

# The Voice

The Newsletter of the Cedar Falls United Church of Christ December 12, 2017.

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## Caroling this Friday at 5 p.m.

Dear Family and Friends of Cedar Falls UCC,

“I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” (Luke 2:10) This joy is for all and is meant to be shared with everyone. Does Christ bring you joy? Isaac Watts wrote a hymn in 1719 entitled, “Joy to the World”. “Joy” to the World. It isn’t joy to just this nation or to just Caucasians. It is joy to all.

The angel said, “I bring you good news.” Do you need some good news in your life? Have you thought about how you can re-gift the joy that you have by giving it to someone else.

Joy can be a barometer to our relationship to God. No matter what our circumstances are, no matter whether we are financially broke, or physically hurting, we can have joy. Janice and I went to a one man presentation of the Christmas Carol and I have watched many years one version or another of Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol. One of the bits of wisdom I am reminded of by this story is that Christmas (the birth of Christ) is a reminder to make room inside for JOY and to be a joy giver. How are you giving joy this year? How are you receiving Joy? If I am full of complaints and dissatisfaction, then I tend to crowd out joy and love and peace.

We are meeting at the church on **December 15<sup>th</sup> (Friday) to go Christmas Caroling.** We hope this will bring joy to the singers and audience. If you are interested, then please meet at the church at **5 p.m.** If you don’t want to go singing but would be willing to make hot chocolate, help with refreshments, join us at the church at 6 p.m. We will enjoy some soup and sandwiches together.

Chris Merz has invited us to go to the jazz club downtown Cedar Falls at 9 p.m. for more Christmas music jazz style. Sunday we were so blessed to enjoy The Hands of Time play for our worship service. The food for the brunch was good too. Thank you all! Thanks to the clean up crew too!

Our focus this Sunday will be on Joy. Two men of great faith that have inspired my faith journey is the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In the Book of Joy which shares their wisdom they share thoughts about pillars of joy: four that are qualities of mind and four that are qualities of heart. Come and join us this Sunday for sharing this joy.

On December 17<sup>th</sup> Janice and I will be hosting an open house that we would enjoy you dropping by from 2 – 5 p.m. No gifts

please. We just would enjoy your company so let your presence be the present!

On December 24<sup>th</sup> we are having 2 worship services. At 10:15 a.m. we will have our 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Celebration and that evening at 7 p.m. we will celebrate the birth of Christ.

We are so blessed to have a God who loves us and sent Jesus to dwell among us. May this season be a celebration of life and love. For some people the Christmas season is difficult. Let's remember to pay attention to each other with extra kindness and patience. Let's remember to listen to one another.

On December 19<sup>th</sup> I turn 60 years old. Wow! I am excited. What is it about decades and marking our time line?

May God's love bring us together and may God's grace hold us together. We are making a difference where we can and how we can. You can make the church stronger. Invite and bring friends to worship. God bless you! God is awesome! God loves you!

In Christ we serve,  
Pastor Sue

**FULLY RELY ON GOD!**



### **THANK YOU NOTES**

Thank you to all those who are faithfully coming to church. Your presence is a gift you give!

### **President's Message**

The Church Council met on November 27 and put together a preliminary budget for 2018. The next step is a pledge drive which will commence this next Sunday. We'll be handing out pledge cards to all members in church this Sunday, December 3. All members not in church will receive their cards in the mail next week. Please return your pledges to us by December 17, that's 2 weeks. The Council meets again on December 18<sup>th</sup> and will finalize the budget then for presentation to the congregation in January. Please consider a small increase in your pledge. Even a 5% increase in each pledge from last year's pledges would amount to \$1800, a significant amount in our budget.

The church owns seven cemetery spaces. We have 2 spaces at Garden of Memories and 5 spaces (4 of them together and one by itself) at Cedar Valley Memorial Gardens. We are seeking input into what to do with them. We are considering selling them.

Sincerely,  
Larry Bucholz, Council President-

### **United Fellowship**

First Thursday of the month meeting date, time varies according to location. We enjoyed going to Barn Happy near Cedar Falls on our Dec. outing. There was 9 of us!

If you are available on the first Thursday of the month, join us in our food and fellowship adventures.

The next voice will have our January outing location.

**Special Offering The Christmas Fund  
A United Church of Christ Offering**

This special offering is taken at Christmas time to benefit the servants of God. So many clergy have spent their life serving churches and are now retired or disabled and living in poverty or encountering expenses that they can't pay.

**Morning Circle**

Next meeting is December 21<sup>st</sup>.  
Morning Circle meets at 9:30 a.m.  
on the Third Thursday

We will be filling and delivering our cheer boxes. Thank You.

That night we are invited to a service at the Mennonite church of The Longest Night.

**Cedar Falls UCC Foster Children's Closet  
(Kaden's Kloset)**

In November we were able to help around 25 families. "Thank you" to all those who have made this ministry possible.

**Church Community News**

December 21<sup>st</sup> 7 p.m. Longest  
Night Service @ Cedar Falls  
Mennonite Church

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**A new support group** for transgender/  
gender nonconforming has meetings in  
the Waterloo and Charles City areas.  
For more information go to:  
[www.transcend.lgbt](http://www.transcend.lgbt) or e-mail someone  
at: [contact@transcend.lgbt](mailto:contact@transcend.lgbt) or phone:  
319-359-7774

**On-going and UPCOMING EVENTS**

The United Church of Christ has launched a new partnership invitation to all our churches. At the last General Synod they began the "3 Great Loves" initiative –an initiative that focuses on Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation. "...And the greatest of these is love." (–a quote from 1 Corinthians 13:13) There may be no greater calling in today's ministry than the call to love. 3 Great Loves is a denomination-wide effort that about engaging the UCC to take action and to show the impact of the UCC, working together as one church, with one voice and one vision – a vision of A Just World for All.

Our General Minister and President, John C. Dorhauer, invites us to consider supporting the 3 Great Loves initiative over the next 2 years by planning activities around the following time line for each of the Loves: 1. NOW through the Spring of 2018 – Love of Neighbor: whether it is a neighbor in need who lives next door or on the other side of the world, many are faced with the need for protection, shelter, and support. 2. Summer 2018 – Winter 2019 – Love of Children: children in many families and neighborhoods need school supplies to overcome inequalities in our education systems. 3. Spring of 2019 – Love of Creation: taking care of our environment is one of the most important responsibilities we have as the Church.

You can learn more about 3 Great Loves at [www.3greatloves.org](http://www.3greatloves.org). Do you have any activities you would like to see happen that might be focused on in these 3 time suggestions?

We celebrate the many joys in the life of our church family. These major events are precious and give us new life. If you have an event you want to share with the rest of our church family, please send it to: [cedarfallsucc@gmail.com](mailto:cedarfallsucc@gmail.com)

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

An Open and Affirming Congregation

“Listening to God with open minds.

Welcoming all with open arms.”

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