

The Call

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More than we can IMAGINE

Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. We seek to equip and empower disciples to alleviate the suffering of others through disaster response, humanitarian aid, sustainable development and the promotion of mission opportunities.

The human imagination is pretty incredible.

Last fall, Week of Compassion staff and partners heard the dreams of teenage girls in Jakarta, Indonesia--unaccompanied refugees, without a permanent home. Their lives are filled with uncertainty and challenge, yet when they picture their futures, they imagine themselves as small business owners, artists, mothers, surgeons, and pilots.

The human imagination is also limited, bound by our finite human experience.

Sometimes the suffering of the world outpaces our ability to imagine new life. For many, 2017 was an apocalyptic year filled with unbelievable storms, earthquakes, fires, floods, and violence.

Together, we prayed for our neighbors in Puerto Rico, stood with, and gave to people and causes from next-door neighbors to global neighbors we will never meet. Even when we found it hard to envision recovery and new life, we accompanied our neighbors, strengthened by the assurance that God is working in, through, and beyond us.



First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
611 Clark Avenue, Ames, Iowa
Phone: (515) 232-5766
E-Mail: fccames@fccames.org, www.fccames.org

(Continued from page 1)

The same Apostle Paul who said that God is able to “accomplish abundantly more than we can ask or imagine” also put the work of building abundance squarely at our feet: “always seek to do good to one another and to all” (1 Thessalonians 5:15). Through thick and thin, when dreams abound and when our imaginations run dry, we continue to do good.

Your Week of Compassion gifts work “around the world, around the year” to bring more of God’s love and goodwill than we can ask or imagine.

You shared your compassion with families in South Texas and Puerto Rico who were impacted by hurricanes. During the year 2017, First Christian Church gave generously, in excess of \$1,900. You offered food and shelter to families as far away as Sierra Leone and Bangladesh who experienced the most severe floods of the century. You extended God’s care to refugees from Syria and Somalia. You imagined an unimaginable world -- God’s world -- for empowered women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia.

In grateful partnership, we offer again our thanks and rejoice in the abundant good work of the gospel. As we continue to walk together in compassion for others, let us be strengthened in the knowledge that God is able to “accomplish abundantly more than we can ask or imagine.”

—Liz Collazo for FCC and Week of Compassion Staff



The Week of Compassion Offering will be received on Sundays, February 18 and 25th. You may give on Sunday mornings in the designated envelopes, or online, at <https://docgeneralassembly.webconnex.com/weekofcompassion>.

Shop to help Week of Compassion with the Disciples Coffee Project

Started in 2008, the Disciples of Christ Fair Trade Project is a collaboration between Equal Exchange, Disciples Home Missions and Week of Compassion to involve more Disciples in supporting small farmers around the world.

Equal Exchange helps small farmers earn a sustainable income through fairly traded coffee, teas, chocolate and other food products. For each pound of fairly traded items Disciples purchase through the Fair Trade Project, 15 cents per pound goes to the Project's Small Farmer Fund. According to the Equal Exchange website, that fund amounted to \$1,363.75 in 2016 alone!

You can see the coffee, teas and others products available to order at the Equal Exchange website here: <http://shop.equalexchange.coop/> A new item is their "Sisters Blend" coffee which honors women coffee farmers who are active in their cooperatives and women across faith-based denominations in the U.S. who advocate for small farmers. You can also check out Equal Exchange's great list of [fair trade book and film picks](#) for the New Year.

Chocolate lovers: chocolate ordering is back!

Orders will be due by Monday, January 29. To place your order or ask any questions, please contact Stacey Maifeld at staceymaifeld@gmail.com or [515.520.9844](tel:515.520.9844). (To see the discount pricing we get for wholesale orders, you will either need to create a free login on the Equal Exchange website or Stacey can check on it for you).

