

**Congregational
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

The Open Door

September 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 Getting the Wheels Turning

The summer months have come to an end, and I have had a month now to get settled back into church work. Thus it seems to me it is time for our congregation to fully engage in living out of the purpose, process, and focus we discerned and voted on this past spring. We got the ball rolling before summer began as we viewed and discussed a couple of thought-provoking videos addressing material poverty. But, then summer hit and our pastor decided to go on parental leave 😊, and understandably, our forward movement slowed. So, here we are in need of getting those wheels turning again.

Forgot in what direction we are headed, the direction in which we heard God calling us to move and committed ourselves to following as a church? Here's a quick reminder:

Our purpose: 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.

Our process: Educating Ourselves and Others, Living Our Faith in Our Daily Lives, Reaching Out to Our Community

Our focus: Developing relationships with our neighbors who are living in material poverty

Just as the input of each and every member of our congregation was needed in the process of discernment and the vote of affirmation to move forward during a special congregational meeting was essential so too is the participation of each of us vital as we now seek to live according to these well-thought-out guiding principles as a community of faith.

Our Christian Education Committee is diligently working to offer opportunities that we might learn more about material poverty. They are seeking to facilitate study and discussion that our thinking about "poor" people might be transformed. They are doing this work so that we might be enabled and empowered to engage in

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meaningful, authentic relationships with our neighbors who experience material poverty and work together to move the needle forward in the effort to eradicate poverty. But no matter how great a program they offer or how wonderful the resources they find, they will have little impact if you, each and every member of our congregation (or at least a majority of us), don't open yourself to being challenged to think in a different way and add your voice to the conversation as we continue to listen for where God is calling us. That is, you need to come study, question, and discuss together.

But it is not only the job of the Christian Education Committee to think about how we will move forward in living out our purpose, process, and focus as they seek to facilitate our learning and development. This work belongs to us all. We are the ones who are ultimately responsible for educating ourselves and others, living our faith in our daily lives, and reaching out to our community as we seek to develop relationships with our neighbors who are "poor." So, how have you been engaging in this work? Or, how will you begin? Are there books or articles you have read that you have found helpful in better understanding systemic poverty in our community, nation, and world? Have you looked for such resources? How have you been living out your faith each day with a focus on building relationships with your "poor" neighbors? Have you sought to discover who the "poor" in our community are? How have you reached out to the "poor" living in our community to offer more than a handout? Have you stopped to actually listen to their stories and share your own? Have you opened your ears to begin learning their loves, their passions, their talents, their gifts, in addition to their worries and struggles?

Friends, we don't have a road map for how to go about answering this call to live out our faith, but we have our compasses. Together let us move in the direction of developing relationships with our neighbors who are living in material poverty. Together let us get the wheels turning that the lives of our neighbors and our lives might be made richer as we engage in authentic relationship with one another. Together let us get the wheels turning that together we might move the needle forward in eliminating poverty in our community and beyond.

... Worship

Sermon Videos

Rev. Petersen records her sermon each Sunday and posts each video to our church's Facebook page. If you have to miss worship some Sunday, you are still able to hear Rev. Petersen's message for the week. Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/NewtonUCC](https://www.facebook.com/NewtonUCC) if you haven't already.





"The First Paul": Bible Study

You are encouraged to join in a new Bible study group beginning **Thursday, September 7th**. We will read and discuss the book "The First Paul: Reclaiming the Radical Visionary Behind the Church's Conservative Icon" by two of the foremost New Testament scholars of our time Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

"Paul is second only to Jesus as the most important person in the birth of Christianity, and yet he continues to be controversial, even among Christians. How could the letters of Paul be used both to inspire radical grace and to endorse systems of oppression—condoning slavery, subordinating women, condemning homosexual behavior? Borg and Crossan use the best of biblical and historical scholarship to explain the reasons for Paul's mixed reputation and reveal to us what scholars have known for decades: that the later letters of Paul were created by the early church to dilute Paul's egalitarian message and transform him into something more 'acceptable.'" (From the back cover)

Join in this 9-week study to discover the first Paul whom the early church quickly sought to temper and eventually contradict. The group will meet in the **Parish House each Thursday at 5:00pm-6:00pm** with our final session on November 2nd. Our reading and discussion schedule for September is as follows: September 14th—Chapter 1; September 21st—Chapter 2; September 28th—Chapter 3. No reading is required for the September 7th meeting.

