

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

January 4, 2023

PULPIT SUPPLY

A special thank you to Rev. Cathy Young for leading our Christmas Eve and New Year's Day services. She shared background and insights into our Christmas story, connecting the Old Testament prophecy to the New Testament coming of the Messiah—giving some new insights into a story we all know well. Thank you to the Touch of Brass, the Chancel Choir, and Hudson Lourenco-Feld for their beautiful Christmas Eve music, and setting the stage for a meaningful Christmas Eve message.

Thank you, to John Mardis, for leading our Christmas Day service. It was fun hearing the Christmas message through various readings, sharing, and singing of familiar (and not so familiar) Christmas songs.

We welcome to the pulpit this Sunday Evie Waack who will be preaching on the Baptism of Jesus, assisted by Anne Hoekstra, worship leader. We will be holding worship in the chapel for the next 7-8 weeks, while the sanctuary undergoes some much-needed plaster repair. This will be a great opportunity for us to enjoy a beautiful space in our church—our chapel!

SANCTUARY REPAIR PROJECT

Services this Sunday, January 8th will take place in our Chapel because contractors will start repair work in our sanctuary on January 9th. Cardinal Construction & Iowa Wall Systems will repair the damaged plaster in the sanctuary and South St. lobby, and the damage to stairs, walls and woodwork in the bell tower stairway. The plaster was damaged by moisture that came through the exterior brick walls and the stairway was damaged when the radiator in the stairway leaked boiler water. The brick walls were tuckpointed and sealed 18 months ago, with no further signs of water damage. And the radiator has been removed and hot water pipes capped.

Because of the plaster dust that will be generated, the organ console & pipes will be covered, the pew cushions will be removed and covered, and other parts of the sanctuary will be covered with plastic sheeting. Sunday services will remain in the Chapel until the work in the sanctuary is complete, a number of weeks, and the contractors move to the lobby and stairwell. The entire project will be done by the end of March, and is being paid for from the insurance settlement for the stairwell damage. Some of you have asked when this repair will be done, so we are glad to finally get started and ask for your patience as the work is being done. Please contact me if you have questions.

~ *Dave Allbaugh*

Taking Care of Family...

~ Prayers for Diana Blankenfeld Paige, who underwent another (and hopefully final) brain surgery last week, and was scheduled to come home on January 3. We pray for a complete and rapid recovery from a year full of surgeries and procedures in 2022.

~ Prayers for Richard Cook, who is to undergo a procedure to treat his atrial fibrillation on January 10.



CHANGE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR KIDS

Calling all kids. Sunday School will now take place during the worship hour. Kids- follow the leader after the mini message to the youth director's office for Sunday School. Join the fun.

CALLING SUNDAY SCHOOL ADULT VOLUNTEERS...

We need 2 more people who can join a rotation for Sunday School teachers every 4-6 weeks. Sunday School is now during worship and there will be an easy-to-follow curriculum. Please let Anne Hoekstra know if you are interested. What an opportunity to get to know the kids of the church.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adults will resume Sunday School this week, reading and discussing Chapter 4 of Holy Disruption by Tracy Daub. Visitors are welcome to join at 9:15 in the Friendship Room.

INTRO TO CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

Tuesday, January 24th - 6:30pm
Westminster Presbyterian Church - Waterloo

Contemplative Outreach of Northeast Iowa and Waterloo Catholic Faith Formation co-host this introduction to a quiet, contemplative style of prayer for anyone wishing to deepen their prayer life this year. (<http://www.centeringprayer.com/>)

DECORATIONS ARE DOWN

Thank you for planning to help take down Christmas Decorations next Sunday but they have been put away to get ready for the construction.

** ANNUAL REPORTS REQUEST **

The Annual church meeting will be January 22, 2023. If you are a chair of a board or committee, please turn your respective report in to Michelle in the office no later than this *Tuesday, January 10th*.

"HELP WANTED"

If you are interested in joining one of the church boards or committees, please let Diane Highnam or Michelle (in the church office) know and they will get you added! It's a great way to get to know people, share your gifts and talents, and provide meaningful activities for our church family! The various boards and chair-people can be found on our website if you'd like more information!

(<http://www.firstcongucc.org/leadership.html>)

DIRECTORY UPDATE

Abbie Chronister's new email address is
abbie.chronister@gmail.com.

FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERING

THANK YOU to all of the volunteers at the Food Bank last month! Have a great week and stay warm!



