

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

December 29, 2021

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

by Anne Hoekstra

Happy New Year!

As we come to the end of one year and begin a new one, we reflect on the year that passed and look to what lies before us. The year ahead is yet unknown to us, full of possibilities. We replace our calendars, and make plans—for work, for friendships, for family, for health, for our spiritual growth. We also may make resolutions, or not. . . Regardless, we look ahead with anticipation and hope as we replace our 2021 calendar for that of 2022.

In many ways, our daily lives will not change even though our calendar does. But moving into a new year offers us an opportunity to reflect on the year we are leaving—the gifts and challenges it brought, and the ways we find God in both. It also provides the opportunity to open ourselves to ways God is working through us to be witnesses of our faith in the world, however that may be. It provides us the opportunity to appreciate our families, including our faith family, and find ways to strengthen our ties and our faith.

As we contemplate the new year, we do not know what will happen as we deal with another year of covid and a year of transition in our congregation. We don't know what the future holds for us, but we know Who holds the Future. And we know that in **all things** God **works** for the **good** of **those who love him**, who have been called according to his purpose.

I'm grateful for all of you—for your faith, for your lives, for the love you show each other. Each of you is an important part of the whole that makes up First Congregational UCC. I appreciate what each of you contributes to the life of our church, to our community, and to our wider world. Together, we are much stronger, much more creative, much more effective. On this cusp of a new year, I offer you this prayer, dear friends, and hope that 2022 brings you a happy new year!

Prayer for the Year Ahead

May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding us from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening us to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making our path easy,
But by making us sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from us,
But by taking fear from our heart;
Not by granting us unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping our face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making our life always pleasant,
But by showing us when people and their causes need us most,
and by making us anxious to be there to help.
God's love, peace, hope and joy to us for the year ahead.

Author Unknown

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

We meet next Tuesday, January 4th at 4 pm over Zoom. Check Facebook for updates!

YOUTH NEWS:

Youth Director Office Hours:

Abbie will hold office hours December 29, 30, and January 4, 6, and 7, all from 1pm-5pm.

Her office hours can also be viewed on the church website's calendar.

Youth Group:

There will be NO youth group this Wednesday, December 29th. Will resume on January 5th!

Childcare:

There **WILL** be childcare during the worship service on Sunday, January 2nd.

OFFICE CLOSINGS

No office hours will be held by staff on December 31st, or January 3rd for the Holidays.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2022 Offering Envelopes are now available under the bulletin board in the Crossroads.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Attention all Board/Committee Chairs - Please email me your annual report by Monday, January 10th. Are you working on improving procrastination as a New Year's Resolution? If so, take advantage of this coming weekend and get it done. 😊
Thank you! ~ Michelle

FROM THE REOPENING COMMITTEE

The committee did not meet this week. We continue to recommend meeting in the sanctuary. We continue to have faith that our congregation is vaccinated and wearing a mask. Using these measures allows us to be together. That is important. See you Sunday.

~ Beth, Tim, Dave, Greg

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORIES

We will begin working on the new Membership Directory for 2022 in February. Please contact the church office by the end of January if any of your information for your family is incorrect or if you would like to send in a new picture. Please call Michelle (319-234-8927) or email (fcuccoffice@gmail.com). Thank you!



POINSETTIAS

There are several poinsettias left in the sanctuary from Christmas. If you would like one, please stop by the church during office hours (Wednesday until 4pm, and Thursday between 9am and 4pm) and pick one up this week or take one after Service this Sunday if there are any left.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JANUARY						1
2 10:30 Worship w/ Communion <i>(Childcare Provided)</i>	3 (Office Closed)	4 7:30 Men's Bkfst @ Village Inn 10:00 Al-Anon 4:00 Adult Bible Study	5 6:00 - Youth	6 5:15 - Bells 7:00 - Choir	7	8
9 10:30 Worship & Sunday School	10	11 4:00 Adult Bible Study 6:00 - Trustee Mtg	12 6:00 - Youth	13 5:15 - Bells 7:00 - Choir	14	15
16 10:30 Worship <i>(Childcare Provided)</i>	17	18 4:00 Adult Bible Study	19 6:00 - Youth	20 5:15 - Bells 7:00 - Choir	21	22
23/30 10:30 Worship & Sunday School 12:00 Annual Meeting (Jan 23)	24/31	25 4:00 Adult Bible Study	26 6:00 - Youth	27 5:15 - Bells 7:00 - Choir	28	29

BIRTHDAYS



1 Joanne Lane Jim Thiele	13 Ted Martens	27 Emile Leighty
6 Barb Mardis Julie Thoreen	14 Megan Panicucci	28 Dan Hummel Craig Mahood
10 Lois Johnson David Young	15 Jesse White Charlie Mejia	29 Connie Stevens Zack Steva
12 Brad Highnam	23 Jayne Slaughter	30 Luke Overton
	24 Steve Maurer	31 Craig Holdiman



MOMENT FOR MISSIONS...

Craig Jensen and his grandsons, Teddy and Charlie Mejia, were caught bringing Christmas cheer along with a meal on wheels last week to a grateful Waterloo resident. Frequently the only people some recipients see each day are those who deliver lunch, and they often don't get to interact with children as well, so this is an extra special treat! A lot of kids aren't blessed to have grandparents or other elders in their lives and love to experience the joy of helping others. This is an awesome way to introduce volunteering to kids.

The youngest Mejia, Cooper, joined the process several weeks ago, but due to his age, stayed in his car seat, and we forgot to take a picture. 😞 Thank you, photographer, Karen Jensen, for facilitating and sharing. Also, several of the FCUCC regular participants are going to be out of town soon, so if anyone would like to give this process a try for just one or two times, please call/text 319-504-3212. It is very rewarding and provides a vital service which helps keep seniors in their home settings.



~ *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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Congregational Tidings

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