If you are interested in joining the group, please purchase a copy of the book prior to our second meeting. If you would rather purchase your book through the church, please contact the church office by **Thursday, September 7th**. Contact Rev. Petersen with any questions or concerns.



Morning Circle

The next meeting of *Morning Circle* will be **Wednesday, September 20th at 9:30am** with Jan Turk as hostess and Judy Brody 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 Chapters 7 & 8 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 September 20th 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 Pastoral Letter

As a response to the violent clashes between white supremacists and counter demonstrators in Charlottesville, Va., that left a woman dead and 19 injured, the national leadership of the United Church of Christ issued this Pastoral Letter on August 15, 2017:

Dear Members, Friends, Clergy, and Leaders of and within the United Church of Christ,

Last weekend, a group of white supremacists came to Charlottesville, Virginia, and incited violence to protest the removal of a Confederate monument. Although protest is the bedrock of our nation's democracy, coming in riot gear proves that they intended to do more than simply protest.

We, the Council of Conference Ministers and Officers of the United Church of Christ, strongly condemn the acts of violent hatred expressed by these white supremacists, Neo-Nazis, and Ku Klux Klan members. Their white robes and burning crosses were replaced with polo shirts, khakis, and tiki torches, while their lynching was replaced with a speeding car barreling through a group of peaceful protesters with the intention of harming and killing others, which it did. Their vitriolic hatred is the same.

We confess that the events of Charlottesville are systemic and communal expressions of white privilege and racism that continues to pervade our nation's spiritual ethos. And if we only condemn the acts of August 12, 2017, without condemning the roots of racism, which perpetuate discrimination in our American schools, justice system, business, and healthcare systems, then we have sinned as well. We must work toward the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth now for the sake of a just world for all.

We do this by committing to follow the ways of Jesus, who stood with the oppressed, spoke out against political and religious powers, and courageously embodied a just world for all as he sought to create it. Today, we must follow the ways of Jesus in addressing the hatred of white supremacists and racists among us.

Our local UCC churches must be true solidarity partners with those who march in the streets. Our UCC churches are encouraged to move from the sanctuary and walk alongside other clergy and community leaders who seek to resist, agitate, inform, and comfort. We must resist hatred and violence. We must also agitate ourselves, and our neighbors to acknowledge any racism within or among us. We must inform ourselves, and our neighbors what our sacred stories reveal to us of a just world for all. We must lament and grieve with those who are injured or murdered during violent confrontations with those who mean us harm. And we must comfort those who have been discriminated against with the transformative love of God.

As we go forward, let us model the legacy of activism through our sacred call given to us by our UCC ancestors: May we be prophetic truth-tellers like our Congregational Christian forebears, who marched in public squares demanding equality for all. May we serve others, and remain faithful witnesses like our Evangelical and Reformed forebears, who tended to the needs of the forgotten. And may we be courageous like our non-UCC forebears, who left their spiritual home and joined the UCC in order to fully live out who God created them to be.

In the days to come, may God's truth, mission, and courage be our guide to embodying the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.



... Service



Food Pantry Sundays

The first Sunday of each month we receive donations for the Salvation Army Food Pantry. On **Sunday, September 3rd** 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.



"Barking Good" Project

Every second and fourth Monday of the month beginning at 12:15pm, the CUCC kitchen is bustling as PI participants and CUCC members Stormy Storms and Marti Barker work together to produce bone-shaped dog treats for the Jasper County Animal Rescue League dogs. These treats are also available at the Newton Farmer's Market for a donation, so any dog owner can surprise their dog with a yummy homemade dog treat.

