



VOICE OF FAITH

Sunday Worship
10:00 AM

Sunday, December 3rd
Congregational Budget Meeting

Faith United Church of Christ
3307 Mulberry Avenue
Muscatine, IA 52761
Phone: 563-263-5979
Fax: 563-263-0305
www.faihuccmuscatine.com

This meeting after the worship service on Sunday, December 3rd, is to vote on the budget for the 2024 year. Congregational votes will be taken for the 2024 Budget and for HVAC Roof Top Heating and Cooling Units, the cost is estimated around \$55,000. This is extremely important, as our budget reflects our priorities, values, and ultimately our mission. Remember to send in your pledges for the new year!

Church Office Hours
10 a.m. — 4 p.m.
Monday - Friday

FAITH UCC STAFF

Grandpa Remembers
A Christmas Story - December 10th

Pastor Paris White
pastor@faihuccmuscatine.com

Lisa Allen
Office Coordinator
secretary@faihuccmuscatine.com

Pat Mundell
Congregational Life Coordinator
pmundell@machlink.com

Beth Elshoff
Children's Education Coordinator
bethelshoff@machlink.com

Remember the good old days when you snuggled under a blanket to hear your grandparents read the Christmas story? Join us as Grandpa will share the Christmas story with the church for the Children's Christmas Program "Grandpa Remembers" on Sunday, Dec. 10th at 10:00 a.m. worship. We will also be welcoming our Faith Ringer Choir on this Sunday.

2023 Church
Annual Reports

Join us December 10th for some
Christmas Caroling for All!

Annual Meeting
Booklet Reports
Due Dec. 15th

Christian Education has scheduled Faith an opportunity to go to Christmas Caroling on Sunday, Dec. 10th at 2:30 p.m. at Addington Place. Mark your calendar and meet us there! All ages are welcome to come and sing with us! We will then come back to the church for some cocoa, milk and cookies.

If you are on a committee, it is time to start working on the 2023 annual reports. If you need a copy of last year's, let the office know, and we will send it to you.

Christmas Eve Morning
Worship at 10 A.M. on December 24th

Please send your completed summary to Lisa at secretary@faihuccmuscatine.com by Dec. 15th.

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, so we will have our usual 10:00 a.m. Worship with Communion, and a special offering with the Christmas Fund. We will also welcome the Faith Singer Choir, and special music from Judy Wilson and Janelle Wilson-DuSavage.

If you are waiting on a bank statement for yearly totals & need more time to do the summaries, they will be due Jan 5th.

Christmas Eve Evening
Worship at 6:00 P.M. on December 24th

Please call Lisa in the office if you require additional time.

Then join us for our candlelight worship. We will welcome the Faith Youth Krystal Bells and Tammy Ales for special music, the service will begin at 6:00 p.m.

YOU ARE THE CHURCH!

Nomination of Officers & 2024 Committee Volunteers

Are you interested in serving the church?

We have opportunities through the Vestry or one of our many committees, please contact the office, and we will partner you up with a vestry member for a conversation on what it means to be in a leadership role and what requirements are involved. If you already know you'd like to serve, please sign up on the red board in the back of the sanctuary.

You are the Church! [View Descriptions Here](#)



SAVE THE DATE: Our Annual Meeting will be Sunday, Jan 28, 2024



The meeting will start immediately after the Sunday worship service. The agenda will include voting for 2024 Vestry and committee members, voting on the new permanent sign design, and reviewing the 2023 year. The printed annual booklet will be available Sunday, January 14th, and a digital copy emailed to the members of the church. If you are a friend of the church and would like a copy of the digital booklet, please email the church office. After the annual meeting, there will be a potluck meal, please bring a dish and share with the group.

The Pension Boards United Church of Christ, Inc. Christmas Fund Offering on Sunday, Dec. 24th

This is a special collection we take up on Christmas Eve for The Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, Inc. For over 100 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund have been a way to ensure that the light of love and hope will always shine for faithful servants of our church who find themselves facing unforeseen financial needs. On behalf of the hundreds of clergies and lay employees and their families whose lives were touched by your support of last year's offering, we offer our sincere thanks for your generosity! Please write the check to Faith with "The P.B. Cross Fund." in the memo.



