



ames

UCC COURIER

United Church of Christ

217 Sixth St. Ames, IA 50010

**ISSUE 245
AUGUST 2013**

**515-232-9323
www.amesucc.org
office@amesucc.org**

AMOS

AMOS Institute of Public Life Learning Session

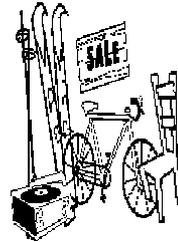
The Affordable Care Act – Let's
Get Ready

Tuesday, July 30 at 7 p.m. at
Bethesda Lutheran Church, 1517
Northwestern

AMOS is conducting a public edu-
cation and awareness campaign
to train leaders to educate those
who must make choices on the
Affordable Care Act. The people
trained by AMOS will be able to
help those uninsured and under-
insured make their health care
decisions.

 **Worship with First Baptist
& First Christian
on August 4**

Brookside Park, Hickory Shelter
Service begins at 9:30 a.m.
*Don't forget to bring your lawn
chair!!*



**Attic to
Basement Sale
August 23,
4-8 p.m. &
August 24,
8-12 noon**

We are now ac-
cepting donations for our annual
Attic to Basement rummage
sale. Please leave donated items
upstairs in rooms 209-211. Note:
we are not accepting TV's.
--Cornelia Flora

**RALLY SUNDAY!
September 8
Put it on your
calendar!**

There will be more
information in the September
newsletter. Get excited for a new
year of engaging and faith-filled
activities!

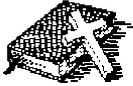


Congregational Dinners

We are looking for individu-
als/couples/families to host a
congregational dinner in Sep-
tember. The dates are
September 6-8 and 13-15.

Please email Hannah at
hannah@amesucc.org if you
are interested in opening up
your home!

FROM THE PASTOR



“God’s Vision!” That was the theme for the 29th General Synod held in Long Beach, California. The organizers took their inspiration from Habakkuk 2:2, which reads: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it.” While the theme was clear, I am not sure whether I could name the one, over-arching vision from General Synod. Instead of a new vision, General Synod continued to emphasize its recent initiatives and core identity: the planting of new churches, a progressive social witness rooted in Christ, the diversity of the church, and a focus on the future rather than the past.

It is hard not to be moved by the overwhelming variety and breadth of the church at General Synod. You meet people from all over the country, from churches that have Samoan or Native American roots, and hear powerful sermons that display an impressive array of oratorical gifts. If I had any complaint about General Synod, it is that it was too busy, too much going on for any one person to absorb it all.

As is customary, General Synod conducts its business through the passing of resolutions. These resolutions have binding authority on the national setting of the church and provide suggestions and inspiration for our many congregations. The resolution that attracted the most attention called for divestment from fossil fuel companies. The Massachusetts delegation took the lead on this resolution. Climate change is such an important issue, which will negatively affect so many billions of people, that any non-violent effort to arrest its progress, including divestment, must be tried. After a lively debate, the resolution passed, and it calls upon all of us to consider prayerfully how we can divest from fossil fuel companies in both our churches and our own lives.

Another contentious resolution called upon the national setting to institute a fifth church-wide offering to support seminarians struggling with student debt. Currently there are four national offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, which supports international humanitarian efforts; Strengthen the Church, which supports planting new churches and strengthening existing ones; Neighbors-in-Need, which supports justice advocacy; and the Christmas Offering, which provides assistance to retired clergy in need. After a lively debate, General Synod

rejected the call for another church-wide offering. I joined with the majority in voting against this resolution because I believe there are far more effective ways of funding seminary education. If you are curious, I have included a brief description in this newsletter about the history and structure of the national church.

As we begin to turn our attention to the fall, one initiative that I am keen on pursuing is renewing our Caregivers group. Caregivers is the UCC equivalent to Stephen Ministries, and the curriculum trains people to provide spiritual support to the congregation. Ames UCC established a Caregivers ministry in the early 1990s and that group has provided two decades of impressive service to our congregation. Building on the work they have done, I would like to offer a new round of Caregivers training to ensure that all of the pastoral needs of the church are being met. If you have any interest in the program, please let me know. Have a wonderful rest of the summer! I hope to see you all soon at the corner of Kellogg and 6th.

—Jonathan Page

Executive Board

150th Capital Campaign Committee

Preparing for the Future of the Ames UCC

What can we do today to sustain and grow an active progressive membership for tomorrow?

