



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
United Church of Christ  
FEBRUARY 2016



Friends in Christ:

Lent begins early this year. Unlike Christmas, which is always celebrated on December 25, the date for Easter moves around. The date is determined by the sun and the moon. So Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon falling on or after the vernal equinox. This year that Sunday is March 27. Our Lenten preparations for Easter begin roughly 40 days (not counting the Sundays) before that - on Ash Wednesday, February 10. In the days ahead we move from winter into spring, from darkness into increasing hours of daylight. We also move from ashes to resurrection. In the process we have the opportunity to become freshly aware of God's love, mercy, hope, and strength in our lives.

Thomas Merton wrote that Ash Wednesday "is a day of happiness, a Christian feast. It cannot be otherwise, as it forms part of the great Easter cycle." Lent is the "holy spring," not a season of punishment but of healing, restoration, and new life. God has made a new beginning in Jesus Christ. The season of preparation that is Lent is a time to give yourself to being a part of that new creation.

The traditional disciplines of Lent are designed to help us participate in the healing, restoration, and new life that God offers at all times. They are intended not to hurt or debase us but to help us recover ourselves so that we may present ourselves more fully to God. They are opportunities to develop, as Margaret Miles put it, a "countercultural self—a religious self, free of social conditioning and capable of the most powerful activity we can imagine - a relationship with God."

Jesus suggests three "spiritual disciplines" that were common in his time - three that might still be of use to us today.

- **Prayer** - which is entering into a conversation with God that can be public or private.  
Prayer invites us into silence in the midst of a noisy world. In the silence we can be still and know God and know that we are not God. Prayer calls us to be honest in a world that is filled with lies. Prayer leads us to open up all the closed doors of our lives. In doing so we discover our emptiness and the places where we are full. We discover our strength and our broken places. We discover God present even in the valley of our shadows.
- **Fasting** - which brings the daily bombardment of our senses to a halt.  
Each day we receive countless messages telling us: eat this, drink that, buy me. News is available 24 hours a day. We access social media anywhere, anytime. Fasting calls a temporary halt to the input of the world that would tell us who we are so that we can be still and listen to God's still, small voice. Sometimes fasting involves food. In our time, however, maybe you'll turn off the TV, or stop reading the newspaper, or go off line, or curb your rampant consuming in some other way.
- **Giving** - which puts our possessions in perspective.  
We are told to get more and more. We are told that the one who dies with the most toys, wins. Ash Wednesday, of course reminds us that the one who dies with the most toys, still dies. Lent calls us to reexamine what we call winning and living. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**Join with your friends in this congregation as we begin the season of Lent together. Worship with us on Ash Wednesday, February 10, at 7:00 p.m., following the pancake supper at 5:30.**

*Bill*

P.S. I want to thank the congregation for your kind and generous gift at Christmas. It is difficult to fully express my gratitude, not only for this gift but also for the ongoing gift of your call to me to be your pastor. But it is deep and heartfelt. Much has been written about the demands of the pastorate and how the stress takes its toll. My experience here, however, is that the support and prayers of all members carries me through times of challenge. All of you make this a healthy place for ministry.

With affection and gratitude, I thank you—for your gift and even more for the treasure that you are.

## MILESTONES

**Death:** Mike Myer on January 16. A funeral service was held at the church on January 21.

**Moved:** Diana Coberly, to 4239 N. Oak Park Ave., #508, Chicago, IL, 60634, (319) 400-9491.

## CHURCH ACTIVITIES

### ASH WEDNESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER AND WORSHIP SERVICE BEGIN THE SEASON OF LENT ON FEBRUARY 10

On Wednesday, February 10, our Board of Christian Education will host a pancake supper in Rockwood Hall from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Bring your family and friends and join others for pancakes (gluten free pancakes will be available), eggs, sausage, good company, and good conversation. Profits from the free-will donation will support our Christian Education Programs. It will help with planning if you sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall or call the church office (337-4301) to let us know how many will attend. But please join us even if you haven't done this. After eating, we will hold our Ash Wednesday worship service in the sanctuary at 7:00. This will be a time of music and song, scripture and prayer, and the imposition of ashes for those who want them. The worship service is designed for people of all ages.