Weather Cancellations

Check KWQC TV 6, listing of cancellations at:
Link: <https://www.kwqc.com/weather/closings>

Wednesday Night classes:

If the Muscatine Schools are closed or let out early due to weather on a Wednesday, Christian Education activities at the church will be canceled.

Sunday Worship service and events:

Please use your judgment on driving conditions. If there is a winter weather advisory, please check to see if we will still be holding the event, worship service, or if the office will be closed due to the weather.



FAITH UCC COMMITTEES & GRANT THANK YOU NOTES

Open and Affirming

We should have an online store up and running for the rest of the congregation to make orders soon; no meeting in Dec. Pastor Paris showed members the final version of the tee shirt. She has collected size information from all the youth (toddler through high school) and has placed the first order. The Congregational Grant that was secured covers the cost of all the youth shirts. The printing company, Phelps, is establishing a website, so members will be able to purchase merchandise online going forward. An assortment of items will be offered including hats, quarter-zip long-sleeve tops, reusable shopping bags, and sweatshirts. Some items will be available to order with only the Faith UCC name and rose window if members wish to choose. You can view it here: https://stores.inksoft.com/PhelpsUSA_faithunited



Muscatine County LGBTQIA+ Coalition Background: Progress Muscatine president Jessica Brackett approached Faith UCC and several other local groups who promote full inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community to form a new Muscatine County LGBTQIA+ Coalition. The proposal was brought before the Vestry and support was given. Deb Hagy and Jessica Brackett recently met with the Community Foundation for possible assistance in becoming the fiscal agent for this group. No decision on how funds will be managed has been made at this time. The ONA committee members agreed that the coalition is a work in progress and the nature of our committee's involvement will need to be defined at a later date. ONA will not meet in December. Upcoming opportunity by the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa: <https://www.interfaithallianceiowa.org/get-involved/intersections>

Faith UCC Green Team

We are taking a short break and reflect individually on goals we would like to set for 2024. Green Team is on hiatus until January 2024. We do have 2 radon home testing kits left.



Sign task force

The sign committee wants to bring the concept of the sign to a Congregational ballot vote on Sunday, January 28th. The cost is estimated at \$38-40,000 which includes the cost of a sign, bricklayer, and electrical. Funding will be decided after a vote on the sign design/concept. A mock-up sign will be presented for the January annual meeting.



Grant Funds — Thank You Notes

- Christian Education: After receiving a Congregational Life Grant, we were able to pay our fair share of the funds needed to participate in the ecumenical Christian Summer Day Camp. These funds help with expenses to do background checks on volunteers, as well as allow youth to register for free. Thank you for the ability to collaborate on VBS opportunities that all Muscatine youth can enjoy!
- Outreach: The Grant for the crop walk was donated in October, thank you, Faith!
- The Congregational Care Team: thank you to the Youth Group and Care Team for assembling and mailing 11 envelopes of "supplies and goodies" to our members and friends who are in college with the help of our Congregational Life Grant. It was just a little "pick me up" into their fall routine before testing.
- ONA: The Mindfulness Workshop was a joy for all that attended, the grant helped with services from Allison Castle and alleviated the cost of the color copier paper in the handouts to the attendees during this event. Thank you! We are so grateful for how well-attended this event was for both members and the wider community. We hope to have more seminars in the future.
- ONA T-Shirts: Thanks to our grant, we had enough money to purchase a free t-shirt for all of our youth, from toddlers to high school! Thanks to Lynette for her inspiration and funds to purchase t-shirts for our kids. Kudos to Mylo for her artistic talent in creating the design. Many thanks to Pastor Paris for working with Phelps to set us up! - ONA
- Special Music: We are so grateful that our grant funds have already gone to good use and have been given to Caitlyn Valencia, Gui Foo Chen, Julie Kundel, Lauren Kundel, and Judy Wilson between the months of August and November, Thank you! We will continue to bring you more special music!

