

Happy New Year



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ JANUARY 2017



Friends in Christ:

Writing about the awareness of time that weighs heavily upon us as a new year arrives, Samuel Miller, who, before his death in 1968, was the Dean at Harvard Divinity School, said:

Our bodies and our thoughts are woven of the threads of time; our days and nights are marks of her mastery; our deeds and desires are her children. Here as elsewhere in life we may lose our souls, from too much love of what is gone and too much fear or attention paid to what is not yet come. For time is now! The past is present, and all the future we shall ever know is present. The narrow alley in which we live may seem uncomfortably small and precarious, but it is also impenetrably deep and precious.

This “narrow alley” in which we live is filled with amazing people and places. Our time is accessible only to us—neither those who came before nor those who follow encounter the distinct opportunities and challenges that we face.

The author of Ecclesiastes invites us to open our eyes and look around. To everything there is a season—a time to rend, to sew, to plant, to reap, a time to be born; and a time to die, yes, for that allows everything else to happen and fills us with an urgency to do our work, and love others, and live our lives in this narrow alley.

The year now past was filled with loss, with change, and with uncertainty. Many felt that the year left them sad, somber, more resolute—and more eager to start the New Year right.

But we don't just leave this fading year behind. We can't. We bring it along as we continue down this narrow alley. The days pass, one after another, inexorably, and no clutching will keep them. Yet they leave their marks upon us, upon our hands and faces, upon the spirit most of all, and our heart is filled with their voices, laughing and weeping.

So I begin to understand the wisdom of linking Christmas with the coming of the New Year. No one, of course, knows when Jesus was born, neither the year nor the date. Early Christians began marking his birthday on the 25th of December because of the winter solstice. The days were—and are—beginning to get just a little longer once more. The light has triumphed over the darkness. What better time to celebrate God with us in Jesus? Without this yearly celebration of incarnation, we would be loath to go into another year. Each year the weight of the past gets heavier—and so we bear one another's burdens. We continue to follow Jesus who tells us his yoke is easy, his burden is light.

To lighten our burden, Jesus calls us always into the living present.

Time is now! And in this time we are called to live fully.

Peace (and Happy New Year)

Bill



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

EPIPHANY CELEBRATIONS ON JANUARY 8

Epiphany (the revelation of Jesus to the Gentiles, the coming of the Magi) falls twelve days after Christmas, on January 6 each year. This year we'll extend the Christmas season for a few more days and celebrate Epiphany on Sunday, January 8. In our 10:15 worship service we will bring our observance of Christmas to a conclusion, hearing the story of the Magi from the Gospel of Matthew and sharing in the sacrament of communion. After worship our festivities continue in Rockwood Hall where we will enjoy Epiphany Cake. If you find a coin in your slice of cake, you will be crowned the king/queen of the festival! (And you get to do the children's sermon and help bake the cake for Epiphany 2018.)

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. INTERFAITH CELEBRATION

The 20th annual interfaith celebration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held at First Mennonite Church, 405 Myrtle Ave, Iowa City, on Sunday, January 15, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. The Featured Speaker will be Stacey Walker of the Linn County Board of Supervisors. Sponsored by the Consultation of Religious Communities.

MISSION BOARD SPONSORS ADULT EDUCATION SERIES BEGINING JANUARY 15

On Sunday, January 15, the Mission Board will begin a new 6-week program on racism. The title is: "Does Racism Require Intent?" It will be explored using the "White Privilege—Let's Talk" curriculum published by the national office of the United Church of Christ in 2016: <http://www.uccresources.com/products/white-privilege-lets-talk-a-resource-for-transformational-dialogue-pdf-download>

This series reflects the urgency in our church and in our society to address divisiveness related to "whiteness" and "otherness" which continue to undermine the Christian values of equality for all that we in the UCC have long cherished, even from the days of the Amistad.

Attendant to the curriculum, readings will be available though not required. We had an excellent turnout for discussion of this topic last January-February and hope that this new series will build on that and lead us to ways to act as allies against "otherness" in our individual and societal lives.

