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# UCC COURIER

United Church of Christ

217 Sixth St. Ames, IA 50010

**ISSUE 249  
NOVEMBER 2013**

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www.amesucc.org  
office@amesucc.org

## **Introducing a Young Adult Meetup!**

We are starting a Young Adults monthly Meetup the third Thursday of the month. This group is for those individuals roughly in the 20-40 year old age range. Our first event on Thursday, November 14 at 6:00 p.m. will be making homemade pizzas in Fellowship Hall. There will be childcare provided for all ages. The first meeting will be very informal and mostly a way to get to know one another.

The first meeting will be very informal and mostly a way to get to know one another. Hope to see you there! If you have questions, send an email to Terisa Thomas at [terisatomas@hotmail.com](mailto:terisatomas@hotmail.com) or Rachel Jones at [rachel.jones@webfilings.com](mailto:rachel.jones@webfilings.com).

## **Chili Cook-off and Pie Fest on Saturday, November 16**



It's time for the annual gastronomical feast on November 16 at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. In the past the chili has ranged from mild to hot and we expect nothing different this year. Prizes will be awarded to the crowd favorites for chili and pie.

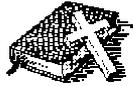
This is always fun so plan to attend!

**Pledge Campaign:**  
Be sure to get your 2014 Pledge cards in to the church if you have not already!!

## **Book Club November 20**

Learn about our upcoming Theologian-in-Residence Phyllis Tickle and read her perspective on the future of the church, including churches like ours. (See page 11 for more details.)

## FROM THE PASTOR



***Transitions  
can also  
provide  
opportunity  
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introspection,  
renewal, and  
new hope.***

The reality of my impending departure is beginning to sink in. It is a daunting prospect to be packing up my worldly possessions and returning to the Northeast without a clear plan for the future. I will be relying on the grace of God, on the helpful advice of friends and family members, and on your prayers.

Of course, the church also faces an uncertain future as you search for new ministerial leadership. Times of transition always provoke anxiety and, unfortunately, can lead to inertia and retrenchment back to what feels most comfortable. But that does not have to be the case. Transitions can also provide opportunity for introspection, renewal, and new hope.

This congregation is a proud inheritor of the Congregational tradition. The bedrock of that tradition has been the autonomy of the local church. You call all the shots. You determine your theology. The membership has full authority to hire and fire clergy and to spend its collective dollars however you see fit. Church is all about the covenant you share with one another. Ministers come and go. The covenant, the membership, the commitment to God all remain.

As I reflect on my time with you, I have come to realize that I probably took on too many aspects of church life, mostly out of expediency. But if the congregation is to be healthy and productive in the future, the congregation needs to take ownership over some key essentials, especially in the areas of evangelism and building connections among the members. That process can, and should, begin now. Several members of the church are already taking the lead in these areas.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find information about promoting socializing and fellowship among the younger members and friends of the church. It has often been pointed out that most of our activities are geared toward retired people and their schedules. If you feel a little disconnected or that you do not have many friends within the congregation, this is an ideal time to discover what new opportunities are bubbling up. Take the lead. Own the covenant.

Perhaps the most important new effort will be the establishment of connection groups, small groups that have an intentional spiritual component. Six to ten people commit to meet regularly to share their spirituality, read the Bible, discuss important issues in their lives, and discern how God might be working within you. These groups will take a little longer to set up, but they have the potential to enrich deeply the lives of those involved.

In terms of evangelism, one of the most important, and simple things that each person can do is to get to know the visitors to the church. People have mentioned again and again that the church has a wonderful initial welcome to guests, but that welcome does not translate easily into knowing other people. Our mentor program and training of greeters and ushers help with that, but the best way to welcome new people is to take the initiative to get to know everyone you see on Sunday morning.

This church impresses me that it knows what it is about. It is a proud proponent of a liberal/progressive theology. It respects tradition while being open to new things. It is a strong advocate for social justice and values the fact that you can get to know everyone in the church. This church has been an exciting place to serve, and I hope that each of you can continue to build it up in your own unique way. After all, in our tradition, the church is you.