FAITH UCC EVENTS

Friendship Circle

Friendship Circle will meet on Thursday, December 7th at 10 a.m. at the church. Co-hostesses are Alice Huss and Pat Mundell. Connie Miller will present the program. All women of the church are invited to attend.



Harmony Guild

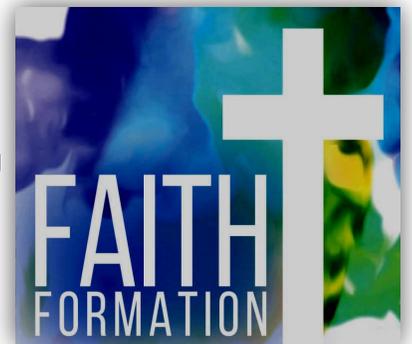
Harmony Guild will hold their December 4th meeting at 6:00 pm at the Rendezvous. Sue Johannsen and Marcy Clausen are co-hostesses. The cost of the meal is \$20, please contact Marcy Clausen or Sue Muir if you wish to attend. All women of the church are invited to attend.

Christian Education News

Youth Group, we will have a bowling party on Dec. 3rd at noon! Youth are encouraged to stay after worship for the budget meeting and exercise the right to vote they were awarded after getting confirmed! We will then head over to the Rose Bowl, lunch will be included.

Confirmation continues to meet and explore the books of the Bible. This month mentors are invited to join the class again on Dec. 13th from 6-7 p.m. We always look forward to having you with us!

Pastor Paris continues to host Bible study on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend when you're able! Please note we will not meet on Dec. 26th or Jan. 2nd due to the Christmas break. Please enjoy your holidays!



There will be NO Christian Education classes for 3-year-olds through confirmation classes on Dec. 20th, Dec. 27th or Jan. 3rd. Enjoy Christmas vacation!!

Congregational Life Grant Thank you Note

The Spooky Soiree hosted by Crossroads on October 19th brought together people with disabilities and their friends and family for an evening of ghoulish fun and dazzling dancing. Costumed partygoers traveled from all over Muscatine and Tipton to fill the Rendezvous and dance the night away.



By informal count, attendance was over 150, with at least three different disability service providers represented. Grant funds awarded by the Open and Affirming committee paid for the perfectly accessible venue with yummy Halloween treats and the DJ services of everyone's favorite Emcee, Tony Tone Loconsole.



Pumpkin and ghost centerpieces and garlands were created by the Crossroads Day Habilitation program to enhance the Spooky Soiree atmosphere. Thank you for your commitment to diversity and inclusion and support of underrepresented populations in Muscatine.

- From all of us at Crossroads

FAITH UCC GRATITUDE

MCSA Room # 5 Shelter Sponsors

Dec. 3 - James & Janet Sichterman, with Alan Arkema
in celebration of the holiday season

Dec. 10 - Larry, Marcy, and Lane Clausen
in honor of Jim & Kathy Trosen

Dec. 17 - A memorial gift in memory of Margaret Heerd

Dec. 24 - Larry, Marcy, and Lane Clausen
in celebration of Christ's Birth

Dec. 31 - Rich Carroll & Jan Collinson
in celebration of a new year!



Card Shark Greeting Cards

These are some of the cards the Card Sharks made in the last couple of months for the teachers at Mulberry School. They will give their students one of these note cards to encourage them in their class. I want to thank all the gals who helped make these cute cards over the last three months. I know the teachers really appreciate them. We will not meet again until February or March, depending on the weather. I am still making all occasional cards and selling them for a dollar. After some expenses, the money will go into the benevolent fund. Don't forget to pick up one of the cards at the back of the overflow room. Make someone's day and let them know that you care and are thinking of them, by sending a card. Blessings, *Linda Hardin*



Thank you notes

- Thanks to Dave Wangberg and Pat Mundell for picking up food from Fareway for the additional food items that went into the Bag of Blessing bags.
- Faith Local Outreach has collected 153 pairs of undies and 64 pairs of sweatpants to be delivered throughout the school district. Thank you to the congregation for your generous giving.
- Thank you, Nancy Wangberg and Harmony Guild, for providing the Muscatine chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace with 8 sets of twin bed sheets.
- Thank you to Nick Sharar for your help in removing the stumps in the Church landscaping. Along with Dan Huss and Dave Wangberg, we are grateful!
- Thank you to Liz Busch and Brook Tompos for being the Altar Committee members helping with the Thanksgiving Sunday communion.

