

# 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)

December 8, 2021

## MODERATOR'S MUSINGS:

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" is a Christmas song that reminds us of the magic of the season and all the joy and fun it brings. We love Christmas for many different reasons, but it can also be a difficult time—a time for grief that someone special is missing from our midst, a health issue has faced its ugly head, or finances continue to limit the choices of the holiday spirit.

As Christians, we both celebrate the anticipation of the promises of the Christ Child, and quiet ourselves during this Advent season to consider deeper truths. We see nature around us responding to diminishing light, colder temperatures, and harsher conditions. We KNOW that life not only brings joy, but harshness as well. The cycle of nature reminds us that life as we know it will end. Our faith acknowledges these truths, but it also reminds us that God is with us. God is with us now, in our sorrows, and in our anticipation of things to come. We live in faith that God is with us. We feel "God with us" in the love we have for each other, with our families, with our church family, and with our community. We care for others because God cares for us.

May you have a "wonderful time" this Advent/Christmas season, as you consider all the ways God comes to you, both in darkness and light.

~ *Anne Hoekstra*

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS



**Anna Kendall** has moved to be closer to her daughter.

Her new address is:

13391 N. 94th Dr.  
Peoria, AZ 85381

### 2021 PLEDGES

Our Church has 74 pledge units for 2021. Currently, 28 pledge units have a final payment due on their 2021 pledge, amounting to \$18,650.

Please make an effort to complete your pledge payments so we can finish this year on budget.

Contact Michelle in the church office, 234-8927, if you have questions about your pledge status.

~ *Dave Allbaugh, Treasurer*

Abbie Chronister invited us to share our favorite local haunts, and shared some information about Hansen Dairy, which is a favorite of ours. Another of my favorite local haunts is The World's Window in Cedar Falls. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit gift shop which sells unique certified Fair Trade products to the Cedar Valley at 214 Main St. 319-268-1584. It offers a variety of handmade items from around the world, including baskets, textiles, home décor, scarves, jewelry, children's toys, books, specialty foods, and unique Christmas decorations. It is a fun place to visit anytime, but especially during the holiday season. By purchasing items from them, you are helping to support families around the world.

~ Anne Hoekstra



## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

We will discuss Genesis 22-23 next Tuesday,  
December 14th at 5 p.m. by zoom.

## TRUSTEE MEETING

The Trustee Meeting for December will be held next  
Tuesday, Dec. 14th at 6:00pm.



## CHRISTMAS MITTEN TREE

Don't forget to bring in your hats,  
scarves, and mittens to decorate  
the Mitten Tree in the Crossroads  
area of the church.

## VETERANS OF THE CROSS (THE CHRISTMAS FUND)

This offering provides direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.

This offering is usually collected the Sunday before Christmas but you can also place your donation in the offering on any Sunday or mail your check with "VOC" in the memo to Michelle in the office by December 28th. Thank you in advance!

## ADVENT

What is coming we yearn to know  
As fallen leaves herald winter snow  
Will what comes be worth the wait ?  
Will past hungers our future sate?

How ironic it seems and bravely bold  
To nurture faith and hope when earth grows cold  
Hope defies reason's expectation  
While faith abides despite realization

Advent beckons us to neither sit nor slumber  
Lest resignation our spirits encumber  
Our hearts may slacken as cold winds blow  
But peace is found when love does grow

With joy we celebrate what is not yet  
In homage to the best in us, dare we forget  
Welcome the sacred, the good, and the true  
For frigid's the soul that will not renew

--- Rev. Bret S. Myers, 12/7/2017

## FROM THE REOPENING COMMITTEE

Holiday greetings to our congregation. We are monitoring news of the new omicron variant and are aware of its rapid spread. However, we have faith that most or all of the congregation is vaccinated and appreciate that folks continue to wear masks. Your actions make it possible for us to continue to gather for worship. Thank you!

The Reopening Committee



**Youth Group:** Wednesday from 6pm-7pm. We will be doing crafts and decorating our bulletin board!

**Sunday School/Childcare:** Will meet during Sunday Service on December 12th. We will be learning about Joy in the context of Advent!

**Youth Director Office Hours:** Youth Director Abbie will hold her usual office hours Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 1pm-5pm.

---

## MOMENT FOR MISSIONS



### Get Involved with Junior Achievement (JA)!

JA is a nationwide, volunteer led, school based program. The goal of JA is to provide opportunities for educators and students to experience real-world, interactive lessons from the volunteer's perspective. Whether you are a stay at home parent or a CEO, your experiences, coupled with the JA curriculum, opens a student's eyes to see themselves beyond school. JA is working with Bunger Middle (to which we are a Partner in Education with) to provide their program, and needs volunteers to help in some 7th grade classrooms on Tuesdays starting in January during a variety of times in the school day. The commitment is about 40 minutes a week over the span of six weeks. Youth Director Abbie is getting involved, and so should you! Email [abbie.youthdirector@gmail.com](mailto:abbie.youthdirector@gmail.com) for questions and to sign up!

P.S. Did you know the late Harold Brock ( Bob's father) was a founding board member of JA in Waterloo? Wouldn't it be awesome for us to continue his legacy of support for this marvelous organization? Since we haven't been able to fulfill so many of our commitments to Partners in Education due to Covid, this will help renew our involvement with the youth of our community!



Festival of Lights  
Drive-thru ONLY: December 9  
Walk-thru ONLY : December 10-12

LOST ISLAND KOA  
4550 HESS RD., WATERLOO  
5 P M - 9 P M



'Tis the season for House of Hope's Festival of Lights! Park your car and walk through a winter wonderland of light displays! Listen to live Christmas and holiday music from local performers! Grab some hot chocolate and a cookie from the hot chocolate truck! Rumor has it, the big guy will be there, too! We have so many festive surprises for you! All proceeds benefit House of Hope programs! House of Hope provides single mothers and women aging out of foster care with housing, case management, access to services, and resources to achieve independence and permanent homes. House of Hope does not receive any government funding and is entirely supported by the community. Thank you for your support!

Hope to see you there! You can purchase tickets in advance or at the gate! \$20/ vehicle <https://houseofhopeccd.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/7367>

# 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 Friday, December 17th. (\$12.00 per plant)

We will be ordering live poinsettias again this year! You may take your poinsettia(s) home with you after the 7:00pm Christmas Eve service.

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

Poinsettia(s) given by: \_\_\_\_\_

"In Memory of....": \_\_\_\_\_

(OR)

"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