



Faith
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

JANUARY 2022

VOICE OF FAITH

Sunday Worship
10:00 AM

Faith United Church of Christ

3307 Mulberry Avenue
Muscatine, IA 52761
Phone: 563-263-5979
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www.faihuccmuscatine.com

FAITH UCC STAFF

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Christmas Pageant 2021

A BIG THANK YOU to the following people who helped pull off our Christmas pageant and program: Sharon Hanssen who made our new Mary costume; Dan Huss who helped set up the manger backdrop and then took it down after the program with Frantz Silberger; Jan Collinson for the Christmas pencils the kids got and for the Candy canes and lesson; Frantz Silberger for taking pictures to put in the newsletter and Mary Silberger for helping dress the cast and for all the other things she would have done in case I wasn't there; Althea, Naomi, McKenna, Stella, Cason, and the Fab 4 (Sarah Harvey, Janelle Wilson-DuSavage, Caleen and Pat Pagel) for the musical pieces; the confirmation class and Nancy Wangberg who were readers, narrators and MC's; Lisa Allen who did and redid the scripts and bulletins as changes occurred; and to all the participants who put on costumes when asked to participate (as long as they didn't have to SAY anything). It takes a VILLAGE!!!! - *Beth Elshoff*



MONTHLY MUSINGS FROM PASTOR RYAN

Paul ends his letter to the church in Corinth with these words, “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus” (I Corinthians 16:23-24). He has a way of saying goodbye without actually saying goodbye. Instead, he marks his separation from the church by marking the ever-present and always connecting grace and love of God through Christ Jesus. Did Paul just not like saying goodbye, or was his faith that deep and strong? We assume the latter, but I, for one, must admit that I do not like goodbyes.

After serving for over five years as your pastor, goodbye hardly seems worthy of everything I want to say and share with all of you in these last few weeks. W.S. Merwin, a poet I often turn to for counsel in times such as these when my own words fail, writes:

Only humans believe
 there is a word for goodbye
 we have one in every language
 one of the first words we learn
 it is made out of greeting
 but they are going away
 the raised hand waving
 the face the person the place
 the animal the day
 leaving the word behind
 and what it was meant to say

As your pastor it has been my charge to say something—to preach the Gospel—sometimes using words and sometimes by sitting, listening, learning, helping, and journeying with each of you on your own faith journeys. Now that my departure from you draws closer, I am moved to say something, something more than just goodbye, and yet, as Merwin observes, the word I leave behind is only but a fragment of all I mean to say. Thus, I will take a cue from the Apostle Paul over these next few weeks and say, “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.”

All of which is to say that as much as I dislike saying goodbye, I know and trust that all of you will continue to be held and shaped by God’s grace. All of you will be held and renewed by the love of Christ. All of you, I know and trust, will continue to be called together by the Spirit as a church of compassion, welcome, and generosity. All of you, together, as the body of Christ at the intersection of Mulberry and Houser, will find a new pastor to sojourn and share the Good News with—in both word and deed. In the words of Julian of Norwich, “All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.” And while even all that doesn’t quite capture what it is I would like to say to all of you, it does capture something of what it means in the weeks ahead when I seek to find the words to say, goodbye, thank you, may the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

- Pastor Ryan Downing

Special Offering – Blanket Sunday January 9, 2022

We can be our strongest, our kindest, and our most Christ-like when we are connected. Think of the CWS Blanket that the children pass around the church every year on Blanket Sunday. Think of all the individual pieces of thread and wool being pulled together to cover someone with warmth! Without any one of those pieces - without you! - the story would not be the same. The blankets we help to purchase are distributed throughout the world helping families who are going through hard times. Help cover those in need again this year. Please have your check written out to Faith UCC and in the memo write Blanket Sunday.



Vestry Minutes from Monday, December 6, 2021

Present: Attending: Mark Butterworth, Bill Creasey, John Elshoff, Alice Ganzley, Deb Hagy, Sue Johannsen, Julie Kundel, Jon Merritt, Mark Odell, Melissa Schumaker, Rich Carroll, Scott Warren, and Pastor Ryan. Not attending: Tim Stelzner

Treasurer’s Report – November Budget, additional money \$877.00 needed to pay for the roof from the Wendell Day Fund, Motion carried. Accepted the treasurer’s report. Motion carried.