Bag of Blessings

Faith is now sending home 237 food bags each weekend to elementary students in the Muscatine school district. River Bend is providing 200 prepackaged bags and the bags of blessing's account is purchasing the items for the additional 37 bags. The bags are filled and delivered by the students in the special needs classroom at the high school. If you'd like to help with this project please contact Pat Mundell.



Our Traditional Poinsettia Garden



Each year we place poinsettias around the Christmas tree in front of the sanctuary. Please sign your name on the flower signup sheet if you're bringing a poinsettia and please put your name on the plant holder if you want it returned to you.

Food Pantry



We will be collecting some Stocking Stuffer treats and small Gift Sets of food or non-food items like hygiene products. A little extra for the holiday gift-giving for folks who cannot afford the extras!



FAITH UNITED MEMBER AND FRIENDS

Birthday Card Shower

Dec. 1 – Alice Huss
1730 Timberline Drive
Muscatine IA 52761

Dec. 8 – Darlene Vance
(Milestone Birthday: 90!)
2016 Shady Lane
Muscatine IA 52761

Dec. 10 – David Kundel
3213 Anastasia Place
Muscatine IA 52761

Dec. 14 - Marilyn Wilson
2672 Tom Sawyer Rd.
Muscatine IA 52761

Dec. 18 – Bob Sharar
2446 Dewberry Ridge Rd.
Muscatine IA 52761

Dec. 26– Donna Reed
Apt. 415, Addington Place
3515 Diana Queen Dr.
Muscatine IA 52761

Anniversaries

- 1 – Jon & Judy Merritt
- 4 – Nick & Lauren Sharar
- 18 – Don & Pollianna Adams
- 21 – Ben & Sharon Hanssen
- 23 – Dave & Nancy Wangberg
- 30 – Frantz & Mary Silberger

Gift Donation

Faith United would like to give Pastor Paris a gift this Christmas. If you would like to show your appreciation during the holiday, label an envelope "Pastor Gift" and drop it off in the office.
Thank you!

Altar Committee - December
Nancy Wangberg

Birthdays

- 1 – Alice Huss
- 2 – Ann Emerick
- 4 – Cindy Carver
- 4 – Cassandra Diercks
- 8 – Darlene Vance
- 10 – Dave Kundel
- 13 – Nancy Harrison
- 14 – LeeAnn Weggen
- 14 – Marilyn Wilson
- 15 – Denny Taylor
- 17 – John Kleffmann
- 17 – Melissa Schumaker
- 18 – Robert Sharar
- 19 – Mark Butterworth
- 19 – Jim Trosen
- 26 – Donna Reed
- 31 – Kay Creasey

Scrip Gift Card Orders
Due - Monday, Nov. 27th at Noon

Pick up an order form!
Checks can be made out to Faith UCC



Sincere Condolences

- Our sympathy to the family of Sylvia Trumbull, 90, who passed away on Friday, October 27, 2023, at Lutheran Living Senior Campus. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society. Cards can be sent to Butch & Cynthia Trumbull at 2682 Connecticut Yankee CT. Muscatine, IA 52761
- Our sympathy to the family of Keith E. Allchin, 64, who passed away peacefully from inoperable cancer at Premier Estates on November 7, 2023. There will be no services per Mr. Allchin's wishes. Cards can be sent to Steve and Cindy Allchin at 2861 Rolling Meadow Lane, Muscatine Iowa 52751.