In displaced persons camps in Northern Iraq, Week of Compassion helps provide food, water, medicine, and school for children like this young girl. [photo: Week of Compassion]



To diversify his crop and reduce risk from weather and pests, Pedro is planting new seedlings. [photo: Craig Thompson]

Lent Worship: Liberating Spirit!

Another Kind of Power

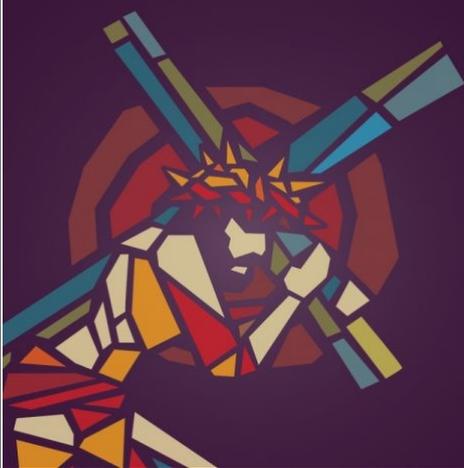
Our theme for 2017-18 is “Living Christ, Liberating Spirit, Loving Disciples – For Such a Time as This.” We began in the Fall focusing on “For Such a Time as This.” Then turned to “Living Christ” for Advent and Epiphany. In Lent we will focus on “Liberating Spirit! Another Kind of Power.” The Spirit of God, we sometimes say, is the power of God at work in us. It’s like the wind that keeps the turbines moving. The Spirit energizes and guides our steps in the way of Jesus. The power of the Spirit is decidedly different from other kinds of power, for it is the power of love in the flesh, living and breathing within and through us. That is its liberating quality. We may feel stuck in patterns of behavior and systems that oppress and degrade, and it is the Liberating Spirit that gives us the power to face that kind of power with a different, life-giving power. During Lent we will be exploring different aspects of that power as we take a microscope and look at the last week of Jesus life.

Each week during Lent we will focus on one day of Jesus’ last week. So, for example, the first Sunday in Lent we will study Palm Sunday. The next week the Monday of Holy Week, and so on. About a decade ago, before David Digby retired, he and I spent one Lent studying and preaching

from a book called, *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus’ Final Days in Jerusalem* By Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. That year we also took one week to explore each of Jesus’ last days. Doing that really helped give more time and attention to the events and mood that ended with Jesus’ death on a cross and being placed in a tomb. David Digby will lead the Adult Learning Class in a study of this book. If you have the book, maybe you want to get it out and read a chapter each week. If you don’t have the book, feel free to borrow or purchase one and read along. Following the structure of that book, we shift from Luke’s to Mark’s gospel. Though it would be interesting to read both and compare the similarities and differences of the two.

Lent is our time, like Jesus’ 40 days and nights in the wilderness, to prepare ourselves to receive the new life and vision of Easter. It begins on February 14th, Ash Wednesday and continues for 40 days and 40 nights (not counting the Sundays), ending with the close of Holy Saturday, just in time to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter. May this season open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to the power of God’s Liberating Spirit!

Pastor Mary Jane



Joint Services with United Church of Christ and First United Methodist Church

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Ash Wednesday</i> | February 14, 7 PM | At United Church of Christ |
| <i>Maundy Thursday</i> | March 29, 7 PM | At First United Methodist |
| <i>Early Easter Service</i> | April 1, 7 AM | Reiman Gardens |

Worship Schedule

Epiphany Worship
Living Christ!
Love on the Move



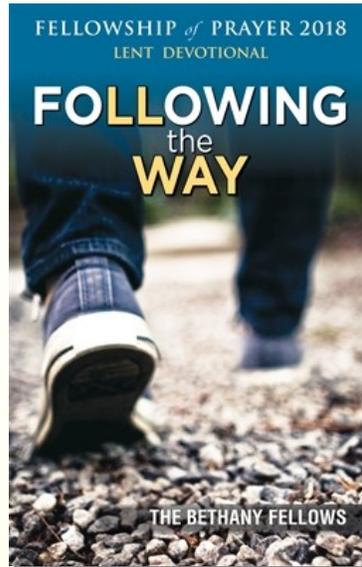
| | Title | Scripture |
|---------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Jan. 28 | Across to the Other Side | Luke 8:22-39 |
| Feb. 4 | On the way to Jerusalem | Luke 10:38-11:13 |
| Feb. 11 | In the Thick of It | Luke 14:7-35 |

