



**Ames United Church of Christ  
Sunday, February 12, 2017**

*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 deacon for today is Kim Spangler; our greeters and ushers are Barbara Faidley, Debi Ford, Barbara Hauerrberg, and Steve Rogers-Smith. We have no one scheduled today for building lockup.*

**GREETINGS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** Linda Shenk with Ailis Shenk Cook and Aidan Shenk Cook  
*A formal and mutual invitation to move into the worship experience.*

One: What have we come to see?

**Many: Is this the Son of God, or are we to wait for another?**

One: Indeed, this is Jesus, friend of outcasts and the suspect.

**Many: Renewal to the diminished and good news to the poor! Amen!**

**HYMN** "Sing to God" (insert)

*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: Holy Voice, You have shown us your wisdom in your messengers. Make their proclamation our own: a world where all is restored and justice prevails. By the holy name of Christ, 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.*

One: We confess our brokenness before God and one another. Light of the world,

**Many: Your patience with us is never ending.**

**You have shown us wonders,**

**yet we are so often complacent.**

**You have showered us with mercy,**

**yet we withhold mercy from others.**

**You have given us everything,**

**and we act as though we were entitled all along.**

**Forgive us these and all our secret sins.**

**You know our hearts;**

**we implore you to make us whole again. 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.*

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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

One: The words of Jesus are trustworthy: Faith can make you well. May our hearts overflow with gratitude at the gift of God's mercy, and may we also be merciful in our turn. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

## PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

## 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.*

## GOSPEL Luke 7:18-35 (Revised Standard Version)

Allison Anderson

*Gospel means "good news," making the full title of this book of the Bible "The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Luke." We will stay in this book of the Bible until after Easter.*

*The Revised Standard Version of the Bible (RSV) is an authorized revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which was a revision of the King James Version, published in 1611. The King James Version has with good reason been termed "the noblest monument of English prose." Its revisers in 1881 expressed admiration for "its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression ... the music of its cadences, and the felicities of its rhythm." It entered, as no other book has, into the making of the personal character and the public institutions of the English-speaking peoples. The Revised Standard Version Bible seeks to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years. It is intended for use in public and private worship, not merely for reading and instruction.*

*I have made a few alterations to the translation below to clarify whether it is John or Jesus being referred to as "he." –Pr. Eileen*

The disciples of John told him of all these things. And John, calling to him two of his disciples, sent them to (Jesus), saying, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And when the men had come to (Jesus), they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" In that hour (Jesus) cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offense at me."

When the messengers of John had gone, (Jesus) began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,  
who shall prepare thy way before thee.'

I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than (John).” (When they heard this all the people and the tax collectors [acknowledged the justice of] God, having been baptized with the baptism of John; but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

“To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the market place and calling to one another,

‘We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep.’

For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine; and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Humanity has come eating and drinking; and you say, ‘Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by all her children.”

## SERMON

**HYMN OF REFLECTION**                      “We Yearn, O Christ, For Wholeness,” Hymn 179

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

*Please share your prayer needs as you are so moved.*

## 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/trespasses as we forgive our debtors/those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom/kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.**

## OFFERING

“It Is Well with My Soul”

H. Spafford

Chancel Choir

*In 2017, nine percent of our total budget will help fund local, regional, and national charitable programs. On the third Sunday of each month, when we have Holy Communion, loose change and bills are designated for a Communion Fund, which supports Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance (75%) and our in-house Pastoral Emergency Fund (25%).*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**HYMN OF SENDING**    “You Are Called to Tell the Story” (insert)

## BENEDICTION

*From the Latin of “well” and “to speak,” this is one final good word to send us off. Please join us in the parlor next door for coffee, tea, treats, and community.*

February 12, 2017

Devotion: Use this resource at home to guide your household's daily devotions. You can do this alone or with others; in the morning, during the day, or at night. Find a routine that works best for you.

Pray: Light a candle and open your devotion time with a prayer.

