

First Congregational UCC

TIDINGS

A weekly newsletter for our church family and friends
November 29, 2023



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



PULPIT SUPPLY

Thank you to Rev. Garry Moore of the Western Home Communities for his message Sunday, to Cliff Highnam for serving as worship leader and providing the mini message.

You can watch the service by clicking on Rev. Moore's Picture.



This Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, we welcome Rev. Cathy Young back to our pulpit. Abbie Chronister will serve as our worship leader, and Anne Hoekstra will provide the mini message. We will be lighting our first candle in our Advent wreath, as we "Wait" in Hope during this special season.

TAKING CARE OF FAMILY...

- ~ Prayers for Pat Brock's mother who has entered hospice care.
- ~ Prayers for Jim and Anita Altenbaumer's daughter, Hope, as she begins her treatment.
- ~ Prayers for Greg Hoekstra as he recovers from shoulder surgery.



Sadly, we have lost two church family members in the last week.

Shirley Kappel passed away last Thursday, November 23, 2023. Service will be held this Friday at noon with visitation an hour before at First Congregational. You can read the full obituary here:

<https://www.lockefuneralservices.com/obituaries/7451/shirley-kappel>

Ruth Linderman died this week. Funeral service will be held at First Congregational on Monday, December 4th at 10:30am. We will publish a link to the obituary once it is available.

Please keep the Kappel and Linderman families in your prayers.

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Also, you can now view the obituary for **Anna Kendall** here:
<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/anna-kendall-obituary?pid=205743005>

YOUTH NEWS

~ Our Church is hosting the Wednesday collaborative youth group activities on November 29th at 5:30pm.

~ The youth are scheduled to have a fundraiser on Saturday, December 16th at Kimball Avenue from 5-9pm. We are asking parents/family/friends to join us. Dinner will be provided!



CHRISTMAS MITTEN TREE

Our mittens, scarves, hats tree is now up in the lobby. If you'd like to help keep someone warm this winter, please drop off your donations.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

FCUCC is sponsoring one Bunger family this year. Please consider making a donation to help our partner school, Bunger Middle School in Evansdale. You can mail your offering in or put an envelope or check in the offering plate on Sundays with "Adopt-a-Family" in the memo.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Thinking about getting a head start on your New Year's Resolutions? Here's an idea ... join a board or a committee at church and get involved with some fun people and fun activities! There are plenty of openings and lots of ways to serve God and help be a part of the community. If you're already on a board or committee and are ready for a change, you're in luck too! Make the change and discover new aspects of the church family and get involved in new ways! Check out some information and sign-up sheets in the church library for the next few Sundays! Let Diane or Michelle know if you have questions! Let THIS be the year that you have resolutions that are meaningful, helpful, and doable! Get involved and let God's light shine through YOU!

PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED

Do we heat or do we eat? As the weather gets colder food insecurity rises. Think of the Food Pantry as a gift for the community. Thank you.



SANCTUARY DECORATIONS

A great big thank you to those who were able to stay and help decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas last Sunday.. Take a look around at the beauty of the Christmas season!

JOLEY SEITZ RECITAL

November 7th - 6:00pm

Davis Hall, UNI

Gallagher Bluedorn

Performing Arts Center

works by R. Wagner, H. Berlioz,
J. Marx, and C. Griffes



CHURCH ROW CANTATA

Something exciting will be happening for 3 Church Row churches this December!

On **Sunday, December 10th** the choirs and congregations of First Congregational Church, First United Methodist Church, and First Baptist church will be combining in worship and music to celebrate the Christmas season with a performance of Joseph M. Martin's Christmas cantata "Canticle of Joy". The service will take place at First Baptist Church (434 Baltimore St) on December 10th at 10:30am. Please plan to join us for fellowship, worship, and community with our fellow Church Row congregations at this very special worship experience this Christmas season.

Attention Bakers: We are in need of 6 dozen cookies. Please contact Michelle in the office if you can help provide some or all of these.

TRUSTEE MEETING NOTICE

The next Board of Trustee's Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 12th at 6:00 pm.

