



In the last week I've taken part in both the "active shooter"/"violent intruder" training with Officer Nick Schieffer and the AED (Automated External Defibrillator) with firefighter Steve Boozer. Both were extremely informative and easy to understand. I am grateful for everything that safety professionals have done to help us lay people know how to care for ourselves and others in a crisis.

The nature of both those potential crises—an armed assault or some form of heart failure—left me feeling frightened and sad. Particularly the first: How did we come to live in a world where I need to know to put abandoned weapons, post-incident, into garbage cans to take to police rather than carrying them out and risk being identified as the assailant? Why are Pr. Hannah and I talking about installing ropes on walls behind the nursery room doors, which open outward and so cannot be barricaded, in order to keep our children that much safer? I don't want to have to know these things, I don't want to imagine such scenarios!

But I am glad I have, for two reasons. One, by imagining the worst, I am able to feel some of the resulting emotions in advance and will be able to move through those emotions more quickly if, God forbid, the need arises. And, two, I was reminded of the power of the Holy Spirit.

I think that many of us go through our days checking in with the divine at set times, but otherwise giving our attention to tasks and the people in our lives. It can be easy to forget the extraordinary power within which we take our every breath. Crises, however, disrupt our every sense and open wide our capacity to truly know and receive God.

I am utterly convinced that whenever someone's body is violated by a weapon, the Spirit cushions their fall—just as it also grasps at the hearts of those perpetrating the violence. Nothing can separate us from the divine, be it another human or our own frail humanity.

Pr. Eileen

WORSHIP

**Starting Sunday May 15, Ames UCC Sunday
Worship will be held at 10:30 a.m.**

Serving on the WAM Team
by Peg Powell and Abby Buchele

I first visited Ames UCC when our granddaughter Abby was baptized in this church in January, 2000. Doug and I became members of the church in January 2011 and now I am blessed to be serving on the Worship and Music team with Abby! I chose to serve on this team because, even though much of our work is done behind the scenes, it is a very vital and integral part of worship. Our responsibilities include scheduling greeters and ushers, turning on lights and sound equipment, tracking worship attendance and coordinating support for the worship service.

Most important to me as a member of the WAM committee, we help provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere for ALL who worship with us. We try to make members and guests feel as I did when I first came to visit when our grandchildren were baptized here in this church... welcome, safe and included! In addition to my own family at Ames UCC, I also have a church family that I have come to know and love. What I learn about my family through worship at Ames UCC is that we include ALL in our family circle. When we worship, our songs, prayers, scripture, giving, communion and tradition are designed by God to bring us closer to Him as we grow and support each other as a church family. We are inclusive and responsive to each other and our spiritual and emotional needs. It feels good to walk into our sanctuary and be welcomed and included in this church family and to be reminded that worship touches us all the time and goes far beyond our time together on Sunday morning. At Ames UCC we are part of a faith community that supports our church and each other.

- Peg Powell

I have been going to Ames UCC since I was a baby. My parents, my aunt Barb Rowland, my Grandma Marcia Buchele, and my great grandparents Burt and Mary Lou Moore were all members of this church before I was born. Now my grandparents, Doug and Peg Powell, are members as well. This year I was able

to start serving on the Worship and Music team with my Grandma Peg.

Now, as a member of the Worship and Music team, I get to see the behind the scenes aspect of all the work that is put into preparing our sanctuary for our worship service. The WAM team helps get the service going and creates a welcoming and happy environment for the congregation.

Worship at Ames UCC has helped me celebrate many good and memorable times all throughout my life. This started with my own baptism in 2000 as well as the baptism of both of my siblings and many other children in our church. I took confirmation classes in 2015 and became a member of the church. I have been attending Youth Group for many years and am representing them on the Worship and Music team. I have wonderful memories of worshipping with my family on holidays such as Christmas Eve and Easter and celebrating with them. I am also blessed to be able to worship with my family every week in smaller ways like singing hymns, reading scripture, serving as acolyte or occasionally as greeter or usher. I look forward to many more worship services together.

