



**Ames United Church of Christ  
Sunday, November 29, 2015**

*Welcome to Ames UCC! Worship is the way we praise God and learn what it means to be a Christian. Services of worship are just that: a way that we serve the power that calls us together and sends us out to be the eyes, hands, and feet of justice in the world. We hope that you leave today feeling connected, renewed, and in relationship with the holy.*

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

*Our worship leaders today are Eileen Gebbie (Children's Celebration and sermon); Burton, Eli, Grace and Nanette Heginger (Advent wreath); Jim Peak (liturgist); Phil Spike (worship leader).*

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Most announcements are also in your bulletin and our weekly e-newsletter. To sign up, e-mail [office@amesucc.org](mailto:office@amesucc.org).*

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*Passing the Peace is an ancient Christian tradition in which we show we carry no weapons, only love.*

**CHORAL INVOCATION OF THE HOLY** "Come, Emmanuel, Come" C. Barry Quartet

**CANDLE OF HOPE**

**One:** We light this candle in HOPE. We bring this light of hope with us, together, on this journey. Hope comes from the Child and our hope is dedicated to the Child lying in a manger. Seeking goodness only, for our neighbors and for ourselves, may we kindle God's light of hope within us. Let us pray together.

**Many:** Good and gracious God, God of darkness and light, God of hope and fear, help us take one step closer to you, toward the joy of unity with you. In this candle light, show us that the power of hope silences doubts and fears. Take this light, small but mighty, and magnify it within us until our hope chases away all shadows around our church, our community, our nations and our world. Amen.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

*A formal and mutual invitation to move into the worship experience.*

**One:** In Advent we watch and wait, and prepare to welcome the Christ Child into the world.

**Many:** Come, Lord Jesus, come!

**One:** In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship, and watch faithfully for signs of God's light breaking into the world.

**Many:** Come, Lord Jesus, come!

One: As we wait, dear One, we watch for signs of your action in the world, actions of compassion and grace breaking in.

**Many: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

One: Holy God, we recognize that we do not know the day or the hour, but we know that the day is near.

**Many: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

**Be born anew in our world and in our lives.**

### **HYMN** "O How Shall I Receive You" (Hymn 102)

*Singing is one way to connect to God through our bodies. We stand up, breathe deep, and let loose. And as Augustine wrote, "(S)he who sings, prays twice."*

### **INVOKING THE HOLY**

*God is always with us, so this "invoking" or invitation to God, is really an invitation to our own selves to become aware of that constant presence.*

One: In this season as the days grow shorter and the shadows lengthen, we gather in eager expectation for the Light of the World to dawn. Help us, God, to lay aside all the works of night and even our cynicism as we enter this sacred season. During this hour of worship, send your Spirit to empower us to live in the light with hope. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*Confession has a long tradition in Christian history. It is a way to name our own brokenness and failing, sometimes generically and sometimes quite specifically, as a means to cleanse our hearts as we move through the service.*

**Many: Holy and Loving God,**

**we give thanks for the promise of this sacred season  
and for the joy we find in the Christ Child.**

**Yet even as we rejoice, we recognize that we often fail  
to live with the hope of redemption.**

**In this season of anticipation,**

**we know that we are easily distracted by our own projects and preparation.**

**We lose focus on the one who is the Source of our joy.**

**Forgive us, God, and restore our hope in you. Amen.**

### **SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION**

*A brief moment to reflect on the prayer and your own heart and life. Silence is as important as noise in our dialogue with the divine.*

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

*As a people of Easter, there is always good news: when we die to our brokenness, we live again in hope.*

One: The promise of the season of Advent is the promise of Emmanuel, God with us. Jesus calls us to keep awake so that we are ready for God's arrival. Therefore, let us lay aside all those things that distract us from faithful watching for God. Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:

**Many: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

### **CHILDREN'S CELEBRATION**

*Children are very important to our church. Each service they come forward for a special lesson just for them. We want all children to know they are welcome everywhere in our sanctuary, even – especially – at the very front. We sing the song below as they come forward.*

K. Stewart

Watch and wait, lis-ten and pray; Je-sus will be born on Christ-mas day.

Watch and wait, lis-ten and pray; Lord, give us hope to- day.

### **HEBREW BIBLE** 2 Kings 22:1-10, 23:1-3 (Good News Translation)

*We use "Hebrew Bible" instead of "Old Testament" out of respect for our Jewish sisters and brothers (it isn't old to them) and acknowledgement of the living voice still found in these ancient stories.*

Josiah was eight years old when he became king of Judah, and he ruled in Jerusalem for thirty-one years. His mother was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah from the town of Bozkath. Josiah did what was pleasing to the LORD; he followed the example of his ancestor King David, strictly obeying all the laws of God.

In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the court secretary Shaphan, the son of Azaliah and grandson of Meshullam, to the Temple with the order: “Go to the High Priest Hilkiah and get a report on the amount of money that the priests on duty at the entrance to the Temple have collected from the people. Tell him to give the money to the men who are in charge of the repairs in the Temple. They are to pay the carpenters, the builders, and the masons, and buy the timber and the stones used in the repairs. The men in charge of the work are thoroughly honest, so there is no need to require them to account for the funds.”

