as service organizations, corporations and businesses. It has one paid staff member, Executive Director, Michael Fritz. It is governed by a Board of Directors, with representatives from each of the faith groups. This Board of Directors meets monthly on the third Tuesday of the month.

This year Good Neighbor moved its offices to the former rectory of the First Christian Church. This location is more accessible to the families it serves. Board members and other volunteers spent time and energy preparing the offices to resume operations. Approximately 73% of the households served are below the federal poverty level. The Executive Director meets with clients to assess needs and provide appropriate services. He also makes presentations to community organizations to educate them as to the services GNEA provides and to solicit financial support. He also prepares grant applications seeking funding. 75% of UCC's third offering of the month is donated to Good Neighbor.

Good Neighbor also has fundraising activities each year. They host an Italian dinner. This year it was catered by a chef formerly employed at Lucullans and held at the Fellowship Hall at the Unitarian Universalist Church. They also sponsor an annual choral concert. This year 16 choirs participated. Both events were very successful.

On September 20 Good Neighbor held a board retreat September 20. A long range plan was developed that will guide agency operations over the next 2-3 years.

-- Submitted by Judy Blair

Meals on Wheels

“Meals on Wheels” is a part of our church’s outreach program. Mary Greeley Medical Center (MGMC) contracts with us to deliver meals on Saturday morning for the entire year, our church is responsible for delivering one route each Saturday of the year, with two routes on the first Saturday of each month. Meals are picked up at the Mary Greeley Medical Center. The meals are usually ready at 11:20. If you get there early, you get your choice of routes. Volunteers select their own route, unless they come too late and end up with whatever route is left. The process usually takes less than one hour.

As contact person, it is my job to recruit and provide volunteers, ensure the volunteer has access to an insured vehicle in working condition, inform volunteers to not discuss any information regarding “Meals on Wheels” clients with anyone outside of MGMC and understand that confidential information should only be discussed with staff or other volunteers when necessary. Contact the Homeward office at (515) 239-7594 in a timely manner if a volunteer can not be found to cover a shift, and to provide orientation for volunteers about the Meals on Wheels program.

I recruited 3 times per year: September through December, January through May, and June through August. Sign-up sheets are on a clip board attached on the bulletin board in the parlor. If not completely filled, the contact person calls past volunteers. Once the schedule is complete, it is given to the church office. Becky lists the volunteers for each month in the UCC Courier to remind our members the delivery dates. We also expect that people will find their own substitutes, by trading with another volunteer.

In 2014, eleven families served as volunteers to fulfill the contract with Mary Greeley Medical Center: Chase, Dirks, Hieber, Hernandez, Potter/Anderson, Shields, Spicer, Trenkle, Tipton, White and Clark. Additional gratitude I give to those great folks for filling in for me late summer and fall due to a mean tick. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

-- Nancy N. Clark (515) 232-6039