

Happy New Year & Welcome 2016



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ JANUARY 2016



Friends in Christ:

After the preparations of Advent and the celebrations of Christmas, the light begins to grow. We conclude this season with Epiphany Sunday on January 10. This day reminds us that the love of God made flesh in Jesus is for all people.

Traditionally the days between Epiphany and the beginning of Lent (this year on February 10) have been a time for congregations to think about mission and reaching out to people far away. This year we need only look outside our front doors to see that our mission is here. We are surrounded by a major university, undergoing its own growing pains with record enrollment, living with a sense of uncertainty and trepidation among many.

We are a strange and questionable lot. While the rest of the city sleeps off the excess of Saturday or rises to run or to run out for the *Times*, we get up and seek out a parking space in order to come together for our weekly assembly. Along with the biologists and astronomers nearby, we would probe the vast reaches of space and explore the deep mystery of living things in order to understand this creation and its evolution and to help shape its future. But each Sunday we also read from an ancient and often obscure book that begins, "In the beginning *God created* the heavens and the earth," and concludes with a vision of a new heaven and a new earth coming into being.

We find ourselves living in this often puzzling time between that first creation and the new creation. We are people who sense that something significant has happened in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—something so significant, in fact, that it seems as though in Christ that new creation has begun, that life overcomes death, that love is stronger than hate, that peace will win out over war, although the signs of that reality are few and far between. And we also sense that our purpose here on this corner is to in some way announce and even *show* to the world that indeed in Christ there is a new creation and we are part of it.

Kelci Lucier in *College Stress Solutions* suggests that religion can be a source of strength for young adults before, during, and after college. With all the challenges of university life, faith can be a guide and a congregation can be both a home and a community of support. A church can provide needed renewal, helping students to refocus and reprioritize as they study and grow.

Lucier tells students: "Religious communities are a great place to connect with people who share your beliefs and values. The familiarity that comes with traditions, cultures, and rites associated with many religions can help you conquer homesickness, feel connected to your new community, and simply relax and have fun....Religion can be a great way for you to alleviate some emotional stress while helping you feel rested, restored and revitalized."

As the new year and the new semester begin this month, let us remember the great gift that we have and that we are as a congregation. Every day, every hour, countless students walk by here. Many need what we can offer, but are unaware of who we are and what we value. Part of our calling as people who have decided to stay in this place is to find new ways to minister to the students who are our neighbors.

Peace,

Bill

INTRODUCTIONS and TRANSITIONS

CONGREGATIONAL UCC WELCOMES THE REV. PATTE HENDERSON AS OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL

On December 9, our Church Council approved the hiring of the Rev. Patte Henderson as our new Director of the Church School. Patte will direct the Sunday morning program for children, including both the 9:15 Sunday School and the Children's Church that is held during worship. This is a part time, 12 hour/week position. Patte brings with her a wealth of education and experience. She has a BS in Education and worked for 13 years as an elementary and early childhood teacher. She also has an M.Div. and is a retired Presbyterian minister, having served in churches in Colorado, Virginia, and Iowa as both a Director of Education and as Pastor. She joined our congregation earlier this year. Patte began her work here in December, preparing for the start of the 2016 church school season on Sunday, January 3.

Congratulations to Theresa Messlein and Jim Martin who were married in their home on December 31, 2015. Rev. Bruce Williams officiated.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

◆ EPIPHANY CELEBRATIONS ON JANUARY 10

Epiphany (the revelation of Jesus to the Gentiles, the coming of the Magi) falls twelve days after Christmas, on January 6 each year. This year we'll extend the Christmas season for a few more days and celebrate Epiphany on Sunday, January 10. In our 10:15 worship service we will bring our observance of Christmas to a conclusion, hearing the story of the Magi from the Gospel of Matthew and sharing in the sacrament of communion. After worship our festivities continue in Rockwood Hall where we will enjoy Epiphany Cake. If you find a coin in your slice of cake, you will be crowned the king/queen of the festival! (And you get to do the children's sermon and help bake the cake for Epiphany 2017.)

