



# The Open Door

MAY 2021



CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

God is still speaking,

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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## 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.

## SERVICE & OUTREACH



"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25: 35-36

Our mission is to serve others, especially the marginalized and vulnerable. Each month the newsletter is publishing our growing outreach, tallying the donations made to different organizations and projects.

During the month of April the Open Door received the following updates:

### Monetary contributions:

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1 to American Red Cross                                    | 1 to St. Jude             |
| 1 to Special Olympics                                      | 1 to Educate the Children |
| 1 to Neighbors Helping Neighbors                           | 1 to Salvation Army       |
| 1 to Animal Rescue League of Iowa                          |                           |
| 1 to American Heart Association                            |                           |
| 1 to Friends of Rock Creek State Park                      |                           |
| 1 to Friends of Newton Public Library.                     |                           |
| 1 to Garment Workers Center COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund |                           |

### In-kind donations:

- 1 of food to Blessing Box at First Baptist
- 1 of personal care products to Blessing Box at First Baptist
- 1 of clothing and household goods to Goodwill
- 1 of food to Salvation Army Food Pantry (cont. on page 2)

## Service and Outreach (cont. from p. 1)

Another aspect of service and outreach is how we offer others help or encouragement. This month we want to add this service to the newsletter so we all can see the church in action.

### Offering a helping hand:

Befriended two elementary-school-age neighbor boys, conversing with them and giving them odd jobs  
Drove 83-year-old friend to cataract evaluation  
Mailed encouraging notes to church members

To-date totals:

### Monetary contributions:

5 to the Salvation Army  
4 to Neighbors Helping Neighbors  
1 to United Way of Jasper County  
2 to the Animal Rescue League of Iowa  
1 to Garden Gate Ranch  
1 to First United Church for their special outreach  
2 to American Red Cross  
2 to Special Olympics of Iowa  
1 to St. Jude  
1 to American Heart Association  
1 to Friends of Rock Creek State Park  
1 to Educate the Children  
1 to Friends of Newton Public Library

### In-kind donations:

3 food donations to the Salvation Army Food Pantry  
2 food donations to the Blessing Box by the Salvation Army  
6 food donations to the Blessing Box at the Baptist Church  
1 personal care products donation to Blessing Box at the Baptist Church  
1 clothing donation to the Blessing Box at the Baptist Church  
1 clothing and household goods donation to Goodwill  
1 food donation to Teen Challenge in Colfax  
1 donation to Bibles for Mission Thrift Center in Pella

How about letting the newsletter know about YOUR service and outreach? You can:

- 1) email the newsletter editor: [aprilfaidley@gmail.com](mailto:aprilfaidley@gmail.com)
- 2) call the editor: 515-478-6493
- 3) or drop off a note at the church office.
- 4) Simply say “\_\_\_\_\_ (how many?) donation(s) made to \_\_\_\_\_(fill in the organization or project)” or describe how you have helped or encouraged someone.

If you have already submitted some donations to the newsletter, please only report new ones. If you are reporting for the first time, submit your year-to-date totals.

## Money Musings

I am writing this column with about a week to go as far as April collection opportunities.



To date, we are more than \$2,000 under our income projections for the month. Should this not change next week, we will be between \$3,000 and \$4,000 under our income projections for the year. Hopefully, when we return to in-person worship, we will make up this shortfall.

I also wanted to update the congregation on our investment returns for the first quarter of 2021. We have three sources of investments. The United Church Funds have essentially held steady during the first quarter. The Edward Jones Money Market Funds are designed to be very stable. Currently, with interest rates so low, we get less than \$1.00/month in interest from these funds. These funds are there predominantly to handle short term cash needs. Finally, we have Edward Jones Investments, which are the bulk of the Fuller Scholarship Funds. These investments increased from \$598,000 to \$609,000 for the quarter (rounded), giving us the largest increase of any of our investments.

