

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

July 21, 2021

GENERAL SYNOD 33

General Synod 33 has come to a conclusion! WOW what a heart-felt week full of connecting, difficult and joyous conversations alike, learning, and loving. You can view notes from Plenaries at tinyurl.com/GS33PlenaryNotes to get information on what was voted on and discussed. That link will take you to a document authored by myself.

Some highlights are as follows:

- The diversity of the delegates was intentional and incredible:
 - 13% youth and young adult,
 - 57% persons who identify as female,
 - 46% lay persons, and Significantly reflective of the UCC commitment to racial and ethnic diversity.
- A Race Audit is in place (by [Join the Movement UCC](#)) and its purpose is to be a multi-year initiative to examine how racial inequity is reflected in the UCC overall.
- The following resolutions were put to the vote:
 - **The Alliance of Associate Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ Request to be Recognized as a Formal Group** - Passed with 82% in favor
 - **A Resolution to Advocate and Act to Change the Cash Bail Bond System** - Passed with 98% in favor
 - **A Commitment to Gender Safety & Equity in Ministry Settings** - Passed with 97% in favor
 - **Becoming a Contemplatives in Action Church** - Passed with 93% in favor
 - *"This resolution seeks the church's integration of action for justice alongside intentional commitment to the life of prayer."*
 - Provides recognition of diversity of spiritual practices
 - **A Resolution to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy** - Passed with 99% in favor
 - **A Resolution Encouraging to End 128 Years of War Between the United States of America and the Hawaiian Kingdom** - Passed with 68% in favor
 - **Declaration for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel** - Passed with 83% in favor
 - **A Resolution to Declare and Respond to Racism as a Public Health Crisis** - Passed with 96% in favor
 - **"Who will speak for the Trees?" A Resolution on the Rights of Nature** - Passed with 96% in favor
 - **A Resolution to Recognize the UN International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)** - Passed with 94%
 - *"The resolution calls on the United Church of Christ to: 1) acknowledge this Decade; 2) adopt its frameworks for addressing the issues affecting African descendant people; and 3) promote the Decade and resulting outcomes for advocating for the rights of African descendant people."*
- General Synod 34 will be in Indianapolis in 2023!

-Abbie Greene, Iowa Delegate

TAKING CARE OF OUR FAMILY

~ For Chris Winters, sister of Connie Jo Peirce and daughter of Collene Peirce, who is recovering from surgery on Monday. Thank you for your prayers for her surgery—Connie reports that it was very successful!

~ For Pastor Bret who is to have eye surgery in Iowa City on July 28 for a chronic eye issue.

Please let Michelle know if you have a prayer request or joy to share with the congregation.

PASTOR BRET'S OFFICE HOURS:

After talking with the Personnel Committee, my office hours will be changing to Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-5pm. As always, I will be available at other times by appointment. You are encouraged to call ahead before coming in to talk as I may get called away. I always welcome to hear from any of our members if anyone is in need of a pastoral call. During the pandemic, outside visits are also available upon request, as well as Monday afternoon "Walks and Talks with the Pastor." I look forward to opportunities to get to know you all better.

PIANIST COMING TO FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

Peter Miyamoto, piano

7:00pm, Thursday, July 30, First Congregational Church, Waterloo

Program

Beethoven: Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a "Les Adieux"

Chopin: Ballade No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 52

Ravel: Jeux d'eau (Play of the Water)

Rachmaninoff: Moment Musicaux in E Minor, Op. 16, No. 4

Intermission

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9



Professor of Piano and Chamber Music at the University of Missouri, Peter Miyamoto formerly taught at Michigan State University, and the California Institute of the Arts. After serving as head of the piano faculty at the New York Summer Music Festival 2003-2015, co-founded the Odyssey Chamber Music Festival in Missouri, and in recent years has taught and performed at the Curtis Institute Young Artists Program in Philadelphia, PA and at the PRIZM Summer Music Camp and International Chamber Music Festival in Memphis, TN. Miyamoto has given master classes at major institutions throughout the United States as well as internationally in Canada, China, Greece, Japan and Serbia. Peter serves as Executive Director of the Plowman Chamber Music Competition, and is Immediate Past President of the Missouri Music Teachers Association of MTNA.

Masterclass change of location: CVCM presents a masterclass with Peter Miyamoto at the Hearst Center for the Arts on July 29th from 10am – 12pm. The masterclass is open to advanced students ages 12-23. Anyone interested in participating in this class should contact cedarvalleymusic.org.

For more information, check cedarvalleymusic.org.