--Jonathan Page

## Financial Stewardship Team

### **Thank you to all who supported our Fall Stewardship Campaign . . . Surprising Gifts!**

We appreciate the thoughtful, generous giving through pledges and donations. Many people volunteered their skills to make our campaign a success. Thank you to Doug Powell, Vice Coordinator of Financial Stewardship, for laying out our needs and to the Rev. Jonathan Page for providing leadership and encouragement.

Thanks to staff members Becky Bridges and David Cook for their extra work. We appreciate the mission moments given by Lynette Spicer and Kim Spangler and the stewardship witnesses of Phil Spike and Nancy Clark. A big thank you to those who helped with the envelope addressing, stuffing and stamping of our mailings . . . Christa Andersen, Nancy Hart, Peg Powell, Greg Wool, Bill and Barbara Yungclas and Bill Slinger. To those who volunteered at the potluck, a huge thank you . . . Ellen and Steve Barnhart; Curtis, Malinda and Jan Bauer; Jim Dickson; Nancy and Doug Heathman; Rachel Jones; Greg Lamont; Jon Page and Bill Slinger. How many gifts . . . not surprising!

**Income Highlights through Third Quarter 2013**

<b>Operating Budget</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Pledges	\$199,834	\$204,404	(\$4,570)
Non-pledge, Loose Contributions			
	\$11,335	\$14,834	(\$3,499)
Rent	\$6,508	\$5,681	\$827

**Outreach Beyond the Budget**

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$3,162	\$2,663	\$499
Strengthen the Church	\$1,805	\$911	\$894

**Treasurer's Quarterly Report**

It appears that we are not doing as well with our operating budget as in 2012 with the year to date income of approximately \$214,060 which is 95% of what we projected in the annual budget. Expenses of \$224,233 are 100% of the projected budget amount.

Below is a list of major repairs through the first nine months of the year with a list of estimated expenses for the rest of 2013.

**2013 Major Repairs through September 30, 2013**

	<b>2013</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>
Shelves for church and office	\$479.96	
Office 50-year shingles	\$10,815.05	
Ballast, lamps, exit signs upstairs	\$2,229.24	
Outdoor storage shed	\$961.93	
Scrape, sand, paint office windows	\$1,071.38	
<i>Total from Operating Fund</i>	\$15,557.56	\$7,500.00
Water proofing roof	\$2,950.00	
Bat control	\$3,210.00	
<i>Total from Building Escrow Fund</i>	\$6,160.00	
\$7,500.00		
Year to date major repairs	\$21,717.56	\$15,000.00

**Anticipated major repairs through end of year**

West doors	\$11,700.00
Office windows trim painting	\$2,142.77

--Jim Dickson, Treasurer

# Executive Board

## The 150th Capital Campaign Team

The 150th Capital Campaign Team has compiled the thoughts and ideas from the congregation and would like you to complete a short survey to help us prioritize our list. We are asking for your guidance as it would be difficult to study all projects thus far identified. The survey results will help direct our search and a final priority list will be presented at the annual meeting in January.

There are two options to complete the survey.

1. Online: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZMRJV5B>
2. Paper Copy: Available in the church office or the back of the sanctuary starting Sunday, October 27. They may be returned to the church office or any committee member.

We ask that you take the time to fill out one or the other no later than Sunday, November 10. Each member or regular attendee is encouraged to participate.

-- 150th Capital Campaign Team

# Christian Education Team

## Learn Something New Every Sunday at Learning Center Adult Forum

The program begins at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Come early for continental breakfast of doughnuts, pastries, bagels, coffee, tea and juice at 9:00 a.m. The breakfast is supported by a free will offering.

- ◇ November 3 – Journeys of Faith, LaVerne and Barbara Faidley
- ◇ November 10 – Ask the Pastor
- ◇ November 17 -- Life on the Farm, Dean and Frieda Lehman
- ◇ November 24 – Painting of The Prodigal Son (European Painting Lost and Found) - Ursula Rudenberg
- ◇ December 1 – No program

## Insight Bible Study Group – Attend One or All

This fall on Thursdays at 3 p.m. in Room 104 (in church) the Insight Bible Study group will look at the historical Jesus. Using insights from the DVD series Saving Jesus Redux, The Historical Jesus: Five Views, and Jon's fall sermons, the group will discuss:

October 31 -- Jesus' Ministry of Compassion  
November 7 -- Who Killed Jesus?  
November 14 -- The Atonement  
November 21 -- The Resurrection of Christ  
December 5 -- Why Jesus Is Worth Saving

Insight is a group discovering its faith. There are no right or wrong answers and no homework except for what you want to explore on your own. Everyone is welcome!!!!