At the end of the first quarter, then, our total Fuller Scholarship Funds stood at just under \$674,000. With this amount in the funds, Council felt safe authorizing \$35,000 in scholarship awards for the next academic year.  
Larry Leitner, Treasurer

en down, old books need to move on to another home, clutter needs to be straightened, and so on. Jim, as the church custodian, keeps the building clean, yet it isn't his job to sort, discard, store, organize, and update everything that is lying about.

Many of our spaces look tired and outdated. We need fresh, clean, uncluttered surroundings to lift up our spirits, help us get on with our mission, and perhaps to influence potential candidates to think well of us.

To pick a job and volunteer to complete it, go to the church website and click on the "Ministries" button on the menu. You will find a page that says "Ministry of Maintenance." Click on that, view the list of what needs to be done, and sign up!



## MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 5/1 Lori Goodman
- 5/2 Jerry Sawin
- 5/5 Azalea Mastio
- 5/8 Gary Yoder
- 5/12 Allison Pryke
- 5/16 Lynn Cottrell
- 5/17 Norm Van Klompenburg
- 5/21 Emma Stonehocker; Heather Hicks
- 5/25 Gary Johnson
- 5/27 Jasmine Yoder
- 5/29 Craig Armstrong



- 5/1 Carolyn & Duane Hobbs
- 5/17 Marilyn & Don Deppe



## SPRING CLEANING!

How long has it been since we actually did a thorough cleaning and sprucing up of the church? Lin Chapé and Marti Barker generously donated their time to an extensive survey of the

church building and the parish house. Many areas need work. Objects need to be stored appropriately, rather than left piled up in corners, old posters need to be tak-

## Minor Feelings Book Study

An 84-year-old Thai immigrant in San Francisco, California, died last month after being violently shoved to the ground during his morning walk. An 89-year-old Chinese woman was slapped and set on fire by two people in Brooklyn, New York. A stranger on the New York subway slashed a 61-year-old Filipino American passenger's face with a box cutter. Nearly 3,800 hate incidents toward Asian-Americans were reported over the course of roughly a year during the pandemic. Incidents against women were far higher, at 68%, compared to men, at 29%.

As with much of the country, our study group has become aware of the rise of hate-based incidents against Asian-Americans. To understand this horrific discrimination more deeply, we have chosen *Minor Feelings* by Cathy Park Hong for our next study.

TIME describes this book: "Hong dissects her experiences as an Asian American to create an intricate meditation on racial awareness in the U.S." The book was named one of Time's 10 Best Nonfiction Books of the Year in 2020 and is a National Book Critics Circle Award Winner. The author Claudia Rankine said of it, "Brilliant . . . To read this book is to become more human."

Schedule:	MAY 6	United
	MAY 13	Stand Up
	MAY 20	The End of White Innocence
	MAY 27	Bad English
	JUNE 3	An Education
	JUNE 10	Portrait of an Artist
	JUNE 17	The Indebted

Join the Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83595726192?pwd=cm9FTXkrVlhrQmkvalEwVitGZW9nZz09#success>

(Highlight the web address, then copy and paste into your browser)

Meeting ID: 835 9572 6192

Passcode: 377178

If you need assistance, contact Jane Ann Cotton or April Faidley.

The Book Study will take a summer break during July and August, resuming in September.



This study is a laity-generated educational program. The participants choose the books and research additional material to add to the discussion. We hope the books we choose will interest others. If you have a book in mind that you would like to read and discuss in a group format, please let us know, through the church office, what you would be enthused about studying. We would be most happy to welcome you into our study!



**We miss our local homebound members.**

**We hold them in our heartfelt prayers.**

**Take a moment to call or write to them!**

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

Bev Edge  
Village Assisted Living  
2571 Guthrie Ave, Apt. 1402  
Des Moines, IA 50317  
(515) 299-1845

Betty Hotchkin  
Park Centre #40  
500 1<sup>st</sup> St. N.  
Newton, IA 50208  
(641) 791-4687

Norma "Jeannie" Johnson  
200 S. 8th Ave E.  
Newton, IA 50208  
(641) 275-5393

### **Pastoral Care**

We are grateful to have Rev. David Raymond available to provide pastoral care. If you have a pastoral emergency, please reach out to Rev. Raymond directly at (641) 521-1506 or davidray@mediacombb.net, or through the church office (staffed Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:00am-3:00pm). Thank you, David, for blessing us with your care.

