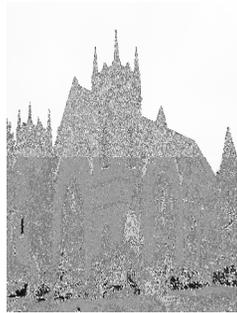


ISSUE 241

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United Church Courier

Potluck and Annual Congregational Meeting January 27 in Fellowship Hall

Calling all members! This year's Annual Meeting will be January 27, following worship. The Church officers will present their reports to the congregation and we will vote on the bylaw changes for the new governance structure. A potluck will precede the business portion of the meeting.

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

Ash Wednesday February 13 at UCC

6:00 p.m. Soup Supper

7:00 p.m. Worship with communion

Mark the beginning of the Lenten season by joining with First United Methodist and First Christian Church in our annual Ash Wednesday service.

Lenten Soup Suppers and Meditative Worship Wednesdays in Lent (February 20-March 20)

5:45 p.m. Soup Supper

6:30 p.m. Worship

Spend some time in fellowship and reflection during Lent. Join us for a light soup supper every Wednesday night and a meditative Taize style worship service.

Following soup on the Wednesdays in Lent, our Youth Group will have child care and activities provided for babies, toddlers, and children! Bring your whole family to enjoy the soup suppers and let your younger children be entertained by our fabulous youth while YOU are able to attend the Lenten worship services at 6:30 p.m.!

Theologian in Residence Weekend, February 23-24

Our visiting theologian this year, Dr. Gary J. Dorrien, teaches social ethics at both Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University in New York City. He will develop the theme "The Crisis and Necessity of Progressive Theology" during the weekend. (see inside for more details)

**FROM THE
PASTOR**

Our Theologian-in-Residence program is one of the marquee features of our church. It represents our most important single effort to promote theological engagement and the search for truth. In our society, where ill-conceived forms of religious observance create so much harm, the Theologian-in-Residence program seeks to use perhaps our most potent weapon on behalf of good: education. This year's Theologian-in-Residence should both inspire and lead you to think deeply about your own faith.

Dr. Gary Dorrien is the Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary and professor of religion at Columbia University. Dorrien has spent his professional career exploring the nature of the Christian faith in our contemporary intellectual world. His particular gift is in placing current trends in Christianity within their historical context. It is safe to say that no one else in the country has as thorough an understanding of the history of the liberal Christian tradition as Gary Dorrien.

What does Progressive Christianity actually mean? What alternatives are there within the umbrella of liberal Christianity? What relevance do these beliefs have for our lives and our social action within society? His lectures, entitled "The Crisis and Necessity of Progressive Theology," seek to answer all of these questions. The lectures are on Saturday February 23rd and begin at 9:00 am. Be sure to put the date on your calendar and circle it with a bright red pen.

Now that we have arranged for this impressive scholar to come into our midst, we need to make sure that people actually show up to enjoy the treat. Do you have any friends who like theology, or who are involved in their own churches? This is the opportunity to invite them to our church. They can see the proud intellectual and progressive tradition of the UCC and the Congregationalists. Do not let this chance pass you by. Be proud of our congregation.

Also coming up in February is the beginning of Lent. This year we will host First United Methodist and First Christian for the annual Ash Wednesday service on February 13th. A Lenten soup supper for all three congregations will precede worship. During Lent our adult Christian education course, A Life of Faith, will continue with a look at Jesuit spirituality. Classes will meet weekly on Sunday at 9:30am or Monday evenings at 7:15pm. We will read James Martin's *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*. You can buy a copy on Amazon.com, among

other places. If you would like to participate in the course, but are wary of the cost of the book, please contact the church office and we can arrange something. In addition, we will have our weekly Wednesday night soup suppers during Lent, followed by a reflective Taize style worship service. I hope you will be able to attend.

As always, do not hesitate to contact me with any pastoral concerns. I am happy to meet with you at the church office or in your homes.

Interested in Joining Ames UCC?

Jonathan Page is currently scheduling the next round of membership classes. If you are interested in learning more about membership and how to join, contact Jon (jon@amesucc.org). We hope to hear from you!

Thanks to Ames UCC!

Dear UCC Congregational choir,

Thank you so much for your opening Holy Season at my front door. All of you looked and sounded festive and helped me be aware of Christmas coming.

My neighbors keep telling me *"and they were so good!"* and agreed that that's one of the best ways to celebrate Christmas with old and familiar carols. "Please thank them from us" the neighbors say.

Thank you.

--Mary Lou Hines, Bickford Cottage

Pastor Jonathan Page and the entire UCC congregation,

Thank you for your tremendous support of LSI's People Place. In particular, thank you for the support you provided to the families we serve through your Angel Tree program. All of the families who were supported were overwhelmed by your generosity. While being in poverty is a struggle in itself, some of the families you assisted were also dealing with issues ranging from domestic abuse, homelessness due to a home fire, and healthcare issues. While these families don't know who you are personally, they do know that you made a difference in their lives.