ANNUAL MEETING ON JANUARY 29

The Annual Meeting of the Congregational United Church of Christ will be held on Sunday, January 29, in the sanctuary, following our 10:15 worship service. We will receive reports of Boards and Committees, vote on the budget for 2017, and transact any other business that is fitting and necessary. Copies of the annual report will be available by Sunday, January 22.

NEW MEMBER CLASS

A new member class will be held on Wednesdays, January 11 and January 18 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining Congregational UCC or would like more information about us, we invite you to attend these sessions. For more information, please talk with Bill Lovin or call the church office, 337-4301. Childcare will be provided.

UPDATE ON FUNDRAISERS*

Current totals for the fundraising in December:

Heifer Project	-	\$1271.00	
Blanket Project—Church World Service	-	\$ 210.00	
Mission Board Cards and Knitted Items	-	\$ 328.00	
Christmas Fund	-	\$ 695.00	*Possible further updates!

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

THINK AHEAD FOR ANNUAL OUTERWEAR DISTRIBUTION

Each year in the fall, Congregational UCC joins with other congregations in providing winter coats for people of all ages, especially children. As winter items start to go on sale in the stores, now is a great time to let your dollar go further and purchase coats. Please store them at your home until the fall when they can be brought to the church and then taken to the distribution site.

A WORD OF THANKS...

For many decades the Chinese School has used space in our building to teach Chinese on Sunday afternoons. As 2106 was ending, we received this note from them:

“Thank you for your loving support to our Chinese School of Iowa City throughout the year. We are very thankful for your gracious help. We hope that you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!”

The Chinese School of Iowa City

DOANE COLLEGE CHOIR CONCERT—HOUSING STILL NEEDED

On January 12, 2017 the Doane College Choir will begin their concert tour with a performance in our sanctuary. As hosts of this wonderful 50-voice ensemble we would like to provide housing for the singers as we did for the Ripon College choir.

Please contact Marie von Behren, 319-354-4020, mvonbeh@msn.com if you are able to open your home for an overnight stay on January 12th after the concert. It will help them plan their expenses when we can tell them how many singers we are able to house. Thank you for your support.

FREE LUNCH PROGRAM NEWS

Our church served 140 lunches at the Free Lunch Program on Halloween Day, October 31. So many wonderful members of our church volunteered their time by donating and preparing food, serving and/or cleaning up on this day:

Our Confirmation Class, Reverend Bill Lovin & Robin Thomas-Lovin, Claire Ashman, Ginny Clemons, Martha Ann Crawford, John & Randee Fieselmann, Paula Forest, John Fuller, Pat Goeldner, Donna Hirst Marge Hoppin, Donna Janes, Joan Jehle, Kathi Koegle, Marcy Kuechenmeister, Ruth Kuntz, Nan Martin, Hermine McLeran, Linda Muston, Joyce Myer, Joan Parsons, Edie Roberts, Patty & Dale Roberts, Rick Ruppert, Betty Stein, Sally Strang and Lee Wood. Thank you all so much for your time and cheerful helpfulness in making this day so successful. Our guests let it be known how much they appreciated all the nourishing food that was provided!

Our next serving date is Monday, January 30. A sign up sheet will be posted in Rockwood Hall by the first of January, 2017. As always, this endeavor wouldn't be possible without you! *Vicki Thomae*



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Membership Committee **will not** meet in January. Their “kick off” meeting will be on February 21st at 5:30 pm

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST IN JANUARY

The Women's Lunch will be on January 19 beginning at 11:45 am. Please call the church office in January for restaurant choice! The Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, January 21, beginning at 8 am at the eastside **Mid-Town Restaurant, 200 Scott Ct. in Iowa City.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

MEDITATION/PRAYER GATHERING

You are invited to join others for a time of silent prayer and meditation each Wednesday at noon. After a brief reading, participants sit silently for about 20 minutes. We conclude our time together with a brief period of conversation. This group is open to everyone. You do not need to attend every week in order to participate. We are all just beginning to pray, so feel free to join us when you are able.

