



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ

March 2014



Friends in Christ:

This winter has been one of bone-chilling cold, ice, lots of snow, and (surprisingly, on the day I'm writing this) temperatures in the upper 40's. We Iowans have borne this weather with our usual patience and a lot of good hearted humor. We at the Congregational Church have responded to the cold by feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless in both seen and unseen ways. (We seek to follow the way of Jesus who told his followers both, "Let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven," and "When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." It's not always easy, but we keep working at it.)

As winter gives way to spring this month, we enter the season of Lent. And this year we need a different kind of Lent. This season of preparation for the celebration of Easter begins on Wednesday, March 5. We are preparing ourselves to receive the good news of resurrection—and it takes some time to be ready for such news.

This year we need a Lent that calls us not to renunciation but toward learning to receive all the good gifts of God. The *Talmud* tells us, "One will have to give account in the judgment day of every good thing which one might have enjoyed and did not." Lent calls us to consider our mortality and that means that we need a new assessment of all the wonder that comes to us in our days.

This year we need a Lent that reminds us of the strength that we find when we are weak, weary, and worn out. For me that always brings to mind the words of Albert Camus, "In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer. And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there's something stronger – something better, pushing right back." Lent helps us see how we are strong in the broken places.

This year we need a Lent that encourages us as we search for what Flannery O'Connor called, the "green seasons... the spring and summer of God's will." The very word "Lent," comes from a word that means "to lengthen." These are days for seeking the warm mercy of God.

I invite you to take the opportunity that the days of Lent present this year. We will begin this season in a special way on Ash Wednesday, March 5. The Board of Christian Education is renewing an old tradition here and offering a pancake, egg, and sausage dinner in Rockwood Hall from 5:30-6:30 p.m. (It's Shrove Tuesday a day later, but we Congregationalists have never been captive to the church calendar.) A Service for the Beginning of Lent will follow in the sanctuary at 7:00. Our worship will include music and song, scripture and prayer, and the imposition of ashes for those who want them. As in recent years, this is a worship service that can be attended by people of all ages.

Winter gives way to spring. The days lengthen. The light shines brighter. Lent arrives. God calls us together into a new season of life.

Peace,

Bill

SERVING THE CHURCH 2014

March

In The Congregational Church, 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 services, which begin at 10:15 a.m.

If you cannot serve on the assigned date please call someone else on the list to arrange a swap with them.

March	GREETERS	USHERS	HOSPITALITY
2	William Dickenson Rod Malcom	Christine Dickey, Robyn Hepker, Jason & Jeanna Beerends	Robert & Gloria Hanson
9	Ann Aschoff Diane Baculis	Rick & Phyllis Ruppert Paula Forest Ann Ghabel	Kathleen Clark Richard Valentine
16	Judy Doorenbos Margery Hoppin	James & Jacqueline Sangster	Vicki Thomae Fern Weir
23	Amy & Chris Lewis	Derek & Pamela Willard Eugene Buck & Elizabeth Oakes	Bryon & Kathleen Day
30	Gloria Lacina Sandy Lacina	Mark & Carrie Whittaker Bob & Betty Stein	Cynthia Kemp Maile Sagen

**If you have any questions, or have made changes with anyone,
please call the assigned
Deacon of the month—Bruce Reynolds 319-351-0438**