On behalf of myself and the staff at People Place, Thank You for supporting People Place and the families we work with.

--Lisa K. Heddens, Service Coordinator

Annual Meeting Agenda January 27, 2013

12:45 p.m. Convene – Opening Prayer – Rev. Jonathan Page

Approval of minutes annual congregational meeting, January 22, 2012

Approval of minutes of congregational meeting, December 2, 2012

Dedication of 2012 Memorial Gifts

Reports

Clerk – Nancy Brown

Treasurer - Jim Dickson

Pastor – Rev. Jonathan Page

Moderator – Ken Birt

New Business

Motion: The Executive Board recommends that the congregation allocate interest earned on endowment funds in 2012 to Outreach.

Motion: The Executive Board recommends amendment of the bylaws.

Motion: Approval of officers, for positions not filled at the December congregational meeting.

Adjourn

The logo for the Executive Board, featuring the text "Executive Board" in a bold, sans-serif font centered within a white oval shape. This oval is set against a black background that has a slight gradient and rounded corners.**Executive Board****Bylaws Amendments**

The Executive Board recommends amendments to the church bylaws. This changes the governance structure from boards to teams, adding Evangelism and Caring Network teams and makes a few other changes.

With changes in our society, it is becoming more difficult to get people to commit to the traditional three-year board terms. The old board structure also did not address certain key tasks, like evangelism and the Caring Network, and had people serving in areas they did not enjoy. The proposed changes require fewer people committing to extended terms of office and will reduce the number of monthly meetings. The structure will encourage people to work together, as needed, on specific programs and projects.

A coordinator and vice coordinator will lead each team. The leadership commitment is for one year as vice coordinator and a year as coordinator. All church members will be asked to help with the work of one or more teams based on their interests in the Time and Talents survey. To encourage broad involvement and collaborative thinking, two worship services each year will incorporate All Church Team Meetings.

Three documents are available to show these changes:

- A one page summary of the proposed changes
- An abbreviated list of changes (3 pages)
- The full copy of the bylaws

The one-page summary and three-page abbreviated list are included in this newsletter. All documents will be available on the church web site. Electronic or paper copies of all documents may be requested from the church office.

Ken Birt, Moderator



Gary Dorrien, 2013 Theologian-in-Residence

The topics on Saturday, February 23 are:

- “Society as the Subject of Redemption” (9:00-10:30 a.m.)
- “Idealism in Question” (10:45 a.m.-noon)
- “Prit” (1:15-2:45 p.m.).

On Sunday, February 24 he will give a presentation during Learning Center (9:30-10:30 a.m.) and will deliver the sermon during worship.

We will serve lunch at noon on Saturday. Tickets are \$8 per person and will be sold following worship on February 10 and 17. The program is self-supporting so even though we do not charge a registration fee, we suggest that participants make a voluntary contribution of \$30 for the program on Saturday.

(Theologian-in-Residence continued from page 5)

Gary Dorrien is an Episcopal priest and the author of 17 books. For the February 17 Learning Center, Jonathan Page will offer a brief survey of his academic work. Dorrien's most recent book, *The Obama Question: A Progressive Perspective*, will be featured on Wednesday, February 20 at the 2 p.m. meeting of the Ames UCC Book Club. Come and enjoy the discussion in the church parlor.

We will be looking for volunteers to assist in a variety of ways. There will be volunteer sheets in the church bulletins on February 3 and 10 listing ways you can help. Plan to be part of this special church weekend, both as a volunteer and attendee.

A graphic consisting of a white oval with the text "Member Services" inside, set against a black background with a white border.

Member Services

Winter Congregational Dinners February 8-10 and 15-17

We need people to sign up to host a dinner or brunch in their homes! The purpose of the quarterly congregational dinners is to get to know each other, the people that we sit among in the pews, on a deeper level outside of worship. If you would like to host a meal in your home, please email Hannah at hannah@amesucc.org and let her know which date you can host and how many people you can accommodate. Everyone in the congregation will be assigned to someone's home for a meal in the next few weeks!

UCC Attic to Basement Rummage Sale Set for August 23-24

Save your gently used items for the rummage sale. The rummage sale will provide a service for students as well as prepare us all for the new academic year. The August dates should give us all time to pull together wonderful things that we have accumulated but no longer need. Cornelia (Neal) Flora is organizing the sale and is eager to receive suggestions on how to make it equal the great fund raising event that it has been in past years. Contact her at cflora@iastate.edu


Christian Education
A Life of Faith: Jesuit Spirituality

Lent is a time for spiritual reflection and discernment. To help deepen your own spirituality, our Lenten adult Christian education course will look at the Jesuit spiritual tradition. To help guide us, we read James Martin's *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*. You will be expected to buy your own copy or borrow a copy from the Ames Public Library. Please let Jonathan Page know if you would like to participate, but need assistance covering the cost of the book. The course will meet on Sundays before worship at 9:30am and again the next day at 7:15pm and will run from February 17/18 until March 24/25. We hope you will join the group.