### **Prayers and Concerns**

Marilyn Deppe  
Anne & Kit Chapé

Anne & John Gerken  
Pam Wagnor

If you know someone in need of support—a visit, a call, a note, or a prayer—please contact the church office.

### **WHAT'S NEXT**

The COVID-19 14-day positivity rate in Iowa has dropped to 4.1 and the 7-day positivity rate now stands at 3.9. Both were over 6 a couple of weeks ago. This means the criteria for reopening that was established when we closed has been met. In addition, congregants continue to receive their vaccines and achieve immunity. The survey in regard to resuming in-person worship services received about a dozen responses that were overwhelmingly in favor of opening. Virtual services with Rev. Holmes in the pulpit are planned for May 2nd and 9th. Council will be outlining the details of our plan to reopen at the next Council Meeting, May 5th. You will notice on the calendar that May 16, 23, and 30 are "TBD," meaning "to be determined." After Council has completed our plan, details of those services will become available. Watch the **Weekly Updates** for the reopening information. We look forward to seeing you soon!!!!



# Communications

## Church Council Catch Up

In an effort to keep our congregation informed regarding the various matters that impact our life together, notes from Church Council meetings are shared with our friends and members via this newsletter.

### April 7, 2021 Council Meeting

**Present:** Jane Ann Cotton, Moderator; April Faidley, Assistant Moderator; Larry Leitner, Treasurer; Jenni Pryke, Secretary; Norm Von Klompenburg & Les Morgan, Members at Large.

**Maintenance Report:** In regard to general maintenance and to the city building inspection program, the following maintenance needs were discussed: damaged ceiling tiles, replacing all fire extinguishers, possibly needing new Exit signs, heavy industrial mats for the entryway to repair the current ones that pose a tripping hazard. Consensus was reached to authorize Norm to procure whatever is needed to maintain the physical plant and prepare for the building inspection.

The highest storm window was removed by Norm and Jim Christenson and brought down for repair. Round Up will be sprayed on the weeds in the landscaping beds. The stone mulch will be replaced later. Norm is working on finding people to mow the lawn.

We encourage people to sign up for volunteer jobs as listed on the website.

#### WHERE WE ARE

**Online Worship and Music:** Recording of services is going well; Anne is mastering the technology.

**Search:** The Search Committee consists of: Dorothy Raymond, Chair, Les Morgan, Carolyn Hobbs, Larry Leitner, Jane Ann Cotton (ex-officio member), and Norm Van Klompenberg (consultant). We received two responses from our posted Profile. A meeting was held with one candidate on March 26, 2021. The other respondent was deemed not a good fit. We followed up with the interviewed candidate to indicate our interest; he is pursuing another position.

#### WHERE GOD IS LEADING US

Conversations with other churches in the community continue as we discuss cooperation and shared programming. Plans are ongoing regarding Lutheran Pastor Mark Holmes providing recorded services from our Sanctuary. The first recorded service will be April 11 at 10:00am. Mark has agreed to perform three more services in April. Since Rev. Holmes will be recorded on Thursdays, we will need to compensate Bev for the additional time. Council had authorized Larry to negotiate compensation for Pastor Holmes. An agreement was reached in which Pastor Holmes will receive \$100 for each Sunday service.

It was noted that if we resume in-person services with a supply pastor and also continue to upload those services to the internet, we will need someone to record and post those services. Anne has been recording and posting the virtual services, however, she does not work on Sundays. A decision on this was not made as we do not know when we will begin having in-person services.

Preparation for resuming in-person services was discussed. We can designate sections of pews for seating in order to maintain social distancing; we will follow CDC Guidelines. We can prepare the congregation for this through the weekly update. Council decided to conduct an email survey asking congregants their thoughts on returning to in-person services. When survey results are in we will proceed to develop our plan. If Mark Holmes continues as our supply pastor after the church opens, the services will probably need to be at 11:00 am since the Lutheran service is at 9:30 am. (cont. on p. 8)

( Council Catch Up cont. from p. 7)

**Other Concerns:**

Jenni requested the use of the church for the evening of April 27 for a Delta Kappa Gamma meeting (20-25 people). The group would use the fellowship hall and briefly use the sanctuary for an induction ceremony. The Council has stated that the use will be allowed if CDC Guidelines will be followed. Jenni stated that they will be followed and the group will sanitize the areas used.