The Executive Board recruited a Capital Campaign Committee consisting of Amy Johnson, chair, Diane Birt, Nathan Hannover, Doug Powell and Philip Spike to recommend a capital campaign to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Ames UCC. Our hope is to develop a proposal this year that would be submitted for congregational approval at the next annual meeting in January 2014. The Capital Campaign Committee decided that the focus of the campaign should address the question at the top of this page.

The capital campaign committee is about to begin the first step in seeking your input in a multistep process. We would like your thoughts to guide the committee in constructing an “all-church” survey that would be circulated in October. Our first task is to make sure that we are asking the “right” questions. The committee tried to identify possible categories for improvements. Do you have suggestions for other categories or other ways of categorizing the types of actions we can take today?

Modernizing/updating the church property: update entries (bell tower and South-East canopy), update the youth room, modernize sanctuary space, motion sensing or other "green" projects, improved church signage.

Expand programming: expand music program, student minister endowment.

Outreach projects: invest in facilities for use by community outreach organizations, endowment for outreach program.

Deferred maintenance: retaining walls, handrails for exterior stairs.

We would also like your reactions to the following questions which will help guide the committee. What are your thoughts? Should we be asking any other questions?

What do you feel are the primary strengths of the Ames UCC that will help it continue for the next 50 years?

What can be done now to create/enhance strengths of the Ames UCC?

What changes would make the Ames UCC more attractive to new members?

Comparing the Ames UCC to other churches you have attended or visited, what changes do you feel would make the Ames UCC more inviting or appealing?

Give your responses to any member of the committee or send an email to Amy Johnson, amyjohnsonpt@gmail.com. Please share your thoughts freely as there are no bad ideas!

Christian Education Team

From the Minister to Children and Youth



Applications open for the Ames UCC Youth Director

The youth director oversees and supports the activities of 7th grade to 12th grade youth. The director introduces young people to Christ, disciples them in spiritual growth, trains them in serving Christ with their lives. The director assists parents and guardians in raising teenagers to a wholesome maturity. The position averages 7 hours of work per week and is salaried at \$4,000 per year. Please pass this information on to anyone you think might be interested in applying.

--Hannah Hannover

Vacation Bible School was a HUGE success!!!

We shared our week with more than 120 children and 30 adults from First United Methodist and Collegiate Methodist in a week of singing, storytelling, crafts, games, science, snacks and learning about God's love for us. A special thank you to Barbara Faidley for leading the Pre-School class all week, Bill Slinger for bringing the stories to life for our children during storytelling time, David White and Maryanne Diorio for fearlessly leading the games all week, Abby Buchele, Alison McHenry, Kerry Strum and Linda Shenk for helping to guide children through the different activities. Thanks also to Nancy Marks, Catherine James, Kim and Pat Spangler, and Marcus Johnson for donating items/money to be used during the week. Thanks to Tania Tipton, Barbara Faidley, Linda Shenk, Marcus Johnson, Esther Smith, Joyce Hertz and Marlys Benk for loaning items from other countries that the children could use to help visualize other cultures. And of course, thanks to you parents for sharing your children with us all week! I am feeling very grateful for this large support system for our children's ministry here at Ames, UCC!

THANK YOU!!!



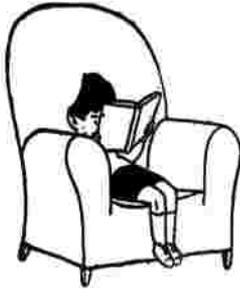
The church library is off the parlor in the northwest corner of the church.

CHILDREN'S READING PROGRAM: Parents, please remind your children to check books out of the church library and fill out the sheet for the 10 books your child read. Have you lost the sheet? Just put the names of the books on a sheet of paper. Just remember, 4 of the 10 books need to be Bible stories. Then give the page to Hannah and receive a coupon for a Dairy Queen Treat.

BOOK PICKS: Starting in August, Jonathan and Hannah and other church members will be asked to select favorite books from the library. These books will be labeled as "Jonathans' Book Pick" etc. These books will be displayed on racks in the church parlor. Make sure to take a look. Does it look good? Check it out of the church library. Put your name on the card in the book and put the card in the basket in the library on the book shelf by the phone. ENJOY THE BOOK. When you are finished with the book, return it to the library and put it in the basket marked RETURNED BOOKS. We would like all of the readers in the church to start using our library.