Our Church Family – The United Church of Christ

The annual meeting of the Iowa Conference was held on October 14 at Urbandale United Church of Christ. We heard reports and discussed restructuring and finances, but the most important item was not business but fellowship. We renewed friendships and made new contacts with others around Iowa. Via Zoom we heard from our Conference Minister, who now also serves as Interim Conference Minister for the “Tri-Conference,” which includes the churches in Nebraska and South Dakota. Associate Conference Minister Kendy Miller led our closing worship, which included a moving service of Holy Communion.

On November 4, representatives of UCC congregations in northeast Iowa gathered at the Cedar Falls United Church of Christ for a meeting of the Northeast Association of the Iowa Conference. A morning session dealt with how to speak across the chasms that divide people these days. Our resource was the book by the Rev. Janice Springer, *I Know We're All Welcome at the Table, But Do I Have to Sit Next to You?* Jim Altenbaumer, who attended both these meetings on behalf of our congregation, says the main thing he learned was, “It’s not about you!” The spring meeting of the Association is set for April 27, 2024, in Osage.

One feature of the present arrangement in the Iowa Conference is the authorization of several “deans” to maintain contact between congregations and between the Conference and congregations. The dean for our area is the Rev. Dixie Laube, who also serves as pastor of congregations in Rudd and Osage. Several of us from First Congregational UCC met with her earlier this year. Please include our wider church family in your prayers.



BELL TOWER WORK AT FCUCC

COMPLETED EARLY
NOVEMBER



UCC CHRISTMAS FUND



The Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross Offering) has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, health premiums, supplementation of small annuities, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

We will collect this offering on **Sunday, December 17th** or you may mail your check to the church. If you would like to give to this special offering, please mark “UCC Christmas Fund” in the memo of your check.

“From Christ’s fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” John 1:16



GRAND REOPENING

Great News! On Friday, Dec. 8 at 4pm, Growing Minds Early Learning Center (previously Grin & Grow Childcare) will be celebrating our grand reopening. We will be celebrating our new name and logo as well as our 80th year in the Cedar Valley. The "Purple Coats" from Grow Cedar Valley will be attending and assisting with the unveiling.

We wanted our new name to recognize that we also offer programs that go beyond just child care, such as early education and developmental support. These programs can help support children's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development and promote school readiness.

Furthermore, we hope to offer a sense of stability and support to families who may be facing other challenges. We can be a hub for other community resources and services, connecting families to essential supports that they may not have access to otherwise.

We will serve some light refreshments and provide a tour of the classrooms. I hope you can attend.

~ Ed Gruenwald, Director

THE PROUD IMAGE CHRISTMAS CONCERT - "A CHRISTMAS OF HOPE"

The Proud Image Chorus will be joined by River City Chorus on Sunday, December 10th at 2:00 p.m. (Doors open at 1:15pm) at Cedar Valley Church (3520 Ansborough Ave., Waterloo) to present a Christmas Concert. All proceeds from the free will offering will go to benefit House of Hope.

Tickets are \$10 for adults/\$5 students. Our very own Craig Holdiman is a member of the Proud Image Chorus and you can get tickets from him or by going to: <https://houseofhopeccd.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/13788>.



Festival of Lights



\$20 per vehicle, 6pm-8pm



Friday, December 1
DRIVE THRU

Saturday, December 2
DRIVE THRU

Sunday, December 3
WALK THRU

Friday, December 8
DRIVE THRU

Saturday, December 9
DRIVE THRU



Sunday, December 10
WALK THRU



Friday, December 15
DRIVE THRU



Saturday, December 16
DRIVE THRU



Sunday, December 17
WALK THRU

More Information: <https://houseofhopeccd.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/13611>



THREEHOUSE
Collaborative Campus Ministries



ThreeHouse Collaborative Campus Ministries is accepting donations of gently used winter coats to give to international students at UNI.

Coats can either be dropped off at ThreeHouse (2422 College St., CF) or you can text/call Abbie Chronister (440-478-0425) to coordinate pick-up.