**MEN'S
BREAKFAST**
SATURDAY,
March 15, 2014
8:00 a.m.
Hamburg Inn



WOMEN'S LUNCH

Thursday March 20, 2014
11:45 at Vesta
Please call the Church office to
RSVP

MARCH 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Betty Mather 12:00-2:30 P.M. (Sanctuary) Shelter House Book Sale
2 Worship 10:15 a.m. Communion UIHC Blankets Equal Exchange Coffee Sales Shelter House book sale Chinese School	3 Narcotics Anonymous Noon	4 Mission Board 7:00 p.m. Diaconate 7:00 p.m.	5 Foreign Relations Ash Wednesday Worship 7pm CE Pancake Supper 5:30- 7:00 p.m.	6	7	8 Betty Mather 12:00-2:30 (Sanctuary)
9 Worship 10:15 a.m. First day of Lent Chinese School Sunday's @ 4 Betty Mather	10 Narcotics Anonymous Noon	11	12 Noon Music Meditation	13 Foreign Relations	14	15 Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. @ Hamburg Inn
16 Worship 10:15 a.m. No Adult Ed Chinese School	17 Narcotics Anonymous Noon	18 Trustees Stewardship 7:00 p.m.	19 Noon Music Meditation Richard Bloesch Rehearsal 6-10 (Sanctuary)	20 Women's Lunch 11:45 @ Vesta	21	22
23 Worship 10:15 a.m. No Choir No Rehearsals No Church School Chinese School	24 Narcotics Anonymous Noon	25 Church Council 7:00 p.m.	26 Noon Music Meditation	27 Foreign Relations CE Board Membership 7:00 p.m.	28	29
30 Worship 10:15 a.m. OGHS offering Chinese School	31 Narcotics Anonymous Noon Serving @ Free Lunch Program					



BOOK REVIEWS OUR ADULT LIBRARY



In two recent books, 2 very different people report they went to heaven and back and they describe their experiences.

"Proof of Heaven; a Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife" was written by Eben Alexander, MD, and is a scientist's case for the afterlife. Dr. Alexander was originally one of those scientists who argued that near-death experiences were impossible.

Dr. Alexander reports that he journeyed beyond this world during the time he was in a coma due to a brain illness. In his book he relates his near-death experiences.

"Heaven is for Real" is a little boy's astounding story of his trip to heaven and back. It is the story of 4-year old Colton Burpo as told to his father Todd.

Colton Burpo survived an emergency appendectomy. In the months that followed he talked of visiting heaven and he relayed stories told to him by people he met there. He told of people he did not know from life, events that had happened before he was born, and he reported of meeting long-departed family members.

Dr Eben Alexander has been an academic neurosurgeon for the last 25 years.

The Burpo family are residents of Imperial, Neb. Todd is an ordained minister and pastor of a local church, as well as employee of Chase County Public Schools.

- 1 Sandra Lacina
Benjamin Barker
- 2 Nathan Weir
- 4 Barb Hanson
Ian Wells
- 5 Lyle Tonne
- 6 Melissa Reynolds
- 10 James Jetter
- 12 Thomas Knapp
- 13 Joan Buxton
- 14 Diana Baculis
- 15 Sylvia Woolums
- 16 Jim Dunsmore
Emily Klinefelter
Marcus Byrn
- 17 George Frohwein
- 21 Tim Barker
- 22 Nathaniel Savage
- 23 Isabella Myers
Justine Barker
- 24 Jack Garten
Carrie Whittaker
- 26 Christine Sherman
- 29 Rachel Anderson
- 30 Gary Klinefelter



FREE LUNCH PROGRAM NEWS

Our church served 120 lunches at the new location, 1105 Gilbert Court on Monday, December 30th. We all felt it was especially rewarding to be the first group serving at 1105; we officially christened this beautiful facility! So grateful to the following people who donated and prepared food and/or served and cleaned up on this day:

Bill Dickinson, Marge Hoppin, Rick Ruppert, Edie Roberts, Bruce Reynolds, Ginny & Bryan Clemons, Rande Fieselmann, Pat Goeldner, Vernetta Knapp, Joyce Myer, Katie Hoefler, Martha Ann Crawford, Chuck Connerly, Shelby Stacey, Connie

Parsons, Betty Stein, Kathy Thede-Reynolds, Glenna Cobb, Claire Ashman, Betsy Boyd and Paula Forest.

Thank you all so much. As always, a great group of people who made this event fun!

Our next serving date is Monday, March 31st. A sign-up sheet is posted in Rockwood Hall. Any help you can lend is always so appreciated!

This is an important effort that not only helps people in our community, but also lets them know that our church cares.

Vicki Thomae
Edie Roberts

ASH WEDNESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER AND WORSHIP SERVICE BEGINS THE SEASON OF LENT

On Wednesday, March 5, 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, eggs, sausage, good company, and good conversation. 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.

On Palm Sunday, April 13th, 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.