Deacons’ Report – Stewardship Update: 70 pledges have been received. Deacons made calls. Mark Butterworth suggested that we follow up with those who are not attending/pledging.

Elders’ Report – Safe Church Policy and Create Employee Handbook The Elders report that progress is being made on revising the Safe Church Policy and Creating an Employee Handbook. The Elders hope to bring policies to the Vestry in January.

Trustees’ Report – Snow removal, hedges, parking lot repairs, updated router. The hedges were cut down. Because the live stream did not work on Nov. 28, Scott Warren will investigate a new router.

Pastor’s Report – Open and Affirming team responded to a move to ban books in Muscatine Community School District. A statement was created and read. A router may be needed. Church attendance: Sept. 5-Nov.7 average was 46 people in person. Nov. 7 – Dec 5 averaged 48 in attendance. The pastor will miss the confirmation class. Kim Warren will take the class in the future. The Christmas program will be on Dec. 19. On behalf of Pastor’s mom, thanks were shared for sending cards in response to surgery. Pastor’s mother-in-law has multiple myeloma. The Vestry was asked to think of one person to contact to be an usher or greeter.

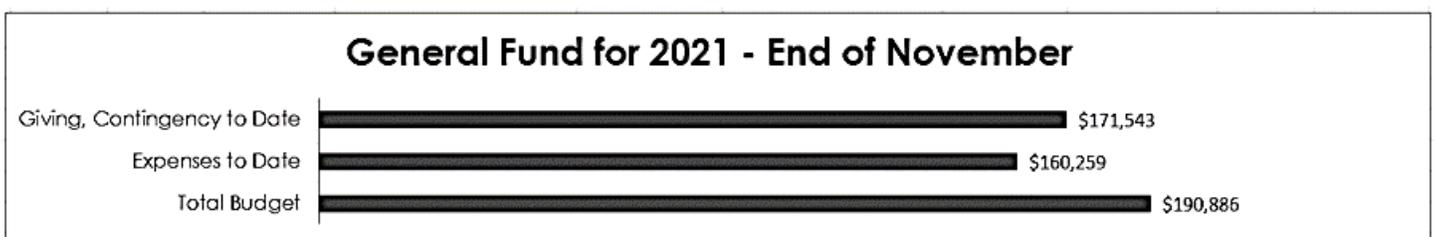
Unfinished Business

- Building/Public Health Policies Review (Nursery, congregational singing, masks, etc.) Sue Johannsen made a motion to return to masking. Second by Bill Creasey. The discussion revolved around families who may come to Christmas Eve service when some are not vaccinated. Motion carried. Bill Creasey made a motion to allow singing softly with masks. Second by Deb Hagy. Motion carried.
- Capital Improvement Planning Committee Updates – Jon Merritt reported that he has the dimensions and has talked to Carpet One. Jon suggested putting it on hold considering Pastor’s leaving. Another option is to repair the high traffic areas. The stairs are a safety hazard.
- Insurance Board policy 2022 renewal , Mark Butterworth recommended keeping what we have.
- Annual meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2022. Preparation is in place.

