

# Congregational Tidings

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here!*



A weekly newsletter



[www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa](https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa)

March 17, 2021

## Taking Care of Our Family ... ..

Please let Pastor Bret, Michelle, or Anne know of those we should be keeping close.

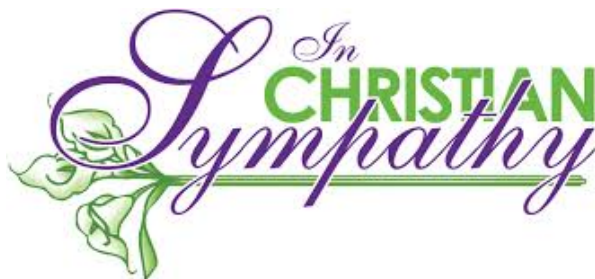


\* Prayers for the family and friends of Sally Walker who passed away on March 9th. Graveside services are being planned for mid-May. Sally was a vital part of our community in her role as a RN, even serving our congregation for a few years as Parish Nurse.

\* Prayers for the family and friends of Marian Greene who passed away on March 12 following a short illness. A memorial service will be held later this year, likely in the summer. We mourn with the whole Greene family and will miss seeing Marian at David's side.

\* Prayers for Steve Thorpe as he faces serious health issues. He is currently at home and appreciates your emails, cards, and messages. We keep Steve and Liz in our hearts during these difficult days.

\* Prayers for Abbey & Jeff Athey who lost their sweet Oakley. Our pets are family to us, and their loss hurts deeply.



We are saddened to announce the passing of Marian Greene on Friday, March 12th.

Please keep David, Paul, Gina, Lucas, Molly, and Tyler and the whole extended Greene family in your prayers. We will all miss Marian!

## PPRC Committee

Our committee for Pastoral-Parish Relations (PPRC) includes Pastor Bret, Peter Steva, Meach, Abbey Athey, Craig Driver and Sue Hummel. We provide a format for addressing concerns and communication between pastor and congregation. Anyone with an issue to discuss, is encouraged to call or email any of us. We meet regularly and welcome the chance to keep all of us in our church family, connected. Communication is key in any family!

## Women of Faith

Our March meeting will be one of conversation related to the theme of "home." We'll break into small groups to talk about questions such as : What makes me feel at home in a community? How do I make a community feel like home? What is my responsibility to my home community? Whether you've come to Cedar Falls from another country or have always lived here, your observations will be welcome contributions to our evening together.

Please note the change in meeting date. We will meet by Zoom on Tuesday, March 23 at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to attend, please respond with an email to [ratliff@cfu.net](mailto:ratliff@cfu.net) by Saturday, March 21.

This topic has been chosen as a prelude to our April 27 meeting at which the director of the Youth Art Team and some Team members will talk about their project "Making Iowa Home." The Team members interviewed seven people who have come to Iowa from around the world and asked them "What makes you feel at home?" Then, the Team created a book of selections from those interviews and their own art work. You can read more about this great project and purchase the book here: <http://youthartteam.com/public-news/youth-art-team-published-a-book/>

Contact Evie Waack with any questions.

## Wednesday Night Gathering

Don't forget to join us on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83810037005?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83810037005?pwd=ZXFKYIFWYnFHhBYdUZzWUMvK2RCdz09)

[pwd=ZXFKYIFWYnFHhBYdUZzWUMvK2RCdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83810037005?pwd=ZXFKYIFWYnFHhBYdUZzWUMvK2RCdz09)

Meeting ID: 838 1003 7005

Passcode: 310289

Dial in: 312 626 6799



# MOMENT FOR MISSION

## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING



This Sunday, March 21, 2021, our church will be collecting an offering for One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). This offering helps with disaster relief, refugee and immigration assistance, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, we can help with the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS, we can help with holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, our contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put resources in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment, and recovery of the most vulnerable. We can help meet immediate needs and address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Please send your offerings to Michelle at the church or donate online on our website. THANK YOU for your contribution!

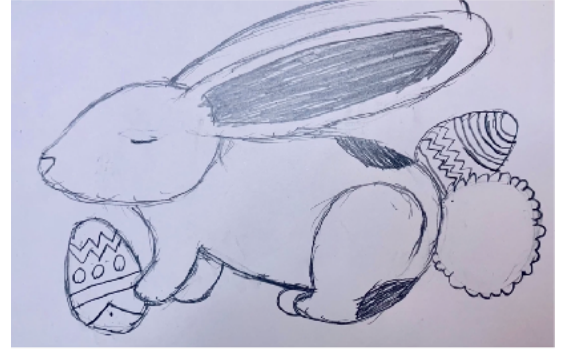
## TREATS REQUESTED FOR IRVING SCHOOL

Testing will be taking place March 22-24 so if you'd like to help give the students in our neighborhood a break during that stressful time, please consider dropping off some bananas, apples, oranges, individually packaged chips or fruit snacks at 1115 W 5th Street (closed during spring break 3/15-19). Thanks!

