

**Congregational  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

# *The Open Door*

## August 2017

### Who We Are

We are a community of God's beloved dedicated to **following** the teachings of Jesus as we live our faith by **loving** and **serving** all of God's creation and **striving** for justice and peace throughout our community, our nation, and the world.

### Inside This Issue

#### Pastor Petersen's Perspective: On Being Grateful

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As you may know, I have experienced a couple of dramatic changes in my life over the past couple of months. Martin and I welcomed our son, Jabali, into our lives at the end of May. And because that wasn't enough change for us to handle at one time, we moved into a new house at the beginning of July (quite an experience with a newborn as you might have guessed!). Both of these experiences have come with many joys and challenges, and I would say that the joys have far outweighed the challenges and even provided energy and motivation to face any challenges or hardships that have come our way.

One of the greatest joys has been the vast array of support I have been offered by so many of you here at Congregational UCC. Whether it was offering to help us move; throwing some money in the pool to help pay for professional movers when it was announced that Church Council supported hiring a moving company for us; or running me to Des Moines on a moment's notice to buy split queen-size box springs and then helping to physically carrying them up the stairs because the regular ones wouldn't fit and guests were coming the next day, I thank you for your support. Whether it was stopping by to make sure the move went off without a hitch; coming to the house three Saturdays in a row to look at various house issues; or packing up household and lawn-care items and delivering them to our doorstep all to help a couple of first-time homeowners get their bearings and settle in, I thank you for your support. Or, whether you gifted our little one with a book or clothes or other baby essentials; offered to babysit should we need time to pack or just get out of the house; or sent a card with a lovely note to congratulate and encourage us as new parents, I thank you for your support. All of the support I have received, indeed that my family has received, from you all has been an incredible gift for which I will be forever grateful.

While I am deeply thankful for all of the support mentioned above, this is probably the piece for which I have been most thankful: thank you for respecting my need to be away. The time I have had to spend with Jabali and Martin as we



come together as a new family and begin the work of transforming our new house into our home has been invaluable. After only a few weeks, our house does feel like home even as we continue to discover additional “joys” of homeownership. And, my goodness, how Jabali has grown! He has undergone far greater a transformation than this house ever will as he has developed from a newborn in complete shock to being in this outside world to a curious, active, playful little guy who “talks,” smiles, and even reads (Ok, I’m pretty sure he’s more interested in the bright colors of the pictures than the simple story, but it’s still amazing!). The time I’ve had away from my pastoral responsibilities has given me the opportunity to begin discovering who I am in this new role as the mama of this beautiful little boy as well as settling in to a new home for us all, and for that I am truly thankful.

Friends, as I return to my role as pastor here at Congregational UCC, I do so with much gratitude. Thank you, thank you, thank you for all of your support. And I thank you in advance for your continued prayers and your patience as I figure out how to faithfully live out both of these callings to serve as your pastor and as Jabali’s mama. Once again, you have shown me how a Christian community can live out its faith, and I thank God that I have the joy and privilege of being a part of this community as your pastor. May God bless you all as you have so graciously blessed me.

## ... Worship



### Worship with First Presbyterian Church

On **Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**, we will have the joy and pleasure of welcoming members of Newton’s First Presbyterian Church in worship and fellowship in our church building. Rev. Petersen will lead this joint service of worship. Please plan to join us as we continue to connect with the wider body of Christ and return the welcome and hospitality First Presbyterian showed us on Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Worship Downtown

On **Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>**, we will join together in worship and fellowship with five neighboring downtown congregations for our Third Annual Worship Downtown. Worship will begin **at 10:00am** and take place on N 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave E facing E 2<sup>nd</sup> St N (the street between our building and First United Methodist Church). Refreshments will be served in the parking lot of First United Methodist Church following the service. Bring a lawn chair to sit on and don’t forget your sunscreen! We are looking for more canopies to provide some shade for the service and refreshment time (the Methodists cut down the trees that had provided some shade in the past years); please contact Rev. Petersen if you have one to contribute.