New Business

- Finalizing 2022 Budget – The budget was distributed with the pledge information. Rich said that due to the pandemic we have underspent the budget by about \$1500. Having a possible \$17,000 from the Endowment built into the budget provides a contingency to make the budget. Alice Ganzley made a motion to finalize the budget. Second by Julie Kundel. Motion carried.
- 2022 Vestry nominations. Mark Odell asked people to contact others to fill open seats. Alice Huss said she would serve on Vestry.
- Annual Reports due Dec. 15th reports with the end of year bank totals due by Jan 5th.
- Communion - December 24th, servers needed: Julie Kundel and Deb Hagy volunteered
- January 2nd – Reschedule Communion? The pastor will be away. Communion on Jan. 9th.
- Annual Meeting Sunday, January 30th, 2022.
- Deb Hagy requested funds for families for Christmas. Mark Odell made a motion to give remaining Pastoral Emergency funds to Deb. Second by Melissa Schumaker. Motion carried.
- Pastoral Transition Updates and Review – Interim/Search and Call: Mark Butterworth had a positive response from Rev. Barb Muhs. Jon Merritt called Dick Nye and Jim Trosen. Jim said to keep in touch with the office of the Iowa Conference. Some expressed interest in someone trained as an Interim pastor, and we learned that Rev. Muhs has 2/3 of the training. Mark Odell will talk to Rev. Sarah to learn who might be available in the area as trained interims. Bill Creasey asked that the congregation be consulted and included in the decision-making. Some want to meet with Rev. Sarah in Dec. to learn the process of finding an interim.

Next Meeting on January 10, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.



Faith United Events

Congregational Budget Approval Meeting December 12, 2021

Moderator Scott Ingstad called the meeting to order at 10:54 am. A requirement of ten percent of the membership was confirmed for a quorum. Rich Carroll, Treasurer reviewed the Budget and Contingency Fund, p 2. There was a question about funding the interim and pastoral search. Frantz Silberger made a motion to approve the Budget and Contingency Fund. Second by Tom Emerick. Motion carried. Mark Odell, Vestry President proposed parking lot repairs and improvement expenditure. Connie Miller made a motion to approve the parking lot expenditure. Second by Frantz Silberger. Motion carried. Mark Odell gave an update on the Pastoral Transition Process. There was no other business that came before the congregation. The meeting was adjourned. Respectfully submitted, Sue Johannsen, Vestry Secretary

Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 30, 2022

Our annual meeting to elect new Vestry members will be at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 30, 2022.

Annual Meeting Booklet

This year we will be emailing the booklet to our members, if you are not a member and would like a copy emailed to you let the office know by emailing Lisa at secretary@faithuccmuscatine.com. If you would like a hard copy, stop by the office to pick one up, they should be ready and available on January 24th. They will be available on Sunday, January 30th for the meeting as well.

Faith UCC Congregational Life Grant Applications

Grant requests must be submitted to the church office no later than the last day in February. Congregational Life Grants from the Endowment Fund may be used for the following purposes for the programs of Faith United Church of Christ of Muscatine, Iowa, including: Education, Faith Formation, Fellowship, Faith Scholarships, Grants for members of Faith UCC, Faith Outreach - local and wider-church benevolence, spiritual, & mission interests, and for capital improvements (i.e., buildings & grounds) of Faith United of Muscatine.

The nomination of Officers for the year 2022 and Committee Volunteers

YOU ARE THE CHURCH! If you are interested in being a part of the church through the vestry or one of our many committees, please contact Mark Odell or Pastor Ryan by January 9th.

Nominating Committee Listing

Christmas Outreach Giving for Advent 2021

Bag of Blessings:	\$3,165.00	
Emmaus Café:	\$ 135.00	
Domestic Abuse Shelter:	\$ 140.00	plus (115 Gift Items) and (\$120.00 in Gift Cards)
Local Veteran Needs:	\$ 250.00	
Outreach Gifts:	\$ 130.00	
MCSA Room #5:	\$ 750.00	
Muscatine Food Pantry:	\$ 120.00	plus 80 food items
Total Advent Giving:	\$4,690.00	



The outreach committee would like to extend a warm thank you for your donations to the many local missions you supported this year.

Faith United Church Community

Weekly Church Event Calendar

Wednesday

4:15 p. m. - Centering Prayer
 6:00 p. m. - C.E. Youth Class
 7:00 p. m. - Adult Forum Class

Sunday

10:00 a.m. - Sunday morning worship
 11:00 a. m. - Adult Forum Class
 11:00 a. m. - Confirmation Class



Advent Decorations January 9th

The taking down of Christmas decorations after the Worship service.

Please join us so the task is light, and the work is done swiftly.