Contribution to Methodist Church food mission: Meals will end in late May and resume in September. April suggested giving a small contribution at this time, and revisiting our participation in September. Council agreed to donate \$100.

**Church Council Composition**

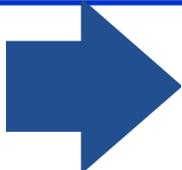
Moderator: Jane Ann Cotton

Assistant Moderator: April Faidley

Secretary: Jennifer Pryke

Treasurer: Larry Leitner

Members-At-Large: Les Morgan, Heidi Grandstaff-Fresh, Norm Van Klompenburg



**MEET PASTOR MARK HOLMES**

Greetings to the Congregational United Church of Christ in Newton! My name is Pastor Mark Holmes and I have the opportunity to fill the pulpit for a short time during this interim. First, a bit about myself. I was born and raised in West Branch, Iowa, along with 5 brothers and sisters. Yes, my parents were crazy!

After I graduated from Wartburg College, I worked at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp just west of Ft. Collins, CO where I served as a backpack guide and camp manager. My seminary studies were completed at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. I am presently serving as the Interim Pastor at First Lutheran Church in Newton.

My wife, Jody, and I presently live in Clive. We have three adult children who all live in the Des Moines area, and three grandchildren with one more on the way! Jody works as a project manager at CSG Government Solutions based in Chicago, and is currently working on a project with the state of Illinois (virtually, of course!). My interests include music, reading, canoeing and backpacking.

I look forward to meeting many of you face-to-face when it's finally safe to do so. I know that God has a bold future planned for your congregation and He is using this time of transition to prepare your hearts for all that is to come! It will be quite an adventure!

Living in God's Amazing Grace!

Pastor Mark

## Editor's Revery

This is my

**wish** for you:

**comfort**

on difficult days,

**smiles**

when sadness intrudes,

**rainbows**

to follow the clouds,

**laughter**

to kiss your lips,

**sunsets**

to warm your heart,

**hugs**

when spirits sag,

**beauty**

for your eyes to see

**friendships**

to brighten your being,

**faith**

so that you can believe,

**confidence**

for when you doubt,

**courage**

to know yourself,

**patience**

to accept the truth,

**love**

to complete your life.



# MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
						National Mother Goose Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Virtual Service with Rev. Mark Holmes		Video taping of Meditation and Musical Moments	6:00pm Church Council via Zoom Cinco de Mayo	5:30 pm <i>Minor Feelings</i> book study via ZOOM		National Miniature Golf Day
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Virtual Service with Rev. Mark Holmes <i>Mother's Day</i>		Video taping of Meditation and Musical Moments	Eid al-Fitr	5:30 pm <i>Minor Feelings</i> book study via ZOOM	National Dance Like a Chicken Day	National Chocolate Chip Day
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
TBD– refer to the Weekly Update email for information	Tax Day	Video taping of Meditation and Musical Moments		5:30 pm <i>Minor Feelings</i> book study via ZOOM	National Endangered Species Day	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
TBD– refer to the Weekly Update email for information		Video taping of Meditation and Musical Moments	Deadline for submissions to the newsletter	5:30 pm <i>Minor Feelings</i> book study via ZOOM		National Paperclip Day
30	31					
TBD– refer to the Weekly Update email for information	Memorial Day					

Congregational United Church of Christ  
308 E. 2nd St. N.  
Newton, IA 50208

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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Moderator	Jane Ann Cotton	521-3547 (Cell)	jacotton@pcpartner.net
Pastor Emeritus	Rev. David Raymond	521-1506 (Cell)	davidray@mediacombb.net

**Office hours: 10:00am to 3:00pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; not open to the public**



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