~ *Anne Hoekstra*

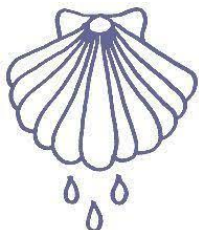


YOUTH

- Youth Group will occur on July 21st (Egg Drop) and July 25th (Fun with Shaving Cream). Come check it out at 6pm-7pm for both days!
- I am currently prepping the August 2021 Youth Calendar. Let me know this week if you have any special happenings that you want to be included!
- We are looking for Sunday School teachers! Send Abbie an email at abbie.youthdirector@gmail.com if you are interested!

YOUTH DIRECTOR OFFICE HOURS

Abbie's Office Hours will be Thursday, July 22nd from 1pm to 5pm,
Monday, July 26th and Thursday, July 29th from 1pm to 5pm.



Please share our joy. The Greene family asks for your prayers
for *Ellison Maye Bishop* as she is baptized in
Williamsburg this coming Sunday, July 25.

MODERATOR MUSINGS

I learned a new terminology this week—"Collective Effervescence", which sounds like an advertisement for some kind of new beverage, but it's actually something that can't be purchased. It's the joy that we feel we when are together! It's a term to describe the sense of harmony and energy we feel when we come together around a shared purpose. It might be to discuss a book, catch up with friends over coffee, to brainstorm with colleagues, to watch a baseball game, reunite with relatives at a reunion, or be audience (or performer) in a play or musical event. It's that "joie de vivre" that makes us happy to be with others. Emotions are contagious--they play off each other and are heightened by the experience of sharing. How many times do you laugh out loud when you are alone? How about when you are with others? We tend to become more exuberant and joyful in the presence of others, i.e. "collective effervescence"!

Last week, I experienced this "collective effervescence" when Greg and I, and two other couples held our 8th annual Gramp Camp, a 3 day event for our grandkids that is now in its 8th year. We plan for months around a theme chosen for the year. The kids and grandparents love it—we have done a variety of activities over those 8 years, and our number of grandkids have grown from 5 to 10. The older kids are very helpful and inviting with the younger kids, and the youngest love having such great "big kid" friends. At the end of those 3 days, we are exuberant, exhilarated, and frankly--exhausted!

In our church family, we experience that "collective effervescence" when we gather for a variety of purposes: delivering meals, preparing and putting on the Christmas Bazaar, rehearsing and performing as a bell or chancel choir, discussing our recent book, listening to Abbie's children's sermons, planting trees, and even meeting for a Trustees meeting! Worship is also a time where we experience this--as we are nourished by word and music, AND by being in each other's presence. We flourish when we are together. We can be happy alone, but we are happier together!

May you have many moments of "collective effervescence" this week!

~ Anne Hoekstra

WEBSITE

- Wondering how to access worship either as a live stream or after-the-fact? Facebook-full or Facebook-less? Look no further! This guide, found at <http://www.firstcongucc.org/sunday-service.html> or on the website under the "Sunday Service" tab will walk you through the simple steps:

Sunday Service -



https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalUCCWaterlooIowa/videos/?ref=page_internal

Instructions on How to Access Sunday Services:

1. Click on the Facebook icon or the link above to be directed to the FCUCC Facebook video page (both links will open in a new tab).
2. If you have a Facebook account, you can login if you wish. Then, scroll down to the video you would like to watch, and viola!
3. If you do NOT have a Facebook account, have no fear! We can help!
4. All you have to do is click on the Facebook icon or the link above to be directed to the FCUCC Facebook video page (both links will open in a new tab).
5. If you do not see the live stream yet, refresh the page in the upper-lefthand corner of your browser. We go live a couple minutes before service starts, so if you open the page before 10:30am, you will most likely have to refresh!
6. If you have any questions, email [Abbie](#). Thanks!

MOMENT FOR MISSIONS



Job Foundation Updates:

*2021 Graduates...*Seven students graduated from the program this spring--a foundation record! Collectively, they have accumulated nearly \$32,000 in their long-term savings during their time in the program! What an accomplishment! Read about their reflections on the time in the program and future plans on the Job Foundation website. This spring UNI Business students helped to refresh it!

The Job Foundation Scholarship Awarded to Graduate

In 2019, long-time program supporters, Dave and Jeanne Allbaugh, created The Job Foundation Scholarship to support program graduates at Hawkeye Community College, Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa. The Allbaughs understand that access to higher education is one way to advance economically and break the cycle of generational poverty. 2021 graduate, Develle (DJ) Rambus, has been awarded The Job Foundation ISU Scholarship! After completing a summer internship at John Deere, DJ will attend Iowa State and study engineering.



DJ is pictured with his mother, Dee, and brother, DeJuan. DeJuan is also a Job Foundation student.

~ Laurie Allbaugh

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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