NEW PARAMENTS!

Once the plaster and painting in our sanctuary are completed, we will be greeted by these new paraments for our chancel area. Paraments are the textiles that drape the pulpit, the lectern, and the altar. These beautiful new green cloths are gifted from the memorials of Rex Boatman's mother--Millie Emma Boatman, his son--Russell Robert Boatman, and his wife--Phyllis Mae Boatman.



Green paraments or textiles are used at certain seasons of our liturgical year—during the season of Epiphany and the many Sundays following Pentecost Sunday, until Advent. These were custom made for our sanctuary by Jeff Wunrow designs. The design for our pulpit and altar is titled “God So Loved the World,” a reminder of God’s grace for us, all people and creation. The altar design is called “Pathway” (You will make known to me the path of life. Psalm 16:11.) It reminds us of the paths we each follow, and the UCC motto “No Matter Where You Are On Life’s Journey, You Are Welcome Here.”

You may have noticed that the color for Advent, the four Sundays preceding Christmas, is blue. The colors of Christmas and Easter season are white, as is Epiphany Sunday. Pentecost Sunday is red. During Lent, we use our violet colored paraments. Green, the most used color, symbolizes life, hope, and anticipation.

We are very grateful to the Boatman family for these beautiful gifts and look forward to being back in our beautiful sanctuary to enjoy them. Our new paraments will not only brighten our sanctuary, but remind us we are entering a new season in our church’s life. We continue to pray that our next pastor and director of youth will soon be with us. In the meantime, we will enjoy these symbols of life, hope, and anticipation, symbols of our faith in God’s future for us.

~ Anne Hoekstra

MOMENT FOR MISSIONS...

LITTLE PANTRIES UPDATE...

A special thank you to all who supplied food for the little pantries. Pantries were filled during the very frigid weather and appreciated again in December.

After filling pantries for a few months now we are in need of more food items. Keep in mind the need for ease of preparation and the need to survive a freeze. We need items such as Peanut butter, nuts, rice, cereal, pancake mix, oatmeal packets, granola bars, crackers, snacks for kids, canned soups/fruits (pop-top cans preferred), new/unopened baby formula, sealed/unopened drink mixes, dried fruit, etc. Thank you all for your generosity.

IMMERSE SEVEN-SESSION COURSE AT THE SNOWDEN HOUSE (306 WASHINGTON, W'LOO)

11:30am - 1:00pm every Tuesday from January 24th - March 7th (*Facilitated by Laura Hoy, CCDA*)

Answering the question - “How might we love God and love our neighbor in a way that helps us all heal and grow together as a community?” Each session focuses on principles of church-based, neighborhood development.

Do you know someone else who would benefit from this course? Send them [the Immerse Registration Link](#) so they can learn more and sign up! Questions? - Jenna Petersen, jpetersen@webuildhabitat.org or 319-235-9946.

\$10 may be paid at the first class. Lunch will not be provided, but brown bags are encouraged.

First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here

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

SEARCH & CALL UPDATE...

HAPPY NEW YEAR, Church family!

As 2022 has come to a close and our new year begins, I want to say THANK YOU to all of you for your patience and support that you've shown the Search and Call committee. We continue our search process with the firm, Shepherd Staff, and are confident that they will help us find the senior minister that will lead us forward! As of this writing, there have been 414 unique 'clicks' on our church profile (i.e. 414 people have checked us out on the Shepherd Staff website). There have been 125 prospects for consideration, 113 have been eliminated (either by the candidate themselves or by the Shepherd Staff vetting process). There are currently 12 candidates in some form of consideration. There are two candidates who will be interviewed by Shepherd Staff for the second/third time this week.

We continue to ask for your ongoing prayers that God will bring us to the person meant to join us here in Waterloo. We have a wonderful church family and some exciting programs in place and some visions for much to come. We know that God has been at work among us as we care for one another during this time of transition. We appreciate the messages and support from our guest preachers, and the hard work of the many boards and committees of the church. We continue to ask for patience in the process. May this new year bring a joyous celebration of new leadership and new beginnings! May we all be blessings for one another as we wait and pray.

In gratitude, Diane Highnam, Chair

Search and Call Committee: Craig Holdiman, Craig Mahood, Evie Waack, Hannah Prescott, Karen Jensen, Lauren Reisinger, Rich Thuesen, and Anne Hoekstra (moderator).