Once again, members and friends of the participating congregations are invited and encouraged to join together to sing as a choir during the service. Details regarding rehearsals will be shared as this information becomes available. The offering received will again be donated to Jasper County Elderly Nutrition (please make checks payable to “Jasper County Elderly Nutrition”). If you would like your offering to go to our congregation, please make your check out to UCC and/or write UCC on your offering envelope. Any undesignated funds will be given to Jasper County Elderly Nutrition.

Cake will be provided for all to enjoy during refreshment time, and each congregation is being asked to recruit one volunteer (or a couple) to provide additional refreshments (veggies, fruit, cheese and crackers, etc.). Please contact Rev. Petersen if you are interested in volunteering. Drinks will be provided by First United Methodist, and The Salvation Army will provide all of the paper goods and plastic ware.

Please spread the word as all are welcome to attend. And, of course, mark your calendars and plan to join in this time of worship and fellowship with our siblings in faith!



### Bible Study

Our weekly Bible study has been on a break for the summer and will begin again in September. More information will be made available as the start date approaches.



### Morning Circle

The next meeting of *Morning Circle* will be **Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am** with Donna McCoy as hostess and April Faidley giving devotions. The group is studying the book "Jesus: The Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary" by author Marcus J. Borg. During this meeting we will be studying Chapter 7 of the book.

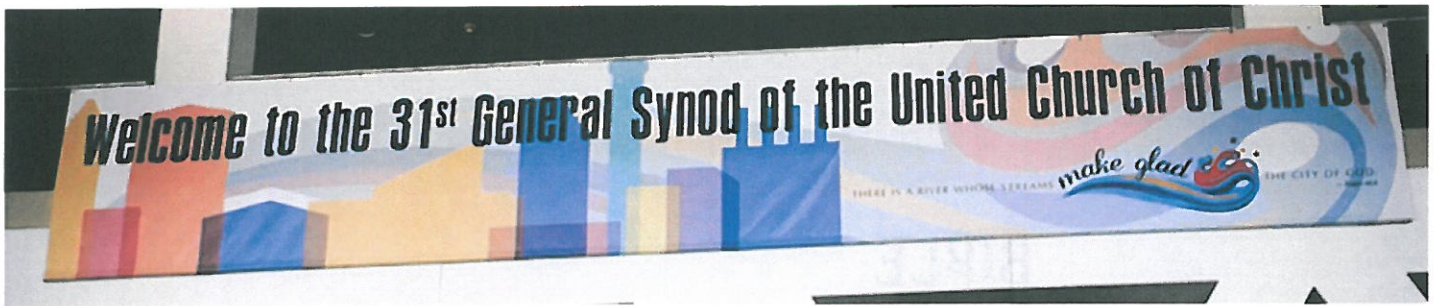
All are welcome to join us as we deepen our understanding of who Jesus was and what that means for us as people of faith seeking to follow in Jesus' way. Want to participate? Join us on August 16<sup>th</sup> in the Parish House.

### Centering Prayer

You are invited to gather each Wednesday evening for a time of Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. It is simply a wordless, trusting opening of one's self to the divine presence. The group will meet in the **Chapel**, just off of the Sanctuary, on **Wednesdays, 5:15pm-5:45pm**. Please contact April Faidley with any questions.







## UCC General Synod Recap

The 31<sup>st</sup> General Synod of the United Church of Christ convened in Baltimore, Maryland June 30<sup>th</sup> through July 4<sup>th</sup>. About 2500 UCCers came together from all over the nation to spend time in prayer, study, and conversation while walking together in the ways of Christ. The General Synod gathers every two years to “Be the Church.” In addition to worshipping and learning together, those in attendance also take action – marching together for justice, approving budgets and church officers, and passing resolutions. Now, in the UCC individual congregations make their own decisions about how to live their lives together, so the General Synod speaks TO the Church instead of FOR the Church. Continue reading to listen for the things the 31<sup>st</sup> General Synod of the UCC is saying to us here in Newton, and visit [ucc.org](http://ucc.org) for more news and information. (Many thanks to Rev. Caela Simmons Wood, pastor of First Congregational UCC in Manhattan, Kansas and a fellow colleague of Rev. Petersen’s in the Next Generation Leadership Initiative for this review as Rev. Petersen was unable to attend Synod due to the conflict with her parental leave.)