# CREATIVE CORNER

Last fall, we had a lovely cello solo submitted by Sabina Meacham. This week's entry is also by Sabina, but it features another of her gifts--her drawing and teaching skills. Pick up a pencil or pen and a piece of paper, and draw along with Sabina as you think "SPRING"! Thank you, Sabina, for sharing your talent with us:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjH0qCI3DA4>



On behalf of the Board of Creative Arts, I would like to invite others to contribute your creations. We welcome photography, paintings, sculpture, poetry, stories, dance, music, acting, recipes, knitting, crocheting, sewing, needlework, woodworking, pottery--whatever you enjoy creating. Or maybe you have a favorite hobby that isn't necessarily your own creation, but an appreciation of the creativity of others. You can take a picture of your creation or something you appreciate. If you would like to present a video, we can link it to our website and/or Facebook page. We would like to know a little about what you are sharing, perhaps a story of how you created your work, and why it, or the experience, is important to you. We miss seeing each other and this is a way that we can share ourselves in a different way. We welcome artists of all ages and abilities. Please send your creation or questions to Anne Hoekstra at [annelouisehoekstra@gmail.com](mailto:annelouisehoekstra@gmail.com). Thank you.

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## PASTOR'S CORNER ... ..

Greetings all,

I'd like to share a poem with you about courage. So much of life requires courage. We all go through difficulties in life, and courage reminds us of who we are and of what we most value. Courage is there to prompt us to do the hard or uneasy thing. Courage does not always receive acclaim from others, but it steadies our course and keeps our eyes on the prize of integrity. We rarely invite difficulty into our lives, but it is often those difficulties, when overcome, that elevate us to higher ground. May you be so lifted!

Blessings,  
Pastor Bret

## For Courage

JOHN O'DONOHUE

When the light around you lessens

And your thoughts darken until  
Your body feels fear turn  
Cold as a stone inside,

When you find yourself bereft  
Of any belief in yourself  
And all you unknowingly  
Leaned on has fallen,

When one voice commands  
Your whole heart,  
And it is raven dark,

Steady yourself and see  
That it is your own thinking  
That darkens your world.

Search and you will find  
A diamond-thought of light,

Know that you are not alone,  
And that this darkness has purpose;  
Gradually it will school your eyes,  
To find the one gift your life requires  
Hidden within this night-corner.

Invoke the learning  
Of every suffering  
You have suffered.

Close your eyes.  
Gather all the kindling  
About your heart  
To create one spark  
That is all you need  
To nourish the flame  
That will cleanse the dark  
Of its weight of festered fear.

A new confidence will come alive  
To urge you towards higher ground  
Where your imagination  
will learn to engage difficulty  
As its most rewarding threshold!

*From the books, *Benedictus* (Europe) / *To Bless the Space Between Us* (US). Posted by kind permission of the [John O'Donohue Literary Estate](http://www.johnodonohueliteraryestate.com).*

## Sunday Mornings During Lent

During Lent, the Sunday morning Zoom gathering will read and discuss the book *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem*, by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

"Using the gospel of Mark as their guide, Borg and Crossan present a day-by-day account of Jesus's final week of life. They begin their story on Palm Sunday with two triumphal entries into Jerusalem. The first entry, that of Roman governor Pontius Pilate leading Roman soldiers into the city, symbolized military strength. The second heralded a new kind of moral hero who was praised by the people as he rode in on a humble donkey..."

Topic: FCUCC Sunday Morning Book Study at 9:20 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

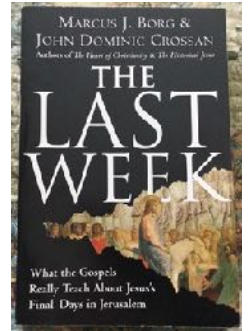
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83998402038?pwd=b1JYRnZjMFRhWUEvNm5MMTJ2bk5aUT09>

Meeting ID: 839 9840 2038

Passcode: 246810

Dial in: 312 626 6799 US

Contact Evie Waack with any questions.




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## Lenten discussions

During Lent we will take a half an hour after the worship service, starting at approximately 11:35 a.m. to talk about the theme of the day and/or our own Lenten reflections and thoughts. This is an opportunity to have some intentional fellowship after the worship service to deepen and broaden our spiritual connection with one another, and to edify our own faith journeys. A zoom link will be available on our church website and our church Facebook page. We hope to see you there!

*Create an endowment of love. Please consider including our church in your estate planning.*

F I R S T C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C

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*Congregational Tidings*

Place  
Stamp  
Here