Lent Worship
Living Christ!
Another Kind of Power



| | Title | Scripture |
|---------|--|-----------------------------|
| Feb. 18 | Palm Sunday Humility | Mark 11:1-11 |
| Feb. 25 | Monday Thoughtful Anger | Mark 11:12-19 |
| Mar. 4 | Tuesday Ubuntu (We Belong Together) | Mark 11:20-25; 27-33 |
| Mar. 11 | Wednesday Seeing | Mark 14:1-11 |
| Mar. 18 | Thursday With | Mark 14:12-72 |
| Mar. 25 | Friday/Saturday Dignity & Worth | Mark 15:1-47 |

Lenten Devotionals



What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? How do we walk with him along the way?

The earliest Christians were referred to as "followers of the way," and the prophet Isaiah spoke of what it would take to prepare the way for

the arrival of God's anointed one. A focus on the way of Jesus as laid out in John's Gospel helps us follow in his footsteps and see both his choices and priorities; reminders from Isaiah help us see that the way of Christ is rooted in justice.

Join us this Lent as we follow the way: the way to the Lord, the way of Jesus, the way to the cross...the way to new life. Each daily devotion includes a scripture, reflection, and closing prayer.

Following the Way is edited by Nanette Banks, Laura Phillips, and Lara Blackwood Pickrel, and written by The Bethany Fellows, a collection of pastors in the first five years of professional ministry.

Look for Lenten Devotionals in the coming weeks, in the Sanctuary, by church pews.



Opportunities to Serve

“ Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift... The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...” (Eph. 4:7;11)

Opportunities to serve:

- Sign up to be an Usher or Greeter in 2018. Contact Stacey Maifeld at stacey-maifeld@gmail.com or 515-520-9844.
- Help welcome baby Natalia Joy! Contact Dawn Heaberlin at 451-9618.
- **Volunteer with music or worship arts**, to be readers, writers, actors, musicians, singers, bell ringers for worship. Contact Tim Button-Harrison at 641-485-5604
- **Help out with Sound or Video**, on Sundays. Contact Janet Lott at jalott@isunet.net
- **Join FCC’s Food at First Core Group of Volunteers**, which serve every first Saturday of the month. Contact Cynthia Gaunt at cygaunt@hotmail.com.
- Be a faithful steward, and **fulfill your monthly pledge**.

Keep watching this box and respond as you are able. It takes a lot of people contributing their gifts to keep the ministry of FCC moving, growing and vital.

Regional News

Around the Region — Things We Do Together

*For more info or to register for events:
<http://www.uppermidwestcc.org/regional-newsletter-dte>*

Below, @CCC = held at the Christian Conference Center

Jan 22-24 Ministers Institute 2018
Jan 28 Regional Operations Council online
Feb 9-11 Junior Retreat at CCC
Feb 9-10 Committee on Ministry at CCC
Feb 23-24 CYF Midwinter Retreat
Feb 25 Regional Operations Council online
Mar 3 Camp Council at CCC
Mar 25 Regional Operations Council online
Mar. 30-Apr. 1 CCC Closed for Easter
Apr 21 Regional Property Committee
Apr 22 Regional Operations Council online
Apr 27-29 Work Retreat at CCC

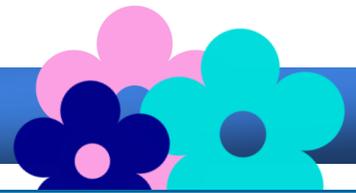


Theologian in Residence
Ames United Church of Christ
Friday, January 26, 6:00 pm
Saturday, January 27
Registration at 9:00 am

