Urbandale
United
Church of
Christ

A Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation

January 2021~CALL

Ponderings from your Pastor…

Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness. (Isaiah 43:18-19, The Common English Bible)

This year's calendar change from December to January will come with a healthy dose of "Thank God THAT'S over!" So much about 2020 had to simply be endured that any retrospective or "Top Ten ____ of 2020" will be somber at best. We are tempted to think that 2021 will bring a return to normalcy, but those of us who have changed calendars a lot know that we can rarely, if ever, go back to the way things used to be. We cannot undo what has happened, because people have died, jobs have been lost, and savings wiped out. Promises have been made and broken, responsibilities shirked, and callous, hateful things said. We will not soon forget these.

I'm pretty sure the Exiles in Babylon hoped they could go back to what they remembered of their lives in Jerusalem. But when the prophet Isaiah begins to give them hope for restoration, he cautions them, using God's voice, that remembering how it used to be will not help. Dwelling on "ancient history" will only mire people in what cannot be changed. It is time to embrace the new thing that God is doing and move boldly into the future.

As the coming year unfolds, we may find that we can begin to congregate again in our building. But we have learned how to manage a live-streamed service, and we would be foolish to give that up. In November, that service had an average of 400 views (ok, so some of them were my family, but still…) so we would be foolish to give that up. We may find that we can again open up the church office. But we have discovered that we can do more work in other locations than we thought possible. Do we really need to staff an office 30 or 40 hours a week? In our pre-COVID mode, we did most of our decision-making by bringing people to our building to have a meeting. But there are other ways to "meet" and we will likely make use of those as well.

Make no mistake, there are significant aspects of our mission and ministry that cannot happen without at least some people together in the same room. The sense of unity that we experience when we work together on a project or eat together, or hold someone's hand or smile happily, cannot be replicated on a screen or in a mailing. Yet, the God we serve is a God of new beginnings. As those new things "sprout" among us, we need to figure out what God is doing and how we might get on board with it.

I have already had to write "2021" several times. Normally that takes some getting used to and I grumble a bit when I forget and write the previous year. I don't expect it to be much of a problem this year. I am glad to see the back of 2020. But I don't expect the new year to be like 2019. It is a new year, all its own. It will bring new challenges and new delights. My resolution is to stay open to the new things that God is calling us to and be attentive to what God is doing.

Amen

Pastor Dave

January 2021

January 2021

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2021

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec 27	28	29	30	31	Jan 1, 21 New Year's Day	2
3 10:00am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Hour	4	5	6 7:00pm Worship Team	7 7:00pm Budget Team	8	9 9:00am Bowtie Boyz
10 10:00am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am PreK-5th Grade SS	11	12	13	14 7:00pm Leadership Team	15	16 9:00am UUCC Women
17 10:00am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Hour	18	19	20 6:45pm Confirmation Class	21	22	23 9:00am Bowtie Boyz
24 10:00am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am PreK-5th Grade SS	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:00am Worship 10:30am Annual Congregation Budget Meeting	Feb 1	2	3	4	5	6

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION, 2021

Mark your calendars for our congregational annual budget meeting **January 31st** immediately following worship via Zoom. We will be voting on the 2021 budget.

Please register in advance for the meeting: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0lc-yvqDkoH9zkFISH2SI6kVGGSc6V346C. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Preschool-5th Grade Sunday School Zoom Meetings
January 10th & 24th at 11:30am

Please 'Zoom' in from the comfort of your own home to join Jill Hamilton and Rev. Amy as we share curriculum on the liturgical season of Epiphany from Illustrated Ministries. We will take some time to check in and engage the curriculum.

Please reach out to Rev. Amy if you have any questions, amy.murray@urbucc.org.
Please register in advance and join us on the Zoom links below:

January 10, 2021
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEucumprT0iH9EQNEOqUWN9valfLbRbdax3

January 24, 2021
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0oceCvrzkiGtB4uCKEm4K8ongMbI1qeVst

January Team Zoom Meetings

- Wednesday, January 6th at 7:00 pm ~ Worship Team
- Thursday, January 7th at 7:00 pm ~ Budget Team
- Saturday, January 9th at 9:00 am ~ Bowtie Boyz
- Thursday, January 14th at 7:00 pm ~ Leadership Team
- Saturday, January 16th at 9:30 am ~ UUCC Women
- Saturday, January 23rd at 9:00 am ~ Bowtie Boyz

Prayer Shawl Ministry Enters Its 18th Year!

Yes, it's true. The close of the 2020 Christmas season marks the entering of a new year for PSM (acronym for Prayer Shawl Ministry).

Ol' time UUCC members often are familiar with PSM and how it works. However, new members or friends of UUCC may not know much about this ministry at all. Also, you may not know the ministry is ongoing in spite of the pandemic! In short, here is what you will want to know about PSM.

*PSM's purpose is "to blanket our community with God's love, healing and comfort."

*Prayers shawls are available for anyone who is going through a difficult time such as a loss of a loved one, a serious health issue or surgery, a separation or divorce, or a transitional life change.

*The best way to request a prayer shawl during COVID-19 is to email: prayer.shawls@urbucc.org or call the church office with information. The ministry then processes the shawl soon after.

*Please be aware shawls may be given to persons outside our community (over a third of our over 725 shawls fall in this category!) Many prayers are raised for relatives and friends going through difficult struggles due to health, loss, etc. during our service prayer time. A prayer shawl is likely appropriate for any of these folks.

*A donation to the ministry is appreciated at any time as all funds go to purchasing yarn for the making of future shawls.

*Also, any shawl can remain confidential!

Have questions? Ask any of our church staff or email or call Barb Woodsmall or Carol Looney.

In summary, our Prayer Shawl Ministry is there for YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES. Please consider using this in 2021 and helping to "blanket our community with God's love".

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are invited and welcome here."

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

10:00 am ~ Worship, Facebook Live Steam 10:30 am ~ Fellowship Hour

The Rev. David P. Sickelka, Senior Pastor.....david.sickelka@urbucc.org
The Rev. Amy Murray, Ministry Program Coordinator..... amy.murray@urbucc.org
Steven Linn, Music Program Director..... steven.linn@urbucc.org
Bobby Stinnett, M.M., Organist,
Children/Youth Choirs and Handbells Director .....bobby.stinnett@urbucc.org
Sophiap Eng-Swanson, Office Coordinator.....staff@urbucc.org
Sadmir & Umihana Omerhodzic, Custodians.....sadmir.omerhodzic@urbucc.org

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