◆ MISSION BOARD SPONSORS ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

The Mission Board is sponsoring a 5-week long Christian Education series beginning on Sunday, January 10 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. A suggested reading is *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Another helpful preparatory activity is to go to the Project Implicit website: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html> to select and take the RACE IAT. Jessica Welburn, Assistant Professor of Sociology and African American Studies at UI, will help lead this series. Jessica attended the IC UCC during her youth while her family lived in Iowa City, so we are excited to have her involvement in this series. Please join us for these programs as we start 2016.

◆ ANNUAL MEETING ON JANUARY 31

The Annual Meeting of The Congregational United Church of Christ will be held on Sunday, January 31 in the sanctuary, following our 10:15 worship service. We will receive reports of Boards and Committees, vote on the budget for 2016, and transact any other business that is fitting and necessary. Copies of the Annual Report will be available Sunday, January 24.

- ◆ Working behind the scenes at Glenna Cobb's memorial reception several of us met caterer Janice Ross, a friend of Deb Cobb and new to the industry. She left several trays of her treats to benefit our congregation's Christmas Eve party including the delicious blackberry bars delivered fresh that evening. Also included in her largesse were plastic cutting boards for our brand new kitchen, the only gadgets she could think that we lacked! Should you need the services of a kind and very competent caterer any time soon, please contact her:

Janice Ross, dba Bella, lenanoel.jr@gmail.com, 3933 Causeway Circle NE, Solon, IA 52333, 319-621-3656

Jane Murphy

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CHURCH ACTIVITIES Continued

◆ OFFICE CLOSED REMINDER

The Church Office will be closed on January 1 and will reopen on January 4 at 9am.

◆ “THE GIVING SEASON”

Christmas, the “season of giving,” is over, yet we all know that sharing, even in small ways, makes a difference to many people all year long. Our schools request each student to supply facial tissue and hand sanitizer at the beginning of the school year. But, there are many children and, by the middle of the year, those supplies are running very low. I will be collecting tissue and hand sanitizer during the month of January to give to Mark Twain School. Please think of us the next time you’re shopping. A tub for donations will be in Rockwood Hall.



If you have a connection with another school, please don’t hesitate to take your supplies there. The need is great everywhere. Contact Edie Roberts with any questions: edie-roberts@uiowa.edu

◆ NEW MEMBER CLASS

A new member class will be held on Wednesdays January 20 and January 27 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining Congregational UCC or would like more information about us, we invite you to attend these sessions. For more information, please talk with Bill Lovin or call the church office, 337-4301. Childcare will be provided.

◆ PLANNING FOR A NEW WEBSITE

We are looking for anyone interested in helping develop our new website. All experience levels needed. We need a small group to look at how we want to proceed and how to choose who will build the website and what content will be included. This will be a short term project. Our website is the first thing many people encounter when they are looking for a church. It is the “new front door”. Our current website has been great but it is time to update and get mobile friendly. What do you think we need to have on our new website? Do you have ideas? We want to hear from you. There are countless options, styles and set ups available. Take a little time and browse other church websites. It is very informative. Start with some UCC churches. There are many that have great websites. Let us know what you like and what you don’t. We will begin our planning very soon and your input will help. If you are interested in being part of this short term interesting project, please let the office know. We are eager to get started. Cynthia Kemp and James Robinson

◆ THINK AHEAD FOR ANNUAL OUTERWEAR DISTRIBUTION

Each year in the fall, Congregational UCC joins with other congregations in providing winter coats for people of all ages, especially children. 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. Please store them at your home until the fall when they can be brought to the church and then taken to the distribution site.

◆ A WORD OF THANKS...

For many decades the Chinese School has used space in our building to teach Chinese on Sunday afternoons. As 2015 was ending, we received this note from them:

Thank you so much for helping and supporting our school throughout all these years. It means a lot to us. Have a merry Christmas and we hope 2016 brings wonderful things to you and your loved ones.

The Chinese School

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CHURCH ACTIVITIES Continued

◆ MEN'S BREAKFAST

The men of the church will meet for breakfast at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 16 at the eastside Mid-Town Restaurant, 200 Scott Ct, Iowa City.

◆ WOMEN'S LUNCH

The women's lunch will be held at 11:45 am on Thursday, January 21st at El Bandito's on the corner of Market and Gilbert, Iowa City.

