

The Voice

The Newsletter of the Cedar Falls United Church of Christ February 27, 2018.

One Great Hour of Sharing More than we can imagine

Dear Family and Friends of Cedar Falls UCC,

“Now to God be the glory, who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine.” Ephesians 3:20.

One Great Hour of Sharing is taken every March. This offering provides information for us to consider. “It is easy to feel overwhelmed when we look at all the areas of need in God’s world: there is hunger, sickness, and injustice in so many communities. It is easy to feel there is nothing we can do to help. We can feel trapped by hopelessness and fear that what little we can do – won’t have an impact. But there is hope! Better yet: we are that hope!”

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said that “we are the agents of transformation that God uses to transfigure this world.” One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is promoted not only by our wider church but in other denominations as well. “Our gifts become part of a loving legacy in ways we can’t foresee. Our gifts become blessings to people we don’t know and blesses in ways we can’t expect. We can make a difference beyond what we can imagine.”

As the Apostle Paul writes, “by the power at work within us,” God is able to “accomplish

abundantly more than we ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20). Offering envelopes are available at church.

When Rembrandt painted his famous work of the crucifixion called “The Three Crosses” which I think hangs in the Louve in Paris did something most unusual. Among the faces in the crowd beneath the cross, he painted himself. That seems to be his way of saying that he could not envision the crucifixion without admitting that he had a participation in it. Most of us identify with the Christ on the cross, rather than the Rembrandt in the crowd.

It seems that we are sacrificing our children as we stand by and watch. I admit I feel powerless with all the gun violence. I think of the children and teachers hanging on the cross (innocent, yet paying the cost of indifference). I am in the crowd like Rembrandt watching it happen. How about you?

I don’t have the solution/s, but think it is important to be talking about it and working together to solve the issues without name calling, without yelling at one another, and without pitting one issue against another. What do you think?

During the time of Lent, we continue to reflect and go deeper on our faith journey. We start by asking what is interfering in our connections with God? With each other? Within our self? We also ask: what does it mean to follow Jesus? What does the cross of Jesus symbolize sacrifice for you? Does the path of love always demand sacrifice? What sacrifice gives us hope, faith, and courage?

It seems that I have more questions than I do answers. I affirm that following Jesus means living out the priorities and the truths which Jesus taught us, things like: loving our enemies, going the extra mile, turning the other cheek, praying for those who hate you and being God's instrument of love in this world. How do we do this? What gives us faith, hope, and courage? As a faith community we seek to provide a safe place for all to experience God's love. We continue to humbly walk with God, love mercy and do kindness.

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!



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.

United Fellowship

March 1st 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.

Morning Circle

March 15th 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

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

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

Community Events

There will be an ecumenical Good Friday worship service at noon on March 30th. We will be meeting at noon in Overman Park and then processing from there.

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

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

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An Open and Affirming Congregation
“Listening to God with open minds.
Welcoming all with open arms.”
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