BOOK REVIEWS

CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW



“In Our Image-God’s First Creatures” by Nancy Sohn Swaartz, illustrated by Melanie Hall; Jewish Light Publishing, 1998

This picture book is included in a group of books: For People of All Faiths, All Backgrounds. They are endorsed by Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish Religious Leaders. In this story, God says to all the creatures “Man and woman shall be a part of nature, like each of you. And nature shall also be a part of them. Let Us give Our gifts to woman and to man”. Then each of the creatures thought of a gift that he could give to humankind. All of creation became involved, offering their gifts to humankind. God would make man and woman partners with him to care for all the creatures and all the world. This book celebrates the interconnectedness of nature and the harmony of all living things. It is another way of looking at the story of creation. The illustrations in the book are excellent and add much to the story line. They are colorful and will hold a child’s atten-

Book Review: The Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6 volumes.



Have you ever picked up the Bible but found some of its words and terms confusing? Think of all the names in the Bible or the many geographic locations. What about biblical terms like “Son of Man” or resurrection? Have you ever wondered what they actually mean? It turns out that scholars have already answered your questions. All you have to do is look up an entry in the Anchor Bible Dictionary, which we have in our church library. The Anchor Bible Dictionary is the most respected Bible dictionary in print. The amount of information it contains will amaze you and I use it regularly in sermon preparation. My only word of caution is that it can occasionally be a bit too scholarly in its approach. Some entries are unnecessarily long or filled with more technical detail than you need. Nevertheless, I would strongly encourage everyone to pick a random biblical term and look it up. The Anchor Bible Dictionary is a wonderful resource to have and I hope all of you have the opportunity to use it.

--Jonathan Page

UCC Book Club

Your Summer Reading List for the UCC Book Club

The UCC Book Club welcomes all readers and even those who just want to hear the discussion. The group meets in the church parlor on the third Wednesday at 2 p.m. Please note the books marked with *Multiple copies are available in the Ames Public Library Book Club collection. Books may be checked out for six weeks.

September 18 -- Freedom Road by Howard Fast (1944 novel, 294 pages) Discussion leader: Lynette Spicer

It is the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. Kathleen Hillyard, ISU history professor, said this was her favorite novel about this time in U.S. history. It is about the reconstruction 1865 to 1877. In 1944, *The Negro Digest* had this review: A thrilling, sensational novel of the controversial Reconstruction era that gives an entirely new picture of the Southern society of freed Negro slaves and poor whites in the post-Civil War days. Here is a strong rebuttal to the *Gone with the Wind* and *The Clansmen* school of writing. The editors of *NEGRO DIGEST* believe it one of the finest books ever written about the Negro.

October 16 -- The Master Butcher's Singing Club* by Louise Erdrich (2005 novel, 416 pages) Discussion leader: Paul Clark

Drawing on her paternal German ancestry, Erdrich tells the story of Fidelis Waldvogel, a WWI sniper and master butcher. After marrying Eva, the pregnant fiancée of his best friend, who was killed in the war, he emigrates to America. Settling in Argus, North Dakota, he and Eva establish a butcher shop. The focus then shifts to Delphine Watzka, a performer in a traveling vaudeville act, who has recently returned to Argus to care for her alcoholic father, Roy. Not willing to abandon Roy, Delphine and her vaudeville partner, a homosexual Ojibwa, set up house in Argus.

November 20 -- Emergence Christianity: What It Is, Where It Is Going, and Why It Matters by Phyllis Tickle, Ames UCC Theologian in Residence 2014 (2012 nonfiction, 212 pages) Discussion leader: Allen Trenkle

Whatever else one might say about Emergence Christianity, says Phyllis Tickle, one must agree it is shifting and re-configuring itself in such a prodigious way as to defy any final assessments or absolute pronouncements. Yet the insightful and well-read Tickle keeps us informed of where Emergence Christianity now stands, where it may be going, and how it is aligning itself with other parts of God's church. Through her careful study and culture-watching, Tickle invites readers to join this investigation and conversation as open-minded explorers rather than fearful opponents.

