

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



URBANDALE UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
a just world for all

A Just Peace and Open and Affirming Congregation

August 2023

The CALL



Ponderings From Your Pastor

Dear Church,

August is a month in which many are pushing to finish their summer activities and a month to dive into planning for the fall. I am in both camps!

I will be on vacation August 16-22. It has been a couple of years since I was able to get to Washington to see my daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren. I am excited to see the mountains and, maybe, some salt water, and to reconnect with this part of my family.

Many of my thoughts are directed towards the program year and what can happen next. As the Pastoral Search Team gets their feet on the ground, the congregation's work is to keep being the church! Keep going on ideas that have sprung up like creating a Banned Book Library and Distribution, gatherings to meet and eat, and considering possible changes in the building. Grab onto ideas like the Q&A Youth Group that help build community connections and let us do more than we can do alone. Plan for fun, create joy, serve from the heart, and live love out loud. Transitions happen all the time. God created change. Change demands creativity. Sometimes we choose the direction of the change we want to see. Sometimes we jump into the boat and go with the flow. The intentional part of this transition is complete although there are some leftover pieces from the intentional time. The work continues.

At the Leadership Team Retreat on July 22, the Team wrestled with the question: "how do we get done what we want and need to do." That is not a question that can be answered in 45 minutes! The Team focused on two particular areas.

How do we improve our community engagement through social media? This begins with updating our website. Is this something you are interested in? Are we using our Facebook page and members' group to the best advantage? Is there another form of social media that we would benefit from using?

How can we connect with and inform people who have a particular interest in areas of justice and service? This means using Realm, our database system, to greater advantage. There will be more coming about getting on Realm, how to use it, and how to be in groups for information sharing and action.

This congregation has emerged over the last year and half as one that is not simply surviving. You are lively and vital to your neighbors. You care and you have passionate responses to the needs around you. You laugh and work together. You are willing to try new things. You, above all else, are beloved.

Blessings, Pastor Coqui

Moment with the Moderator

Making All Things New Isaiah 43: 18-19

This theme was everywhere at General Synod and the focus of the worship and theology moments, so I spent a lot of time reflecting on what that means. How do we look at life, community, climate, justice, etc. in new ways? The resolutions we worked on in committee and passed during the business meeting were a focus on doing new things. We are working on ways to share this information during the program year. We elected a new General Minister and President, Karen Georgia Thompson, the first woman to fill that role! If you have the opportunity to attend a General Synod, I highly recommend it. I met new friends, experienced new ways of doing things, and heard amazing speakers! For a full re-cap, check out the information on the national website: <https://www.ucc.org/general-synod-34-highlights/>

Thank you to the Leadership Team for pulling together an excellent Pastoral Search Team! Leadership Team appointed the Search Team July 22 and the Church commissioned them in worship on July 30. The Search Team members are: Bob Brandhorst, Diane Dornburg, Sandy Gahn, Wilona Keeler, Carol Looney, Jessica Lown, Mark Siegel, Joe Walters, Bonita Wiley and David Yurdin. Please thank them and keep them in your prayers as they begin this important work.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, Aug. 13 for a congregational meeting following worship to vote on the bylaws. We did make one minor change to the bylaws from those published in May. We defined the Leadership Team to better coordinate our bylaws with our articles of incorporation. The bylaws will be sent separately, so watch for those. Thank you to all who worked so hard to update these! Being community both internally and externally is an important part of who we are as the Church. It was fun to see the community built during VBS. Thank you to all who participated! The work of the Refugee Ministry Team is important in so many ways, and I know the team appreciates all the donations (both monetary and physical items) you've entrusted the Team with! Finally, the school community was thankful for the school supply items that we delivered this week to Karen Acres as they start school. The school supply drive continues until Aug. 20, so if you still want to help our neighbors start school with everything they need, there is still time!

Let's be the Church together!

In Christ's Service,
Jennifer Gardner
Moderator

SPECIAL MEETING of the congregation



The Leadership Team has called a special meeting of the congregation

following worship on August 13.

The only item of business at this meeting is to

vote on the proposed By-Laws.

This vote was delayed at the Annual Meeting in June so that some legal points could be checked. That has happened and the vote can go forward.

Please come to worship and stay for the brief meeting.

What is Happening at UUCC this Month?

A Month of Sundays

Our People's Choice Hymn Sing continues through August. We take suggestions of favorite hymns and sing a verse or two of several hymns. Make a joy-filled noise!