◆ FREE LUNCH PROGRAM, NOVEMBER 30, 2015

I want to offer special thanks to all those who helped with our last Free Lunch. It is always a wonder to me that so many of you come together to provide 170 tasty, healthy meals, and do so with generosity, hard work, and laughter. We always have fun working together and an added plus is the number of diners who take the time to pass on their heartwarming appreciation.

Their appreciation and mine go to: Claire Ashman, Joan Buxton, Bryan Clemons, Martha Ann Crawford, Bill Dickinson, John Fieselmann, Randee Fieselmann, Paula Forest, John Fuller, Sharon Garton, Pat Goeldner, Patte Henderson, Betsy Henson, Donna Hirst, Marge Hoppin, Donna Janes, Kathi Koegle, Marcy Kuechenmeister, Bill Lohss, Nan Martin, Joyce Myer, Connie Parsons, Patty Roberts, Rick Ruppert, Betty Stein, and Vicki Thomae.

Thank you all! Edie Roberts

◆ UPDATE ON FUNDRAISERS

Current totals for the fundraising in December:

Heifer Project	-	\$1313.00
Blanket Project—Church World Service	-	\$ 265.00
Mission Board Cards and Knitted Items	-	\$ 61.00
Christmas Fund	-	\$1617.00

◆ NEW HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOMES DEDICATED IN DECEMBER

In this instance helpers, I'm happy to relay a message of needs being met: Thanks to many of you and others in our community and to the hard work of the staff at our local habitat affiliate, Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity, 3 families will have new homes for the holidays.

The Habitat staff and I and, most importantly, these families who will now have safe, decent, affordable homes greatly appreciate the multitude of ways that many of you have supported these projects over the past year.

We're so grateful. Thank you. Mary Palmberg

Three homes were dedicated in December:

Mary Palmberg Women Build 7 Home Dedication:

- Amar Hamad & Muna Abdalla family (<http://marypalmbergbuild.com/meet-the-partner-family/>)

Memorial Build Home Dedication:

- Milord Mahinga & Syphoriana Nyabenda family (<http://hfh-ia-iowavalley.huterra.org/content/milord-mahinga-and-syphoriana-nyabenda>)

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CHURCH ACTIVITIES Continued

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOME DEDICATIONS cont.

Thrivent Build Home Dedication:

- Shema Batiste & Francoise Mukangila family (<http://hfh-ia-iowavalley.huterra.org/content/shema-batiste-and-francois-mukangila>)

◆ PRAYER/MEDITATION GROUP MEETS WEEKLY

Wednesdays at Noon in the Sanctuary: You are invited to join others for a time of silent prayer and meditation each Wednesday at noon. After a brief reading, participants sit silently for about 20 minutes. We conclude our time together with a brief period of conversation. This group is open to everyone. You do not need to attend every week.

◆ NOTARY NEEDS

Office Manager Nan Martin is now a proud Iowa Notary. She will have her official stamp very soon so give her a call or drop in if you have any notary needs.

LOOKING AHEAD

◆ 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.

◆ 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.

◆ SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE COMING UP

For the past eighteen years, an annual used book sale has raised money to support Shelter House the Iowa City homeless shelter. The book sale has become an ecumenical event, thanks to the many congregations, individuals, and the Shelter House Board who help make it possible each year. The latest word is that the 2016 book sale will be held in April. Watch the newsletter and church bulletins for more information as it becomes available.