### MIDWEEK MUSICAL MEDITATIONS BEGIN THIS MONTH

2016 will mark the eighth year of our popular Lenten Musical Meditations series beginning on Wednesday, February 17. The musical meditations will begin at 12:30 and last for approximately 25 minutes. These midday recitals are free and open to the public. Please join us and bring a friend.

#### 2016 SCHEDULE

February 17	-	Ruth Hurlburt, Organ
February 24	-	T. Andrew Hicks, Organ
March 2	-	The LIROS Quintet
March 9	-	Taizé Meditation led by Patrick Zubiato
March 16	-	Dalaie Choi, Organ
March 23	-	Richard Bloesch, Piano Marie Von Behren, Soprano

### MISSION BOARD SPONSORS ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

The Mission Board is sponsoring a 5-week long Christian Education series which ends on Sunday, February 7 at 9:15 AM in Rockwood Hall. The topic, **Racism Here at Home**, will focus on recognition of biases we all have and how they affect and are affected by social institutions such as education, immigration and incarceration. Emphasis will be centered on us locally.

### LET'S GO SHOPPING

Our trip to Second Act this year brought in fewer coats than we anticipated. So, here's your opportunity to make up the shortfall! As winter items start to go on sale in the stores, now is a great time to let your dollar go further and purchase coats. Second hand stores offer real bargains this time of year including Goodwill, The Crowded Closet and Kids Stuff. Please store them at your home until the fall when they can be brought to the church and then taken to the distribution site.

### MEMBER GATHERINGS

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday, February 20 at the Bluebird Diner on Market Street in Iowa City. We will gather at 8:00 am.

The Women's Lunch will be held at 11:45 am on Thursday, February 18 at El Bandito's Restaurant on the corner of Market and Gilbert Streets in Iowa City.

## CHURCH ACTIVITIES Continued

### SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE – USED BOOKS NEEDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

The Shelter House Book Sale is a longstanding community fund raising event for almost two decades. Approximately 20,000 books are donated annually to the sale. Typically half the books are sold for exceedingly low prices. Last year \$17,000 was raised for the Iowa City Shelter House. All topics, fiction and non-fiction are needed. Mysteries, romances, novels, children's books, health care, history, economics, art.... No encyclopedias, no journals, no textbooks. Please bring book donations to Rockwood Hall. A box will be labeled for the sale.

There are many different volunteer jobs that make it possible to hold the sale. A description of jobs will be posted in Rockwood Hall. Scheduling volunteer hours can be very flexible. Tasks include:

Picking up donated books and bringing them to the sale site.

Sorting books at the sale site.

Assisting in many different ways during the two-day sale.

**Location and Date of Sale:** March 5-6, 2016 at the TMOne Building, 1925 Boyrum Street (the building just passed of HyVee on Boyrum Street - formerly the Goodwill Store and drop-off), on March 5-6, 2016.

### ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

On Palm Sunday, March 20th, we will dedicate our offering to OGHS. The United Church of Christ has at its core transforming lives! Why? Because we are all one in Christ.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, lives are transformed through support that provides clean water, food, medicines, shelter, healthcare, education, and disaster relief in the U.S. and internationally.



**Let us give generously, not because we have to, but because we can.**

### MEMBERSHIP BOARD HOLDS YOUNG ADULT GATHERING

The Membership Board is sponsoring a get together for young adults in our congregation after worship on Sunday, February 7. The Board wants to be sure our congregation is meeting the needs of our younger members and to find out if we need to add or adapt programs that match your interests. "Young adult" is a fairly wide category here. We're talking about anyone out of college through mid-forties or so. Single or married. Parents with children in church school—and those without children. In short, if you think of yourself as a young adult, we'd like you to join us to talk about what's important to you in life and in the life of this congregation. Child care and lunch will be provided. (We know it's Super Bowl Sunday, and promise we won't keep you past 1:00 p.m.)