There is still time to sign up for ThreeHouse Trivia Night on **Thursday, Nov. 30th.**

See information to the right or go to threehouse.org to register.

Trivia Night: Holiday Edition!

Questions about Iowa winter history, Christian and international holidays, hit holiday songs, movies, and more!

Thursday, November 30th

At Second State Brewery
203 State St, Cedar Falls

Check-In starts: 6:30PM
The game begins at 7:00PM!

\$15 per person or \$75 for a team of 6.
Scan the QR code or visit threehouse.org to register!
Proceeds support the ThreeHouse mission and ministry.

Questions? Email office@threehouse.org or call 319.266.4071



LIGHT OUT OF DARKNESS CONCERT

“The Metropolitan Chorale presents a gift to the community - May these songs guide us to become carriers of the light that brings joy, hope, courage, peace, grace and love, now and when the star dims.” ~ *Kim André Arnesen*

3:00 pm, Sunday, December 10, 2023
First Congregational Church

Admission is free - Free will donations of cash or non-perishables will be collected for the benefit of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

Artistic Director - Ryan Occeña

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1 style="color: green; margin: 0;">December 2023</h1>					1 12:00 Shirley Kappel Funeral	2
3 9:15 Adult Study 10:30 Worship & Sunday School	4 10:30 am Ruth Linderman Funeral	5 7:30am - Men's Breakfast (Village Inn-W'loo)	6 3 - 4:30pm Job Foundation M.S. Lesson (Downstairs)	7 8:00 Prayer Walk (Begin @ Habitat every Thursday) 5:15pm Bells 6:45pm Choir	8 4:00pm Growing Minds Ceremony	9 9:00am Women's Breakfast at Perkins
10 10:15 Christmas Cantata at First Baptist 3:00pm Met Chorale Concert	11 5:30pm Job Foundation Senior Lesson (Downstairs)	12 6:00pm Trustee Meeting	13 3 - 4:30pm Job Foundation M.S. Lesson (Downstairs) 5:30pm NAMI	14 Meals on Wheels 5:15pm Bells 6:45pm Choir	15 11:30 - Social Action Luncheon	16
17 9:15 Adult Study 10:30 Worship & Sunday School	18	19 7:30am - Men's Breakfast (Village Inn-W'loo)	20	21 5:15pm Bells 6:45pm Choir	22 Fill Neighborhood Pantries 6pm Growing Minds Christmas Party	23
24 10:30 Worship 7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 (Office Closed) Merry Christmas!	26	27	28 Meals on Wheels 5:15pm Bells 6:45pm Choir	29	30
31 10:30 Worship						

Birthdays

Anniversaries

<p style="text-align: center;">2 Vicki Ahrens</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 Jake Jensen</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8 Marty Zellhoefer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 Peggy Essmann Tom Wells</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11 Gyobanna Driver</p> <p style="text-align: center;">13 Joel Jensen</p> <p style="text-align: center;">14 Thomas Panicucci</p> <p style="text-align: center;">19 Mays Weber</p> <p style="text-align: center;">27 Brian Bishop</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">28 Dee Vandeventer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29 Jeff Thompson</p> <p style="text-align: center;">30 Jeff Driver</p> <p style="text-align: center;">31 John Stevenson</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">17 Jeff & Cindy Thompson</p> <p style="text-align: center;">28 Dale & Evie Waack</p> <p style="text-align: center;">30 Rocky & Mary Kay Petersen</p>	
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It's time to order your Poinsettias!!!



It's that time of year! You may fill out this order form and place in the offering plate or call Michelle at the church office. Orders may be placed any time by Sunday, December 17th. (\$12.00 per plant)

We will be ordering live poinsettias this year so you may take your poinsettia(s) home with you after the Christmas Eve service.

Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church (*write "poinsettia" in the memo*).

Poinsettia(s) given by: _____

"In Memory of....": _____

"In Honor of....": _____

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

First Congregational UCC
608 WEST FOURTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

Congregational Tidings

Place
Stamp
Here