Shaphan delivered the king's order to Hilkiah, and Hilkiah told him that he had found the book of the teachings in the Temple. Hilkiah gave him the book, and Shaphan read it.

King Josiah summoned all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and together they went to the Temple, accompanied by the priests and the prophets and all the rest of the people, rich and poor alike. Before them all the king read aloud the whole book of the covenant which had been found in the Temple. He stood by the royal column and made a covenant with the LORD to obey him, to keep his laws and commands with all his heart and soul, and to put into practice the demands attached to the covenant, as written in the book. And all the people promised to keep the covenant.

## SERMON

### ADVENT ANTHEM

“English Advent Carol”  
Melissa Asklof, soprano  
Emily Mullaney, violin

Patrick M. Liebergen

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*If you would like a name on the prayer list, simply contact the pastors.*

## PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

*The basics of the Lord's Prayer appear in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. It may be familiar to you in this form, or with “sins” or “trespasses” toward the end. We also support the use of traditional or contemporary language for addressing the holy and naming the holy's realm.*

**Our Father/Creator who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom/kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom/kin-dom, the power, and the glory for ever, Amen.**

## OFFERING

Cello Suite No. 1, III. Courante  
Emily Mullaney, violin

J. S. Bach

*Your gifts go to support the work and mission of our church. Coins and bills are sent to mission partners like Food at First and Youth and Shelter Services. Checks, unless otherwise designated, go to the church proper to help keep our ministries (like worship, youth group, and Godly Play) vital. If you would like to sign up for electronic giving, please contact Katie Bonney for details ([office@amesucc.org](mailto:office@amesucc.org), [515-232-9323](tel:515-232-9323)).*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### HYMN OF SENDING

“Come, O Long-Expected Jesus” (Hymn 122)

## BENEDICTION

*From the Latin of “well” and “to speak,” this is one final good word to send us off.*

## AMES UCC ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Upcoming Sunday Scriptures

12/6 Isaiah of the Exile, Isaiah 40:1-11

12/13 Rebuilding the Temple, Ezra 1:1-4, 3:1-4,10-13

12/20 Zechariah's Song, Luke 1:5, 57-80

12/27 Beginning of Good News, Mark 1:1-20

### Wednesday Morning Bible Study

During the 8:30 a.m. Wednesday Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall, we join Pr. Eileen to reflect on the coming week's scripture. Join us!

### Advent Party and Hanging of the Greens - Tonight, Nov. 29

November 29 is the first Sunday in Advent. Join us at 4:00 p.m. for our annual Advent Party! Children of all ages are invited to join in the fun of making crafts, decorating cookies, eating pizza, and being in fellowship together. At the same time we will be decorating our church for the Christmas season. Many hands will help make light work as we put up the Christmas tree and other beautiful decorations. Pizza (and more!) will be catered from Valentino's and EVERYONE is invited to stay and enjoy the meal together. The meal will be free for children and adults!

### Holiday Hours

Katie will be out of the office on Monday, November 30. The church office will be closed from Monday, December 28 through Thursday, December 31 for Christmas and New Year's. In case of pastoral emergency, please call 515-428-1779. Leave a message and the on call pastoral caregiver will respond as soon as possible.

### Poinsettia Forms Due This Wednesday, Dec. 3

Help decorate our sanctuary for Christmas Eve with white Christmas poinsettias and dedicate them in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. There is a form insert in the bulletin; please return it in the offering plate or to the church office by Wednesday, December 3.

### Library Work Group - Dec. 2

The Church Library Work Group is meeting on Wednesday, December 2 at 1.30 pm. We will be labeling all the children's books with specific stickers. We also have more adult books to process. We will also be putting Christmas books into the back of the church. Come join us and enjoy fellowship and a feeling of accomplishment as we finish our tasks.

### God Talk - Dec. 6

Join Pr. Eileen at 9:30 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month for an open-ended conversation about hot topics in faith and theology. Next week's topic: prophecy. We will meet in the stage room upstairs. No question is too strange, no doubt too shocking, no certainty too bold!

### Congregational Meeting - Dec. 6

There is a congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday, December 6 following worship. Informational packets including the agenda and proposed meeting items are available in the back of the sanctuary and the parlor.

### Parents and Caregivers of Small Children: Youth Group Babysitting - Dec. 6

Sunday December 6th from 3-5 PM the Youth Group will be providing babysitting services for the families of the Ames UCC. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to drop off their children in the church nursery for two hours of fun. This is a great opportunity to finish or start your Christmas shopping, or just take some time for yourself before the hustle and bustle of the holidays starts. A free will donation will be collected with the funds raised going toward sending our Youth Group to the National Youth Event in Florida. Please contact Jean Watts if you have any questions (515)337-2487, jean@amesucc.org

### Caroline Isaacs of AFSC on For-Profit Incarceration - Dec. 9

On Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, see Caroline Isaacs from the American Friends Service Committee talk about her work advocating for incarcerated individuals and their families, improved prison conditions, and reduction of the number of incarcerated people as part of the AFSC's Governing Under the Influence advocacy program.

