
URBANDALE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation



JULY 2010

THE CALL

July Highlights:

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Ponderings from the Pastor

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1 (NRSV)

We are fast approaching what for many is the apex of the summer season. The 4th of July is an occasion that is filled with travel and reunions, picnics and outings, festivals and fireworks. In my own family, the day is saved for the Dau (Grandma Sickelka's family name) reunion. I hope to be able to attend at least the mid-afternoon meal (there are 3!).

But we should not lose sight of the fact that this is Independence Day. We should not forget that in the early days of our republic, there were those who risked everything in order to live their truest humanity. While we debate in our time whether or not it is appropriate to use the phrase "In God We Trust," it was in their day an assertion that they were prepared to commit every worldly resource to the effort, leaving themselves exposed to poverty, ridicule and even death. (It was, after all, treason!) It was a statement of how much they were willing to sacrifice in order to defend the opening statements of the Declaration of Independence: All (people) are created equal; All are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; All are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These truths were important enough to commit all available energy and resources to their defense. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Freedom is not free." (Others have expressed the same idea in similar words.)

The writer of Galatians (we're still arguing about whether or not it was Paul) understands that there is a spiritual dimension to freedom. It is one dimension of the coming of Christ into the world. But the passage from Galatians also contains a warning: ...Do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. While we have abolished overt slavery, we still have in our culture various forms of slavery. We are slaves of an economy that undervalues the work of some while spending obscene amounts on others. We are slaves of an energy policy that relies too heavily on fossil fuels and bolster that policy with military force. We are slaves to our own vices that too often create addictions, destroy relationships, and damage bodies.

While it is a common sentiment expressed on this holiday that we must defend our freedoms, it is my observation that we are more likely to hand them gift-wrapped to someone than it is for someone to try to take them away from us by force. All it takes is a statement about terrorist attacks, jobs being lost, prices going up, and suddenly our fears and anxieties take over and we gladly trade our freedoms for security and prosperity. It is a symptom of spiritual ill-health that we so easily submit to the yoke of slavery.

I remember hearing a recovering alcoholic speak openly about the spiritual transformation that took place in his life. Early in his recovery, he operated with the understanding, "I cannot drink." It was imperative for him that he live by this prohibition. But there came a time when he began to say, "I can not drink." The difference was for him very profound. It was freeing, liberating, life-affirming. For freedom Christ has set us free! Amen.

God's Peace with Justice,
Pastor Dave

*For pastoral care, please contact Pastor Dave at 276-0625 (church office),
574-514-6154 (cell) or david.sickelka@urbucc.org.*

From Rev. Amy Murray

Ahhh... summer is finally here. Tis' the season of cookouts, swimming, and of course, weddings. I have found in recent years my summers filling up both attending and officiating at such joyous occasions. What an honor to witness a covenant being made! I have always appreciated the participation of family and friends in such sacred events because after all, like baptisms, it takes the support of the community to love and nurture those involved. The popular passage from 1 Corinthians 13. You know it well.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (vs. 4-8)

This passage applies more than just to a spousal relationship but to all of our relationships that show love. All relationships are imperfect and have their share of grief. We are not immune to heartache and pain. Just as we renew our covenant with God by coming to table for communion, prayer, working for justice, or however you live out your calling; we are all in need of spiritual food, nurture and love.

How do you give and receive love? Where and how do you meet God? How do you come to participate in the renewal of your covenant with God? How are you nurturing yourself this summer season? May the blessings of this summer season draw you closer to God and embrace the unconditional love that we are freely given.

Children's Prayer shared in Everyone Is Welcome Sacred Circle:

*Dear God,
Remind us that you love us always, forever and no matter what! Amen!*

Thank you!

Pastor Dave would like to thank all of those who have worked so hard to make his entry into this ministry smooth and welcoming. Many hands have helped with the "Coffee and Conversation" time, the Welcome to the Table Lunches, and the blog. Beyond that, people painted and decorated the office, helped with the moving of stuff, and offered their words of welcome or invitations to a meal or a gathering. All have served to make your pastor feel welcome and valued. It is much appreciated.

Confirmation Class 2010-11: Claiming Our Faith, Finding Our Voices

Are you entering the 8th or 9th grade? Are you ready to learn more about our church and to grow in your life as a Christian? Confirmation class is designed for you! This is your chance to explore our history and who we are today—through music, art, and other expressions of faith. At the end of the school year, you will have an opportunity to join Urbandale UCC as an adult member! Pastor Dave will lead this class on Wednesday nights from 6:45–8:00pm, starting **September 8th**.