### UPDATE ON CROP WALK 2015

UCC Contribution:	\$805.00	(\$117.00 over last year's total)
Total CROP Walk 2015:	\$27,228.00	

### FRESH FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP

There is a sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall for anyone who would like to provide flowers for worship. Flowers can be given in memory or honor of loved ones or in celebration of special events. Flowers can also be given simply for the joy and beauty that they bring. Questions? Please contact Jane Murphy at 351-9079 or at [murphyjane51@gmail.com](mailto:murphyjane51@gmail.com).

## CHURCH ACTIVITIES Continued

### IT'S OUR TURN ON FEBRUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>!

We will be hosting the free lunch on Monday, February 29. A sign-up sheet has been posted in Rockwood Hall. Please consider helping with food and/or time. This is an important effort that not only helps people in our community, but also lets them know that our church cares. Helping is fun! We make a great team! Join us!



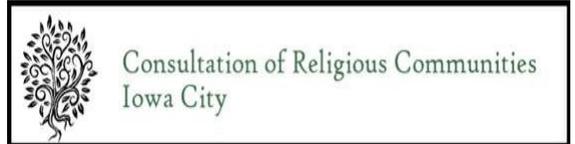
### ENJOY AN EVENING OF FOLK AND BLUES MUSIC

**WHO:** The Consultation of Religious Communities (CRC)

**WHAT:** A Benefit Concert to Reduce Homelessness with music provided by Jack Greve, the 'Fritters' featuring Nic Arp and 'Flash in the Pan' – Local Folk and Bluegrass Band. Beverages, desserts and hors d'oeuvres will be served!

**WHEN:** Friday, February 26, 2016 - 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** OLD BRICK, 26 East Market Street, Iowa City, IOWA



**HOW MUCH:** Suggested Donation - \$20.00 to benefit The Common Fund of the CRC, which is administered by The Crisis Center

If you have any questions please contact Michael Lawler, Emergency Assistance Coordinator - The Crisis Center of Johnson County at 319-351-2726, Ex. 117 or e-mail [michael.lawler@jccrisiscenter.org](mailto:michael.lawler@jccrisiscenter.org).

### WORK CAMP AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2016

Following a planning meeting on November 15, two week-long work camps are scheduled for 2016. During the week of **March 14-18** (which is Spring Break for the University and Iowa City Schools) we will be working at the former post office in Coralville to get it ready for and to help with moving the Ecumenical Food Pantry to a new location there. We will be working mainly out-of-doors at the Village Community during the week of **June 20-24**. We are still hoping to plan an international work camp with the medical clinic in Dominica or through the Global Ministries of the Disciples/UCC but those opportunities are not yet organized enough for us to commit to them.

### RIPON COLLEGE CHAMBER SINGERS TO PERFORM IN MARCH

On March 13, 2016 there will be a special edition of Sundays at Four featuring a concert by Ripon College Chamber Singers directed by Dr. John C. Hughes.

As you may remember, John was the choir director for three years at our church following the retirement of Dr. Richard Bloesch. He received his DMA in choral conducting from the University of Iowa and was appointed to the job as director of choral activities at Ripon College in Ripon, WI. Now in his second year at Ripon he will be touring with his premier group this spring and will include Iowa City on the schedule.

We need help from the congregation to provide housing for the choir members and we plan to provide the Sunday evening meal for the choir. Several folks have volunteered housing and help but more are needed. If you have room for one or several students please let Marie von Behren know. Thank you for welcoming John and family back to Iowa City.

# OUR CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

## *The Dog That Nino Didn't Have*

written by Edward Van de Vendel, illustrated by Anton Van Hertbruggen

This award-winning book beautifully depicts the art of finding a balance between imagination and reality.