*Holy Voice, You have shown us your wisdom, O God, in your messengers. Make their proclamation our own: a world where all is restored and justice prevails. By the holy name of Christ, Amen.*

Reflect: Reflect on the key verses from Sunday's reading.

*"What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'" Luke 7:26-27*

Study: Study the reading and consider the background.

*Jesus and John were two cousins with a common purpose: not only in proclaiming, but also in acting to bring about the kingdom of God. They may suffer insults and opposition from the authorities, but that's not enough to stop these two persistent prophets.*

Consider: Consider this theme for the week's text.

*John encouraged a lifestyle of humility, service, and repentance. We can continue to work toward justice and peace as John did.*

Read: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding of Sunday's text. After the reading, ask the follow-up questions.

Sunday: More than a Prophet, Luke 7:18-35

Monday: Jairus' Plea, Luke 8:40-42

Tuesday: A Woman Restored, Luke 43-44

Wednesday: A Woman Restored, Luke 45-48

Thursday: Jairus' Daughter Healed, Luke 49-56

Friday: Jesus Sends Out Disciples, Luke 9:1-6

Saturday: Herod Hears of Jesus' Healings, Luke 9:7-9

# God's Story<sup>™</sup>

## Our Story

*Describe Jesus' and John's relationship with each other.*

Connect: Connect in conversation with others.

- What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?
- If someone who didn't know Jesus asked you about him, how would you describe him?
- Describe a favorite relationship you have with someone you love. Describe a relationship you have with someone that is challenging for you to love. What similarities and differences do you notice between the two?

Do: By acting on what we learn we make God's word come alive. Do the following activity this week.

*Write a job description for yourself as if your life was the job. What are your qualifications? What is your experience? How do you present yourself to the world?*

Bless: Close your devotion with a blessing.

*God bless you as you live your best life. Amen.*

### Upcoming Scriptures

2/19 Luke 7:36-50  
2/26 Luke 9:28-45  
3/5 Luke 10:25-42  
3/12 Luke 13:1-9, 31-35

### Sign the Care Card

Each Sunday, starting this week, we will have a card out for one of our members who is unable to attend worship due to healthy and/or mobility issues. Please look for it at the pass-through window of the little kitchen. Whether you know the recipient or not, let's all sign our names as an act of love. Thank you, Pr. Eileen and the Matthew 25 Ministers

### Book Club Reads Theologian in Residence Writing – 2/15

The UCC Book Club welcomes all readers and even those who just want to hear the discussion on February 15 in the church parlor at 1 p.m.

*Long Live Salvation by Works: A Humanist Manifesto* by Harry T. Cook.

(2012 nonfiction, 200 pages) Discussion leaders: book club members

Harry T. Cook is a retired Episcopal priest, a scholar of ancient religious texts and the ideas that have emerged from them and the Theologian in Residence at Ames UCC on March 3-5. Learn more about Theologian in Residence and register for the TIR box lunch at [amesucc.org/tir](http://amesucc.org/tir)

### Manna & Mercy: Learn the Bible with an Adult Coloring Book (RSVP by 2/15)

If you are unfamiliar with the arc of our Bible's story, or would like a refresher, join me for a Lenten study of Genesis through Revelation using Daniel Erlander's "Manna and Mercy" adult coloring book. We will gather from 7–8:30 p.m. on Monday March 6, 13, 20, 27 and April 3. Location on campus TBD.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 15 so that I may order books. There will be a \$10 charge, with a few copies available for those for whom this is a hardship. Please also let me know if you will need childcare. It is just fine if you can't make every session, but I do want to have sufficient supplies and be able to tell you the schedule of coloring.