Greetings from the Moderator

This past spring the Lombard Peace Institute conducted a weekend workshop for Urbandale UCC. The purpose of the workshop was to help us begin thinking about family systems theory and creating healthy congregational relationships with one another and with our pastor. With this training in mind, I selected *the Leader's Journey* by Jim Herrington, R. Robert Creech, and Trisha Taylor as the book to help the Leadership Team (LT) grow in faith and develop as congregational leaders.

The book's purpose is to help leaders "discover... the motivation and the tools for undertaking the lifelong journey of transformation called discipleship." Each of the key words in that purpose statement has significance to me.

Lifelong suggests ongoing; in fact, because we are members of multiple systems, our leaders' journeys began before we opened this book and will continue long after we read the last page.

Journey suggests moving from place to place, usually forward, but it does not negate the possibility of detours or rest stops. A journey might lead to exploration or discovering new arenas or sites.

Transformation suggests becoming new and different and changed.

Discipleship means becoming a servant leader bringing the realm of God to the world today.

This book is intended to teach us how to "focus on managing [ourselves] rather than managing others." We will learn better to manage ourselves when we grow deeper into our relationship with God. The book maintains that "an intimate relationship with God is the center of gravity that keeps our lives in balance when the pressures of the system threaten to topple us." I'm looking forward to the journey and where the book might take the LT and the congregation.

If this information and journey sound inviting to you, please order a copy of the book and read it along with the LT, or check out one of the copies that will soon be available in the church office.

Randy Jedele, Moderator

EIW Unit for July-August: "Helping Hands"

Our preschool through 2nd graders will be exploring what it means to help others. Through a variety of games and activities our children will be empowered to help others of all ages. The Everyone Is Welcome ministry compliments the "Kids in Action" program over the summer as all of our children, youth and adults will work together to serve others. **Please sign-up to volunteer in EIW** and with the "Kids in Action" program this summer and get to helping!

UCC Children and Youth Need You for 2010-2011!

It's that time of year again when we are planning for the 2010-11 Sunday School year. Our classes have grown and we will now have **6 classes in stead of 5.** I am happy that many of you have come forward with your interest. **I still need teachers for the Jr. High class, as well as our upper elementary classes.** We also need substitutes. Prayerfully consider this ministry and how you might help. Contact Amy Murray at amy.murray@urbucc.org with your interest.

Sunday school Registrations for 2010-2011

It's not too soon to be thinking about your child's participation in Sunday School for the 2010-11 school year! Registrations are available on the table in the narthex. Please return it to Rev. Amy.

Pilgrim Heights Summer Camp... "Be A Hero: Living Like Jesus"

The 2010 summer camp brochures are here! Please pick up a copy on the table in the narthex or the church office. If you are interested in attending as a camper please fill out a registration form and turn it in to the office with half of the fee as soon as possible. Please make checks out to Our Sacred Space. The registration requires a pastor's signature and will be mailed along with 50% of the total. UUCC pays half of each camper's total and will pay for one camp per individual. Please contact Rev. Amy Murray if you have further questions amy.murray@urbucc.org.

Pray for our 2010 Pilgrim Heights Campers and Leaders

Ashley Dhainin	Julanie Carter	Josh Dhainin	Ashley Denning
Seth Gardner	Jamel Carter	Jeremy Boal	Matthew Siegel
Jacob Walters	Michael Walters	Leah Gardner	Maleika Carter
Chris Jordan	Kendrick Santos-Briggs	Barb Woodsmall	Makayla Carter-Shields
	Ken Briggs		

Pray for our Regional Youth Event Participants

Join us Sunday, July 11 in worship to recognize and send off our 2010 RYE participants. We look forward to hearing their experiences upon their return. Your church family wishes you all safe travels!

Bonita Wiley	Suzanne Sontag	Grace Clark
Nathan Wiley	Lilly Clark	Evan Lundstrom-Yurdin

UUCC Needs YOU at the 4th of July Parade!

Mark your calendars to come be a participant or spectator in the Annual 4th of July parade, **Saturday, July 3rd** that begins right out in front of our church at 10am! If you would like to help sell concessions to benefit our ministries, please contact Rev. Amy. If you have questions email Amy at amy.murray@urbucc.org. See you there!