### **2015 Children/Youth Christmas Program - Dec. 13**

The 2015 Children/Youth Christmas program will focus on “Making Room” - preparing hearts, minds, and spirits to welcome Jesus in the many forms and places in which we encounter him. This year’s program explores the nativity scriptures, contemporary accounts of our neighbors without refuge, and the words of our children and youth as they experience the story of Christmas. Please join us in worship on Sunday, December 13 at 10:45 a.m.

### **“A Christmas Story” Movie Night - Dec. 18**

Children and elders and everyone in between are invited to enjoy the timeless story of Ralphie and his quest for a Red Ryder BB gun, his dad’s “major award,” his brother’s poor eating habits, and his mom’s love of bunny suits in the Fellowship Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 18. If, like Pr. Eileen, you own Ralphie pajamas, please wear them. Very light refreshments will be provided, as well as some interactive surprises.

### **Cans for Communion - Dec. 20**

On the third Sunday of each month we gather together to feast at God’s open table. It is a time of reconciliation and renewal, leaving us stronger and spiritually fed.

However, many people in our community (even in our church) struggle with being actually fed. In Story County, 15% of individuals have either low or very low food security. As Iowa State researchers describe, “Low food secure households have difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for all their members. In very low food secure households, the food intake of some household members is reduced and normal eating patterns are disrupted at times during the year due to limited resources.”

Starting Sunday, December 20, the Social Justice team and I invite you to bring canned and other non-perishable goods to our Communion table. Simply place them on or around the table before you take part in the meal. If you are able, bring extras to share with those who are unable to contribute. After worship we will take everything to Food at First for distribution in the community.

God’s table is larger than we can imagine. Let us set more places each and every time we feast. –Pr. Eileen

### **United Church of Christ Christmas Fund - Dec. 20**

We will also take a special offering for the Christmas Fund on December 20th. The Christmas fund is an offering that provides financial assistance to retired UCC clergy and lay employees, groups that are historically (and often still) underpaid and unable to save for retirement. This offering funds pension and health premium supplementation, Christmas “thank you” gift checks, and even emergency grants for active or retired clergy and employees.

### **Christmas Caroling - Dec. 20**

On Sunday, December 20 at 4:00 p.m., join our Director of Music Lesley Lackore for Christmas Caroling. We will gather at the church then go out as a group (or multiple groups) to sing for members of our church community who are not able to easily leave their homes or are in a care facility. We will then gather back together for tasty treats.

### **Sunday Service(rs)**

We like to say that no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at Ames UCC. One of the ways we demonstrate that welcome is through friendly faces and tasty treats. Please help provide both on Sunday as a deacon, usher, or greeter.

**Deacon:** The deacon attends to a lot of little details like lights, counting attendance, and turning on the recording device for the sermon, starting at 10:30 a.m.

**Ushers (4 per service):** Hand out bulletins (programs) starting at 10:30 a.m. Help pass the offering plates. Please indicate if you haven't done this before so that you may be paired with an experienced usher.

**Greeters (3+ per service):** Stand at one of our three doors to welcome all who enter, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Please check the contact Katie Bonney, our Church Office Administrator, to sign up for any Sunday. (office@amesucc.org, 515-232-9323)





Theologian in Residence  
Weekend at Ames UCC  
January 30-31, 2016

**God and Government:  
Are Religious Liberties Crumbling?**

With Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State and author of *God and Government: Twenty-Five Years of Fighting for Equality, Secularism, and Freedom of Conscience.*

**Saturday, January 30, 2016**

- 9:00-10:30 "A Primer on the History of Church and State: It Started in the Schools"
- 10:45-11:30 "When Political Candidates Step in It\*" (\*the issue of church and state)
- 1:15-2:30 "And They Will Be Led by a Child: Predictions for the Future"

**Sunday, January 31, 2016**

- 9:00-10:30 Panel Discussion
- 10:45 Worship

Go to [www.amesucc.org/tir](http://www.amesucc.org/tir) for more information and to register for a box lunch catered by The Cafe. **Registration deadline: January 11, 2016**

**Calendar for the Week**

Monday, November 30

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 5:30 p.m. ERP (*Lasley*)

Tuesday, December 1

- 3:00 p.m. Farm to Folk

Wednesday, December 2

- 8:30 a.m. Morning Bible Study
- 9:30 a.m. AM Work Crew
- 12:10 p.m. Peace Bell Ringers
- 1:30 p.m. Library Work Group
- 2:05 p.m. Wed Afternoon Club
- 6:45 p.m. Choir Practice

Saturday, November 28

- 11:20 a.m. Meals on Wheels (*Chase*)

Sunday, November 29

- 9:30 a.m. Learning Center
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:45 a.m. Worship Service
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group

**Be In Touch with Ames UCC**

217 6th Street, Ames, IA 50010  
515-232-9323  
Mondays—Thursdays  
8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.  
24-hour pastoral emergencies:  
515-428-1779

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