Green Team Report

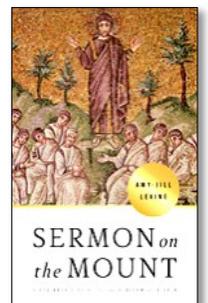


Let there be light! We all know this phrase and realize nature's power around us. The Green Team's goal was to act on our love creation, one of the Three Great Loves campaign. To assist us, we joined Iowa Interfaith Power and Light, a nonprofit that directs faith communities to use less energy and reduce their carbon footprint. Cool Congregations is a program offered by Iowa Interfaith Power and Light to help churches like ours. Cool Congregations challenges churches to act to reduce energy usage. One of the first actions the Green Team took was to inventory the lights everywhere in the church. Then, we asked Van Meter to help us select fluorescent lights to meet our needs. The Vestry approved the cost of replacement in November 2021 but asked the committee to start with a couple of rooms to make sure we liked the changes. Changing lights bulbs to LEDs is not new. The replacement was started several years ago in the sanctuary and offices. Our current goal is to install LEDs throughout the church. There are benefits. First, LEDs use less energy which will reduce our power bill, and LEDs last longer than incandescent and fluorescent bulbs. Using bulbs that last longer will ultimately save our church from maintenance and replacement costs.

The next time you need to replace a light bulb, please consider an LED at your home. So, let there be light on ways to love creation by reducing energy, maintenance, and replacement costs.
 - Sue Johannsen

Wednesday Night Adult Forum

On January 5th we will start a new book. In *Sermon on the Mount*, Dr. Amy-Jill Levine takes a detailed and colorful overview of Matthew 5-7, collectively known as Jesus's Sermon on the Mount. Through Dr. Levine's engaging method of biblical interpretation, listeners will come away with a solid understanding of the Sermon on the Mount in its full historical and theological context. Join us on our zoom meeting discussions, if you would like to receive the email reminders, email the church office.



Friendship Circle

There will be NO Friendship Circle meeting in January. Look for the February newsletter for information about our next meeting on Feb. 3rd.

Ways to Continue Supporting the Work of the Church:

The church is more than just a building. We the people are the church, and we will continue to find ways to be a community that shares in the love of Christ together. To help maintain all that we do, your monetary offerings to the church are welcome.

Our options for giving currently are:

- Drop off your envelopes to the locked mailbox by the front door, in Box 3307
- Send in the mail to 3307 Mulberry, Muscatine Iowa 52761.
- Talk with your bank to set up a direct payment to the church.
- Use our website link for the church's PayPal, transfer charges apply.

Thank you for your generosity.

Thank You to Our Members & Friends

- Thanks to Jim Burr, Nancy Wangberg and Pat Mundell for handing out meals at Emmaus Cafe on Sunday, December 19th.
- Thanks to Sharon Hanssen for the beautiful wreath on display.
- Thank you to everyone for decorating the Sanctuary during the Advent season.
- Thank you for contributing to the November 22nd special offering for the Thank Offering that helps community service projects of the local churches that are members of the association of the UCC of the Iowa Conference. We collected \$355.00 for this ministry.
- Special Christmas Offering for Veterans of the cross. On behalf of the hundreds of clergy and lay employees and their families whose lives were touched by your support of last year's Christmas Fund Offering, we collected \$500.00.
- Thank you to all the vestry members we had in 2021, for all the leadership you showed during this past year.
- Thank you to everyone at Faith for such a kind Christmas gift this year! - *Pastor Ryan, Jen, Althea, and Naomi.*
- Thank you for the many gifts that were given to the staff at Faith, we are grateful for your kindness and thoughtfulness during the holiday.
- Thank you to Beth Elshoff and Pat Mundell for delivering all the Advent programs and the gifts that the children made for our members and friends of the church this fall.
- Thank you to all the participants in our no rehearsal Christmas pageant! Judy Wilson as our accompanist, Naomi & Althea Downing-Sherer, Children's bell Choir, Jan Collinson, Preschool CE class, McKenna Schumaker, Stella Warren, Cason Ales, Tammy Ales, the Fab Four, Nancy Wangberg, Luke Ales, Claire Schumaker, Grace Kreitner, Brynn Castle, Katie Hanssen, Scott Warren, Paul Ales, Abe Ales, Skyler Plemmons, Tim Stelzner, Scott Ingstad, Mark Hagy, Kristin Ales, Parker Welsch, Lauren Plemmons, Mary Silberger, and Beth Elshoff, and everyone else that participated in the production.
- Thank you to Lauren Kundel, Judy Wilson, and Janelle Wilson-DuSavage for their musical talents on the Christmas Eve Service.
- Thank you to our Sunday Morning Worship Volunteers in December: Julie Emerick, Linda Hardin, Mark Odell, Alice Ganzley, Tim Stelzner, Pat Mundell, Dave & Nancy Wangberg, Deb Hagy, and all of the families that served as our Advent acolytes.