### **Three Great Loves highlighted at the General Synod**

#### **Love of Neighbor**

- The General Synod passed a resolution demanding living wages for all.
- Synod affirmed that we are an Immigrant Welcoming Church.
- Those gathered participated in powerful worship that lifted up our mutual interdependence.

#### **Love of Creation**

- Aaron Mair, the first black president of the Sierra Club, was one of the keynote speakers. He credited the 30-year-old report by the UCC Commission for Racial Justice, “Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States,” with lighting “the fuse for environmental change” when it focused national attention on the link between communities of color and the location of hazardous waste sites.
- Synod declared, “The Earth is the Lord’s” and advocated for environmental justice. This story was featured in the Boston Globe as it spoke directly to the President’s actions to remove the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.
- Synod honored the Standing Rock water protectors.
- For the first time ever, Synod went paperless! Almost all delegates and visitors used the new GS App to read the schedule, resolutions, worship bulletins, maps, and more.

#### **Love of Children**

- Synod isn’t only for adults, and the youth took a leading role this year.
- The youth at Synod chose three resolutions to follow, and several spoke powerfully from the floor about gun violence and more.
- Synod passed a resolution supporting adult survivors of childhood abuse and neglect.
- Synod pledged support to Palestinian children in military detention.





**The Rev. Traci Blackmon** was duly elected and installed to lead Justice and Witness Ministries at the National setting of the United Church of Christ. “This is the community of faith I choose,” she said, “and I believe this is the community of faith God has chosen for me... this is not a call I answer alone. The call to justice is a call to us all.”

**Justice for Guillermo Recinos Morales:** One of Rev. Blackmon’s first acts was to lead The United Church of Christ as we marched with the family and friends of an artist and grandfather, seized outside his home on his way to work and detained the past three months by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. The march ended outside the federal building where marchers heard from the Morales’ family, pastor, and other community members.

**Full List of Passed Resolutions and Motions:**

- On Recognizing and Studying Gun Violence as a Public Health Emergency
- Affirming the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ Boycott of Wendy’s
- On Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity Training for Authorized Ministers
- On a More Just Economy: \$15 Minimum Wage, Living Wages and Job Creation
- Toward Disability Justice: A Call to the Church and Churches
- On Corporal Punishment of Children in Homes and Institutions
- In Support of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Supporting Authorized Ministries of Underrepresented Clergy: A Call for Greater Representation & Economic Justice
- Bring Down the Wall in the Caribbean: Ending the U.S. Embargo on Cuba
- Adoption of the Proposed Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws concerning governance of the national setting.
- **Emergency Resolution: The Earth is the Lord’s, Not Ours to Wreck – Imperatives for a New Moral Era**



**The Rev. Dr. William Barber** proclaimed an altar call for justice. “I’ve come recruiting!” he began. And he wasn’t kidding. Barber and friends are launching a new Poor People’s Campaign for 2018 seeking to complete the unfinished work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “We can no longer use the language of Caesar,” Barber said. “It’s too puny to challenge the extremism we are facing now, things that are wrong and just plain mean. We must claim the deep moral language of faith, and silence is not an option.”



## ... Service



### Food Pantry Sundays

The first Sunday of each month we receive donations for the Salvation Army Food Pantry. On **Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup>** a cart will be in the west entrance to receive gifts for the food pantry. The Salvation Army is in special need of tuna helper (not hamburger), Ramen noodles, canned fruit cocktail (peaches or pears), canned tuna, and macaroni & cheese. Of course, other canned or packaged foods are always accepted. They also need any kind of personal care items: such as diapers, bath soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, feminine hygiene products, and laundry soap.



### Jasper County Animal Rescue League

On the third Sunday of each month we collect items to help the Jasper County Animal Rescue League (JCARL). The next collection date will be **Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>**.

Their current wish list is: paper towels, garbage bags, raw hides (for big dogs and small), peanut butter, bleach, dish soap, Fabuloso (the purple kind), laundry soap, liquid hand soap, rubber gloves, kitty litter, canned shredded and filet cat food, canned dog food (Purina), dry dog food (Purina), and dry cat food (Indoor Purina).



### "Barking Good" Project

The Progress Industries partnership with UCC of making and baking dog treats in the church kitchen is in full swing. The project takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month at 12:15pm. A new recipe is being used, but the dog treats remain all natural. Dozens of treats will be produced and shared with JCARL. Our church has helped PI move toward its target goal of getting out into the community setting which has provided a wonderful opportunity for all involved.