Learn Something New Every Sunday at Learning Center Adult Forum

The program begins at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Come early for continental breakfast of doughnuts, pastries, bagels, coffee, tea and juice at 9 a.m. The breakfast is supported by a free will offering.

Jan. 20 Reflections for Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Wayne Clinton, retired from Ames Community Schools and current Story County Supervisor, will talk about the changes in discrimination he has seen in his lifetime and thoughts on where we need to go to end discrimination in this country.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Jan. 27 | Marijuana and the New U.S. View – David White |
| Feb. 3 | Ames Ecumenical Housing |
| Feb. 10 | UCC Green Justice Team -- Mission 4/1 Earth |
| Feb. 17 | Getting Ready for Theologian in Residence |
| Feb. 24 | Dr. Gary Dorrien, Theologian in Residence |
| March 3 | Church World Service |
| March 10 | Camping at Pilgrim Heights Camp and Retreat Center |

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Team up with our Youth Group again this year on Super Bowl Sunday, February 3 as they collect money and food to combat hunger in Ames! Members of our Youth Group will be in the parlor and in the sanctuary that morning to collect your loose change and your non-perishable food items. Thanks for your support!

The logo for Social Justice & Outreach is a black oval with a white border, containing the text "Social Justice & Outreach" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.**M.O.W. (Meals on Wheels): Help Needed**

Please sign up on the sheets in the parlor to help with Meals on Wheels in March. Call Nancy Clark (232-6039) if you have any questions.

The logo for the Green Team is a black oval with a white border, containing the text "Green Team" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.**January/February All-Church recycle item - Rechargeable Batteries**

Have you ever wondered what is the best way to dispose of the many batteries you use?

According to the Ames Resource Recovery Plant (RRP) it depends on the type of battery.

Single use batteries - throw into the regular trash.

Rechargeable batteries - take to the RRP for separate collection and disposal.

The Green Team invites you to bring in your old *rechargeable* batteries and put them in the collection box in the parlor. At the end of February we will take them to the RRP to be recycled.

(Rechargeable batteries are often found in toys, cell phones, tools, and electronics.)

--Kristin Shields, Green Team

“Mission 4/1 Earth”... UCC to launch new conservation initiative

Starting on Easter Sunday (April 1), and continuing for 50 days, through Pentecost, all UCC congregations nationwide are encouraged to join their fellow congregations in engaging in activities and projects which will help preserve our environment. Each congregation is asked to engage in creative local projects and educational programs for 50 days of greening up, powering down and shouting out for the environment

UCC congregations, colleges, seminaries, camps and outdoor ministries will:

Collectively offer more than one million hours of engaged earth care, including clean up, advocacy, education, and other changes that will positively impact the environment.

Collectively plant more than 100,000 trees in partnership with the National Arbor Day Foundation.

Collectively write and send 100,000 advocacy letters on environmental concerns to elected officials and local and national newspapers.

A few of the many suggested examples of what we can do in our congregation include:

Riding a bike or using the bus, or car-pooling

Plant and tend a garden

Write advocacy letters

Participate in helping clean up the city and countryside

Install energy conserving light bulbs and appliances

Donate plastic bags to Goodwill or Food at First

And many more

Your UCC Green team will be working on this Mission. Your input is invited, so we will be holding workshops and a learning center session February 10 at 9:30 a.m. Please attend if you can.

Collectively, as a congregation, we will work toward developing a plan of action to be launched April 1.

--Jerry Chase, Green Team



Ames UCC Book Club

The group welcomes all readers and even those who just want to hear the discussion. The group meets in the church parlor on Wednesdays at 2 p.m.

February 20 -- The Obama Question: A Progressive Perspective

by Gary Dorrien, Ames UCC 2013 Theologian-in-Residence (2012, 256 pages) Discussion leader: Nancy Marks

Gary Dorrien, described by Princeton philosopher Cornel West as "the preeminent social ethicist in North America today," argues that Obama is a figure of "protean irony and complexity." Obama has been a bitter disappointment in many ways, Dorrien contends, yet Obama also has historic achievements to his credit that are too often discounted. Dorrien emphasizes the importance of Obama's story to his career and devotes chapters to the economic crisis, the health care reform debate, war and foreign policy, banking regulation and the federal budget, and the case for a progressive politics of the common good.