Please Keep in Your Prayers

To all who are sick or with injuries, and to their caregivers, Sandra Roth, Myung Sharar, Chad Morgan, Audrey Beckey, Lane Clausen, Nancy Hultquist, Allison Odell, Susan Willis, Joey Merchan, Patricia Fischer, Allen Emerick, Chris Wildasin, Carl Platteter, Norma Stelzner, Ben Hanssen, Cathy Deters, and Bob Murray.



Thank You Notes from Members and Friends

- Thank you to everyone for all the beautiful and thoughtful Birthday Cards. They surely brightened my day and made being another year older easier to take. What a wonderful group of people we have in our church. Sincerely, *Shirley Johnson*.
- Thank you so much to all of you who made my birthday so special this year! I deeply appreciate all of the cards and those who helped celebrate on Sunday the 12th! I'm looking forward to many more birthdays with you! - *Pastor Paris White*
- Thank you for the care package. I appreciate you thinking of me while I am away at college. - *Landon Castle*

VESTRY NOTES FROM MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023

Deacons – Stewardship report with pledge update: currently at \$111,000 with 49 pledges. Last year there were 64 pledging units for \$133,953. There is still time for more pledges to come in and we need to remind people about ‘planned giving’ options too.

Elders – Staff report; resignation of Beth Elshoff. Evaluations completed. Job descriptions were reviewed with each employee so the descriptions can be updated. Christian Education: Beth is stepping down as director beginning Dec. 31st and the committee will work with the elders to update the job description and needs before recruiting for next year. The Elders are clarifying the pastor’s job description and the grant of authority that belongs to the pastor and the grant of authority held by the Vestry. Rev. Jonna Jensen will be consulted, and the Elders hope to have a draft soon.

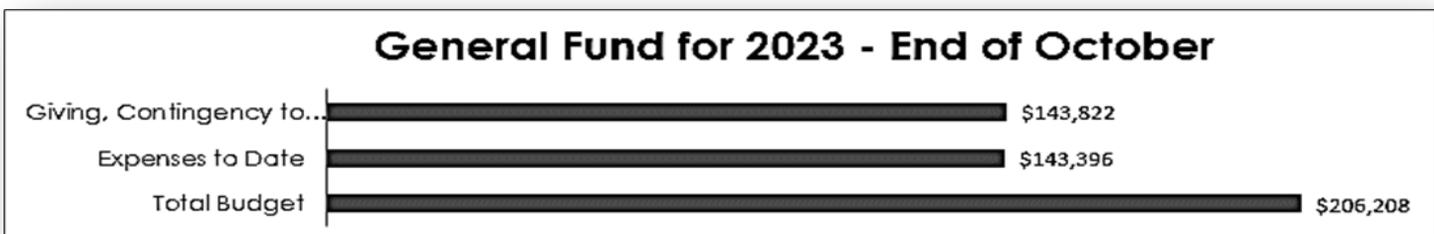
Trustees – The Congregational votes will be taken December 3, 2023, for HVAC (rooftop units; through Kelly’s estimated at \$55,000). Mudjacking finished. Still need to schedule a parsonage walk through. Church cleanup day was Nov. 4th. Mike Hartman did the walk-through and gave us suggestions on fire safety needs. First aid kits have been purchased along with CPR masks. They will be placed in the fellowship area and the basement hallway for easy access. We are considering getting an AED and plan to have training on CPR and AED in the near future. Looking at possible consultant in active shooter safety for the church. Our tornado shelters are the basement hallways and the choir room. They need to be marked as such. A fire extinguisher needs to be purchased for the sacristy and we need to contact MG Fire and Safety to do our annual walkthrough. To note: Exits include the main door, north parking lot, lower door, and the sacristy door. The front doors need to be replaced because they don’t always lock, and it is not ADA approved. Our safety policy/procedures mention a ‘Response Team’ made up of two people on the Vestry who would hear reports of misconduct and disciplinary action. We currently do not have this team set up. 2 people will be appointed in January 2024 from the Vestry. Bell tower update- Dan Huss met with a couple of contractors to get bids. He also contacted Lewis Industrial Services for ideas. It would be fun to get the congregation involved by holding a challenge to submit a possible new design for a new bell tower.