“There are plenty of picture books about finding imaginary friends, loving imaginary friends, even wistful books about letting go of imaginary friends. But few have plumbed the depths of loneliness and emotional complexity the way Van de Vendel and Van Hertbruggen do in their stunning, pithy picture book, *The Dog That Nino Didn't Have*. Nino plays by himself in a rustic lakefront community of cabins. There are no other children around. His mother and great-grandmother appear as backs of heads, and his father, an airline pilot, is far away. But Nino's not alone: he has a dog that's not really there, appearing in scratchy, loose brown outline a sharp contrast to the decadent colors and textures of the rest of the illustrations. This not-dog, constantly referred to as the dog that he didn't have, knows precisely what Nino wants to do. It chases squirrels, jumps in the lake, and seeks comfort in the lap of great-grandmother. The not-dog doesn't only tune into Nino's favorite activities, however; it also knows when he's feeling bad. When Nino's angry or frustrated, the not-dog is the one being so crazy and dumb. When Nino misses his father, the not-dog comforts him, lapping up his tears, since it loved the taste of salty water. But one day, Nino gets a real dog, who's still mischievous and playful but not in the same way as not-dog. Nino's dog doesn't automatically want to do his favorite things, and it doesn't even know Nino's dad, let alone how much he misses him. Nino's happy to have a dog everyone can see, but he's losing a friend who intuitively knows what he needs. . . . Nino sits slumped on his bed while not-dog comforts him, and the two-page spread after that shows Nino at his most destructive, scrabbling in the dirt and flinging heavy brown mud everywhere. But this isn't all sadness and worry; Nino loves his dog, too, and he realizes that having a real dog won't prevent him from having the kind of companionship he had in not-dog. In a triumphant, enthusiastic turn, Nino remembers all the other animals he doesn't have, a giraffe, rhino, moose, lots more dogs, and many others. Scratchy, translucent gray and brown animals surround Nino's house and accompany him and his dog on more adventures, and his imagination is even more boundless than before. Van de Vendel's simple lines evoke a childlike logic about imagination and friendship. . . . More rewarding still is the gentle, subtle, and nonjudgmental presentation of tricky feelings that will be familiar to many young readers, as well as the jubilant discovery of the joyful, comforting power of imagination.”—*Booklist* \*Starred Review\*

“In a woodland landscape of shaggy trees, paneled station wagons, and A-frame cabins, a boy named Nino pines for his absent father, a pilot, and invents a pet dog for companionship and comfort: ‘The dog that Nino didn't have liked tears. It loved the taste of salty water.’ Newcomer Van Hertbruggen envisions the dog as both scruffy and see-through, and the ochers, rusty reds, and avocado greens of his expansive lakeside scenes evoke a 1970s childhood of unsupervised exploration and play; tokens of distant lands—masks, feathers, postcards—dot the pages, perhaps procured by Nino's father. Then the boy gets a real dog: ‘The dog that Nino has now is soft. And sweet. . . . And everyone can see it.’ Yet Nino, missing the presence of invented animals, goes on to conjure up a ‘zebra that he's never seen,’ an ‘imaginary giraffe,’ a ‘not-hippopotamus,’ and more: ‘Nino doesn't have any of them! Not a single one!’ Through playful negatives and sumptuous illustrations Van de Vendel and Van Hertbruggen suggest that imagination can fill the void where melancholy and longing live, coexisting with realities beyond one's control.”—*Publisher's Weekly* (Ages 4–8)

Look for this book (and others) on the library shelves in Rockwood Hall. And explore the rest of our library for more cold weather reading.