Request for Camperships

We have a record number of campers this year including new campers! Your generosity is much appreciated supporting our fundraisers this past year for camperships. We need more money in order for UUCC to provide 50% of the registration cost as promised. Thank you on behalf of our campers and Pilgrim Heights staff for your support!

New Member Classes

New Member Classes begin on **Sunday, July 25** at 11:30 following worship, and continue on **August 1, 8 and 15**. Persons interested in joining the church will have the opportunity to do so on **Sunday, August 29**. Please contact Jennifer Gardner to sign up (so we have enough lunch for you). She can be contacted by e-mail at jennifer.gardner@urbucc.org, or phone the church office, 276-0625. Please let us know if childcare is needed.

◆ Food Pantry for July ◆

We have been having a good year with our contributions to the Food Pantry. We sent 97 items of food and a lot of personal care items. The need is still great so let's keep it up in July. The personal care items we are requested to give is **laundry detergent**. We will emphasize **whole grain pasta** or **egg noodles** for the food items.

IHN Host Week Coming Soon!

Through the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), Urbandale UCC is again hosting families experiencing homelessness. During the week of **July 4-11** we will need volunteers to be overnight hosts, drivers, food preparers and food servers. ***Please sign up on the white board in the narthex.*** There is much to do but many hands make light work. For more information, contact Tom Rendon, tom.rendon@urbucc.org.

Christmas in July!

Christmas will actually begin **Sunday, July 11**, when our annual Giving Tree will appear in the Narthex and remain until Sunday, August 1. Gifts will be distributed to charities on Monday, August 2. "Decorations" on the tree have lists or single items needed by charities. **Take as many decorations as you like and bring them back to put under or on the Sanctuary Tree by Sunday, August 1.**

Groups and causes that will be on the tree this year include AIDs Project of Central Iowa, Animal Rescue League, Beacon of Life, Hope Ministries (Bethel Mission), Children and Families of Iowa, ChildServe, Culture, Inc., Des Moines Area Religious Council's programs, Compassion in Action and Child Care Assistance, Kunkun Chen (our child in China whom we sponsor), the Young Women's Resource Center, Iowa Homeless Youth Centers, Ruth Harbor, and Youth Emergency Shelter Services. We are doing the Giving Tree in the summer because charities receive few donations at this time of year, and often, so many donations at Christmas that they don't have room to store them. Thank you! *The Community Concerns Team*

UCC and Habitat for Humanity

Urbandale UCC is again teaming up with other area churches to work on a Habitat for Humanity house. The house is located at 1929 Jefferson. Sign up for this work day:

Friday, July 16: Need 5 volunteers, including 1 crew leader if possible

July 2010**Who... What... Where... When...**

	July 4 Communion	July 11	July 18 Food Pantry	July 25
Scripture	II Kings 5:1-14	Luke 10:25-37	Luke 10:38-42	Luke 11:1-13
Preaching	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave	Pastor Dave
Liturgist	Mark Siegel	Bonita Wiley	Barb Woodsmall	Debbie Gannon & Laura Fefchak
Music Leadership	Daniel Zinnel	Raggedy Band	Ron Lindhart	Ann Boes & Suzanne Sontag
Ushers & Greeters	Jennifer Gardner Jo Lilley Jeff Couch	Jerry Woods Dianne Woods Jim Nervig Robby Nervig Dean Bisterfeldt	Linda Grathwohl Ray Bowler Chris Gonzalez Nancy Boyer	Sharon Johnson Sandy Gahn Kathy Marean Gail George
Acolytes	Jessica Gertler Amy Ryan	Gail George Kathy Marean	Mensing Family	Grant Gossling Jonah Schaeffer
Nursery	Deb Beery Monica Sutter	Debbie Gannon Deb Beery	Deb Beery TBD	Karen Capps-Davis TBD
EIW Room*	Carolyn Washburn Lily Clark	Pat Boes Tina Carter	Lily Clark TBD	Susan Joynt TBD
Opening the Church	Chris Jordan	Jeff Couch	Mark Siegel	Jerry Woods
Offering Recorders	Chris Jordan Ruth Rasmussen	Ruth Miller Tom Rendon	Steve Chandler Mark Siegel	Karen Capps-Davis Geri Jacobs Jim Nervig
Sound Booth	Jon Duvick	Scott Davis	Kevin Gannon	Ray Bowler

*EIW Room stands for "Everyone Is Welcome" Room.