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at (515) 232-3855 or send an email to [ellenbarnhart@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenbarnhart@hotmail.com).

--Ellen Barnhart



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

## Library News

**LOST:** During the sermon series on "The Historical Jesus", Rev. Jonathan went through our church library and found books related to the topic. We were going to use the books for a special display. Seven or eight books were sitting on the large table in the church parlor on Tuesday. By Saturday morning, the books were no longer there. If you happened to move the books or take them home or know anything about them, please call Barbara Faidley at (515) 233-3874. Our church library has limited resources and we would hate to lose this collection of books.

**THANK YOU:** The Christian Education team thanks all who have made donations to the church library. These donations will help update the library. We continue to look for good quality adult and children's books.

**REQUEST:** One of the goals for the library is to have a collection of the books that the UCC Book Club has read. We have started on this project. We are currently looking for the following books:

*Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* by Helen Simonson?

*After the Leaves Fall* by Nicole Baart?

*Strength in What Remains* by Tracy Kidder ?

*The Irresistible Henry House* by Lisa Grunwald?

If you have any of these books and would like to donate a copy, contact Barbara Faidley at (515) 233-3874 or [barbara@faidley.org](mailto:barbara@faidley.org).

## Book Review

***“The Silencing of Leonardo Boff: The Vatican and the Future of World Christianity”*** by Harvey Cox, published by Meyerstone Books, 1988

Liberation Theology (LT) rose with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council called by Pope John XXIII in October of 1962. Like the Council, LT called for an opening of the Church, a preferential treatment of the poor, and a focus on social justice. It also set up an alternative, to the dominant Catholic ideal: European – preferably, medieval Italian (later, Polish or German). That openness and willingness to change was quickly staunched with a return of the traditionalist to power in the papacy of Pope John Paul II, beginning in 1978. One of the victims of the rejection of modernization of the church was Brazilian Franciscan theologian, Leonardo Boff. Cox follows Boff's life, his silencing in 1985, the efforts of Brazilian bishops to support him, and the rejection of their pleas by John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger (with whom Boff had studied in Munich). Cox seeks to determine why the Vatican saw liberation theology as so threatening. The Vatican position was that with the resurrection, all humankind needed was the Church to provide sacraments to lead to salvation. Using Jesus as a role model – and indeed any reference to the Old Testament, was unnecessary. Thus Boff, who called for the faithful to proclaim their faith in their struggle for social justice based on these biblical ideas was dangerous. Thus he was forbidden to preach or publish.

Boff used his time of silence to be with the people in the favelas (slums), partaking of the condition in which those who have no voice live all the time. The silencing only lasted a year, but others who wrote as he did were also silenced.

The saga continues after the book was published. In 2001 he accused Ratzinger of "religious terrorism". Boff was still a Franciscan when the book was written, but in 1992 an attempt by the Vatican to keep him from participating in the Eco-92 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro led him leave the order and his ministry. And now, with a new Pope in the Vatican, taking the name of the founder of the Franciscan order to which Boff belonged, a number of the issues raised by Boff are now proclaimed by Pope Francis. God is still speaking.

-- Review by Cornelia Flora

**Children's Book Review**

**"Great Events of Bible Times"** by Malcolm Day

This book takes a person on a journey back in time to meet the great figures of the Old Testament and to read the dramatic stories of the Israelites, from the Garden of Eden to the capture of Jerusalem and the Exile. But what do we know about everyday life in Bible Times? This book draws on historical evidence to show how people lived and went about their daily tasks; how they built in times of peace and how they fought in times of war. It shows what they wore and the objects they used every day; how they travelled and how they worked the land. The people and times of the Bible come to life through the illustrations and maps that accompany the stories retold in the book. This is a children's book, but an adult can gain a great of knowledge from the extremely detailed illustrations and explanations.