*Edie Roberts*  
*Children's Librarian*



# Our Adult Library

## "The Relevance of Religion; How Faithful People can Change Politics"

By John Danforth

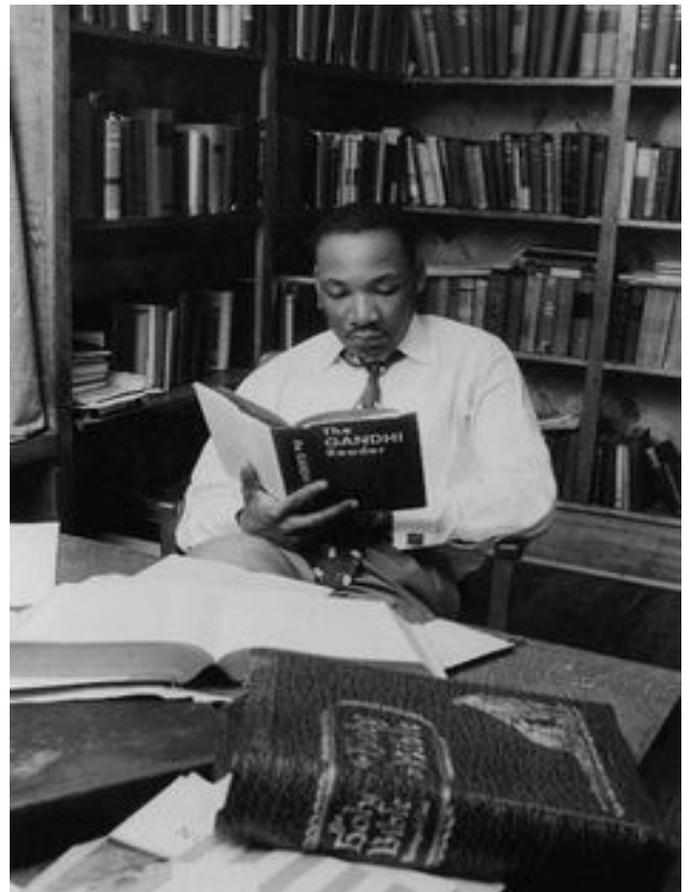
In "The Relevance of Religion" senator and ambassador to the United Nations John Danforth offers a look at the state of American politics today and how religion can be a bridge over our bitter partisan divide. In an era of extreme partisanship, running for office has become a game in which candidates play exclusively to their ideological bases. But Americans hunger for a commitment to the common good.

Danforth writes that religion can be the key to restoring our civic virtue. Faithful religious believers can have a constructive impact on public life. Our shared religious values can lead us out of the embittered, entrenched state of politics today. Danforth believes that our willingness to serve more than our self-interest is religion's gift to politics.

In a time when 75 percent of Americans say they cannot trust their elected leaders, "The Relevance of Religion" is a plea for more compassionate government.

John Danforth is an ordained Episcopal Priest, a graduate of Yale Divinity School. He also graduated from Princeton University and Yale Law School. Danforth has practiced law, has served as Missouri Attorney General and Senator, and US Representative to the United Nations.

Judy Doorenbos  
Library Committee



# Serving Our Church

In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we all share in performing duties for the worship service. A list is provided each month for the assignments of Greeters, Ushers and Hospitality. Please arrive one-half hour before the service, which begins at 10:15 am.

If you cannot serve on the assigned date, please call someone else on the list to arrange a trade with them. Please let the Deacon of the Month, , Betsy Henson know of any changes. She can be reached at 319-330-3207 or pencils@mchsi.com

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>GREETERS</b>	<b>USHERS</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY</b>
7	Ethel Bloesch Ann Aschoff	Kathleen, Bryan , Benjamin And Nicole Day	Scott and Patty Hansche
14	Darin Wells Diane Olson	David and Kathleen Wilder Kathi Koegle and Kevin Richards	Ken and Ruth Kuntz
21	Joan Buxton Linda Christensen	Jane Kinney Donna Hirst Diana Baculis Paula Forest	Kathleen Clark Richard Valentine
28	Mark and Carrie Whittaker	Tina Koepnick James Savage Brian and Laura Umlah	Brian & Lauren Whitehead

# FEBRUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> -Organ in Use 9 am  -Raven Rowe Discernment 7:30pm	<b>2</b> -Organ in Use 9 am -Diaconate 7pm -Mission Board 7pm -Christian Ed Bd 7pm	<b>3</b> -Organ in Use 9am -FRC Luncheon Noon -Prayer/ Meditation Noon	<b>4</b> -Organ in Use 9am -Organ in Use 3 - 5pm -Literacy Class 6:30 pm -Voices of Soul 6:30pm	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> -Citizenship Class 9am
<b>7</b> -Choir 9am -Church School for All Ages 9:15 -Communion Worship - 10:15 -EE Coffee Sales -Young Adult Mtg 11:30 -Chinese School 1:30pm	<b>8</b> -Organ in Use 9am	<b>9</b> -Organ in Use 9am -Organ in Use 3 - 5pm	<b>10 Ash Wednesday</b> -Organ in Use 9am -CE Pancake Supper 5:30pm -Ash Wednesday Worship 7pm	<b>11</b> -Organ in Use 9am -Organ in Use 3 - 5 pm -FRC Luncheon Noon -Literacy Class 6:30pm -Voices of Soul 6:30pm	<b>12</b> -Organ in Use 9am	<b>13</b> -Citizenship Class 9am
<b>14</b>  -1st Sunday in Lent -Choir 9 am -Church School for All Ages 9:15 -Worship 10:15	<b>15</b> -Organ in Use 9am -Recital 7pm Dalaie Choi	<b>16</b> -Organ in Use 4 -5 pm -FRC Luncheon Noon -Stewardship 4pm -Membership 5:30pm -Trustees 7pm	<b>17</b> -Organ in Use 11:30 - 12:30 - Midweek Musical Lenten Meditation 12:30 Ruth Hurlburt, Organ	<b>18</b> -Women's Lunch at El Bandito's 11:45am -Literacy Class 6:30pm -Voices of Soul 6:30pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> -Men's Breakfast at Bluebird Diner at 8 am  -Citizen Class 9am
<b>21</b> -Choir 9 am -Church School for All Ages 9:15 -Worship 10:15 am Chinese School 1:30 pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> -FRC Luncheon Noon -Church Council 7pm	<b>24</b> -Midweek Musical Lenten Meditation 12:30 T. Andrew Hicks, Organ	<b>25</b> -Literacy Class 6:30pm  -Voices of Soul 6:30pm	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> -Citizen Class 9am
<b>28</b> -Choir 9 am --Church School for All Ages 9:15 -Worship 10:15 am Chinese School 1:30 pm	<b>29</b> -Serving at Free Lunch Program					



# *Happy Birthday*

*Noralee Balmer 2/2*

*Eugene Buck 2/24*

*Robin Whitehead 2/24*

*Beth Parker 2/3*

*Matthew Ghabel 2/3*

*Courtney Rowe 2/10*

*Frank Snider 2/10*

*Andrew Ghabel 2/25*

*Steven Hanson 2/5*

*Laura Ghabel 2/14*

*Niki Neems 2/27*

*Christopher Reitz 2/27*

*Sharyn Reitz 2/15*

*Taylor McBurney 2/27*

*Larry Parsons 2/8*

*David Balmer 2/16*

*Nicole Pearson 2/21*

*Ethan Buck 2/23*

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
30 North Clinton Street  
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

**PARKING INFORMATION**

Parking is available evenings and all day Sunday at the IMU or North Hall Parking Ramps.

Ask your usher for a voucher (or get one from the church office).

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

10:15 a.m.      Worship  
11:15 a.m.      Fellowship

Church Office is open Monday - Friday 9-3pm

**OUR CHURCH STAFF**

<b>Pastor:</b>	<b>The Rev. William Lovin</b>
Music Director:	Patrick Zubiate
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Director of Church School	The Rev. Patte Henderson
Office Manager:	Nan Martin
Financial Secretary:	Sharyn Huriaux Reitz
Communication Assistant	Christina Patramanis
Custodian:	Eddy Ghumm

**HOW TO CONTACT US**

Monday - Friday 9 am to 3 pm  
**Phone:** 319-337-4301

**E-mail:**

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Office Manager.....uccicsec@uccic.org  
Financial Secretary.....sharynreitz@gmail.com  
Music Director..... zubia101@mail.chapman.edu  
Dir of Church School.....uccidce@gmail.com  
Communication Assist.....cpatramanis@yahoo.com

**Visit our Web Site:** [www.uccic.org](http://www.uccic.org)