Anyone wishing to participate in this baking project should contact Stormy Storms.



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, September 17th**.

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).

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

- ◆ Bonnie McGinley and family, following the death of her husband, Steven McGinley on August 11th
- ◆ Martha Ellsworth
- ◆ Davis Carter, grandson of Jane & Gary Johnson
- ◆ Susan Townsend and family, following the death of her mother, Jean Townsend on July 28th
- ◆ Sue Anderson
- ◆ George Van Zandt, father of Ed Van Zandt, father-in-law of Suzanne Van Zandt
- ◆ Julia Snyder, daughter of Stormy Storms



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 September during Fellowship Time. If you are curious about your blood pressure reading, please let Carolyn know.

Body Shop Collection

The Service and Outreach Committee coordinates a collection of items for the “Body Shop” at Newton High School. The first of our three collections for the school year will be on **Sunday, September 10th**. The Body Shop is a method of providing high school students with personal care items and cleaning/hygiene supplies at no cost. The shop is free and open to any high school student.

The supplies that they can use include such things as shampoo and conditioners, razors and shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes, laundry detergent, feminine hygiene products, body wash and body spray. Sarah Patterson, the high school coordinator of the program, says that like teenagers everywhere, students prefer brand name and good smelling stuff. They also prefer body wash to bar soap. She has plenty of trial/hotel sizes and hopes that we will donate regular size products. You may place your donations in a box labeled “Body Shop” in the entryway. There will be tax deductible receipts in the box for your use.

Community Meals Restart

September is here, and that means the restart of our involvement in the Community Meals project. The chairpersons will remain the same: Bev Edge, meal preparation; April Faidley, desserts; and Marti Barker, workers. CUCC will be responsible for the third Wednesday of the month with volunteers needed from **5:00pm-7:00 pm** in the First United Methodist Church basement. **Wednesday, September 20th** will be our beginning date. When additional help is needed for meal preparation, Bev Edge will contact individuals with specific times.

If you want to have a heart-warming ♥ experience, please join the Blue Apron Crew as we spread God’s love by serving others in our community. All are welcome to participate in whatever way you can.



COMMUNITYMEALS

Blankets and Tools Offering

The Blanket and Tools offering will be received on **Sunday, September 10th**. This special offering is organized by the Service and Outreach Committee.

The organization that coordinates the use of the Blanket and Tools funds is Church World Service (CWS). You may remember that they also coordinate the Crop Walk. Their motto is "Our Work, Fighting Hunger & Poverty. Promoting Peace & Justice." They are involved with advocacy, help in emergencies, assisting in global development, and providing immigration and citizenship assistance. Some of their recent actions included providing blankets and hygiene kits in rugged, rural Colorado, and globally they shipped a 20-foot container to Serbia with blankets and kits. Please consider making a donation to help with those needs.



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>July Attendance</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Fifth Sunday	N/A	43

<u>August Attendance</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
First Sunday	41	N/A
Second Sunday	at 1 st Pres.	66 w/1 st Pres.
Third Sunday	43	22
Fourth Sunday	Worship Downtown	



Birthdays to Celebrate in September

- 3-Rick McNew
- 8-Ashley Christenson
- 9-Catfish Cottrell
- 10-Zach Johnson
- 12-Sonia Sledge
- 13-Steve Schober
- 15-Anna Mae Morgan
- 19-Collin McGinley
- 20-Christopher Pearson, Karen Shump
- 22-Julie Schmidt
- 23-Brian Schmidt
- 24-Clarence Planer
- 28-Gary Pearson



Anniversaries to Celebrate in September

- 7-Richard & Kay Hagedorn
- 8-Ron & Diane Marvelli
- 12-Jessica Petersen's church anniversary date
- 14-Jerry & Jamie Sawin
- 20-David & Kelly Currant
- 27-Gary & Janie Kahn
- 30-Gary & Lori Yoder

Take note...