OUR CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

Red: A Crayon's Story

By Michael Hall

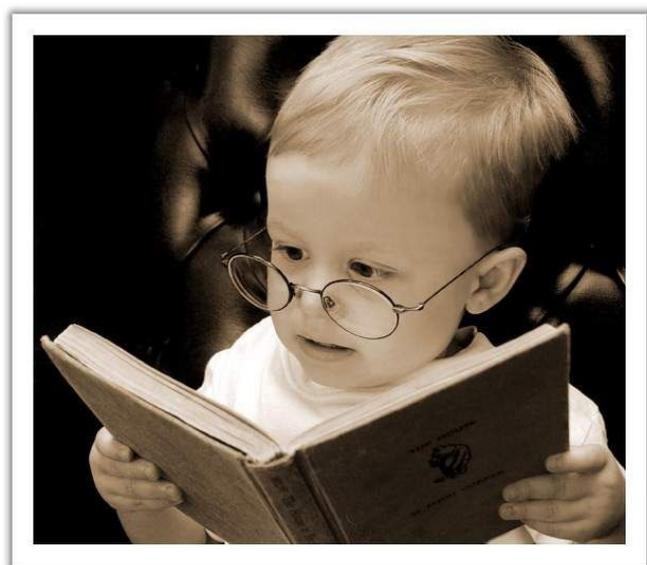
Many of us have the inclination to judge people by their appearance; children are not immune to this impulse. This book shows us not only how wrong those assumptions can be, but how people sometimes even try to fit that image instead of being true to themselves. This is a lesson to learn for all of us.

“Red is a crayon, and children will see his problem right away: his label reads “red,” but he’s blue. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he’s a poor performer in school, where his drawings are expected to be red. Hall (*It’s an Orange Aardvark!*) has a fine ear for dialogue, and the overly cheerful encouragement Red endures will sound familiar to any child who’s struggled to perform: ‘I’ll draw a red strawberry, then you draw a red strawberry,’ coaches the scarlet crayon. ‘You can do this. Really!’ But a page turn reveals two rows of strawberries, one scarlet and the other. . .blue. A Greek chorus of grown-up crayons lined up across a black spread makes patronizing comments: ‘He’s got to press harder.’ ‘Really apply himself!’ Only when Red is at his wit’s end does he meet Berry, a crayon who actually sees him. ‘Will you make a blue ocean for my boat?’ Berry asks quietly, and that’s all it takes to change Red’s life. Stories about accepting differences abound, but this one delivers its message in an unexpectedly affecting way.”

—*Publishers 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

Stronger

By

Jeff Bauman with Bret Witter

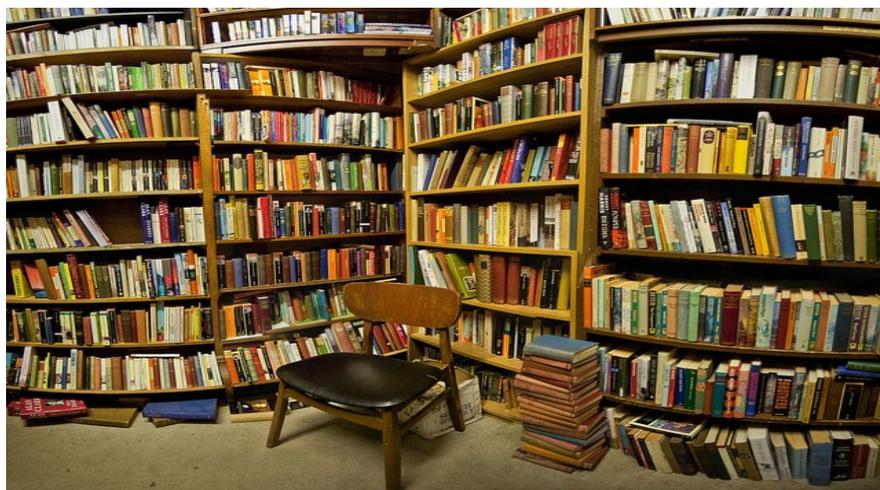
“I saw the bomber. He took my legs, but he didn’t break me. He only made me stronger”

On April 15, 2013 Jeff Bauman was at the Boston Marathon cheering on his girlfriend at the finish line. On April 16, 2013 Jeff Bauman woke up in the Boston Medical Center groggy from a series of lifesaving surgeries and missing both his legs. His remembrance of the Boston Marathon bomber looking right at him set off one of the biggest manhunts in the country’s history and, at the same time, began his brave road to recovery.

Quote from the back cover: “In *Stronger*, Jeff describes the chaos and terror of the bombing itself and the ongoing FBI investigation in which he was a key witness. He takes us inside his grueling rehabilitation, and discusses the challenges and joys he experienced as he rebuilt his life. And he tells of the courage of his fellow survivors. His remarkable story is a testament to what it means to be Boston Strong.”