Date	Scripture	Theme
August 6	Matthew 14:13-21	What to Do with Leftovers; Hiroshima Day of Remembrance
August 13	Matthew 14:22-23	Rocking Boats
August 20		Rev. Kendy Miller preaching
August 27	Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20	What's That You Say?

Pastor Coqui will be on vacation from August 16-22. Urgent pastoral care needs will be managed through the office.

Youth Update

Q&A Youth Group

Q&A stands for Queer and Affirming. Q&A stands for Questions and Answers. New Beginnings Christian Church and Downtown Disciples invited Urbandale UCC to be part of an ecumenical effort to create a progressive youth group for elementary, middle school, and high school youths. Okay, that turns out to be several groups. All the congregations involved are Open and Affirming Congregations – a description used by the United Church of Christ and by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

A planning group has been meeting since June to give shape to the idea of a shared ministry.

Right now, the plan is to have gatherings on Wednesday evenings twice a month. A meal will be served followed by program activities focused on key shared values like justice and kindness. During that time, there will be space for parents and caregivers to have supportive conversations.

The group is committed to meeting at a site other than one of our church buildings for several reasons. First, Downtown Disciples doesn't have a church building. Second, when one group "owns" the space others never feel completely welcome. Third, we know that religion may have cast youth out for being themselves and we want them to find a welcoming space.

There will be plenty of opportunities for volunteers from each of the congregations. There will be a need to set up space, prepare and serve food, and supervise participants. We will need group leaders for the program time for three different groups. Our hope is that we can have a friendly face from each congregation with each group, at least at the beginning. We may need extra help cleaning up at the end of the evening.

This is a very exciting opportunity for us and our youths. Stay tuned.

Announcements

Beware of any text messages or emails that ask you for information or favors from Pastor Coqui. A number of suspicious texts have been sent listing her name. If you suspect a problem, contact Coqui directly before taking any action.

JUANITA BAKER CELEBRATION OF LIFE

As many of you know, Juanita Baker passed away this past April. Her family has decided to hold her celebration of life on her 99th Birthday, August 12, at 10:00 am, here at Urbandale UCC.

You may find a copy of her obituary [HERE](#).

<https://www.cremation-society.com/obituaries/Juanita-Baker?obId=27700743>

CHILD CARE - HELP WANTED

Good news! Urbandale UCC would like to reopen our Sunday morning nursery and childcare on September 10. We are seeking a reliable, caring individual to staff the nursery.

Are you 18 or older and interested in a Sunday morning position caring for the young children of Urbandale UCC? Hours: 8:45 a.m. to noon. There may be times you would be asked to stay later because of a meeting or special event. You will be responsible for children up to seven years old. At all times, a second volunteer adult will be present with you. This is a paid position.

If you are interested, email Pastor Amy, amy.galarowicz@urbucc.org.

BANNED BOOK GROUP

At the last All-church meeting, we discussed our next project to work to support LGBTQIA+ youth and have a mobile banned bookmobile. Bonita Wiley and Sandy Gahn agreed to co-lead the group. Bonita and Sandy met with a representative from Annie's Foundation, a nonprofit organization that is providing banned books and education about banned books to central Iowa. We learned that they are willing to work with us to provide books and lists of banned books.

We need to determine who wants to work on this project, create a proposal for Anne's Foundation Board of Directors, and define where we want to focus our efforts. First, we need to gather the group. Bonita and Sandy would like to meet briefly after church on Sunday, August 6th to find out who wants to be included in this effort. Once we have the names and contact information for the interested group, we will schedule another meeting time to delve into the details. So, all we need is to know who is on board.

Please join us after church for a very short meeting on Sunday, August 6. If you want to join us but aren't available that day, please send an email expressing your interest to swgahn@gmail.com and bonitawiley30@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBER MEETUPS

We are offering new member meetups on Wednesday evenings in August. We will gather at 6 pm, share a light meal, and cover the following topics:

- Aug 9 - Sharing our Spiritual Journeys
- Aug 23 -Introducing the United Church of Christ
- Aug 30 - The UCC Community

To attend, write at membership@urbucc.org, or call Jon at 515-343-0998. Let us know who will attend, and whether you require childcare.

Separately, we can also post the following:

Childcare Help Needed! Help support the Membership team and our summer classes. Help is needed 6 to 7 pm on Aug 9, Aug 23, and Aug 30. Reply to membership@urbucc.org, or speak to church staff.



SUMMER COFFEE HOUR

What happens when you are sitting around a table in the fellowship hall eating cake and drinking coffee after church? Ideas begin to pop!!