March 20 – Crow Lake by Mary Lawson (2002, 291 pages) Discussion leader: Lynette Spicer

Set in the rural "badlands" of northern Ontario, families suffer heartbreak and hardship which are mirrored in the landscape. Orphaned young, Kate Morrison was her older brother Matt's protegee, her fascination for pond life fed by his passionate interest in the natural world. Now a zoologist, she can identify organisms under a microscope but seems blind to the state of her own emotional life. And she thinks she's outgrown her siblings—Luke, Matt, and Bo—who were once her entire world. It's a drama of family love and misunderstandings with heartbreaking humor.

April 17 – The Round House by Louise Erdrich (2012, 336 pages)

Discussion leader: Paul Clark

In 1988, Geraldine Coutts gets a phone call telling her to go to the Round House on her reservation. There she is raped and beaten. With her is a young woman named Mayla and Mayla's little girl. Geraldine's husband is the head judge of the Ojibwe nation in North Dakota. He and Geraldine have a son named Joe who is slowly placed in the role of parental child as his mother retreats more and more into herself and does not leave her bedroom. Who is responsible for this crime in the criminal justice system - the white criminal system or the Indian system?

May 15 – Leaving Long Island ... and other departures by Fern Kupfer (2012, 260 pages) Discussion leader: Christa Andersen

A memoir about being a woman of a certain age and surviving the loss of a child, the explosive end of a long marriage, and the discovery of a genetic inheritance (the BRCA 1 gene) endemic to Ashkenazi Jews. It is a second half of life story, depicting an ordinary life of pain and happy second chances. Until her retirement in 2011, Kupfer was a tenured professor, teaching creative writing and magazine writing at Iowa State University. She is married to the Lebanese-American writer Joseph Geha. Their family combines step-children and grandchildren, middle-easterners, mid-westerners, gentiles and Jews.

June 19 – suggestions of books for book club fall 2013

Details on these books are on the web at <http://www.amesucc.org/connect#Book>.



Leadership Training Session

January 17 at 7 p.m. at Bethesda Lutheran Church, 1517 Northwestern Avenue, Ames

**AMOS – A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy
Ames/Des Moines Joint Cluster Meeting
Saturday, January 26 at 9 a.m.
at Palestine Lutheran Church,
1375 Highway 210, Huxley**

Annual Fund Raising Event

AMOS is planning a reprise of last year's very successful talent show and silent auction for its 2013 fundraiser. This time, however, AMOS will hold two events --Saturday, April 27 in Ames and Saturday, May 4 in Des Moines.

The planning group is looking for

Talent----We want to recruit the best talent we can from our congregations. Last year's was great, but we can do as well or even better!

Auction----We need auction items from the congregations. We need nice, interesting, new or slightly new, loved, etc. items that might be someone else's treasure. And we want services, or vacation cottage time, or a dinner with a special chef, or whatever one can think of! Foods and services were among the most popular items last year. Members of each congregation are asked to help in any way they can.

Ticket and Ad Sellers----All congregations have people who might place ads if they are contacted by their own member and all congregations have people who can sell tickets.

If you are interested in getting involved in the planning, contact Collegiate United Methodist Church representative Carolyn Cornette, (515) 292-4344, carolyncornette@msn.com for times the planning group is meeting.



February 24 Installation of Mary Beth Hartenstein at Hope UCC, 150 9th Avenue, Hiawatha, Iowa at 3 p.m.

From the Iowa UCC Board of Directors...

The Conference Board formally established a foundation to potentially take management of the conference's permanently endowed funds. We are now at the point of identifying a small number of highly qualified individuals to become the Board of the Foundation. If and when we are able to recruit a competent board for this purpose, the board intends to transfer endowed funds to the foundation for their stewardship and management. We are looking for individuals with legal and/or financial experience particularly in the area of investment. These persons will have demonstrated a deep commitment to faith and church. Know such a person? Send their name/contact info to Conference Minister Rich Pleva by emailing jo@ucciaconf.org.

**Ames Historical Society 2013 Annual Lecture Series**

All lectures are at 7 p.m. in the Ames City Auditorium, 520 Sixth Street

A \$3 freewill donation is requested at the door to assist with auditorium rental.

Tuesday, January 29

Making Waves: The People and Places of Iowa Broadcasting
by Jeff Stein, author, broadcast historian and university educator

Tuesday, February 26

Iowa Department of Transportation Centennial: 100 Years of Contributions to Ames, our State and the Nation
by Leighton Christiansen, DOT archivist and Andy Loonan, DOT field services coordinator

Tuesday, March 26

Mavericks, Movers and Shakers, Minister: The Mayors of Ames
by Shannon Bardole, Ames Historical Society researcher

Tuesday, April 30

By the Side of the Road: Along the Lincoln Highway in Ames
by Jeff Benson, Lincoln Highway historian