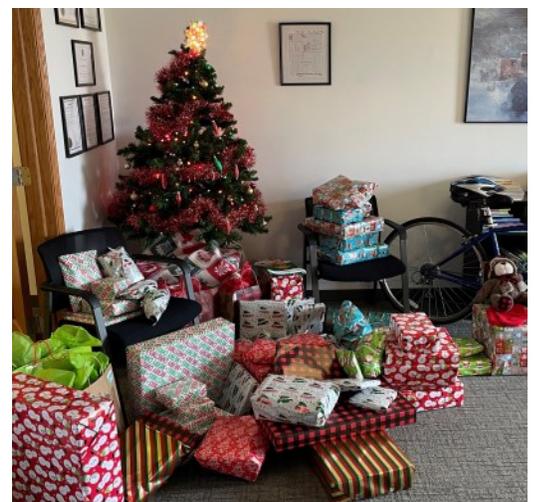
Thank you Faith!

Thanks to everyone in my Faith Family for the generous cash donation to provide Christmas gifts for the families that my agency serves.

Families First Counseling Services.

With your generous donation, we were able to shop for and provide gifts for over thirty children in 16 different families who live in Muscatine. Also thank you to Church members who provided items to give to our families as well.

My staff also asked that I express their appreciation for allowing them to shop for their clients (children) who are most in need. Being able to provide gifts for these children not only brings delight to the children but to my workers as well. I truly consider myself blessed to be part of such a generous caring congregation. - *Deb Hagy*



FAITH UNITED MEMBERS & FRIENDS

January Birthday Card Shower

January 5th - Michael Morgan
3301 Anastasia Pl
Muscatine IA 52761

January 14th - Watson Hays
4825 Grist Mill Circle
Newport Richey FL 34655

January 17th - Sandra Roth
Addington Pl., Apt. 207
3515 Diana Queen Dr.
Muscatine IA 52761

January 20th - Sharon Hanssen
2202 Oak Valley Drive
Muscatine IA 52761

January 23rd - Donald Frost
13559 Avista Dr.
Tampa FL 33624

January 30th - Diane Littrel
2446 Lucas Road
Muscatine, IA 52761

January Birthdays

- 3 – Matt Weggen
- 4 – Pat Burnette
- 10 – Marcie Hanssen
- 12 – Windy Welsch
- 13 – Chris Rada
- 14 – Rich Carroll
- 14 – Tory Hunt
- 15 – Carla Reynolds
- 17 – Dustin Plemmons
- 17 – Sandra Roth
- 18 – Sue Smith
- 20 – Sharon Hanssen
- 23 – Tonya Estabrook
- 23 – Don Frost
- 23 – Mike Harrison
- 23 – Gary Lewis
- 23 – Steve Rada
- 24 – Alec Chartier
- 26 – Todd Schneider
- 30 – Diane Littrel

January Anniversaries

18 – Justin & Lena Botkin

Please Keep In Your Prayers

All who are sick or with injuries, and all their caregivers. Lane Clausen, Alan Arkema, Margaret Heerd, Kelly Ingstad, Robert Meyer, Keith & Nancy Stych, Bernard & Sandra Roth, Myung Sharar, Harold Wilson, Mary Downing, Jim Elshoff, Cory Tomlin, Carla Roozing, Chad Morgan, Phil Carver, Mary Sherer, Julie Kundel, and Chris Lary.