Pastor Paris – Continuing the work on the Church manual/handbook for the whole scope of the church, including job descriptions along with the Elders. Pastor Paris needs a team of 3-4 members to serve on a Pastor-Parish Relations Team. We welcomed six new members in October, and more are interested, they can communicate with Pastor Paris on details. The pastor has done two funerals since last month’s meeting: Carol Lane and Sylvia Trumbull. We have been asked to be part of an ecumenical mid-week Lent soup supper/Lenten discussion – that will be hosted at Wesley Methodist Family Life Center: consensus to participate. Five congregations are already involved and the Clark House and MCSA will be invited. One week would be ours to make soups and Pastor Paris will lead the message and discussion. Monday, December 25th -30 Pastor Paris’s Vacation, Office is closed 25, 26, & 29.

Unfinished Business -Tom Emerick, Scott Warren, and Tim Stelzner met to discuss technology at the church. A long-term plan was developed, and priorities can be identified. The plan includes things like a portable camera, speakers, and two TVs downstairs as well as a new 360-degree PTZ camera for the sanctuary and more. This will take 2-3 years to complete. A New Church Directory with possible new database update (Bill Creasey). We are aiming for an electronic directory plus more. Deb, Bill, and Julie are working to update our bylaws and constitution, especially looking at the Constitution regarding new members and voting.

New Business

The congregational Life Grant thank you notes should be turned in to the office to be shared with the church, via the VOF monthly newsletter, be considerate of deadlines.. Recruit four new vestry members for next year to replace the 4 leaving the vestry at year’s end, plus other elected positions. (Deb, Julie, Dave, and Frantz will have fulfilled their terms) Annual reports coming up! If you are in a committee, please turn in a report to the office. A motion was made to put the kitchen cabinet on Facebook Marketplace. Motion carried.



OUTREACH ADVENT GIVING

Local Outreach Giving Season

The Local Outreach Committee support this Advent season will be for : Emmaus Café, Domestic Abuse Shelter, Diaper Bank, Laundry Love, Bag of Blessings, Diversity Center, and the Local Veterans. Ornament (s) may be picked up with specific items and returned to the church by December 30th. Another option is to make a monetary donation by filling out a form and marking what project you would like to support this year. We also encourage members and friends to support the MCSA room by signing up to donate \$25 per Sunday in 2024.



There will be forms available to fill out during our Advent season for this. Click on this Link for our online outreach descriptions [Here](#).

Outreach Advent Gift Giving



Please fill out this form and return it with your check written out to Faith UCC and indicate "Christmas Giving Fund" on the memo line.

Name: _____ **Pledge#:** _____

Total Giving (amount on the check): \$ _____ **Check #:** _____

Please indicate the Christmas Giving Fund and Amount you would like to go towards the missions of your choice: (you may support more than one).

Emmaus Café	\$ _____	Domestic Abuse Shelter	\$ _____
The Diaper Bank	\$ _____	Veterans Special Needs	\$ _____
Laundry Love	\$ _____	Bag of Blessings	\$ _____
Diversity Center	\$ _____	Other: _____	\$ _____

Thank you for supporting this important local community mission.

MCSA #5 Sponsorship for 2024!



Watch for the email from "Signup Genius" with the 2024 calendar Year... or you may sign up on the clipboard in the overflow area.

After signing up for the date of your choice, please use this form to add who you would like to honor, celebrate, or in memory of. Then write the check to Faith UCC and in the memo, add MCSA with the date you picked.

MCSA #5 (\$25 per Sunday) \$ _____ **Sunday Date for 2024:** _____

Sponsor's Name: _____ **Pledge #** _____

In memory/honor of: _____

Thank you for supporting this important local community mission.



VOF DECEMBER
Faith United
 Church of Christ
 3307 Mulberry Avenue
 Muscatine, Iowa 52761



*Happy Holidays
 From Faith UCC*