FLOWERS ALWAYS ENRICH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES

There is a sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall for anyone who would like to provide flowers. They can be given in memory or honor of loved ones or in celebration of special events such as birthdays and anniversaries. This information will be included in the Sunday bulletin. Flowers can also be given simply for the joy and beauty that they bring. If you have questions, please contact Jane Murphy at 351-9079 or at murphyjane51@gmail.com.

SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE—MARCH 26-27

The Shelter House book sale will be March 26-27. The sale will be at the Johnson County Fairgrounds, and virtually all of the preparation for the sale will be in March. Because of the limited preparation time, we anticipate that we will need substantially more volunteers than in the past.

What you can do before March:

- 1) Continue identifying books to donate, store them in your home and be prepared to move them to the sale site late February. If you have books and no storage space in your home, let me know and we can assist with interim storage. When space at the fairgrounds is available, we hope you can quickly transport your books to the site or to the church. We have people who can assist with "heavy lifting".
- 2) Plan to donate time in March. We will need people to move boxes, sort books into subject categories, box books, etc. I will put a sign up sheet in Rockwood Hall in January, but you can begin to consider how you might assist.
- 3) We will need lots of dollies to transport book boxes. Let me know if you have a dolly that you would be able to loan this enterprise for the month of March.

Last year the Shelter House Book Sale earned \$17,000 for the Shelter House. We are hoping to substantially increase this amount in 2017. The sale is a full community effort, with very strong support from the area churches. Last year our church was exceptional in its generosity of volunteer hours and book donations. Let's beat our 2016 record. Donna Hirst, donna-hirst@uiowa.edu, 351-5253

ARE YOU RECEIVING THE FRIDAY EMAIL?

Each week we send out a reminder to all members about upcoming events. If you are not getting the email and would like to receive it, please contact the church office.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Box Tops Clips—these are found on hundreds of product packages and are worth \$.10 for our schools. Box Tops Clips must be provided to an enrolled Box Tops for Education School (for submission by the School Coordinator before their expiration date).

You've probably seen these coupons on many of the products you use daily. I will be collecting them to pass on to the coordinator at Mark Twain Elementary School in Iowa City. This year's earnings are \$245.50. They have a goal of \$1000.00. The collection is ongoing. If you would like to pass your coupons on to me, I'll see to it that they are delivered. Edie Roberts



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

“THE GIVING SEASON”

Christmas, the “season of giving,” is over, yet, we all know that sharing, even in small ways, makes a difference to many people all year long. Our schools request each student to supply facial tissue and hand sanitizer at the beginning of the school year. But, there are many children and, by the middle of the year, those supplies are running very low.

I will be collecting tissue and hand sanitizer during the month of January to give to Mark Twain School. Please think of us the next time you’re shopping. A tub for donations will be in Rockwood Hall. If you have a connection with another school, please don’t hesitate to take your supplies there. The need is great everywhere.

Contact Edie Roberts with any questions: edie-roberts@uiowa.edu



SUNDAY SCHOOL IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

During the months of January and February, the Children’s Sunday School classes will be learning the many names of Jesus in order to gain a better understanding of who He is and the many ways He impacts our lives through those names.

Sunday School starts at 9:15 am in the upstairs Yellow Room with introductory activities for everyone. Children are then divided into age appropriate groups for further projects that enhance the lesson.

All children ages 4 to 5th grade are encouraged to join in the fun and adventure!



LITERACY PROGRAM – UPDATE AND INVITATION

The first 8 week session of our new literacy program ended in November and we are making plans for the next session to begin in February.

We had 10 students, 5 from the Sudan and 5 from Mexico and Central America. Eight students met with our volunteer tutors on Thursday evenings from 6-7:30 at our church and 2 met with tutors in the daytime in a public space. The level of English literacy varied widely. Some were beginners, others were working on homework from Kirkwood classes in writing, others wanted conversation and reading practice. One student came for help with math. There were some ups and downs along the way but the students all expressed appreciation for the time we spent with them and the one-on-one experience seems good for both parties. We provided childcare with the help of Grace and Edie and Marcie and we all enjoyed the kids who ranged in age from toddlers to a first grader.