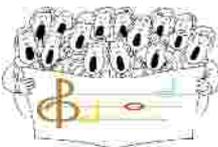
-- Review by Barbara Faidley

# Social Justice & Outreach Team

**Good Neighbor Combined Choir Benefit Concert**

Sunday, November 3 at 2:00 p.m. at St. Cecilia Church

Doors open to the public at 1:30 p.m.



This year UCC's choir will join 14 choirs from the Ames area who will perform a range of choral music. In addition, there will be a

mass choir performing in a two-song finale. A freewill donation will be received to benefit Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Inc., and its mission of providing emergency rent, utilities, food, and gas assistance in an atmosphere of dignity, comfort and encouragement to needy residents of Story County. For more information about the work of Good Neighbor, call (515) 296-1449 or visit [www.gnea.org](http://www.gnea.org).

### **Ames Area Alternative Gift Market Open at UCC and Wheatsfield Grocery**



Alternative gifts and gift cards will be available at Ames UCC on December 7 and 14 in the parlor after Sunday worship.

The Ames Area Alternative Gift Market (AGM) will hold its 23rd market on December 7 (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) and December 14 (10 a.m. to 12 noon) at Wheatsfield Cooperative Grocery. The Ames market is sponsored by nine local congregations and is organized by a committee of representatives from those congregations, including the Ames United Church of Christ. The Ames Area Alternative Gift Market is one of the most successful of more than 300 gift markets nationwide. If you would like more information or want to help, contact Ingrid Anderson to help make this year's AGM a success! Home phone (515) 233-6427, cell phone (515) 441-2135, e-mail [ingrideba@me.com](mailto:ingrideba@me.com).

If you are new to the church, you might wonder: **What is the Alternative Gift Market?** The Alternative Gift Market offers gifts with a conscience. Instead of buying yet another sweatshirt or electronic gadget for someone on your Christmas list, you can purchase a meaningful, life-giving gift in that person's honor. Purchase a yak (or a share of a yak) for a school in western China, a supply of safe drinking water for communities in Bolivia, or provide a bicycle for healthcare workers in Africa. These holiday gifts meet basic needs of education, food, shelter and health; they make a difference in the world. Shoppers can provide for those in need in the Ames community with support for the Bethesda Community Food Pantry, Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support (ACCESS), Emergency Residence Project, Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Habitat for Humanity for Central Iowa, Food at First, Story County Community Dental Clinic, and Life to Life Global Building Group (Global Builders, Ames High Uganda Project). You get an attractive card and a synopsis sheet of the project you select, which you can give to your friends and family during the holiday season. You can be sure that this year's gift won't be collecting dust.

Congregations participating in the Ames Alternative Gift Market are:

St. Cecilia Catholic	First United Methodist
Bethesda Lutheran	Ames United Church of Christ
St. Andrews Lutheran	Northminster Presbyterian
Collegiate United Methodist	Collegiate Presbyterian
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames	

## Member Services Team

### Women's Fellowship - Wednesday, November 6 at Noon

Grab your lunch and join us in Fellowship Hall. The topic is gratitude. We will make easy gratitude journals and share our stories about what we are grateful for in our lives. The group tries to make this within the lunch hour so those who work can join us. Hope to see you there!

--Ellen Barnhart

### Connection Groups



As our church prepares for its 150th anniversary celebration, we as a congregation have been challenged to re-think church and what it means to be a congregation. Many times the topic of small connection groups has been broached and we think that it's time to do something about it! The gift of being able to start this ministry from scratch is that we as a congregation get to define what those connection groups look like.

Are you interested in intergenerational groups? How about more specific groups that cater to a particular age, activity (scrapbooking, sewing, etc.) or even service work oriented groups that go beyond what UCC is already doing in our community? How about more structured Biblical studies groups or even a prayer and meditation group? These are the questions that the Members Services team is asking for your input on...what areas do you feel are underserved or could be better served? Any and all comments are welcome to contact Terisa Thomas at [terisathomas@hotmail.com](mailto:terisathomas@hotmail.com) or (515) 509-4936, Allison Anderson at [ast1961@gmail.com](mailto:ast1961@gmail.com) or (515) 291-6351 or Rachel Jones at [rachel.jones@webfilings.com](mailto:rachel.jones@webfilings.com). Of course you are always welcome to talk to one of us before or after service as well! We will have a round table discussion after worship **November 17** to allow for open conversation and brainstorming. We look forward to your input!