- Abby Buchele

What WAM is up to these days... and two requests.

by Linda Shenk

As WAM continues its work to address emergency preparedness, we hosted two sessions on the AED/CPR familiarization for team leaders and all deacons, are drafting a handbook for emergency procedures, securing first aid kits (one for church office and one of the main building), beginning conversations about signage to indicate exits and path to the basement (for extreme weather warnings), and gathering emergency supplies to have in the basement for weather emergencies. As we gather emergency supplies, we need such things as

- a few battery-operated radios
- flashlights/lanterns
- blankets
- clean tarps

If you have extras of any of these items at home, please feel free to bring them to church and give them to Linda Shenk.

Second request: Please help us provide a welcoming experience for all at worship by offering to usher or greet. Please visit this website to sign-up (or contact Linda Shenk at lshenk@gmail.com): <http://ow.ly/4mPBtB>

Plan Your own Funeral* with Pr. Eileen

*or memorial service

Saturday, June 11 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with lunch (and childcare, if requested).

The days after death can be (usually are) very stressful for survivors. They have many decisions to make and people to call. Help make their work a little easier by setting down in writing some of your preferences for how you would like your body handled and your life celebrated.

During this workshop, we will look at and sing hymns, review classic scripture choices, consider the benefits of sharing memories and homilies, hear each other's opinions on full burial versus cremation, and much more. Each of us will have worksheets to make notes and even decide on preferences. You may decide to take it home to do more reflecting or leave a copy at the church right away.

RSVP to Pr. Eileen by Wednesday, June 1, including your needs for child care and whether you need a vegetarian meal option: eileen@amesucc.org or 515-231-8557.

SOCIAL JUSTICE & OUTREACH

Strengthen the Church Special Offering

Churches throughout the UCC will be collecting for the Strengthen the Church offering on Pentecost, May 15. Funds from the Strengthen the Church offering go to start new churches and renew existing ones, and support programs for youth and young adults. Look for inserts in your bulletin this month that will tell you about some of the churches and projects Strengthen the Church has supported in the past.

Join Us in Celebrating 20
Years of AMOS!

2016 marks 20 years of AMOS
(A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy)
in Central Iowa! Here is a list of AMOS's
victories over the past 20 years:



Healthcare and Mental Health

- *Brought the first Federally Qualified Health Clinic (FQHC) to Story County in 2014, now providing care to thousands of low-income and underserved residents of Ames and the surrounding area.*
- *Secured access to free pre-natal care for hundreds of uninsured pregnant women in Story County by initiating a partnership with Broadlawns Medical Center, Free Clinics of Iowa, and Des Moines University.*
- *Saved hundreds of Iowans from bankruptcy through the expanded charity care agreements reached with 6 major Central Iowa hospitals.*
- *Helped secure passage of desperately needed mental health care reform in the state in 2012 Iowa legislative session. Continuing, along with many others, to fight for appropriate funding of the state's mental health care system.*
- *Fought for passage of the "Kathleen Brown bill" in the Iowa State Legislature that ensures our state's in-home daycare providers are paid promptly and accurately.*

Workforce Development

- *Created Project IOWA, a workforce intermediary that to date, has trained and placed over 250 formerly impoverished central Iowa residents into career track, living wage jobs with Iowa companies like Vermeer, Bridgestone, Mercy Medical Center and Sauer Danfoss in Ames. Go to www.projectiowa.org to learn more.*

Infrastructure Improvements

- *Increased voter turnout to ensure passage of a local option sales tax for critically needed infrastructure improvements to Des Moines public schools.*
- *Won multi-million dollar upgrades to prevent flooding in the Southeast Bottoms neighborhood of Des Moines.*
- *Secured 65,000 square feet of land on the Des Moines riverfront to build the largest open-air skate park in the United States. The City of Des Moines donated the land and AMOS was awarded a Leadership Grant from the Des Moines Community Foundation in support of this effort. Go to www.desmoinesregionalskatepark.com to learn more.*

Juvenile Justice Reform

- *Launched a racial profiling project with the ACLU and the Des Moines Chapter of the NAACP to document cases of racial profiling as they occur in central Iowa.*
- *Observed over 300 juvenile delinquency court cases in Polk County as part*

of the AMOS Court Watch initiative to help ordinary citizens keep an eye on justice.

