



**Ames United Church of Christ
Sunday, December 2, 2018**

Welcome to Ames UCC! 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.

ABOUT WORSHIP AT AMES UCC

Our church is the inheritor of many powerful worship traditions and the adopter of new, moving innovations. But whichever element serves the needs of the day (in terms of scripture, season, or society), each service is developed by members of the church and staff to function as a journey. Our journey takes the individual toward God, into the body of Christ, and then back out to the world with the strength of the Holy Spirit. Along the way we may laugh, we may cry, we may experience deep silence. In each, we embody and come to know more deeply what it means to be a Christian in such a time as this: a servant of 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 to-day feeling connected, renewed, and in relationship with the holy.

Our deacon, ushers, and greeters for today are Jan Breitman, Steve Rogers-Smith, Liberato Silva dos Santos, and Kim Spangler. Laura Beason, Ed Goedeken, and Jeff Kollasch are providing coffee fellowship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS SUSPENDED FOR ADVENT

During Advent and Lent we suspend oral announcements as a way to mark these seasons of contemplation and preparation. Please refer to your bulletin and the weekly e-news for updates. If you are not subscribed to the latter, e-mail Katie Tschopp (office@amesucc.org).

RINGING OF THE MEMORIAL BELL

CENTERING MUSIC

GREETINGS

CALL TO WORSHIP Nancy Dunn

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

One: The spirit is not right within the proud.

Many: **The righteous shall live by faith.**

One: Though trees do not blossom, and no fruit is borne,

Many: **The righteous shall live by faith.**

One: Wait for the Lord's justice, for it will surely come.

Many: **The righteous shall live by faith.**

HYMN “Now Bless the God of Israel,” Hymn 110

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.”

ADVENT WREATH: The Candle of Hope

One: These are fearful days: Words of hate, acts of terror,
welcomes withheld, truths denied.

Many: Anxiety is a constant companion;
Hope feels like a stranger.

One: We call out in our anxiety:

Many: Show us how you work, God;
School us in your ways.

Take us by the hand;

Lead us down the path of wellbeing.

You are our Healer, aren't you?

Mark the milestones of your mercy and love, God.

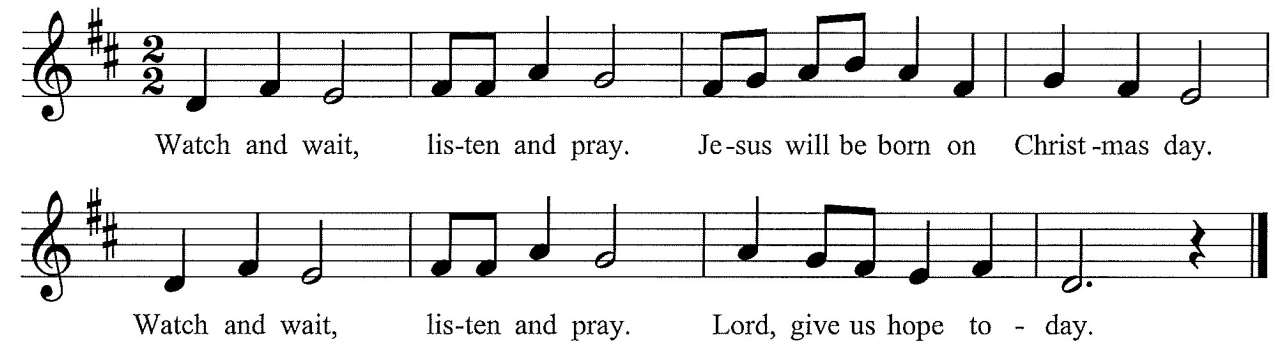
One: We remind ourselves of God's ancient promises: Justice is coming! Love is on the way! Lift up your heads and watch for the signs! Let us light this first candle of Advent, a candle of Hope. In its light, let us think about what signs we are seeing of God at work in our lives and in our world right now. Let us think about where we may contribute to that work.

