

# FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**Ames United Church of Christ  
Sunday, March 31, 2019**

*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 Diane Birt, Ken Birt, Jim Coppoc, Nick Lyon, and Tom Meyer.*

## **ABOUT THE CROSS & HOLY COMMUNION**

*Regular worshippers will notice that our memorial cross and Communion table are missing from the chancel (the front of the sanctuary). They will not return until their time in the story of Holy Week: Maundy Thursday (April 18) for Communion and Good Friday (April 19) for the cross. In the meantime, you will see leafless branches (on the chancel and elsewhere on campus). Throughout Lent we will each have the opportunity to decorate eggs to hang on those branches. On Good Friday, when we commemorate Jesus' death, they will be broken. On Easter Sunday (April 21) they will return to the space on vases filled with flowers, an evocation of the power of the cycle of life.*

## **ORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS SUSPENDED FOR LENT**

*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](mailto:office@amesucc.org)). Oral announcements before worship will resume on the second Sunday of Easter (April 28).*

## **RINGING OF THE MEMORIAL BELL**

## 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.*

### **SILENCE** (two minutes)

*For many of us, nothing is more challenging than silence. During Lent, we will have three moments of silence, each longer than the next. 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.*

“For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from the LORD.”

–Psalm 62.5

## SUNG CALL TO WORSHIP FOR LENT

*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.  
(three times)**

### **INVOKING THE HOLY** Pr. Hannah

*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: God of holy anticipation, keep us awake and alert so that we may be ready to serve you. May our lamps burn brightly reflecting your love and grace. We pray these things in the name of Jesus 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. 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: Though Lent is a season of returning, as in turning back, to God, we know God has never turned from us. Confident in that enduring love, we confess our misdirection and forgetfulness before God and one another. Faithful God,

**Many: Jesus was obedient to love in every way,  
even when that obedience led to death.  
As we walk this preparative season with him,  
fill us with awareness of all the ways we have fallen short  
of being faithful, loving servants ourselves.  
Forgive us our shortsightedness, our waste,  
and our criticism of ourselves and others.  
We long for Jesus' strengths and rely on his loving kindness.  
Amen.**

### **SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION** (three minutes)

*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: Our God is abounding in steadfast love. You have been reminded of that love and so have another chance to turn away from all which does not give life. Be assured and recognize your God-given wholeness again. 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. We sing the song below as they come forward.*

**PSALM**      Psalm 43:3-4      Pr. Eileen  
New Revised Standard Version

*Translator Robert Alter describes the psalms as “the most urgently, personally present of all the books of the Bible...(u)ntold numbers have repeatedly turned to Psalms for encouragement and comfort in moments of crisis and despair,” despite having been composed long ago (1600 and 1200 BCE) for and by a community in the ancient Near East.*

O Send out your light and your truth;  
let them lead me;  
let them bring me to your holy hill  
and to your dwelling.

Then I will go to the altar of God,  
to God my exceeding joy;  
and I will praise you with the harp,  
O God, my God.

**GOSPEL**      Matthew 25:1-13  
New Revised Standard Version

*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 study Matthew through Easter.*

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shot, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**SERMON**      Seminary Intern David Sheridan

**SILENCE**      (four minutes)

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**      Andrea Klocke & David Sheridan  
*Please share your prayer needs as you are so moved.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*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** "Come Quickly Lord to Rescue Me" Tune: Distress arr. Stewart Chancel Choir

*In 2019, nine 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, which goes to rental, medical, and similar direct assistance. 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](mailto:office@amesucc.org).*

*Today, Ames UCC takes part with churches across eight Christian denominations in the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering. This offering supports partners in countries with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries and both international and domestic disaster response.*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**HYMN OF SENDING** "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning" (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.*

## Calendar for the Week

### Monday, April 1

5:30 p.m. Emergency Residence  
Project (Coyle)  
7:00 p.m. SoJO Meeting

### Wednesday, April 3

10:45 a.m. Risking  
with Amy-Jill Levine  
12:00 p.m. Bell Ringing  
12:15 p.m. Lent & Lunch  
2:00 p.m. Wed Afternoon Club  
5:00 p.m. Youth Group  
5:15 p.m. Soup Supper  
6:30 p.m. Centering Prayer  
6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

### Sunday, April 7

9:15 a.m. Godly Play  
9:15 a.m. Youth Group  
9:15 a.m. Learning Center  
10:30 a.m. Worship  
11:45 a.m. Risking  
with Amy-Jill Levine

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## Lenten Preparation with Megan Henson

Lent is a time of preparation. For forty days we are called to enter into the broken places in our lives and in our world to consider how we might need to change. What is holding us up? What is encouraging transformation? What will allow us to live into the power of a love that transcends death?

At stations around the church, pick an egg that speaks to you, grab a slip of paper, and write down something in your life that needs transformation. Roll it up, slide it in the egg, and hang the egg on a branch.

Together, we will let go of the things holding us up and embrace the powerful love that transcends death. By Good Friday all of our eggs will be in the sanctuary, and by Easter morning they will be transformed and made anew. Change is possible. There is nothing that can separate us from the sustaining love of God.

### **Lenten “Give to Someone” Non-Food Drive**

During the six weeks of Lent, join the Worship and Music Team in a service project. We would like people to bring in NON-FOOD ITEMS to give to MICA’s food pantry. Instead of giving up something, try giving to someone! Find the shopping cart in the parlor for a list of needed items. Attached to the shopping cart in the parlor is an envelope with coupons to help purchase some items. Please use as many as you like. Be generous and help someone during the season of Lent.