- *Initiated a school mediation program in six Des Moines Middle Schools that supports students to learn how to resolve conflicts peacefully before they escalate into larger problems for the students, the school or the community.*
- *Elevated the importance of the restorative justice approach as the most effective means of accountability for youth offenders by: organizing a major conference on restorative justice, and educating hundreds of Central Iowans on the criminal justice system, restorative justice circles, mediation skills, and conflict resolution.*

Leadership Development

- *Trained thousands of ordinary Central Iowans in effective leadership development skills that build strong communities, strong congregations, and strong civic organizations. Together, we will continue to build relational power and make democracy work for families in Central Iowa.*

Ames UCC is one of AMOS' 29 member institutions, so with our time, talent, and treasure we have been integral to these successes.

This year, member institutions are investing in the future of AMOS and our communities by asking 1000 people to invest \$20 or more in our work. That's a \$20,000 down payment on our work to improve our juvenile justice system, mental health workforce, affordable housing, and more!

You are invited to attend two important events:

- *Ames UCC Core Team training with AMOS Lead Organizer Liz Hall on Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. (childcare available) in the Fellowship Hall.*
- *AMOS's 20th Anniversary Celebration & Delegates Assembly on Sunday, May 22, 2016 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Plymouth UCC in Des Moines.*

RSVP for both to Pr. Eileen, including childcare and carpool needs: eileen@amesucc.org, 515-232-9323.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Learning Center Topics for May

Adult Education & Formation at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays in the Fellowship Hall. Sunday School for children is at the same time, upstairs in the Godly Play and other class rooms.

The last Learning Center for the school year will be on May 15.

May 1 God Talk: Faith - Pr. Eileen

May 8 Project Iowa - Jan Flora

May 15 Planning & Potluck

Join us for VBS this summer!

We will be catching the wave of God's love this year at Vacation Bible School June 27-30! If you are 3 years old through completing 5th grade you are invited to join us for four days of songs, stories, crafts, games, and much more! We will meet each day at First United Methodist Church (across the street) from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Thursday, June 30 at 6:30 p.m. everyone is invited to attend a VBS celebration! The children will sing songs they have learned throughout the week and our older kids will share about the mission projects they worked on. Please let Hannah know if you are interested in attending or volunteering your time! Ames UCC is collecting supplies for snacks again this year. Hannah has a list available of everything that will be needed. If you are willing to donate something to help with the snacks, please email her at: hannah@amesucc.org.

Just a reminder:

Our last Wednesday Afternoon Club for the school year will be Wednesday, May 11. Our last Godly Play for this school year will meet on Sunday, May 15 with the "Mystery of Pentecost" story! Youth Group will also end May 15. Please note that our nursery care WILL continue through the summer. We will be anxious for Godly Play, Youth Group, and WAC to start up again in the Fall!

MEMBER SERVICES

New Church Directories Are In!

If you have yet to pick yours up, the new church directories are still available in the office. Contact Katie Bonney at 515-232-9323 or office@amesucc.org or drop by during regular office hours to pick yours up. We will also deliver some directories to housebound members. If you find any mistakes in the directory listings, please let Katie Bonney know so corrections can be sent out in the newsletter.

ABC Sale

by Barbara Faidley

The original plan was to cancel our sale this year, but with encouragement from many people we have decided to have a sale but move up the date. We will wait to learn more about our construction plans before setting a date for the sale. **What we need now our items for the sale.** We will be collecting items and sorting and pricing in the choir room. If you could take things directly to the choir room, that would be a great help. We need LOTS of items to sell. We sell items from all areas of the house (Attic to Basement). We WILL NOT SELL CLOTHING. As the time could be short because of the construction please bring in your items as soon as possible. Please call Barbara Faidley about large furniture you may want to donate. Call 233-3874 or 450-1078 or barbara@faidley.org. To make this a successful sale in a short time we will need lots of help before and during the sale, so please volunteer.

Women's Fellowship

by Barbara Faidley

In May, Women's Fellowship will be on May 11 and May 25. On May 11, Barbara Yungclas will be our hostess. Barbara will be sharing with the group about the preparation and execution of a funeral luncheon or a reception. Barbara has done this job for many years and now it is time for others in the group to know the details so we can be as much help as possible. May 25 will be our "Joys and Concerns" group meeting. All the women of the church are invited and we meet from 12:15-1:15 p.m. and eat our lunch during the meeting. The last 5 minutes of our meeting will be spent on a short devotion and prayer. Hope to see lots of ladies at our meetings.