### **Funeral Refreshments Co-Coordinator**

The Member Services team is looking for someone to help coordinate refreshments and meals (if needed) after funerals. Barbara Yungclas has done this for years and in the past has had a co-coordinator, but is currently handling this big job by herself. If you would be interested in helping out with this important task, please contact Allison Anderson at [ast1961@gmail.com](mailto:ast1961@gmail.com), Terisa Thomas at [terisathomas@hotmail.com](mailto:terisathomas@hotmail.com), Barbara, Jon or Hannah. This job is so important to our church. Please consider helping out.

### **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 of each month at 2:00 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.

**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

The author provides a rather detailed history of the modern emergent/emergence movement and the evolution of Emergence Christianity. The opening chapters that discussed the author's preference of the term "Great Emergence" is helpful for those not familiar with the movement. The author discusses different forms of Emergence Christianity, where it now stands, where it may be going, and how it is aligning itself with other parts of God's church. Phyllis Tickle argues that Emergence Christianity is shifting and re-configuring itself in such an unusual way as to defy any final assessments or absolute pronouncements. The reader will discover fascinating insights into concerns, organizational patterns, theology, and the most pressing questions facing Emergence Christianity. The author invites readers to join this inquiry and to participate as open-minded explorers rather than fearful opponents. She provides an extensive list of additional reading material for those wanting to learn more.

All are invited to read the book and participate in the discussion in the church parlor at 2:00 p.m. on November 20 to be more informed prior to **Theologian in Residence on February 22-23, 2014.**

-Review by Allen Trenkle

**December 18 -- The Art of Racing in the Rain\*** by Garth Stein (2008 novel, 321 pages) Discussion leader: Barbara Faidley

**January 15 -- Sarah's Key\*** by Tatiana de Rosnay (2011 novel, 400 pages) Discussion leader: Nancy Marks

**February 19 -- The Year We Left Home: A Novel\*** by Jean Thompson (2012 novel, 352 pages) Discussion leader: Allen Trenkle 2013 All Iowa Reads book

**March 19 -- Parsnips in the Snow: Talks with Midwestern Gardeners** by Jane Anne Staw and Mary Swander (1990 nonfiction, 223 pages) Discussion leader: Lynette Spicer

**April 16 -- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks\*** by Rebecca Skloot (2011 nonfiction, 400 pages) Discussion leader: Nancy Marks

**May 21 -- Deep Down** by Deborah Coates (2013 novel, 304 pages) Discussion leader: Christa Andersen

Find a synopsis of the books at:



<http://www.amesucc.org/BookClub>

# Green Team

## Invitation

In the United Church of Christ we feel we are called to care for all of God's creation. The Green Team offers opportunities for you to learn and actively participate in care for the earth. You are invited to attend the next meeting of the UCC Green Team on Tuesday, November 5 at 7:15 p.m. in Room 104. Please join us as we discuss and plan activities for the coming year. If unable to attend, please share your ideas and interest in the Green Team by contacting Donna Starck, [djstarck321@yahoo.com](mailto:djstarck321@yahoo.com) or any Green Team member.

## Recycling at UCC



The UCC Green Team is reminding everyone that we are collecting the following items for recycling:

1. Eye glasses
2. LED and CFL light bulbs
3. Ink cartridges
4. Rechargeable batteries

Please put them in the basket in the parlor and the Green Team will recycle them for you. Thank you!

# Potpourri

## Author Event at Octagon

Ellen Krug, author of *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*

Wednesday, November 20  
11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
Octagon Center for the Arts



Drop in during your lunch and meet author Ellen Krug. Ellen will read from her book. Participants are welcome to bring a sack lunch. Beverages and dessert will be served. Books will be available for purchase and signing. This free event is hosted by Ames Public Library and Ames PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

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

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Hannah Hannover, Children & Youth Minister

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**Music Director** Lesley Lackore

**Keyboardist** Karen Stewart

**Secretary** Becky A. Bridges

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