



**Ames United Church of Christ
Sunday, December 23, 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 today feeling connected, renewed, and in relationship with the holy.

Our deacon, ushers, and greeters for today are Jane Clark, Kermit Dirks, Trudy Dirks, and Janet Binder.

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 “Love Has Come,” arr.

GREETINGS

CALL TO WORSHIP Pr. Eileen

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

One: A woman shall bear a child,
Many: and they shall name him Emmanuel.

One: A man will be their faithful guardian.
Many: and he will name the baby Jesus.

One: For God is within and among all people,
Many: And together with God we are free.

HYMN “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (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.”

ADVENT WREATH: The Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love

One: Who listens to the voices of the poor? Who share strength with the powerless? Who surprises with forgiveness, and makes all things new?

Many: **Our hope is fragile as an infant.**

One: We call out in our longing:

Many: **Where is your power, O God?
Where is the love that transforms our world?**

One: We remind ourselves of Mary’s ancient song: Sing out my soul, sing of the holiness of God who has delighted in a woman, lifted up the poor, satisfied the hungry, given voice to the silent, grounded the oppressor, blessed the full-bellied with emptiness and with the gift of tears those who have never wept. Who has desired the darkness of the womb and inhabited our flesh. Sing of the longing of God. Sing out, my soul!

Many: **Let this candle of Advent Love shine in our hearts
and remind us to be midwives to Christ’s birth
in our work for justice, our practice of peace,
our offering of forgiveness.**

SUNG RESPONSE “Rise Up Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love Eternal” (insert)

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 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. Today the kids will help us to celebrate the baptism of Eleanor Paull.



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;



Lord, give us peace; Lord, give us joy; Lord, give us love to - day.

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.**

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Prayer

All: **Give to Eleanor strength for 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.**

GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-25 (New Revised Standard Version, modified)
Gospel means “good news,” making the full title of this book of the Bible “The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Matthew.” We will stay in this book of the Bible until after Easter.

Now the birth of Jesus the Anointed One took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus (which means “God saves”), for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill

what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the (*parthenos*, the *almah*, the young woman) shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took Mary as his wife, but had no sexual relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

SERMON David Sheridan, Seminary Intern

HYMN OF REFLECTION “Lo, How a Rose,” Hymn 127

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 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 and ever, Amen.**

OFFERING “Greensleeves” traditional English folktune
Tom Meyer, guitar

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 “Love Has Come” (insert)

BENEDICTION

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

Please gather in the parlor for both our regular fellowship time, but also for the dedication of a new welcome table and matching piece of art commissioned just for our church by the Allen Trenkle family in honor of the late Donna Trenkle, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend.

Calendar for the Week

Monday, December 24
Church Office Closed through
Tuesday, January 1
7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 26
12:00 p.m. Bell Ringing

Sunday, December 30
10:30 a.m. Worship

Tuesday, December 25
9:30 a.m. Christmas Day

Reminder: Contributions for December

A contributions for the 2018 financial year must be POSTMARKED in December or in the office before the 31st. A check left at the office after the 31st but dated December will not be counted toward 2018.

Office Closed for Holidays

The church office will continue to be closed through Tuesday, January 1. Normal business hours resume on Wednesday, January 2: 9a-1p, 2p-5p Monday through Thursday.

Be In Touch with Ames UCC Staff 217 6th Street, Ames, IA 50010 515-232-9323 Mon-Thurs 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.	Megan Henson, Youth Director megan@amesucc.org
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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
Building Relationships Ben Schrag, Nancy Dunn	Social Justice and Outreach Anna Johnson, Linda Best
Christian Education Allen Trenkle	Property Jan Bauer, Laurie Olk
	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.