The facilitator of the program is Jessica Hall who coordinates the ESL volunteer program at the Center for Worker Justice. The students are members of CWJ who are motivated to improve their English in order to advocate for themselves in their workplaces, schools where their children are enrolled, and at doctors' appointments. The volunteers for the first session were: Andrea Rauer, Claire and Bob Ashman, Paula Forest, Terri Macey, Marge Hoppin, Tom Kinney, Matthew Kemp, Edie Roberts, and me.

The volunteer tutors met with Jessica earlier this month and decided we would like to continue the program in the new year. We would like to recruit some new volunteers and I hope you will get in touch with me if you are interested or just want to learn more about the program and the volunteer role. We are going to have an orientation/training before the next session starts – date to be determined. We plan to begin February 9th and continue for 8 weeks which would have us finish on March 30th. We realize that there might be one or two weeks when a tutor is away and so are also looking for a few people willing to be substitutes. Jessica provides us with materials and is available for advice and Marnie Campbell and Lenore Maybaum are willing to be mentors as well.

The need in our community for English literacy assistance is great and we hope we can make a difference in the lives of students we serve as well as building bridges between communities.

My contact information is – Pat Goeldner - E-mail: pgoeldner@earthlink.net

Telephone: **319-338-1541** and of course glad to talk in person.

WOMEN'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

On January 21, 2017 the Women's March on Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines will begin at 9:00 am (womensmarchiowa.com). This march will be in solidarity with the Women's March on Washington. From the Women's March on Iowa website "We support the advocacy and resistance movements that reflect our multiple and intersecting identities. We call on all defenders of human rights to join us. This march is the first step towards unifying our communities, grounded in new relationships, to create change from the grassroots level up. We will not rest until women have parity and equity at all levels of leadership in society. We work peacefully while recognizing there is no true peace without justice and equity for all." If you are interested in participating in the March and would like to attend as part of a group from our church, please contact Beth Oakes via email or call the Church Office at 319-337-4301.

Our Children's Library

"There's a Shark in the Park!"

By Nick Sharrett

Appearances can be deceiving. We all know that, but, we're often still fooled. We assume people are "bad" because of the way they look or talk. We assume people are "nice" because of their smile or the way they dress. Our assumptions are often wrong and those assumptions can hurt us and others. This clever book reminds us that we CAN be fooled. We need to wait and "look twice" before jumping to conclusions.

"THERE'S A SHARK IN THE PARK!" Or is there? In this cleverly written, brightly illustrated story, a boy is testing out his new telescope. He explores the view from a variety of directions, 'He looks at the sky./He looks at the ground./He looks left and right./He looks all around.' He sees a shark! However, upon turning the page, readers see only a smiling black cat. So, the boy looks through his telescope again and once again yells that he sees a shark! However, it's just a bird. Finally his father comes to take him home. The boy will not see a shark in the park today. Or will he? On the last page, a duck in a pond sits on what looks like the tail of a rather large animal. There is a die-cut hole in the center of the front cover and several of the pages, and readers will have fun guessing what lurks behind each opening."—*School Library Journal*, PreSchool–Grade 2

"A little boy, Timothy Pope, goes to the park with his new telescope. Each time he looks through the instrument, he thinks he sees the black dorsal fin of a shark, which the reader sees through a circular hole in the page. But when the page is turned, the dorsal fin is revealed to be the ear of a cat, the wing of a crow, and the pompadour of Timothy's father. In the final picture, a dorsal fin appears in a small pond, much to the amazement of the resident ducks, but by this time Timothy is looking elsewhere. A hole in the book's cover opens to reveal end papers featuring a picture of a shark giving a toothy grin under hooded eyes. With its bright, cheerful, clean-lined illustrations and bouncy, repetitive text, this will make a light, enjoyable choice for very young children."—*Booklist*, PreSchool–Grade 2

Look for this book (and others) on the library shelves in Rockwood Hall. Explore the rest of our library for additional worthwhile reading.

Edie Roberts
Children's Librarian



Serving Our Church

In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we all share in performing duties for the worship service. A list is provided each month for the assignments of Greeters, Ushers and Hospitality.