### **Serve at Food at First on 5th Sundays – TODAY**

In addition to Ames UCC’s regular 3rd Saturday of the month volunteering at Food at First, join us in taking on 4 additional days per year (the 5th Sunday of the month). The first of these is coming up on March 31. On Sunday, the meal is cooked from about 3 p.m. , and served at 5:45 p.m., followed by clean up. Terry Potter also asks for volunteers to think about becoming a Food at First head chef. Terry would provide training and share the 3rd Saturday and 5th Sunday responsibilities. Contact Terry for more information at 515-337-1347 or [terryapotter63@gmail.com](mailto:terryapotter63@gmail.com).

### **Risking with Amy-Jill Levine on Sundays – TODAY, 4/7, 4/14**

After worship on the last three Sundays in Lent, prepare for Holy Week with Dr. Amy-Jill Levine’s new course, "Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week." Dr. Levine is an acclaimed New Testament scholar and past Ames UCC Theologian in Residence. Bring a sack lunch (store it in the large kitchen’s refrigerator) and join me in the Fellowship Hall for these 90-minute classes. Childcare will be provided if requested within a week of each session. No RSVP is otherwise required. -Pr. Eileen

3/31 Jerusalem: Risking Reputation and The Temple: Risking Righteous Anger

4/7 Teachings: Risking Challenge & The First Dinner: Risking Rejection

4/14 The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of Friends & Gethsemane: Risking Temptation

### **LGBTQIA Panel Featuring Pr. Eileen – 4/1**

Pr. Eileen will be a panelist, along with a local rabbi and priest, at the Iowa Safe Schools 14th Annual Governor’s Conference on LGBTQ Youth on April 1st. No foolin’! Details, including registration if you’d like to attend, is here: [iowasafeschools.org/governors-conference-on-lgbtq-youth/](http://iowasafeschools.org/governors-conference-on-lgbtq-youth/)

### **Risking with Amy-Jill Levine on Wednesdays – 4/3, 4/10**

During the regular 10:45 a.m. Wednesday Bible Study for Sunday classes during Lent, we will prepare for Holy Week with Dr. Amy-Jill Levine’s new course, "Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week." Dr. Levine is an acclaimed New Testament scholar and past Ames UCC Theologian in Residence.

4/3 The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of Friends

4/10 Gethsemane: Risking Temptation.

### **Lent and Lunch – 4/3, 4/10**

Each Wednesday through April 10 we will gather in the sanctuary at 12:15 p.m. for worship (silence, song, prayer) followed by lunch in the Fellowship Hall (bring your own). We usually wrap up at 1 p.m., but come and go as your work schedule allows.

### **Lenten Soup Suppers (& PB&Js, too) – 4/3, 4/10**

Hot soup, tasty bread, fun friends...what's not to like? Our annual Lenten Soup Suppers (March 20, 27, and April 3, 10) are an opportunity to share a simple meal and rich fellowship. Each week from 5:15-6:15 p.m. we will have 5-6 soups (3 vegetarian), as well as bread, vegetables, milk, and PB&Js. Childcare for children through 5th grade will be available from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. each week so parents can go on to attend one of our other offerings.

### **Become More Centered during Lent – 4/3, 4/10**

After our shared meal, join me on Wednesday evenings during Lent for a time of fellowship, centering prayer, and song. With a prayer time of 20 minutes, we will likely be together for no more than 45 minutes total. We will meet in the parlor. -Pr. Eileen

### **Suicide – 4/10**

Did you know that in a church our size, about half of the congregation is impacted by suicide, either because they (you) have tried it, are thinking of doing it, know someone who has tried, and/or know someone who has succeeded. About a dozen of our community are likely actively considering ending their lives, with a higher percentage of those numbers among teens. On the final Wednesday before Holy Week, April 10 at 6:30 p.m., join Diane McClanahan, RN, MDiv, from the Des Moines Pastoral Care and Counseling Center for conversation and learning about suicide and our role in prevention and recovery.

### **Come see the musical Godspell with us! – 4/14**

An outing! An outing! On Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, come to see ISU's production of Godspell and then meet up for post-show conversation and social time with a fun group (hint: it's us)! This year plan on purchasing your own ticket for the 2:00 p.m. show on 4/17, and then we will meet up for some group social time afterward. Discussion location TBA.

Email Ben Schrag at [mr.half@gmail.com](mailto:mr.half@gmail.com) if you are interested!

### **Cards of Care**

Have you ever felt scared and alone, grieving and heartsick? Did someone reach out to you at just the right time? Please join a group of congregants in being present for each other during such times through greeting cards. It does not matter whether you know the recipients personally, or not. What matters is a willingness to be a representative of the love of God we share at all times and in all places. If you are interested, please let me know and I will add you to our list of fellow "care card-ers." When I am given permission to pass on a need (a health crisis, a death), I will do so. And if you know of someone who might appreciate a little postal love from their fellow seekers, please let me know. –Pr. Eileen ([eileen@amesucc.org](mailto:eileen@amesucc.org), 515-232-9323)

### **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.

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### **Ames UCC Team Leadership**

Allen Trenkle, Moderator  
Lynette Spicer, Clerk  
Diana McHenry, Church Representative  
Eric Abbott, Church Representative

#### **Building Relationships**

Ben Schrag, Nancy Dunn

#### **Christian Education**

Allison Anderson

#### **Financial Stewardship**

Bradley Duckstein

#### **Social Justice and Outreach**

Linda Best, George Belitsos

#### **Property**

Jan Bauer, Laurie Olk

#### **Worship and Music**

Barbara Faidley, Steve Rogers-Smith

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