Our staff member Chris Lary is in the hospital, cards can be sent to 3309 Mulberry Ave. Muscatine. - Mark Odell, Vestry President

Thank you notes from:

- Thank you for all my birthday cards I received from my Faith family. Don't know what Harvey & I would do without our Faith Family. All are much appreciated. - Darlene Vance
- Thank you for all the beautiful birthday cards, especially at such a busy time of the year! I truly enjoyed and appreciated each one. - Donna Reed
- Dear Friends, we would like to take a moment to thank you for your donation contribution to the Food Pantry for \$3,584.00. We are pleased to accept your contribution and will use it toward food for those in need in Muscatine County. . - Nik Horn, MCSA.

Condolences

- To Beth and John Elshoff, on the death of Beth's father Clifford Sams on Monday, December 20th in Marshalltown IA. Cards can be sent to Beth and her family at 106 Lord Avenue, Muscatine IA 52761.
- To Mark Butterworth, on the death of his Mother-In-Law Therese (Tee) Barraud Beckey, 99, of Muscatine, (Sharon Butterworths, mother) passed away on Thursday, December 23. Ralph J. Wittich-Riley-Freers stated that memorials can be made to UnityPoint Hospice or the USO (United Services Organizations). Cards can be sent to Mark Butterworth and his family at 1715 Pearlview Court, Muscatine IA 52761.

MCSA Sponsors for January 2022

- Jan 2 - Doug & Susan Krieger in Celebration of a New year of hope
- Jan 9 - Mark & Mary Odell in memory of Dick Maeglin
- Jan 16 - William & Kay Creasey in memory of Daryl Wenger
- Jan 16 - Dave & Margie Kundel in memory of Trace Kundel
- Jan 23 - Dave & Nancy Wangberg in celebration of Faith Friends
- Jan 23 - Pat Mundell, to the Ryan Downing family
for their presence with us these last five years.
- Jan 30 - Jim & Kathy Trosen in honor of friends at Faith UCC



To sign up for **2022**
Go [Here](#).
Pick the Sunday of your choice, and make the check out to Faith, and in the memo add MCSA \$25.00 for each Sunday,



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

JANUARY 2022



Notice:

Out of an abundance of caution and concern for the winter storm and the extreme cold, our Sunday worship services for this Sunday, January 2, 2022, will be canceled. We expect to be back at worship on Sunday, January 9th.

- Mark Odell, Vestry President

Faith United Church of Christ Open and Affirming Statement

We the members of Faith United Church of Christ declare ourselves to be an open and affirming church.

We affirm all people are individuals of sacred worth created in the image of God.

We embrace and celebrate the diversity of the human family and God's unconditional love for ALL, including but not limited to people of all ages, races, ethnicities, cultures, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, socio-economic conditions, physical, mental and emotional abilities, faith backgrounds, nationalities, marital status, languages, and education levels.

We invite and encourage all persons into full participation by sharing in the life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of membership in our Faith community.

We welcome all to journey together in faith toward greater understanding, compassion and mutual respect.

We believe that in meeting each other in Christian love, God's spirit frees us all to give, to grow, to be ourselves, because, **"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE."**

- adopted April 7, 2019



MCSA Support A Room

For a \$25.00 donation you can sponsor a room for someone at the local shelter. You may pick a Sunday of your choice. Talk to Lisa in the Church office for available Sundays in 2022. Please write the check out to Faith UCC, and in the memo you may add MCSA donation.

Thank you for helping with this Outreach fund while honoring someone you love, celebrate, or for in memory of. We will include your name and your reason to honor a special person or event in the weekly update on the Sunday of your choice.

A SPECIAL OFFERING FOR EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FUTURE MINISTERS

FUNDING FUTURE LEADERSHIP

Special Offering in February

Seminarians are taking big financial risks, so they can serve the needs of the church. We as a church can help them. If you would like to give, please make your check out to Faith U. C. C with FFLS in the memo. Mail or drop it off at the office at 3307 Mulberry Ave. Muscatine IA 52761. Thank you.