General
BOARD MEETING
Monday,
February 12, 2018
7 PM in the Coffee House

LENT BEGINS ON WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 14TH

There will be an
Ash Wednesday Service
at United Church of Christ
at 7PM



Church office hours are
9 am—2 pm
Monday-Thursday

Have a question?
Email Liz Collazo at:
fccames@fccames.org

Stewardship Report

| Giving in November | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Income: | \$16,291 |
| Expenses: | \$21,038 |
| Difference: | (\$4,747) |
| Disciples Mission Fund: | \$1,225 |
| Thanksgiving Offering | |
| Giving in December | |
| Income: | \$21,211 |
| Expenses: | \$17,321 |
| Difference: | \$3,890 |
| Disciples Mission Fund: | \$1,673 |
| Christmas Offering: | |

Welcome Natalia Joy!



Congratulations to Amanda and Dennis Mokaya on the birth of their new baby girl, Natalia Joy Mokaya, on December 26th. Natalia weighed in at 7 lbs, 9 oz.

In and Out of the Hospital: Gloria Carpenter, Bonnie Smith, Arlo Starbuck

Our Deepest Sympathies for:

The family of Mary Fitz, who passed away on Friday, January 19th, 2018, after a brief stay at the Northcrest Healthcare Unit. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested memorial donations to First Christian Church, Bethesda Community Food Pantry, or Heartland Senior Services.

Our deepest sympathies also go out to Deb Lewis, whose mother passed away on Sunday, December 17th, and to Cindy Ratliff, whose father John Arthur passed away on Sunday, January 21. There will be a visitation with the family on Friday, January 26, from 5-7 pm, in the Great Room, at FCC.

Hello from the Minister's Institute, 2018! From left to right: Darla Ewalt, Randy Allman, Pastor Mary Jane, Rev. Dr. Teresa Hord-Owens, General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Deb Lewis, Pastor Will Brown of Red Oak Church, David Digby, Pastor Anjeanette Perkins of Nevada First Christian Church, Traverce Harrison, and Janet Lott.



Welcoming Natalia

Please join us in welcoming baby Natalia, the newest addition to the Mokaya family. Natalia was born on December 26th, joining big sister Angela and mom and dad Amanda and Dennis (grandparents Cory and Roger Bertelsen)

We will be having an all church gathering following worship, in the Great Room to shower her with well wishes, during the Fellowship Coffee time on March 4th.

If you would like to contribute to a group gift, please give your contribution to me or drop it off with Liz in the church office.



Thank you,
Dawn Heaberlin
451-9618



OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY & DANUBE CRUISE

The Oberammergau Passion Play dates back to 1632 when the Plague swept through Europe. The people of this small German town prayed that their village be spared and vowed to perform a Passion Play. From that time there were no more deaths by plague in the village. The Oberammergau Passion Play is the longest-running play in the world. Performed every 10 years, the next performance is in 2020.

Rev. Sue and Jerry Woods, members of Ankeny Christian Church (DOC), are organizing a group to attend the Passion Play followed by a river cruise of the Danube through Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia. The trip will be in late June or July 2020.

If you are interested or would like more information, email revwoods.sw@gmail.com or call 515-577-4543 promptly to assure an early booking. This event sells out early. Once we have a group, an informational meeting will be held. Let's be Disciples Together!



Thank You!



What a year it has been! Between getting acclimated to the agency, participating in the first annual Reggie's Sleepout Ames, and beginning to develop a strategic plan, I have learned a lot this first year. There haven't been so many exciting changes as we continue to work towards alleviating homelessness in our community.

Some of the changes we made were to update and renovate the shelter. Through the assistance of community grants, donations, and volunteers, we purchased new beds and frames for the shelter, had our wood floors refinished, painted most of the shelter, and transformed storage space into meeting areas and offices. The shelter feels welcoming, inviting, and is better suited for the high demand we see daily.