Please arrive one-half hour before the service, which begins at 10:15 am.

If you cannot serve on the assigned date, please call someone else on the list to arrange a trade with them.

Please let the Deacon of the Month, **Edie Roberts**, know of any changes.

She can be reached at 319-338-8886 or edie-roberts@uiowa.edu

JANUARY	GREETERS	USHERS	HOSPITALITY
1	Ruth and Ken Kuntz	Bill and Janet Williams Roger Mills Betsy Boyd	Dale and Patty Roberts
8	Scott and Patricia Hansche	Jim and Diane Jetter Dick and Mary Lea Kruse	Bryan and Ginny Clemons
15	Kathleen Clark Richard Valentine	John/Randee Fieselmann Mike and Robyn Groff	Katherine and Bryon Day
22	Charles Connerly Martha Ann Crawford	Megan Carnes James Robinson Bill and Becky Hoefer	Kathy Fait and John Fuller
29	Donna Hirst Carroll Hanson	Stuart and Deb Cobb Paula Forest Sharon Garton	Bob and Gloria Hanson

JANUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day Worship No Church School	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 - Diaconate 6:30 pm - Mission Board 7:00 pm - CE Board 7:00 pm	4 - Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon	5	6	7
8 - Church School 9:15am - Epiphany Sunday Worship 10:15am Communion -Confirmation Class 11:30am - EEC Coffee Sales	9	10 - Staff Meeting 10 am	11 - Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon	12 - Doane College Concert 7pm	13	14 -Dasha Wemme Recitals 5pm
15 - Choir 9 - Church School 9:15am - Worship 10:15am - Interfaith Cele- bration of MLK First Mennonite Church 7pm	16 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY - Trustees 7 pm	17 - Stewardship Board 4 pm - Trustees 7 pm	18 - Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon -	19 -Women's Lunch at _____ 11:45 am -	20	21 - Men's Breakfast at Midtown Restaurant at 8 am - Dasha Wemme Re- citals 5:30 pm
22 - Choir 9 - Church School 9:15 - Worship 10:15 - Confirmation Class 11:30 - Chinese School Spring Semester - Dasha Wemmie Recitals 5 pm	23	24 - Church Council 7 pm	25 - Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon	26	27	28
29 - Choir 9am - Church School 9:15 -Worship 10:15am - Annual Meeting After Worship Chinese School	30	31				



TO OUR NEW YEAR BIRTHDAY FRIENDS

1/4	Bryon Day
1/7	Kai Bouma Olivia Groff
1/8	Bryan Clemons Eva Leighton-Dick
1/9	Ana Tracey

1/11	Diane Olson
1/15	Timothy Woolums
1/18	Carol Searls John Fieselmann
1/19	Connie Parsons
1/20	Ken Kuntz

1/21	Barbara McFarland
1/23	Susie Brown
1/24	Julie Jacobsen Isaac Chen
1/28	Tyler Seidl

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 North Clinton Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER

PARKING INFORMATION

Parking is available evenings and all day Sunday at the IMU or North Hall Parking Ramps.

Ask your usher for a voucher (or get one from the church office).

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:15 a.m. Worship
11:15 a.m. Fellowship

Church Office is open Monday - Friday 9-3pm

OUR CHURCH STAFF

Pastor:	The Rev. William Lovin
Music Director:	Chris Nakielski
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Director of Church School:	The Rev. Patte Henderson
Children's Choir Director	Colette Nakielski
Office Manager:	Nan Martin
Financial Secretary:	Sharyn Huriaux Reitz
Communication Assistant:	Christina Patramanis
Custodians:	Douglas Herrera Claudia Landaverde

HOW TO CONTACT US

Monday - Friday 9 am to 3 pm
Phone: 319-337-4301

E-mail:

Minister.....uccicrev@uccic.org
Office Manager.....uccicsec@uccic.org
Financial Secretary.....sharynreitz@gmail.com
Music Director... christopher-nakielski@uiowa.edu
Dir of Church School.....uccicce@uccic.org
Children's Choir Dir...colette.nakielski@gmail.com
Communication Assist....cpatramanis@yahoo.com

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org