Susie Griffith-Tierney and Lynne Busch Rae will be hosting the last coffee hour on August 13 after Sunday Worship. Plan on staying for good food, fun, and fellowship!! Each one will have fresh baked sweet goodies from Lynne's kitchen with sides of fruit or quiche!!

We hope to see all y'all!

THE MUSES



The MUSES – Renée Janski, S.J. Tucker, Ginger Doss, Lynda Millard

Soul-siblings & singer-songwriters come together to rock your world: hippie warrior Ginger Doss, groove goddess Lynda Millard, blues priestess Renée Janski, and pixie queen S. J. Tucker! There will be rock. There will be jazz. There will be truth, tears, laughter, and more. Join us for a multi-instrumental, full-spectrum harmony driven performance like no other, featuring original songs by each band member, as well as old favorites brought to new life. #MusesontheRoad. Get on board.

Tuesday, August 15, 2023, 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$20-\$40 (more if you can, less if you can't) and may be purchased at the door or on Facebook:

<https://fb.me/e/QUEf617K>

Location:

Urbandale United Church of
Christ 3530 70th St.
Urbandale, Iowa 50322

Questions? Email
roodoc@hotmail.com



Article by Heather Fogle

Suds of Love

"I haven't been able to wash my clothes in a washing machine for over three years. I have been washing them in my sink. I will take my clean clothes home and sit down and cry."

St. Paul Congregational United Church of Christ in Oskaloosa is offering a powerful ministry of love and hospitality they call "Suds of Love." St. Paul member Heather Fogle and Pastor Rev. Melissa Sternhagen were instrumental in starting this project. Suds of Love strives to improve the community by connecting with people in a place where everyone is welcomed-serving all people by providing free laundry, cleaning supplies, hygiene items, and food so everyone can meet their basic needs. All are worthy. There are no criteria to meet, and no strings attached. Come as you are and support each other.

I had heard about towns who would provide quarters, soap, and dryer sheets at a local laundromat for those in need. I spoke with and observed a group in Newton, IA who did this. I talked with Pastor Melissa Sternhagen, about doing this in Oskaloosa. She loved the idea and had me talk with the church council. They were excited and gave me about a month and a half to get it scheduled and going. Pastor Melissa gave wonderful insight and guidance in getting this off the ground and the congregation of St. Paul was beyond supportive with time, money, and prayers.

We started off doing this every other month providing quarters, soap, dryer sheets and a small amount of hygiene items. We have grown into every month and now provide a large list of hygiene items, cleaning supplies, snacks, and bread. We just started providing free transportation to and from Suds of Love for those who need it. We have served families, college students, veterans, individuals, those living in hotels, cars and on the street. We have many people who come every month and it is truly becoming a family.

Hope and love are spreading through people one load of laundry at a time

Local businesses and individuals have donated generously. We have partnered with First Christian Church and have a group, the Suds Buds, that heads up Suds of Love. The Grinnell, Iowa UCC is starting their own Suds of Love and another church in Sigourney, IA is starting a Suds of Love there.

Besides our volunteers, sponsors, and patrons, our biggest strength is our "no strings attached" policy. Word is spreading through out the community and surrounding communities. And more importantly, hope and love are spreading through people one load of laundry at a time.

Drop in during a Suds of Love event!! It is from 4:00-7:00 pm the last Thursday of every month at Stop-N-Go Laundromat, 1308 A Ave. East, Oskaloosa. And another way to connect with us is to look on Facebook, Suds of Love- Oskaloosa, IA.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086912191181>

"Love is the whole thing. We are only the pieces."- Rumi

Heather Fogle

Now Accepting
Announcements & Information for
September CALL

DEADLINE

**MONDAY, AUGUST 28
@ 3 PM**

Please email the info to Abby at staff@urbucc.org

If we do not get your CALL submission by August 28
then it may not be included in the CALL

NOTE FROM ABBY:

I will begin my August 1st, and my classes will start Monday, August 21. The times when I will be in the office will be posted outside the office door and in the weekly Friday email. I appreciate your patience with me while I figure out my new schedule.

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE - SUMMER

10:00 am ~ Worship

The Rev. Coqui Conkey, Senior Pastor coqui.conkey@urbucc.org
The Rev. Amy Galarowicz, Ministry Program Coordinator..... amy.galarowicz@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
Abigail Sinclair, Communications and Office Coordinatorstaff@urbucc.org
Sadmira & Umihana Omerhodzic, Custodians sadmira.omerhodzic@urbucc.org

**Flexible Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
~ Check Before Coming ~**

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