

# First Congregational UCC

## TIDINGS

A weekly newsletter for our church family and friends  
December 20, 2023



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

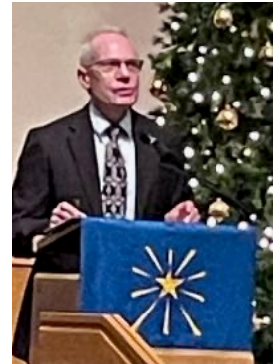
### PULPIT SUPPLY

Thank you to Rev. Cathy Young for her Advent message of "Preparation" last Sunday, to Paul Greene for assisting, and to John Mardis for his mini message.

We welcome back Rev. Young this Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for her message, "Grateful Praise!". Anne Hoekstra will be serving as worship leader, and John Mardis will again provide the mini-

message. Erin Brock-Medhus and family will be our Advent Ceremony candle lighters/readers. This is our 4th Sunday of Advent, our Sunday of "Praise".

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



### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We continue our celebration this Christmas Eve--Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. with our Candlelight Service of "Lessons & Carols". Touch of Brass will begin their prelude of Christmas Carols at 6:30 p.m. Rev. James Altenbaumer will lead worship and communion. Jim and Nancy Stevenson, Sam & Molly will be our Advent Wreath candle lighters. Come join us and bring family and friends for this inspiring and joyful celebration of Christ's birth.

*Luke*

*Hudson*

Merry Christmas from your  
First Congregational UCC Staff!

*Michelle*

*Kyle*

## TAKING CARE OF FAMILY...

~ Congratulations to Abbie Chronister who finished her internship at UNI's Threehouse last week. Threehouse director, Rev. Dave Glenn-Burns expressed appreciation for how wonderfully Abbie has added to their ministry.

~ Congratulations to Laura Kaliban who graduated with her RN this past week. She will be an asset to the health care profession!

~ Prayers for *Hildegard Larsen* who is experiencing declining health. She would love to receive Christmas Cards. If you could think of Hildegard this Christmas season, it would mean so much to her.

*Wellspring Living Health Center  
580 Park Ln.  
Waterloo IA 50702*

~ Prayers for Jeanne Adams, Audrey Adams-Sorge's 98 year old mother, who was hospitalized in ICU near Anoka, MN following a serious stroke on December 15.

~ Prayers for Rebecca Coder's grandparents who reside in Canada - -her grandfather who is recovering from injuries from a fall, and her grandmother who has had several recent illnesses.

~ Prayers for Pat Brock's mother who is in Hospice Care.

## DONATIONS REQUESTED

~ On November 7th, our dear Church brother, *Don Damon*, passed away from complications of a choking accident. Sadly, our church family was unaware of his passing until his funeral had taken place. We would like to honor his memory by contributing to the cost of a headstone for him. If you would like to donate to the headstone, please send your donation to Michelle in the church office by January 10, 2024. The money will be given to the company that will create and install the headstone, according to the wishes of Donnie's brother, Michael.

Thank you for keeping his memory alive through your prayers, especially on his birthday, Christmas Day.

## JANUARY TRUSTEE MEETING

The January Trustee meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9th at 6:00pm.

## YOUTH NEWS

Rumen Hulmequist, the Collaborative Youth Ministry Director, has accepted a teaching job in St. Paul and will be moving there this week. Bee Boettcher, from Kimball United Methodist Church, who has been involved with this ministry from the outset, will be stepping into the role of director. Youth meetings will resume January 3 at First Baptist Church. There is a Bingo and Supper fundraiser planned for January 20 to raise funds for Youth Ministry. Stay tuned for more details.

We wish Rumen the best in his pursuit of his goals to as a teacher and know he will continue to be an inspiration for his students and others he meets.

## UCC CHRISTMAS FUND

We collected this offering last **Sunday, December 17th** and have received \$410 to date, but it's not too late to mail or bring your check to the church by Friday, December 22nd. If you would like to give to this special offering, please mark "UCC Christmas Fund" in the memo of your check.

