



The Stories of Lent
Ames United Church of Christ
Sunday, February 18, 2018

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, ushers, and greeters for today are Barbara Faidley, Art and Bernie Pohm, Liberato Santos, Rachel Schelle, and Phil Spike, No one is scheduled for building lockup.

RINGING OF THE MEMORIAL BELL

LENTEN CENTERING MUSIC

Lent is one of many seasons of the church year that developed millennia ago to help guide and nurture our faith. From Ash Wednesday (February 15) to Holy Saturday (March 31), each of us is invited to go deeply into the story of Jesus' public ministry as well as his execution through additional silence and more meditative song. In doing so, we allow the Easter mystery work on us more powerfully. Oral announcements before worship will resume on the second Sunday of Easter (April 8).

SILENCE (one minute)

For many of us, nothing is more challenging than silence. During Lent, we will have three moments of silence, each longer than the next, as a means to practice what we just sang. If you feel squirmy or uncomfortable or distracted, that is normal. Try paying attention to the breath moving in and out of your nose and mouth or repeating one or two words as a meditative prayer.

SUNG CALL TO WORSHIP FOR LENT (4 times)

A formal, and mutual, invitation to move into the worship experience, which we will sing during the season of Lent.

**All: Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am God.**

INVOKING THE HOLY Bradley Duckstein

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: Giver of life, you are the resurrection and the life. Awaken us with the breath of your spirit, and call us forth in faith as your disciples. In Jesus’ name, 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. Throughout this season of Lent we will use a classic prayer of confession from the Book of Common Prayer. You will see that the prayer has us confess sin and then defines that sin: failure to love.

One: Let us confess our brokenness before God and each other. Merciful Lord,

**Many: we confess that we are in bondage to sin
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed
by what we have done
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
so that we may delight in your will
and follow in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION (two minutes)

Time 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: In Jesus Christ—born an outcast, grown to a lover of all, and a liberator in life beyond death—God knows and receives us as we are. Listen, give thanks, and live.

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 Prs. Eileen & Hannah

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.

**All: Lord prepare me, to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy, tried and true
and with thanksgiving, I'll be a living,
sanctuary, oh for you.**

HYMN “Jesus the Christ Says,” Hymn 48

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.”

GOSPEL John 11.1-44

Sue Lamont

Gospel means "good news," making the full title of this book of the Bible "The Good News of Jesus Christ according to John."

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the (authorities) were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them."

After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the (authorities) had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world." When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the (authorities) who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone.

And Jesus looked upward and said, "My God, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

SERMON

Pr. Eileen Gebbie

SILENCE (three minutes)

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION WITH THE OFFERING OF FOOD AND GIFTS

Pr. Eileen, Ellen Barnhart, & Jan Breitman

Our Communion table is open to all: young and old, faithful and dubious. No one will be turned away. We serve the bread and the juice through “intinction,” which means dipping the bread into the juice. Your server will offer each to you with the phrases “the Bread of Life” and “the Cup of Blessing.” If you are unable to come forward but would like to participate in the meal, simply wait for your row to be empty, then raise your hand. A server will come to you. The bread is free of gluten, soy, and dairy. If you have brought canned goods for the Food at First pantry, please set them at the Communion table before being served.

One: Jesus said: I am the bread of life. All who come to me shall not hunger, and all who believe in me shall not thirst. With Christians around the world and throughout the centuries, we gather around these symbols of bread and wine—simple elements that speak of nourishment and transformation. Let us pray.

**Many: We ask you to bless this bread and this cup.
Through this meal, make us the body of Christ,
that we may join with you in promoting
the well-being of all creation.**

One: We remember on the night when Jesus and the disciples had their last meal together, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, and gave it to the disciples, saying

**Many: “This is my body, which is broken for you.
Take and eat it, and as often as you do, remember me.”**

One: In the same way he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to the disciples, saying:

**Many: “Drink this, all of you.
This cup is the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.**

Sharing the Meal

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**All: We give thanks, loving God,
that you have refreshed us at your table.
Strengthen our faith; increase our love for one another.
As we have been fed by the seed that became grain,
and then became bread,
may we go out into the world to plant seeds
of justice, transformation, and hope. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH Pr. Eileen & Bill Yungclas

Please share your prayer needs as you are so moved. Throughout Lent, Pr. Eileen will be joined by different congregants in leading the pastoral prayer.

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

In 2018, ten 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 our in-house Pastoral Emergency Fund. You can also designate your gift to the Pastoral Emergency Fund directly. 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 “Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days,” Hymn 211

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.

WEDNESDAYS DURING LENT

2/21, 2/28, 3/7, 3/14, and 3/21

Ring the Memorial Bell for Peace

A weekly, uninterrupted tradition since Lent 1986. 12:00 p.m. in the Belltower.