The dog treats produced not only make for happy dogs, but happy people too. So, to lend a hand, contact Stormy Storms. You'll have a very gratifying experience if you do.

### Cleaning Project with Progress Industries

In addition to our partnership with Progress Industries (PI) to bake biscuits for the Jasper County Animal Rescue League, we also work with PI participants and staff for a church cleaning project. Under the guidance of Carolyn and Duane Hobbs a small group from PI is doing some light cleaning and dusting in the sanctuary, library and other areas of the church building. This cleaning project takes place two times per month, on Tuesdays at 10:30am.

If you are interested in helping with this ministry, please contact Carolyn Hobbs.



## Prayers and Concerns

### Please hold in prayer

- ◆ Judy Brody
- ◆ Jean Townsend
- ◆ Tom Turk
- ◆ Sue Anderson
- ◆ George Van Zandt, father of Ed Van Zandt, father-in-law of Suzanne Van Zandt
- ◆ Julia Snyder, daughter of Stormy Storms
- ◆ Carrie Osborne
- ◆ Jim Lukefahr
- ◆ Ann Raridon



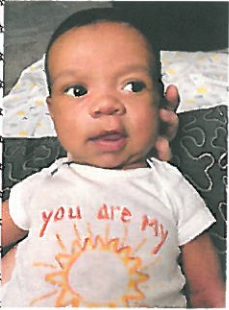
If you know someone in need of support – a visit, a call, a note, or prayer – please contact Rev. Jessica Petersen.



### Blood Pressure Monitoring

Carolyn Hobbs will offer blood pressure monitoring any Sunday in August during Fellowship Time. If you are curious about your blood pressure reading, please let Carolyn know.

### Congratulations, Rev. Petersen and Martin Mutai!



Rev. Petersen and Martin Mutai welcomed their son, Jabali Kiprotich Mutai, into the world on Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:37pm. He is developing well and has already far surpassed his birth weight and length of 7 lbs. 15.2 oz. and 21 inches. Jabali was officially welcomed to Congregational UCC on Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup> during a baby shower thrown in his honor. Congratulations to his proud parents! And, welcome, Jabali; your church family looks forward to getting to know you!



### Opportunities to Serve

All volunteers/workers in the church are very much appreciated. Many of you are seen carrying on the work of the church and many things are done unseen, but just as appreciated. It takes many hands and minds to get everything done. Thank you so much for your willingness!

There are many different ways in the church to serve God and others. The more who help, the less work there is for each one. Signup sheets to provide flowers, greet, usher, serve as a lay reader, and host fellowship time are located in the vestibule. Please help if you can.

If you are willing to be a greeter, please contact Marti Barker. Additionally, there are a few members who may need transportation to worship and church activities. Please contact Duane Hobbs to volunteer.

The office has great volunteers who come in monthly to assemble and ready this newsletter for mailing. If you would like to help, just call the office.



## Worship Attendance

| <u>June Attendance</u> | <u>2016</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Fourth Sunday of May   | 38          | 32          |
| First Sunday           | 36          | 31          |
| Second Sunday          | 30          | 28          |
| Third Sunday           | 33          | 43          |
| Fourth Sunday          | 34          | 33          |

| <u>July Attendance</u>         | <u>2016</u>                       | <u>2017</u>          |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| First Sunday                   | 25                                | 24                   |
| Second Sunday                  | 30                                | 26                   |
| Third Sunday                   | 31                                | 36                   |
| Fourth Sunday (w/ First Pres.) | 71                                | (at First Pres.) N/A |
| Fifth Sunday                   | will be in September's newsletter |                      |



## Birthdays to Celebrate in August

- 5-Mark A. Babcock
- 6-Ron Marvelli, Carolyn Hobbs, Megan Kahn, Mollie Kahn, Don Deppe
- 7-Kay Hagedorn
- 12-Jenessa Koedam
- 14-Cienna Christensen-Baker, Jane Johnson
- 15-Jane Ann Cotton
- 17-Kenny Caves
- 18-Kathy Current



## Anniversaries to Celebrate in August

- 1-Clarence & Marilyn Planer
- 13-Katie & Steven Stonehocker
- 15-Samantha & Sonia Sledge
- 16-Gary & Jane Johnson

## Take note...

### Chapel Renovation Progress

A committee consisting of Chairperson April Faidley, Jan Turk, Jim Christenson, Marti Barker, and Pastor Jessica have been hard at work with the chapel renovation. This area will be a place for individual or small group meditation and prayer as well as Bible study and similar activities.