## SEARCH & CALL UPDATE

The Search and Call Committee has continued to meet to find a new minister. It is a frustratingly slow process. There are way more openings than there are people to fill them. We heard from a UCC church in Eastern Iowa that has been looking for 3 years with no results. In consultation with Shepherd's Staff we have suspended the search through the holidays and will resume after the first of the year. We pray that 2024 will bring us a new pastor to re-energize the church. Blessings to you all from the Search and Call Committee. ~ *Craig Holdiman, Chair*

## ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual church meeting will be January 21, 2024 following the morning worship service. If you are a chair of a board or committee, please turn your respective report in to Michelle in the office no later than Wednesday, January 10th.

If you would like to join a committee or board or switch to a new one, please let Diane Highnam or Michelle in the office know. Thank you!!



# Getting To Know You

## GETTING TO KNOW: CLIFF HIGHNAM



I was born a Christian into a Baptist church in Everett, Washington, as a “war baby” as we were known. After school and a stint in the Army, I moved to Cedar Falls in the mid '70s to work at UNI as a professor (speech pathology) and have been enthralled with Iowa ever since.

I met Diane, a Congregationalist, in the early '80s and we were married by Rev. James Kvetko in this church in 1986. We have been members of FCUCC, Waterloo, since then. Diane and I spawned three children by 1991 who have since moved away; Brad to Kansas City, Cole to Belgrade, Serbia, and Emily to Maquoketa, IA.

All of them are musically inclined, which they come by honestly. Diane plays piano and also plays in the bell choir. I have sung in the choir since I first joined. I also learned to play the hammered dulcimer after I retired, which I am occasionally asked to feature as special music

during services. I have had an active membership in the church, enjoying participation as a member of nearly all boards and most committees at some point in the past 40 years. I look forward to what the next 40 brings!

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## MODERATOR MUSINGS

In this Christmas Season, I am reminded of our church family and how special it is. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians talks about the faith community this way, “There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. . . You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it.” I thank God for all of you—for being the body of Christ in our community.

I also want to thank our faithful staff for all the things they do day by day throughout the year to keep our Church functioning so well--especially without the guidance and inspiration of a pastor. We have been extremely fortunate to have these folks working behind the scenes. Please remember to thank them during this holiday season.

Have a blessed Christmas!

*Anne Hoekstra*



## END OF AN ERA FOR FCC

We only have ONE more volunteer meals on wheels delivery! NEI3A is making changes to its home delivered meal program effective January 1, 2024. For most locations, it will be transitioning to a “shipped meals” model where cold meals are shipped directly to consumers’ addresses rather than NEI3A volunteers delivering hot meals. This change has been made for several reasons: NEI3A has implemented this system in remote areas for several years, and consumer feedback has been positive. This allows service to any address in the NEI3A area. Previously meals could only be delivered to individuals who lived in select communities with home meal programs.

This delivery system accommodates specific diets and food restrictions, better serving people who live with a variety of conditions that restrict their diets. This better accommodates inclement weather as delivery days may be adjusted, allows more choice for consumers as they select meals to be delivered, is more cost effective and will allow NEI3A to serve more consumers. Increases in food costs and unfortunately decreases in funding has also impacted this program. So a box of 10 meals will be delivered every 2 weeks either by the new meal contractor’s delivery person or possibly by UPS or Fed Ex.

A little history: The meals on wheels concept started in the UK in the 1940s. The first US program was in Philadelphia in 1954. The Older Americans Act was signed in 1965 and reauthorized to fund area agencies on aging in 1973. And that’s when AAAs started coordinating home delivered meals across the US including Waterloo. Does anyone remember when FCC got involved? We would like to take a trip down memory lane, so if you have stories about helping, please email, call, text 319-504-3212 or Laurie.Allbaugh@gmail.com. We will celebrate our many years of volunteering in the next Tidings 😊

*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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WATERLOO, IOWA 50702

*Congregational Tidings*

Place  
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