Library News

by Barbara Faidley

Thank you to Laurie Olk for the donation of some brand new books to the Church Library. Most of her donation was international fairy tales. Some of them will be on display on our shelf in the parlor during the month of May. The rest of them will be in the cubbie marked FAIRY TALES. Come explore your Church Library. We feel we are making good progress on the types of books we have. We have books for all ages. We are in our final stages of organizing our books and when you visit the library, you might be pleasantly surprised at the selection of books we have. Once the books are organized we can create a shelf list of all the books we have under different subject headings. That list will be available to all members of the church. The library work group meets on Thursday afternoon from 1:00 -3:00 p.m. New members are always welcome. Give Barbara Faidley a call at 233-3874 or 450-1078 if you would like to join us. Then she can make sure the church doors are open for you. They are often locked on Thursday afternoon.

ODDS & ENDS

Book Reviews

by Barbara Faidley

I will be reviewing two related books today both by the same author, Douglas Wood.

The first book "Old Turtle" is an award winning classic and by some people is considered an adult book even though it looks like a children's picture book. When all of creation—trees, stones, ants, the sky, fish—begins arguing over who or what God is, quiet Old turtle is the only one who has the wisdom and ability to see beyond herself to capture the essence. The debate escalates until Old Turtle finally speaks,: "STOP!" She accepts and incorporates the beliefs of all the creatures. "Above all things and within all things.....God IS." Turtle predicts the arrival of human beings and they are soon fighting among themselves over the nature of God. It is only when people start listening to the mountains and winds and stones and the stars that they actually begin to hear—and to heal the earth. This book has beautiful water-color illustrations by Chen-Khee Chee.

The second book is "Old Turtle and the Broken Truth." This book is recommended for Grade 4 and Up. A truth falls from the sky and breaks in half. "One of the pieces fell to earth in a beautiful land. Several animals discard the broken piece because they felt that "there is something missing." When a human finds it, he is delighted, for it says, "You are loved." He reveals this truth to others " whose faces look like his." They begin to ignore the earth's beauty, to fear those who do not "share their truth" and to fight continually with those "others" who wish to possess it. Finally, a girl embarks on a difficult journey to seek the advice of Old Turtle. Old Turtle helps the people see that there is not just one truth, but "truths all around us, and within us" and that the second half of the broken truth is "And so are they." THE COMPLETE TRUTH was YOU ARE LOVED AND SO ARE THEY. The watercolor illustrations in this book are done by Jon J. Muth. They help bring the story to life.

Both of these books are worth taking home and reading and having a discussion with an older child or just a thoughtful insight into our earth and how to have peace and care for our earth.

Tri-State Conference Transition

by Diana McHenry

You may or may not be aware that the Iowa Conference Board of Directors has been working on a Tri-State Conference agreement with the states of Nebraska and South Dakota. This change was approved at the last annual meeting. For several reasons the timing is right for such an agreement. In the next couple of years both the Iowa Conference minister and the Nebraska Conference minister will both be retiring. This is the prime opportunity for change.

Changing the structure makes great sense for a variety of reasons. Sharing staff gives us the opportunity to share the gifts of additional staff. This will give us additional flexibility and bringing in the additional staff for Nebraska and South Dakota may bring rise to yet unknown gifts. It also gives us an opportunity to truly behave and give action to our covenant. We often give voice to the idea of being in covenant with other conferences, but this move allows us to show it with action. And finally, our current model is unsustainable. We might be fine for several more years, but down the road we would be looking at cutting staff. In this new model Iowa will still have 2 Associate ministers, Nebraska will have 1 and South Dakota have one. There will be one conference minister acting as the administrator for all 3 conferences. Each conference will still function independently, but will also share staff.

The current timeline has the search for the new Tri State Conference minister in the winter of 2016/spring of 2017. If you have any questions I would be happy to discuss them with you. If you don't see me at church you can reach me by e-mail at dianasmchenry@gmail.com. Also there will be information packets available for review in the parlor. Change is good!

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STAY IN TOUCH

Stay in touch with us throughout the month! Please join us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @AmesUCC, or send an e-mail to office@amesucc.org to receive our weekly e-mail announcements.

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

Katie Bonney,
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Jim Dickson, Treasurer
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Eileen Gebbie, Minister
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