Many: Let this candle of Advent Hope
shine in our hearts all week
and remind us to lift up our heads and open our eyes
to watch all around us for signs of the Holy One, Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE “Rise Up Peace Eternal” (insert)

CHILDREN'S CELEBRATION WITH SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

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.



Today the kids will help us to celebrate the baptism of _____ . Her daughter will translate the questions and prayers, which they both studied with Pr. Eileen, as her granddaughter and son-in-law stand as witnesses, along with the children of our church.

At the request of the family, please do not take or post any photos.

Meaning

One: Dear friends, as we come to this font of living water, let us recall the meaning of baptism. Baptism is a visible manifestation of the invisible grace of God. By taking part in the waters, as Jesus once did, we die to our self and rise up to a life of discipleship and praise. We embrace of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as in a rushing stream. Baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark our acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of our participation in God's co-creation, and the beginning of our growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

All: This is the water of baptism.
Out of this water we rise into a new life,
marked as beloved members of Christ's body.

Questions

Affirmation of Faith

One: Do you have faith in God?

All: **I have faith in God.**

One: Do you have faith in Jesus Christ?

All: **I have faith in Jesus Christ.**

One: Do you have faith in the Holy Spirit?

All: **I have faith in the Holy Spirit.**

Baptism

Prayer

All: **Give to Feri strength for the life’s journey,
courage in time of suffering,
the joy of faith,
the freedom of love,
and the hope of new life;
through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen.**

HEBREW BIBLE The Book of Esther

Today we will learn the story of Esther, a novella full of humor, hyperbole, reversals, and hope. Our puppeteers are Audrey Susai, Megan Henson, Mat Wymore, Lena Frank, Alyson O’Hara, and Ben Schrag, and Amanda Petefish-Schrag, who wrote the script and made the puppets.

HOMILY

Homily is just another word for sermon, but often, as with today, it means a somewhat abbreviated sermon.

HYMN OF REFLECTION “I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry,” Hymn 351

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/the cosmos, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom/kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven/the
cosmos. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we for-
give 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 and ever,
Amen.**

OFFERING

“Come, Messiah!”

Lloyd Larson

Chancel Choir

In 2018, ten percent of our total budget helps 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 our in-house Pastoral Emergency Fund. You can also designate your gift to the Pastoral Emergency Fund directly at any time. If you would like to sign up for automated giving, contact Katie Tschopp at 515-232-9323 or office@amesucc.org.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN OF SENDING

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (insert)

BENEDICTION

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

**Please stay after worship to join us
for the congregational meeting.
Meeting materials are available in
the back of the sanctuary.**

Calendar for the Week

Monday, December 3

5:30 p.m. Serving a Meal at the
ERP (Barnhart)

Tuesday, December 4

5:30 p.m. Worship Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 5

10:45 a.m. Study for Sunday
12:00 p.m. Bell Ringing
2:00 p.m. Wed Afternoon Club
6:30 p.m. Christmas Choir
Rehearsal
6:30 p.m. A Little Bit of Everything
6:30 p.m. Youth Group

Sunday, December 9

9:15 a.m. Godly Play
9:15 a.m. Youth Coffee Talk
9:15 a.m. Learning Center
10:30 a.m. Worship
3:00 p.m. AMOS-Wide Assembly
(Ankeny Presbyterian Church)

Announcements Suspended for Advent Starting Today

During Advent and Lent we suspend oral announcements as a way to mark these seasons of contemplation and preparation. Please refer to your bulletin and the weekly e-news for updates.

Foul Weather Planning

It is that time of year again, the time when the temperatures get terribly low and the snow terribly high. If either looks like it might be too dangerous on a Sunday morning, my fellow worship leaders, the Moderator, and I will consult on whether to cancel Sunday morning activities. If we do, we will send out a special e-mail, post on our Facebook page, and call those whom we know are not online (if you would like to be on that phone tree, let me know). Church can wait for temps to be out of deep negatives and snow. -Pr. Eileen

Congregational Meeting – TODAY

Each year in December, Ames United Church of Christ comes together to approve the budget and elect officers, team leaders, and our Iowa Conference of the UCC Association and Conference delegates for the coming year. This meeting is called by the Executive Board, as per our church bylaws.