Patience is definitely a virtue when doing any renovation. The chapel committee has discovered this as they've encountered some unknowns. Progress is being made, and the renovation is almost complete thanks to planning, discussion, and work done by many in the congregation.

The chapel has a new outside door, laminate flooring, area rug, and furniture. In addition, wall repair and electrical work have occurred as well as removal of ceiling plaster. The chapel now has a new coat of paint, and wall sconces will be hung soon. Much has been accomplished, and even though work is not quite completed, the chapel is already being used. Drop in to see how it has been transformed. Just remember that this project is a work in progress. A planned dedication will occur in the future upon the chapel's completion.

Thus far, the renovation of the chapel has been funded through generous donations given by members and friends of the church in honor and in memory of loved ones. However, needs have strained the limited budget, and additional funding would certainly be welcome. If you would like to donate funds, please contact a committee member or simply send your donation to the church office referencing "chapel." All donated funds will be used for the chapel.

### Sponsor "Into the Mystic"

In an effort to get the word out about who we are as a congregation, we sponsor a weekly airing of a podcast by UCC General Minister and President, the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, on KCOB (95.9 FM and 1280 AM) on Sunday mornings at 7:35am. The weekly cost is \$25. You are invited to sponsor a Sunday or two or four or more to increase our community's awareness of what we are all about here at Congregational UCC. We are engaging in wonderful ministry together, and it's time that more folks know about it! Please send your donation into the office referencing "Into the Mystic" if you are interested in donating.



## Worship Schedule for August

| Date                    | August 6                     | August 13                    | August 20                       | August 27                       |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Christian Calendar Date | Ninth Sunday after Pentecost | Tenth Sunday after Pentecost | Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost | Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost  |
| Special Events          | Communion                    | First Presbyterian joins us  |                                 | Worship Downtown                |
| Special Offerings       | Food Pantry Donations        |                              | JCARL Collection                | Jasper County Elderly Nutrition |
| Greeters                | Ed & Suzanne Van Zandt       | Bev Edge                     | Carolyn & Duane Hobbs           | Les Morgan                      |
| Ushers                  | Lin Chapé,<br>Larry Leitner  | Les Morgan                   | Brent Parker                    | Stormy Storms,<br>Bev Edge      |
| Lay Readers             | April Faidley                | April Faidley                | Larry Leitner                   | N/A                             |
| Scripture               | Isaiah 55:1-5                | Romans 10:5-15               | Matthew 15:21-28                | TBD                             |
| Worship Color           | White                        | Green                        | Green                           | Green                           |

**Green** is the color of growth. It symbolizes the renewal of vegetation and the promise of new life.  
**White** symbolizes purity, holiness, and virtue, as well as respect and reverence.

### We continue to remember our homebound members.

You are missed and continue to be cared for and held in our heartfelt prayers.

Marilyn Currant  
Park Centre #1  
500 1<sup>st</sup> St. N.  
Newton, IA 50208

Betty Hotchkin  
Park Centre #40  
500 1<sup>st</sup> St. N.  
Newton, IA 50208

Jean Jensen  
Park Centre #51  
500 1<sup>st</sup> St. N.  
Newton, IA 50208

Jim Lukefahr  
Newton Village #14  
110 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. W.  
Newton, IA 50208

Steven McGinley  
1003 E. 15<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Newton, IA 50208

Ann Raridon  
St. Frances Manor  
2021 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Grinnell, IA 50112

Carol Robinson  
Newton Village #114  
110 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. W.  
Newton, IA 50208

Carrie Osborne  
Iowa City Rehab & Health Care  
3661 Rochester Ave.  
Iowa City, IA 52248

Jean Townsend  
1310 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. E.  
Newton, IA 50208