Financial Stewardship Team

Treasurer's Report

Income Highlights through Second Quarter 2013

Operating Budget	2013	2012	Difference
Pledges	\$140,023	\$138,736	\$1,288
Non-pledge, Loose Contributions	\$ 8,081	\$ 9,257	(\$1,176)
Rent	\$ 4,353	\$ 3,806	\$ 547

Outreach Beyond the Budget

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 3,162	\$ 2,451	\$ 711
Strengthen the Church	\$ 1,780	\$ 933	\$ 847

Treasurer's Quarterly Report

It appears that we are doing well with our operating budget with the year to date income of approximately \$152,554 which is 102 percent of what we projected in the annual budget. Expenses of \$152,294 are 101 percent of the projected budget amount. Expenses are higher for the first six months of the year due primarily to the \$10,815 shingling of the church office.

Nonpledge gifts so far this year

- \$1,000 Theologian in Residence
- \$ 500 Concrete work
- \$ 200 Landscaping
- \$ 20 Landscaping
- \$ 20 Undesignated outreach (multiple times)
- \$ 41 Flowers
- \$ 50 Vacation Bible School
- \$ 165 MICA
- \$ 160 Undesignated outreach
- \$ 150 Music purchases
- New freezer in kitchen

--Jim Dickson, Treasurer



On June 1, 2013, Troy Strum and Jim Peake met with Treasurer, Jim Dickson, to review the 2012 Financial Records of the Ames UCC. All were verified and found to be in order. The committee followed cash from the collection plate journal to bank deposit slips to checking account bank statement to the UCC balance sheet and non-cash deposits from bank deposits slips to bank statement entries, summed each of the bank statement entries for the month to the UCC balance sheet. The UCC balance sheet total was tied to the bank statement balance. The various account statement totals were tied to the UCC balance sheet. To review the expenditures, various checks from a month's bank statement were selected and all were verified to support documentation.

--Sharron Slinger

Social Justice & Outreach Team

Additional Dates to Help at Food at First

The free meal program at First United Methodist Church in downtown Ames serves seven meals per week and is open to anyone who is hungry, no questions asked. Almost everything that is served would have been thrown away by local grocery stores and food services, but has been turned into wonderful, tasty meals.

Recently, I was asked if Ames UCC could take on extra meals each month at Food at First. The chef for the first, third and fifth Wednesday meals quit unexpectedly. I have agreed to be head chef for those dates which are currently being staffed with volunteers from the online sign up. I would like to have volunteers from the congregation assist in this important task. I will create signup sheets for the parlor, to go with the existing ones for our third Saturday noon meals. I will continue to cook these meals, whether with help from the congregation or online volunteers. Currently, signups for the meals are available at foodatfirst@wordpress.com. On Wednesdays, cooks need to arrive at the First United Methodist basement kitchen between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m., servers and cleanup crews should arrive around 5:00 p.m. to serve the 5:30-6:15 p.m. meal. We should be finished with everything by about 7:00 p.m. Families with kids are always welcome to volunteer. There are many tasks for young hands that don't involve knives or fire plus the guests are always pleased to see youth involved with the meals.

Thank you for your support in this important mission!

David White (515) 450-4896, Email: fishinmonkey.dw@gmail.com

Caring Network

Greetings from Grinnell

I want to recognize and publicly thank the caring network of church members who helped with my move from Ames to the Mayflower Community in Grinnell. These folks assisted with the garage sale or with the final packing, cleaning and hauling involved with this move: Ken Birt, Judy Blair, Jerry Chase, Paul Clark, Roger Parmenter, Doug Powell, Ginny Shenk, Kristin Shields, Galina and Phil Spike, Donna Starck and Barb Yungclas. The church received \$160 (20 percent of garage sale proceeds) for its outreach mission as a token of appreciation for all this help.

The Mayflower Community in Grinnell is a ministry of the Iowa Conference of the UCC. On the campus are 83 apartments in five different buildings and 48 patio homes for those living independently. The continuum of care includes residential care, assisted living, nursing services and memory support living. Over the years, a number of Ames UCC members have served on Mayflower's Board of Trustees. Joyce Hertz has been a trustee for the past 2 years.

After I have moved from my temporary apartment (Pearson 205) to my final apartment that is undergoing renovation and expansion (Montgomery 8), I hope I will have many visitors from Ames.

--Nancy E. Brown

Evangelism Team

The Evangelism Team is working to expand Ames UCC's presence in the community and there are several ways you can help.

If you are on Facebook, please "like" Ames UCC and visit our page regularly. Please share photos and add comments on our page. The more interactions you provide, the greater our visibility.