Our Mission Board



After several weather delays, our Mission Board is off to a good start with the projects for 2014. We are one conduit by which you, our church members, help others. We've received several notes of thanks for donations made on your behalf:

- Church World Service expressed their appreciation for two donations: \$90.00 was given to purchase blankets for those in need through the "Out of the Box: Gifting to Help Others" bazaar and \$2333.68 was given for the Typhoon Haiyan Emergency and Disaster Relief.
- The Free Lunch Program was appreciative of the \$1000.00 given for the purchase of milk in 2014.
- The Community Foundation of Johnson County expressed their thanks for a donation of \$239.50 from the Gerhild Krapf recital held at the church in November. This donation was targeted for the 1105 Project.
- Thanks were sent to us all by the Iowa City Free Medical and Dental Clinic for the donation of \$185.55 from the Homecoming Drink Sale.
- Special Olympics Iowa sent their thanks for the scarves for their athletes, coaches, and volunteers at the 2014 Winter Games.
- Our UCC Conference Office sent their appreciation for the "Rainbow Scarves" knitted by our members to forward to people who pledge to take affirmative action against bullying.

Other contributions were made recently:

—The "Souperbowl" generated \$126.32 through the church plus a \$40.00 direct donation to the Crisis Center Food Pantry.

—At Nathan Willard's ordination, \$278.00 was collected to donate to the Shelter House.

—The Sundays at Four Quad City Choral Arts Concert generated \$296.12 through the church plus a \$95.00 direct donation to the Shelter House.

—The Mission Board sent \$9,750.00 from a previous gift to the Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa.

On Our Calendar

Shelter House Book Sale – March 1 (10:30 AM to 4:30 PM) and March 2 (12:00 PM to 4:00 PM)

Iowa City Marketplace (Sycamore Mall)

Book and media items of all subjects will be available for purchase to help the Shelter House.

Sundays @ Four – Betty Bang Mather, Flute Concert, March 9

The Free Will Donations from this concert will be going to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) (the City of Iowa City will be matching 50% of these donations).

One Great Hour of Sharing – April 13

The collection will be targeted for this organization which makes possible disaster relief, refugee assistance, development aid, and much more. They currently operate in more than 100 countries.



SUNDAYS AT FOUR CONCERT SERIES
J. S. BACH FLUTE RECITAL
FEATURING BETTY BANG MATHER AND FRIENDS
SUNDAY, MARCH 9, AT 4 PM

The sixth season of our popular SUNDAYS AT FOUR concert series will conclude on Sunday, March 9 with a J.S. Bach Flute Recital by Betty Bang Mather, playing traverso and flute.

A distinguished teacher of flute at The University of Iowa for 44 years, Betty Mather will be assisted by Gregory Hand, harpsichord and organ; Connie McCain, traverso; and Marie Von Behren, soprano.

The program will feature music that J. S. Bach composed in Leipzig during the 1730s for the traverso (the Baroque one-keyed flute). Three of the four pieces on the program – a trio sonata, an allemande, and a set of Baroque dances – were presumably written for the Leipzig Collegium Musicum, made up chiefly of university students, which performed regularly at Zimmermann's Coffeehouse in Leipzig. The other piece on the program is the poignant soprano aria with obbligato traverso that stands at the architectural center of the *St. Matthew Passion*, first performed on Good Friday, 1736, at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig where Bach was cantor.

Mather will use a modern copy of a traverso (pitched a whole step lower than modern pitch) for the first part of the program, and a modern flute at modern pitch for the final suite of dances.

The SUNDAYS AT FOUR concerts are presented by our church as an outreach program to the community. A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Johnson County.

JOIN THE CHOIR FOR THE SPRING MUSIC SUNDAY

On Sunday, March 2, rehearsals for the Spring Special Music will begin. On May 4, we're performing Georg Frideric Handel's *O Come Let Us Sing unto the Lord* with orchestra and soloists (Marie von Behren, soprano and James Judd, tenor). Rehearsals are Sundays after worship from 11:30–12:30. All are welcome to join us! This is a great opportunity to sing beautiful music with limited commitment. If interested, please contact John Hughes before March 2 for more information.

MIDWEEK MUSICAL MEDITATIONS BEGIN THIS MONTH

2014 will mark the sixth year of our popular Lenten Musical Meditations series beginning on Wednesday, March 12. The musical meditations will begin at noon and last for approximately 25 minutes. These midday recitals are free and open to the public. Please join us and bring a friend.