Stronger is a moving demonstration of how strength of mind and character helped one man stand tall despite the loss of his legs.

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, Jane Murphy, know of any changes. can be reached at 319-351-9079 or murphyjane51@gmail.com.

JANUARY	GREETERS	USHERS	HOSPITALITY
3	JOHN AND PENNY BALMER	MICHAEL GROFF AND ROBIN WOOD-GROFF PATTY AND DALE ROBERTS	PAT GOELDNER MARTHA ANN CRAWFORD
10	LISA BECKMAN AND VAUNE BULGARELLI- BECKMAN	Vernette and Chris Knapp Dick and Mary Lea Kruse	STEVE AND SUE WOLKEN
17	KAI AND AMANDA BOUMA	CARROLL HANSON DONNA HIRST MARGERY HOPPIN STEVE HOSTETLER	KATHY THEDE- REYNOLDS BRUCE REYNOLDS
24	MEGAN CARNES JAMES ROBINSON	MELISSA AND ROGER JENSEN JOHN JOHNSON JANE KINNEY	SHERYL AMOS JIM DUNSMORE
31	BILL DICKINSON ROD MALCOLM	JOHN AND RANDEE FIESELMANN ANN GHABEL SUSIE BROWN	JIM AND KAREN SMITH

JANUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Happy New Year!!! OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 -Church School 9:15 -Worship - 10:15	4 - Organ in Use 9 am—10	5 - Organ in Use 9 am - 10 -Diaconate 7 pm -Mission Board 7 pm	6 - Organ in use 9 am - 10 -Midday prayer/ meditation Noon	7 - Organ in use 9 am - 10	8 - Organ in use 9 am - 10	9 -Citizenship Class 9 am
10 - Epiphany Sunday -Choir 9 am - Church School Racism Here at Home 9:15 - Communion Worship 10:15	11 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	12 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 - Christian Ed Board 7 pm	13 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 -Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon	14 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	15 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	16 - Men's Break- fast - 8 am eastside Mid- Town Restau- rant - Citizenship Class 9 am
17 -Interfaith Celebra- tion of Life -Choir 9 am - Church School Racism Here at Home 9:15 -Worship 10:15 am Chinese School 1:30 pm	18 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	19 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 - U of I Classes begin - Stewardship 4 pm -Membership 5:30 - Trustees 7 pm	20 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 -Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon -FRC Lunch Noon -New Members Class 7 pm	21 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 - Women's Lunch 11:45 at El Bandito's Restaurant	22 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	23 - Citizenship Class 9 am
24 -Choir 9 am - Church School Racism Here at Home 9:15 -Worship 10:15 am Chinese School 1:30 pm	25 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	26 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 -Church Council 7 pm	27 -Organ in use 9 am - 10 - Midday Prayer/ Meditation Noon - FRC Lunch Noon -New Members Class 7 pm	28 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	29 -Organ in use 9 am - 10	30 - Hannah Altmeir Recital 4 pm
31 -Choir 9 am - Church School Racism Here at Home 9:15 -Worship 10:15 am -Annual Meeting After Worship						

Happy Birthday!

4 Bryon Day

7 Kai Bouma

8 Bryan Clemons

9 Ana Tracey
Morgan- Harris

11 Diane Olson

18 Carol Searls
John Fieselmann

19 Connie Parsons

20 Eric Reynolds
Ken Kuntz

21 Barbara McFarland

23 Susie Brown

24 Isaac Chen

27 Holly Whitehead



To You!

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



JANUARY 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

Pastor:	The Rev. William Lovin
Music Director:	Patrick Zubiate
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Director of Church School	Patte Henderson
Office Manager:	Nan Martin
Financial Secretary:	Sharyn Huriaux Reitz
Custodian:	Eddy Ghumm

HOW TO CONTACT US

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

E-mail:

Minister.....uccicrev@uccic.org
Office Manager.....uccicsec@uccic.org
Financial Secretary.....sharynreitz@gmail.com
Music Director..... zubia101@mail.chapman.edu
Dir of Church School.....pattehenderson@gmail.com

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org