Likewise, the Evangelism Team is looking to increase our church's visibility among new members of the community. To accomplish this goal, on July 14 our Welcome Committee visited its first group of residents new to Ames. Committee members had a great experience. They are eager to continue and are looking for others to join them, thereby expanding the reach.

Since Sunday afternoons and early evenings are among the most reliable times to find people at home, we will continue our new resident visits each Sunday afternoon through August 25.

The Welcome Committee will meet at the church office for a brief training session. Teams of two people will be assigned, making sure each team has a least one experienced canvasser. Each team then will be given a specific area and list of families to visit.

These visits are a great way to meet new people and introduce them to our church. If you would like to join the Welcome Committee or if you have families you would like us to visit, contact Jan Bauer at (515) 292-3739 or bauerjan@yahoo.com.

Thank you!

We thank the members and friends of the Ames United Church of Christ for the generous donations made in memory of our mother, the Rev. Louise B. Dengler.



Your prayers and good wishes have helped us through this time. We are truly blessed to be part of this caring and giving faith community.

--Louise Dengler's children

UCC

**You are invited to the
UCC Iowa Conference
Annual Meeting**

Date: October 19

Time: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Ames UCC

Deadline for registration: September 19

Cost: \$20/person

Agenda and registration information at:

<http://www.ucciaconf.org/events/event/annual-business-meeting>.

General Synod and the National Setting of the UCC

To understand the structure and function of the national setting of the UCC, you have to know something about the predecessor bodies that came together to form the denomination. The Congregational Churches, which have been in North America since 1620, only formed a national structure in 1871. The churches shared the same seminaries and history but had no formal constitution or denomination before then. To do work that required the resources of many churches, the Congregationalists formed missionary societies and boards. The two most significant nationwide boards were the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS). After the formation of the denomination in 1871, there was a small national council that helped coordinate denomination-wide activities and planned a biennial meeting of the churches.

The Evangelical and Reformed churches had a presbyterian polity, rather than a congregational one. Churches in a given area were bound together in a classis or presbytery. These bodies were then united into different synods. The actions of each synod were binding on the churches within that synod. The various synods of the E&R church met annually to discuss the national business of the church. When the national body voted, it included the votes of each synod and was therefore binding on the churches.

When these two groups came together in 1957, they borrowed the structure of the E&R side but the polity of the Congregational side. The Congregationalists insist General Synod and national office could have no binding authority on the congregations of the UCC. Yet, unlike on the Congregational side, the General Synod did not represent the local churches, but was made up of the statewide conferences that aligned with the old E&R synod boundaries and their Congregational equivalents. The boards of directors of the national mission boards also had a place in the new General Synod.

While there have been changes in the way the national setting is organized over the past 55 years, the basic governance structure has remained the same. The old mission boards are now called Covenanted Ministries and we have three of them: Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, and Justice and Witness Ministries. The national setting has four officers, one for each of the Covenanted Ministries and the General Minister and President. You can find out more information on the UCC website (www.ucc.org).
--Jonathan Page

Potpourri



Honor Concert for Veterans at Iowa State Fair

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church and School in Des Moines along with Iowa District West is sponsoring a military tribute concert on August 12 at the Iowa State Fair. The hope is to assemble a statewide 160-voice choir and 80-member orchestra for this event. This is being handled more like an "honor choir", where you will get the music ahead of time, and then commit to a practice on Sunday afternoon, August 11, and Monday morning, August 12. The concert is Monday noon at the Susan Knapp stage at the Iowa State Fair. For more information and to sign up, visit www.militarytributeconcert.com.

In keeping with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, race, culture, ability or sexual orientation 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.

United Church Courier

United Church of Christ - Congregational
217 Sixth Street
Ames, IA 50010

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 153
Ames, IA 50010

Return Service Requested

STAFF

Ministers
The Reverend Jonathan C. Page, Minister
Hannah Hannover, Children & Youth Minister

Youth Director
Lesley Lackore

Music Director
Karen Stewart

Keyboardist
Becky A. Bridges

Secretary

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Moderator
Ken Birt

Team Coordinator
Ellen Barnhart

Caring Network
Kristin Shields

Christian Education
Barbara Faidley

Evangelism
Jan Bauer

Financial Stewardship
Sharron Slinger

Member Services
Allison Anderson

Property
Greg Lamont

Social Justice and Outreach
Kim Spangler

Worship & Music
David White

Association and Conference Delegate
Rachel Jones

Treasurer
Jim Dickson

Clerk
Lynette Spicer