The next change was reconfiguring the operations of the shelter and transitional housing program to better meet the needs of the clients served. We increased the length of time a client can access shelter, implemented the use of an assessment tool to identify the number of barriers a household may have to obtaining housing, and began using shelter diversion techniques. Staffing changes which included increasing the Transitional Housing Caseworker position to full-time and moving the Associate Director, Troy Jansen, to day shifts were made to provide more proactive and individualized services to the clients.

Our goals for 2017 include renovating our backyard and playground area, beginning a new federally funded rapid re-housing program, and working with partnering agencies to develop a coordinated entry system throughout the counties of Story, Boone, Marshall, and Hardin. A coordinated entry allows us to do a better job of triaging people experiencing homelessness and getting them con-

nected to the most appropriate program right away.

On behalf of our staff and volunteer Board of Directors, we sincerely thank you for your continued support of the Emergency Residence Project! We assisted 2,196 individuals through our various programs over this last year, and that would not be possible without you.

Sherri Reilly,
President
Emergency Residence Project
225 South Kellogg, Ames, IA 50010
(515) 232-8075
ERP@amesshelter.org
We are a 501c3 non-profit organization. Our tax ID number 42-1252893.

Thank you for all the notes, cards and gifts of presence during chemo sessions and my recent surgery. Your steadfast support has been an ever-present source of comfort and healing.

*Gratefully,
Janis Pyle*

Join us in Fellowship at FCC!



Wednesday Prayers

Wednesdays, at 12:15 PM
Coffee House



Spiritual Practices

Wednesday Nights, Great Room
6:30 – 7:30 PM
Community Worship
6:50-7:10 PM



Listening to God

Every Thursday, from 5:30—7 pm,
in the Great Room.
(except major holidays)



Sunday Fellowship

Learning Time, 9:15 AM
Worship, 10:30 AM



Coffee Fellowship

Every First Sunday of the month, after
worship, and the first two Sundays in July



Fellowship Dinner

Every Third Sunday of the month,
after worship



A mid-week time to refresh, renew, and recharge our spirits! Anyone can join in. You are invited to join us in

the Great Room on second floor for experiences to recharge your spirit.

Church Night Schedule:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 5:45 pm | Dinner available at Food at First – Fellowship Hall |
| 5:50 pm | Bells – Sanctuary Balcony |
| 6:30 – 7:30 pm | Labyrinth Walking, Posting Prayers, and other Spiritual Practices – Great Room. |
| 6:50 – 7:10 pm | Worship – Great Room |
| 7:15 – 8:15 pm | Singers – Sanctuary |

SECOND THURSDAY @ THE HUB

Connecting with God & One Another Every 2nd Thurs. of the month at 7 PM

Join us every second Thursday of the month for a casual time of fun, fellowship, and growing closer to God and one another. We will be meeting in The Hub, which is the space on Second Floor just outside the elevator doors.

Food at First

Free Meal Program +
Perishable Food Pantry



Meals

Sunday thru Friday 5:45 pm and Saturday at 11:30 am
(7 days a week)

FCC's Volunteers the 1st Saturday of every Month!
Contact Cynthia Gaunt for more information,
at cygaunt@hotmail.com.