Lent and Lunch

Gather in the sanctuary at 12:15 p.m. for worship (peace bell, song, prayer) followed by lunch in the Fellowship Hall (bring your own). Last year we usually wrapped up at 1 p.m., but come and go as your work schedule allows.

Wednesday Afternoon Club (WAC)

WAC will meet in February, be off for all of March, and resume in April.

Lenten Soup Suppers

From 6:00-6:45 p.m. come to the Fellowship Hall for a simple meal of soup, bread, and vegetables. Sign up to bring elements of the meal at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d4aa8ac23a7fc1-2018>. If you are not able to

bring food, that is just fine. Please come. The Youth Group will be providing all of the clean up as a fund raiser for their participation in the upcoming Regional Youth Event.

Lenten Study of Julian of Norwich

From 8:30-9:30 a.m. and 6:45-8:00 p.m. (the same content, but more prayer time in the evenings). Julian of Norwich lived in England from 1342-1416, witnessing the Hundred Years War and the era’s mass deaths from plague (and the stench and horror that came with it). With limited religious training and no status in the world, Julian experienced visions of God’s love that so resonated with people that she was not executed for writing them down (religious teaching being forbidden to women). Hers is a faith, confidence, and leadership that continues to inspire. No book purchase is required. We will not meet on 3/14 (during spring break). Childcare is available for both Bible studies. -Pr. Eileen

Chancel Choir Rehearsal (with Easter Choir)

From 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. All voices are welcome.

LENT: Instead of Giving Up SOMETHING try Giving to SOMEONE.

The Worship and Music Team of the church is sponsoring a non-food drive for the MICA Food Pantry during Lent. There are many items people in need use regularly which they cannot afford. A shopping cart will be in the parlor of the church for all of the donations. Items needed are listed below. And will also be available at the shopping cart. Please give as generously as you are able.

Personal Care Items: bar and liquid soap, body wash, toothbrushes and paste, shampoo/conditioner, men’s & women’s deodorant, feminine products
Cleaning products: paper towels, laundry soap, dishwashing soap, kitchen cleaner

General items: Kleenex, toilet paper, diapers-size 4, 5, 6, pull-ups, wipes

Upcoming Learning Center Topics – 2/25 & 3/4

Sundays 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. There's coffee and tea and good discussion. Everyone is invited.

February 25, Politics and Religion in Brazil

Amy Erica Smith is an assistant professor of political science. Her research focuses on democratic citizenship, political socialization and representation. Much of her work focuses on Latin America in general and Brazil in particular.

March 4, The Religion and Imagery in Spain and Cambodia: God is still speaking

Cornelia Flora will share pictures of religious symbols and celebrations in Spain (focusing on Holy Week over several years) and Cambodia (focusing on the ancient cities of Angkor Wat and its present day implications).

Seminary Sunday – 2/25

On Sunday, February 25, our church will participate in an event called Seminary Sunday. Across the UCC, churches will host current students from one of the 14 UCC-affiliated seminaries to hear a good word. This year we will welcome David R. Sheridan. David is currently a student at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS) seeking a Master of Divinity Degree. He and his wife, Leslie (who grew up in Ames), are longtime and active members of the Urbandale United Church of Christ. In 2015, David retired from the Iowa Attorney General's Office where he served as an Assistant Attorney General, and Environmental Law Division Director. He then responded to a higher calling and entered seminary! Our church also supports theological education through annual financial support to CTS, Eden Theological (St. Louis), and United Theological (Twin Cities).

Occasional Devotionals

Sign up for poetry, scripture, and inspiration via text messaging or e-mail. They will never arrive before 9 a.m. or after 8 p.m. Appropriate for all ages. Go to remind.com/join/amesucc.

Calendar for the Week

Monday, February 19

5:30 p.m. Emergency Residence Project (Beason & Geodeken)

Tuesday, February 20

7:15 p.m. Executive Team

Wednesday, February 21

8:30 a.m. Julian of Norwich

12:05 p.m. Memorial Bell

12:15 p.m. Lent and Lunch

2-5 p.m. WAC

6 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper

6:45 p.m. Julian of Norwich

6:45 p.m. Chancel Choir

Sunday, February 25

9:15 a.m. Godly Play

9:15 a.m. Youth Coffee Fellowship

9:15 a.m. Learning Center

9:15 a.m. Animate

10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. AMOS Core Team

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

David Cook, Sexton

cookdavi@gmail.com

Eileen Gebbie, Senior Minister

eileen@amesucc.org

Hannah Hannover,

Minister to Children & Families

hannah@amesucc.org

Mark Kretsinger-Harries,

Substitute Instrumentalist

m.kretsinger.harries@gmail.com

Lesley Lackore, Chancel Choir Director

llackore@gmail.com

Katie Tschopp,

Church Office Administrator

office@amesucc.org

Jean Watts, Youth Director

jean@amesucc.org