

# The Voice

The Newsletter of the Cedar Falls United Church of Christ February 13, 2018.

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## Lent begins February 14<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday

Dear Family and Friends of Cedar Falls UCC,

We experience an interesting event this year. Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day. Easter is on April 1<sup>st</sup> (April fool's day).

Lent is a time of reflection. How honest are we regarding our life and relationship with God? Are we willing to clear away our pretense? Are we open to receive God's gift of mercy and grace? It is an opportunity for us to pause in our busyness to walk with Jesus to the cross. Our journey of faith continues through Lent. So I will be preaching a series during Lent. I will be inviting us to reflect specifically on our story and how it intersects with the story of Jesus. Beginning Ash Wednesday and continuing through Good Friday, we will be reflecting on specific questions. These questions will seek to deepen our relationship to God.

Lent is often a time in Christian history when we encourage our fellow sojourners to choose a spiritual discipline and practice it. What are the spiritual practices that you have learned about and practiced? Do you currently exercise a spiritual discipline? For those who can healthily fast, fasting is encouraged during this time. I appreciate

Pope Francis' encouragement for all of us to practice fasting. I put his statement here:

### **Thoughts for Lent Do you want to fast this Lent? From Pope Francis**

- \*Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- \*Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- \*Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- \*Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- \*Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- \*Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- \*Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- \*Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- \*Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- \*Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- \*Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- \*Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

Another spiritual discipline is prayer. I invite you to set aside a special time every day for prayer. Prayer that listens not just speaks.

We are invited during Lent to clean out our pipes. The work of repentance and self-examination, the work of prayer, fasting, and self-denial, scripture study and other spiritual writings is to clear a channel through which the grace and favor and Spirit of God can flow into our hearts, minds, souls, and our whole being through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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!**



### **Workshop Re-scheduled**

Learning to Read the Bible Workshop  
February 24, 2018 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.  
The Bible is a very strange book! How can we read it faithfully but expansively? What assumptions do we hold, often unconsciously, that influence how we read? There are various ways to read scripture: how can we move beyond labeling some right and some wrong? How does this book relate to our 21<sup>st</sup> century lives? What do we do with some of the uglier verses, like Leviticus 20:9 (If your children talk back to you, stone them)?

We will be inviting anyone who wants to come a bit early on Wednesday evenings (6:15 p.m.) to join us in praying together. We will be praying for things that have been mentioned in worship and anything new.

### **THANK YOU NOTES**

To Pastor Sue and Members of the UCC,

Thank you for the get-well cards. I truly appreciate it. My surgery went well. I have been pain-free! I will now have to follow up with an oncologist for further treatment options.

-Linda Jernigan-

### **Morning Circle**

February 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. Morning Circle will discuss the book, "Aging as a Spiritual Practice" by Lewis Richmond.

Morning Circle meets at 9:30 a.m. on the Third Thursday of the month

### **United Fellowship**

March 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:45 a.m. United Fellowship will be meeting at Cottonwood Canyon at 419 Washington Street downtown Cedar Falls. They have excellent wraps, salads, sandwiches and soups.

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

Our closet continues to be used each week, some weeks more than others. I receive many comments of appreciation for this ministry.

## Community Events

The Wars of the Reformation: Why They Still Matter presented by Dr. Charlotte Wells Associate Professor of History, UNI hosted by The Canterbury Forum. When: Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. Where: St Luke's Episcopal Church 2410 Melrose Drive, Cedar Falls, IA

Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church is hosting a 1 day local church retreat. \$25 per person. Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. A continental breakfast, treats and lunch are included.

They are also one of the hosts for Teen Serve coming this summer. More information is on our bulletin board.

### **UCC Beyond our Local Church**

#### **West Central R/Y/E Regional Youth Event 2018**

When: June 19-22, 2018  
Where: Grinnell College  
Learn more by going to: [rye2018.org](http://rye2018.org)

### **Upcoming Workshop**

March 3 – Workshop “Poetry as Prayer”  
9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Poetry can be prayer, and can serve as a catalyst for the spiritual journey. Poems can help us explore the movement of Spirit in our own lives. The poems we will look at today will speak to our deepest yearnings and greatest fears and name our elusive hopes, our surprising courage, and our persistent dreams. We will hear/read many poems, but this is not a study of poetry; rather in the poetry, exercises and practices that we'll share, we'll discover a tool for deepening our prayer life and our walk with God.

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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