All members, friends, and family of the Ames United Church of Christ are invited to attend the congregational meeting immediately following worship. Please join us! (Note that only full members are able to vote at congregational meetings, though all are welcome to attend.) We will have two agenda items: elected leadership and the 2019 budget.

Advent Party – TODAY

After we've celebrated the first Sunday in Advent in worship on December 2, come back at 4:00 p.m. for the Advent Party and Hanging of the Greens. We will have Christmas crafts in the Fellowship Hall for children of all ages. Many hands are needed to help put up the Christmas tree in the sanctuary and our other beautiful Christmas décor, then share in pizza after the work is complete. All are welcome!

A Little Bit of Everything – 12/5

Did you know that the legal name of our local church is “United Church of Christ – Congregational”? And that our original name was “First Congregational Church”? What do those titles mean? Why have they changed over time? And what makes the United Church of Christ different from the Church of Christ, the Church of God in Christ, the United Methodist Church, and the United Church of God?

This program year, on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. (the same time as Youth Group and Chancel Choir), I’m offering a class about the history, practices, and theology (theologies) of the United Church of Christ through video, conversation, and activities. We will open with a prayer practice and close by joining the Chancel Choir and Youth Group for song and prayer.

No homework, no RSVP, just come. Childcare for kids through 5th grade is available. Pr. Eileen

1,000 Stories Holiday Book Drive Ends 12/7

Raising Readers in Story County would like to provide 1,000 books to Salvation Army Families of Story County area this holiday season. You can help! Through December 7th you can gift new children’s books by dropping them off at the any of these convenient drop-off locations including our church:

Chocolaterie Stam, Cook's Emporium, Duck Worth Wearing, First United Methodist Church, First Christian Church, Olde Main Brewing Company, Pumpkin Patch, Stoltze and Stoltze, The Loft, Turning Heads Salon, The Ames Chamber, United Church of Christ (in the parlor)

Your gift will help hundreds of children of Story County discover new worlds, learn new things, and experience amazing adventures through books.

Christmas Fund Special Offering – 12/9

The Christmas Fund is one of the United Church of Christ's five yearly national special offerings. Donations to this offering provide 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. Ames UCC will collect for this offering next Sunday, December 9.

AMOS-wide Assembly – 12/9

Join fellow AMOS member institutions in Ankeny, Ames, Norwalk, and the Des Moines metro as we celebrate our work together this year and plan action for 2019.

AMOS Delegates Assembly

Sunday, December 9, 3-4:30 p.m.

Ankeny Presbyterian Church, 317 SE Trilein Dr.

RSVP to our Core Team and plan to attend.

Learning Center: Reclaiming Advent and Christmastide – 12/9

A conversation with Pr. Eileen about the four weeks of Advent and the 40 days of Christmastide.

Giving Tree – through 12/20

The generosity of our church never ceases to make my heart sing. Many items have already been selected from our giving tree by the East entrance. If it empties out, I will add on more. Return the wrapped or unwrapped gift(s) to the large box in the Fellowship Hall or the church office (Mondays 9a to 12p, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 9a to 4p), by Thursday, December 20. Thank you! -Pr. Eileen



Be In Touch with Ames UCC Staff

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Mon 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Tues-Thurs 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

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Ames UCC Team Leadership

Rachel Schelle, Moderator
Allen Trenkle, Interim Moderator
Lynette Spicer, Clerk
Diana McHenry, Church Representative

Financial Stewardship
Bradley Duckstein, Joel Johnson

Social Justice and Outreach
Anna Johnson, Linda Best

Building Relationships
Ben Schrag, Nancy Dunn

Property
Jan Bauer, Laurie Olk

Christian Education
Allen Trenkle

Worship and Music
Barbara Faidley, Tom Meyer

Get in touch with a team leader with the information in your church directory.
Contact Katie Tschopp (515-232-9323, office@amesucc.org) if you need a copy.