March 12 Katyra Moeller, Violin & Ksenia Nosikova, Piano

March 19 Ruth Hurlburt, Organ

March 26 Heidi Hanson, Organ

April 2 Patrick Budelier, Organ

April 9 Marie VonBehren, Soprano-Richard Bloesch, Piano

April 16 LIROS Woodwind Quintet

2014 WORK CAMP

For the past two years, our congregation has partnered with First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Coralville and the Howard Street Christian Church of Colfax for spring and summer work camps. We have all benefited greatly from these relationships and we are cooperating again in 2014. We are in the process of planning at least two work camps. One will be to the **Christian Conference Center near Newton during the week of March 16** (Spring Break) to help Tom Burns with Maintenance or perhaps help finish the new cabins before the 2014 camping season begins. We expect to put some trim in the new cabins, to rebuild the benches in the outdoor worship amphitheater, and to finish the railing on the deck we built 2 years ago. Right now we'd like to know who is going for what days of the March 15 Christian Conference Center Work Camp. There is no registration fee-food and lodging are provided by the Conference Center. The camp is for Junior High through adult aged persons, but accommodations will be made for younger family members to be cared for by their family at the camp.



The second work camp is being planned for **Washington, Illinois**. Washington had 40% of its residences (over 1000) damaged or destroyed by a tornado so we expect to do cleanup and repair. Our work camp is the week of **June 15**.

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 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.

IOWA UCC CONFERENCE WELCOMES KRISTA TIPPETT

Author and Peabody Award winning broadcaster, Krista Tippett will be the keynote speaker at "Recharge 2014, June 6-7 at Iowa State University in Ames. Her address, "The Adventure of Civility," will help Iowa UCCers to recharge our commitment to meaningful and authentic civility in our congregations, communities and beyond. Admission to this presentation is included in the conference registration. Tickets can also be purchased separately. For more information, to register for the entire Recharge event, or to buy tickets, visit the Iowa UCC Conference website at www.ucciaconf.org.

SUMMER JOBS AT PILGRIM HEIGHTS

Are you (or someone you know) looking for a summer job?? Pilgrim Heights, the Iowa UCC Conference Church Camp, would love to hear from you! They have many opportunities available: kitchen staff, life guards, residential camp & day camp staff openings!

For Job Descriptions & Applications please visit: <http://www.pilgrimheights.org/getinvolved/employment>

NEW CHAIRS

There is a new look in the sanctuary. On Wednesday, February 12, new chairs were delivered for the choir. These chairs replace the folding chairs that were "borrowed" from Rockwood Hall on a very regular basis. The purchase of these lovely new chairs was made possible by a gift from the estate of Tom and Dorothy Gray, long-time members of the church and devoted choir members. We are grateful to the Gray family for their generosity, to Doug Parsons for putting us in touch with the company that produces the chairs and to Sharyn Hurieaux Reitz, Cynthia Kemp, John Rauer, Andrea Rauer and Marie Von Behren for unloading the chairs, placing them in the sanctuary and moving the folding chairs downstairs. They look nice and will serve the choir well for many years to come.

IOWA VALLEY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY is scheduling a Light Work Day from 10:00 am-1:00 pm on March 29. Light Work is a program that allows us to assist elderly and disabled homeowners to maintain their homes by helping with tasks such as changing their light bulbs, alarm batteries, and furnace filters. This work is potentially dangerous to elderly and disabled individuals, and by assisting them with these tasks, Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity enables them to stay in their homes and maintain a safe living environment. There are no income requirements to qualify for this assistance. The projects are funded by the Iowa City AM Rotary.

On March 29, groups of volunteers from the Iowa City AM Rotary, City High Interact students and West High 1440 Interact students will visit homes and carry out the program services. The program is free, however, a donation of \$10 is suggested to cover the cost of supplies. If you are in need of this service or if you know of anyone in need of this service, please call Tami at (319)337-8949 to request an application.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

- March 7, 2014
- Guest speaker: Shams Ghoneim, Iowa City and Egypt
- The 2014 World Day of Prayer service will begin at the first sunrise on March 7, 2014, in the Pacific region and, following the earth's orbit, will spread all around the world.