## Recipe Corner...

### Caramelized Onion and Goat Cheese Tarts



Yield: 4 servings

#### **Ingredients**

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter  
1 1/2 cups chopped onions  
1 tablespoon sugar  
Kosher salt  
4 ounces goat cheese, room temperature  
1 large egg  
2 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 teaspoon freshly chopped thyme leaves  
1 (14-ounce) box refrigerated pie crust  
Special equipment: 1 (12-count) nonstick mini muffin tin

#### **Directions**

In a large heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat, add the oil and butter. When the butter is melted, add the onions, sugar, and salt, to taste. Cook until the onions begin to brown. Adjust the heat to low and cook slowly, turning often, until the onions are golden brown and caramelized, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the onions from the heat and set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

In a bowl combine the goat cheese, egg, cream, and thyme. Pour the mixture into a small resalable plastic food storage bag. Snip off a corner of the bag to use it for piping.

Lay the pie crusts out flat on a clean surface and with a 2 1/2-inch round cutter cut out 12 circles from each crust. Press them into the cups of the mini-muffin tin. Fill each cup 1/2 way with the cooled onions. Pipe the cheese mixture on top of the onions, filling the cups. Bake the tarts until the filling is set, about 15 to 20 minutes. Let the tarts cool slightly, and then remove them from the muffin tin and serve.

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*If you would like to contribute recipes, please contact the church office.*



Sundays

7:35am "Into the Mystic" on KCOB  
 95.9 FM & 1280 AM  
 10:00am Worship  
 11:15am Fellowship Time

# AUGUST 2017



| Sunday  | Monday            | Tuesday                     | Wednesday   | Thursday | Friday                             | Saturday |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------|------------------------------------|----------|
| 30  | 31                | 01                          | 02  | 03       | 04                                 | 05       |
|   |                   | 5:00pm Worship & Music Mtg. | 5:15pm Centering Prayer                                     |          |                                    |          |
| 06  | 07                | 08                          | 09  | 10       | 11                                 | 12       |
| Communion<br>Food Pantry Donations<br>11:30am Service & Outreach Mtg. |                   | 10:30am PI Cleaning         | 5:15pm Centering Prayer<br>6:00pm Facilities & Finance Mtg. |          |                                    |          |
| 13  | 14                | 15                          | 16  | 17       | 18                                 | 19       |
| First Presbyterian<br>worships with us                                | 12:15pm PI Baking |                             | 9:30am Morning Circle<br>5:15pm Centering Prayer            |          | Deadline for<br>Open Door articles |          |
| 20  | 21                | 22                          | 23  | 24       | 25                                 | 26       |
| JCARL Collection  |                   | 10:30am PI Cleaning         | 5:15pm Centering Prayer                                     |          |                                    |          |
| 27  | 28                | 29                          | 30  | 31       | 01                                 | 02       |
| Worship Downtown  | 12:15pm PI Baking | 6:00pm Racial Justice Group | 5:15pm Centering Prayer<br>6:00pm Church Council            |          |                                    |          |

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***The Open Door*** is a newsletter for the members and friends of Congregational United Church of Christ. Suggestions and submissions are welcome. Deadline for submission is the date indicated on the Calendar.

|                          |                       |  |                              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Pastor                   | Rev. Jessica Petersen | 792-3773 (Office)<br>641-840-2672 (Cell)     | revjessicapetersen@gmail.com |
| Administrative Assistant | Patricia Castline     | 792-3773 (Office)                            | uccnewton@mediacombb.net     |
| Organist                 | Judy Brody            | 792-8129                                     | ljbrody@windstream.net       |
| Choir Director           | Bev Thomas            | 792-6465                                     | thomasb@iowatelecom.net      |
| Custodian                | Jim Christenson       | 641-792-3773 (Office)<br>641-781-0596 (Cell) | uccnewton@mediacombb.net     |
| Health Ministry          | Carolyn Hobbs         | 792-2687                                     | cdhobbs@iowatelecom.net      |
| Pastor Emeritus          | David Raymond         |  |                              |

Church office hours: 9:30am-2:30pm Monday through Thursday (The office will be closed on Fridays.)



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Iowa Conference: [www.ucciaconf.org](http://www.ucciaconf.org)

United Church of Christ: [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)