Grocery Distributions

Monday and Thursday at 4:45 pm a
and Saturday at 10:00 am

Sign Up to Volunteer at <http://bit.ly/1tG7Xb2>

Calendar and Servant Schedule

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| <h1 style="font-size: 2em; color: #800040;">February</h1>  | | | | * Denotes birthday Chapel – 2 nd Floor BT = Bell Tower CH = Coffee House FH = Fellowship Hall LIB = Library | | |
| 28 9:15 am Learning Time 10:30 am Worship | 29 Disciples Coffee Order deadline! 10-11:30 am Ukuleleis Practice (CH) | 30 | 31 12:15 Prayers (CH) Wed. Night Church 5:45 Dinner with FAF 5:50 Bells Practice 6:30 Spirit. Practices 6:50 Worship 7:15 Singers Practice | 1 5:30-7pm Listening to God (Great Rm.) *Ed Gagnier | 2 *Mark Love | 3 9:30 – 1 pm FCC volunteers for Food at First (FH) *Eric Brown *Spencer Haley |
| 4 9:15 am Learning Time 10:30 am Worship followed by Coffee Fellowship | 5 10-11:30 am Ukuleleis Practice (CH) 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting (CR) | 6 6:30 pm Council of Ministries Meeting (HUB) | 7 12:15 Prayers (CH) Wed. Night Church 5:45 Dinner with FAF 5:50 Bells Practice 6:30 Spirit. Practices 6:50 Worship 7:15 Singers Practice | 8 5:30-7pm Listening to God (Great Rm.) 7 pm Second Thursday at The Hub *DeLores Hawkins | 9 *Karen Brenden *Mendy Pendry | 10 *Sharon Olson |
| 11 9:15 am Learning Time 10:30 am Worship *Suzanne Clark | 12 7:00 pm Board Meeting (LIB) | 13 7:15 pm Property Meeting (Library) *Nicole Mesenbrink | 14 LENT BEGINS 12:15 Prayers (CH) 7:00pm Ash Wed. Service at Ames UCC *Larry Mesenbrink | 15 5:30-7pm Listening to God (Great Rm.) 6:30 pm Faith Formation Team Meeting (HUB) | 16 *Cathy Crebs *Bill Pyle | 17 *Mary Gregory |
| 18 Week of Compassion Offering Received 9:15 am Learning Time 10:30 am Worship followed by Fellowship Dinner | 19 10-11:30 am Ukuleleis Practice (CH) Noon – The Call Deadline | 20 *Meg Knol-Digby | 21 12:15 Prayers (CH) Wed. Night Church 5:45 Dinner with FAF 6:50 Spirit. Practices 6:15 Worship | 22 5:30-7pm Listening to God (Great Rm.) | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Week of Compassion Offering Received 9:15 am Learning Time 10:30 am Worship | 26 10-11:30 am Ukuleleis Practice (CH) | 27 | 28 12:15 Prayers (CH) Wed. Night Church 5:45 Dinner with FAF 5:50 Bells Practice 6:30 Spirit. Practices 6:50 Worship 7:15 Singers Practice | 1 5:30-7pm Listening to God (Great Rm.) *Roger Bertelsen | 2 | 3 9:30 – 1 pm FCC volunteers for Food at First (FH) *Shane Wierson |

Servant Schedule

| | Ushers | Narthex | West Entry |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| February 4 | Kris & Larry Mesenbrink | Eric Wierson | Stacey Maifeld |
| February 11 | Kris & Larry Mesenbrink | Eric Wierson | Stacey Maifeld |
| February 18 | Ron & Dee Matthews | Carol Baker | Meg Knol-Digby |
| February 26 | Ron & Dee Matthews | Carol Baker | Meg Knol-Digby |

The people of First Christian Church accept these values as core...

Genuinely accept, welcome and love everyone as Jesus did.

Connect people to God and to one another.

Cultivate an environment where people grow in faith and discipleship.

Celebrate everyone's gifts for ministry and encourage people as leaders.

Minister in the community with God's healing love.

Staff at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Ames, IA:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Minister: | Mary Jane Button-Harrison |
| Minister of Worship & Discipleship: | Tim Button-Harrison |
| Minister of Worship Arts: | Janet Lott |
| Administrative Assistant: | Liz Collazo |
| Worship Musician: | Joseph Schwartz |
| Building Custodian: | Sherri Khan |
| Nursery Attendants: | Karen LeCount |
| Nursery Helper: | Savannah Roseman |

Return Service Requested

Website: <http://www.fccames.org/>

Fax: (515) 233-6294

Phone: (515) 232-5766

Ames, Iowa 50010-6137

611 Clark Avenue

(Disciples of Christ)

First Christian Church