Fuller Scholarship Recipient

One student has been awarded a Fuller Scholarship this year for a total of \$3,000. Scholarships are renewable for four years. The student receiving a scholarship this year is Eileen Gerken.

Eileen will be a junior and is attending the University of Iowa majoring in History and Museum Studies. After graduation, she hopes to work for the Smithsonian Museum. Her parents are John and Anne Gerken.

Eve Fuller fulfilled the wishes of her husband, Max, and her own, by leaving the bulk of their estate to our church to establish scholarships for the "youth" of our members. As stipulated in the will, to be eligible for these scholarships, the student and/or the student's parents must be a member of this church and the student's intention must be to complete a four-year program at an accredited college or university.

Since the inception of awarding these scholarships in 1996, a total of \$158,000 in scholarships has been awarded.



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 September

Date	September 3	September 10	September 17	September 24
Christian Calendar Date	Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost	Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost	Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost	Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Special Events	Communion			
Special Offerings	Food Pantry Donations	Body Shop Gifts Blankets & Tools Offering	JCARL Collection	
Greeters	Donna McCoy	Adam Hansch	Jane Ann Cotton	Norm & Pat Van Klompenburg
Ushers	Craig Armstrong, Adam Hansch	Duane Hobbs, Art Anderson	Jamie & Jerry Sawin	TBD
Lay Readers	Brent Parker	Larry Leitner	TBD	TBD
Scripture	Romans 12:9-21	Ezekiel 33:7-11	Matthew 18:21-35	Matthew 20:1-16
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 1st St. N.
Newton, IA 50208

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

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

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

Ann Raridon
St. Frances Manor
2021 4th Ave.
Grinnell, IA 50112

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

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



Cowboy Cookies ♥ Recipes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup margarine
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup golden brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups sifted flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups quick oats
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- Chopped nuts, if desired

DIRECTIONS

Cream margarine, sugars and vanilla. Add eggs. Mix dry ingredients together and add to other mixture. Mix well. Add chocolate chips and nuts (if desired). Bake on un-greased or parchment lined baking sheet at 400 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes.

Jean Townsend



Fresh Apple Spice Cake ♥ Recipes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 coarsely chopped apples
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 tsp cinnamon
 - 1/2 tsp nutmeg
 - 1/2 tsp allspice
 - 1 1/2 cup flour
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 egg
 - 1/2 cup oil
- Glaze:
- 1/2 to 1 cup powdered sugar
 - 2 to 3 T lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

Mix the following ingredients together: apples through allspice. Cover and let stand at least 3 hours (or overnight). Blend oil and unbeaten egg into apple mixture. Sift flour, soda and salt, add to other ingredients stirring until blended. Can also fold in raisins and nuts (optional).

Pour into greased and floured loaf pan. Bake at 350 for 50 to 55 minutes.

Mix powdered sugar and lemon juice together. Drizzle glaze over warm cake.

Jean Townsend



Sundays


7:35am "Into the Mystic" on KCOB
95.9 FM & 1280 AM

10:00am Worship

11:15am Fellowship Time

SEPTEMBER 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	01	02
03 Communion Food Pantry Donations	04 	05 5:00pm Worship & Music Mtg.	06 5:15pm Centering Prayer	07 5:00pm Bible Study	08	09
10 Body Shop Collection Blankets & Tools Offering 11:30am Service & Outreach Mtg.	11 12:15am PI Baking	12 10:30am PI Cleaning	13 5:15pm Centering Prayer 6:00pm Facilities & Finance Mtg.	14 5:00pm Bible Study	15	16
17 JCARL Collection	18	19 9:30am Morning Circle 5:15pm Centering Prayer 5:30pm Community Meal	20	21 5:00pm Bible Study	22	23
24	25 12:15am PI Baking	26 10:30am PI Cleaning 6:00pm Racial Justice Group	27 5:15pm Centering Prayer 6:00pm Church Council Mtg.	28 5:00pm Bible Study	29	30

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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) 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	792-3773 (Office) 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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United Church of Christ: www.ucc.org