Either e-mail ([eileen@amesucc.org](mailto:eileen@amesucc.org)) or call (515.232.9323) me. Thank you! –Pr. Eileen

### On Raising Children – 2/19

During several of our Learning Center hours this year, I am putting together intergenerational conversations about major life issues. The last one was On Grief, with sharing from Christa Andersen and Terry Potter, Carla Barnwell, Kevin Binder, and Charles Kniker. The next will be On Raising Children. So far our speakers are Larry Trede and Bill Yungclas. They will reflect on the pressures and joys of being a parent when kids are young and as they become adults themselves. Please join us on February 19 at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. –Pr. Eileen

### Prayer Service for the Grieving – 2/26

I am weary with my moaning;  
every night I flood my bed with tears;  
I drench my couch with my weeping. (Psalm 6:6)

If you have lost a loved one recently—or ever—and would like time to pray for that loss and in that grief with others, please join me and Pr. Hannah for a prayer service on Sunday, February 26 from 9:30 to 9:50 a.m. in the Sanctuary. –Pr. Eileen

### Seminary Sunday – 2/26

Our congregation financially supports the three UCC-affiliated seminaries in the Midwest: Chicago Theological Seminary, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, and Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. On Sunday, February 26 we celebrate that relationship along with churches across the United States, by welcoming a current seminarian to lead worship. Last year our seminarian was Greg Rose. This year we welcome Tim Wolfe.



Tim Wolfe grew up in the southwest suburbs of Chicago, where his parents planted three churches in underserved communities during the 1960s and 1970s. After graduating Northwestern University, Tim moved to Los Angeles, where he served as a minister of music for several congregations. He returned to Chicago in 1989 and began a new career as marketing creative director specializing in pharmaceuticals. His call to pastoral ministry came as a result of writing a devotional blog for LGBTQ Christians ([www.straight-friendly.blogspot.com](http://www.straight-friendly.blogspot.com)). He will graduate Chicago Theological Seminary (M.Div.) in May, with ordination by The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries, a UCC

affiliate, soon following. Tim lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood with his partner of 25 years, Walter Swift, and two precocious cats, Cody and Maxwell.

### Register for Theologian in Residence Weekend 2017 Now

Registration for box lunches for our Theologian in Residence Weekend with Harry T. Cook is now available. Visit [amesucc.org/tir](http://amesucc.org/tir) to learn more. Want to help out? Contact Charles Kniker.

Read a review of Harry T. Cook's book *Long Live Salvation by Works: A Humanist Manifesto* by Allen Trenkle:

In his book *Long Live Salvation by Works: A Humanist Manifesto*, Harry T. Cook, 2017 Theologian in Residence gives voice to the skepticism that many in the 21st century feel about institutional religion and theism. The theme for the book is taken from Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast." The author briefly reviews the origin of religions and their sacred texts, but mostly focuses on Christianity. He provides background for belief in faith and works but argues for "trust and try," arguing that what makes us human is our capacity to inquire. Likewise, he reviews the concept of salvation and concluded salvation need not be conceived as hope one will survive life through resurrection and immortality, but rather as conviction that one can make a difference in the time and place when and where one lives. The author discusses how religion and the sacred texts have been misused resulting in anti-Semitism, believing one religion is superior to another, economic and social injustices, improper role of religion in government and environmental degradation. Cook nonetheless believes there are perceptions in the bible such as Paul intimating that human beings share in the divine work (1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 6:1) that can be helpful to humanists. Later, Charles Darwin also helped human beings understand they are part of the evolving order. Humans can do more than simply react to life, they can interact with life through the art and technology they have created and be actively involved in saving themselves and their environment.

## Calendar for the Week

### Monday, February 13

5:30 p.m. Emergency Residence Project (Breitman)  
7:15 p.m. Financial Stewardship

### Tuesday, February 14

12:00 p.m. Men's Fellowship  
7:00 p.m. Invitation and Welcome

### Wednesday, February 15

8:30 a.m. Bible Study  
12:00 p.m. Peace Bell Ringers  
2:05 p.m. Wednesday Afternoon Club  
6:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, February 16

1:00 p.m. Library Work Group

### Saturday, February 18

9:30 a.m. Volunteer at Food at First

### Sunday, February 19

9:15 a.m. Learning Center  
9:15 a.m. Godly Play and Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Worship  
5:00 p.m. Youth Group

### Be In Touch with Ames UCC

217 6th Street, Ames, IA 50010

515-232-9323

Mon 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Tues-Thurs 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

24-hour pastoral emergencies:

515-428-1779

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