- This year, the women of the WDP Committee of Egypt invite us into a time of worship with the words of the prophet Isaiah, “I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert.” With these words as backdrop, we are invited to learn about Egypt’s history and rich cultural diversity. A young Egyptian woman shares her experience in Tahrir Square—where she has found hope.

Community of Christ

2121 S. Ridge Dr., Coralville

Registration: 9:30 AM, Program: 10:00 AM

The **Knox College Choir** will perform six concerts on a 9-day tour of the Midwest during Knox's spring break, March 17-23. The opening concert of their tour will be **Monday, March 17, 7:30pm, at the First Presbyterian Church**, 2701 Rochester Ave, Iowa City, Iowa. The choir of fifty-two members, directed by Laura Lane, professor of music and director of choral activities at Knox College, will perform a wide variety of songs including sacred works by William Byrd and Norman Dinerstein, contemporary works by Eric Barnum, Gabriel Jackson, Sydney Guillaume and Jaakko Mantjarvi, and folk songs from Haiti, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia and Cuba. The tour program will conclude with the spiritual *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel* arranged by Stacey Gibbs. The Knox College Choir is the premier choral ensemble of the college. Under the direction of Dr. Laura Lane, the choir performs three different programs each year and tours annually, with a European tour every three or four years.

CRC NOTE: JOHN DEAR IN IOWA CITY Internationally known author, peace activist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee (by Archbishop Desmond Tutu), John Dear will be coming to Iowa City on March 27. He will be speaking at 7:00 at the First Baptist Church, 500 North Clinton on the topic of his new book, "The Nonviolent Life". There will be a discussion, book signing and reception following his talk.

Dear suggests that the life of nonviolence requires three simultaneous attributes: being nonviolent toward ourselves, being nonviolent to all people, all creatures and all creation; and joining the global grassroots movement of nonviolence. John Dear has won accolades from other peace lovers such as Daniel Berrigan, Jim Wallis, Richard Rohr and Thich Nhat Hanh.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY Elder Services and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) have a program to use volunteers to transport persons to medical appointments in Johnson County. Many older adults need to be accompanied to doctors, dentists, physical therapy, cardiac rehab, and other medical sites so that they may safely attend these regular appointments and stay healthy! They especially need drivers that are willing to transport clients in rural areas of the county! Questions? Call Sandy Andreasen at 319-338-0515 extension 1012.

INTERFAITH MOMS

Now in its second year, Interfaithful Moms Gathering is a fellowship of mothers representing diverse faith and religious backgrounds. Mothers of many ages are listening, learning, and reflecting on topics relevant to issues of faith and motherhood while establishing transformative relationships. Gatherings incorporate speakers, stories, discussions, and activities that weave together themes of motherhood and faith.

Gatherings are held the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 9:30-11 am at First Presbyterian Church. Current participants include women from several of CRC's member organizations and attendance includes about ten participants at each gathering. For more information, please contact Amanda Edwards at 319-930-0742.

<http://interfaithfulmoms.com> www.facebook.com/InterfaithfulMoms

2014 ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOW-UP

In response to a specific question regarding past and planned donations to the Crisis Center and Common Fund, here are combined amounts from all sources for the years listed. These amounts came from special gifts and fundraising and were/are not included in the General Fund Budget.

2012: Common Fund -	\$3,015	Crisis Center -	\$ 2,500
2013: Common Fund -	\$ 5,929	Crisis Center -	\$ 4,903
2014: Common Fund -	\$10,000	Crisis Center -	\$10,000 (planned)

The Church Council will begin discussing several issues raised in the January 26, 2014 Annual Meeting, including special fund policies and benevolences. The Council will set a date later for a congregational meeting to further explore these topics.

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MARCH 2014 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

OUR CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: **The Rev. William Lovin**

Music Director: John Hughes
Christian Ed Dir. Megan Beardmore
Organist: Bill Crouch
Office Manager: Amy Engrav
Financial Sec. Sharyn Huriaux Reitz
Custodian: Eddy Ghumm

HOW TO CONTACT US

Tuesday—Friday.....8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Phone: 319-337-4301

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