**August 2010 CALL DEADLINE:
Thursday, 15 July - 9:00 am**

Activities & Events

July 2010

July 2010							August 2010								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
27				1	2	3	32	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	33	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
29	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	34	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
30	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	35	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
31	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	36	29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				July 1	2	3
				Elsie away		
				Pastor Dave away		
				6:00pm 4th of July Planning Mtg	Sadmir away 4th of July Parade	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sadmir away						
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship: Communion	7:00pm All Team Night Calendar	10:30am Staff Meeting 12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave	7:30pm AA	IHN Host Week		
				5:30pm Art Club	Rev. Amy away	
					8:00am Bowtie Boyz IHN breakfast	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Sadmir away					8:00am Habitat Build	
Rev. Amy away			UCC Regional Youth Event			
Christmas in July		Tara away				
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship	1:30pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Leadership Team	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave 7:00pm Scout Leaders' Meeting	5:30pm Community Spaghetti Meal 6:30pm Caregivers 2 7:30pm AA	CALL Deadline		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Tara away			6:30pm Lombard Group Mtg 7:30pm AA			
Christmas in July		1:30pm Staff Meeting				
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship: Baptism 11:00am Baptism Reception 12:00pm Pastor Luncheon						
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas in July		1:30pm Staff Meeting	12:00pm Lunch w/Pastor Dave 5:30pm Art Club			
9:15am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship 11:00am New Member Class 1						

Our Condolences to the Family of **Ada Diefenderfer**, who passed away on May 29, 2010. Ada was a member of Urbandale UCC for 26 years and is survived by her daughter, Barbara Zorn, also of Urbandale UCC. A Service of Remembrance was held on Friday, June 11th in Des Moines.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY NEWS

The Prayer Shawl group will meet next on **Saturday, September 18**. There will be no gatherings for the summer months. **However, the ministry will continue to function during the summer. Please submit requests via email to prayer.shawls@urbucc.org or fill out request card found in the church pews.**

UCC Unique Card Creations

The UCC Art Club Needs 'Extra Hands'!

This summer, UCC Art Club will be working hard on a new desktop calendar for 2011. Many of our calendar pages are hand-made, so we are looking for volunteers to help us glue, cut, attach, etc.! If you are interested in helping our small group construct the calendar pages we will meet in Fellowship Hall from 5:30 – 9 pm on the evenings below:

Thursday, July 8

Tuesday, July 27

Thursday, August 1

Tuesday, August 24

Thursday, September 9

Questions? Email Ann Boes at ann.boes@urbucc.org



A Longer HOLY SHIRT!!!

UCC will continue to accept t-shirt orders throughout the rest of June and into July. **We need to order 50 shirts at a time, so please get your order in now!** Prices range from \$11 to \$25 for a hooded sweatshirt and payment will be taken at the time you place your order. We hope to all be able to wear our new UCC shirts for Homecoming Sunday on September 12th! Please give your orders to Amy Murray or place them in her mailbox.

COMING EVENTS:

Look for details of this and other coming events on the Community Events Bulletin Board!

Sunday, July 25: *Re Nae Vanden Broek's 70th Birthday Open House, 3-7pm, 3304 Eula Drive, Urbandale—to give thanks to my friends and family that been part of my life for 70 years. Your fondest memory of our friendship is the greatest gift I could wish for. Re Nae Vanden Broek*

Tara will be away from the office from Monday, July 12th through Monday, July 19th. Please warmly greet the volunteers who provide office support and answer the phone.

The Caregiver's Corner:

Care-giving to Gay & Lesbian Brothers & Sisters ~ Part I

By Don Walters

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ voted years ago on the resolution titled “Calling on UCC Congregations to Covenant as Open and Affirming” of gay, lesbian and bisexual brothers and sisters. This passed resolution became what is known as “Open and Affirming” of gay, lesbian and bisexual people. Urbandale UCC voted to be an Open and Affirming congregation, thus providing a warm and safe home of welcome, love and support to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender brothers and sisters.

Reviewing this rich and milestone-breaking history made me wonder recently: how are we at Urbandale UCC doing as an Open and Affirming congregation? In particular are there things we should be saying and doing to affirm and support our gay, lesbian and bisexual brothers and sisters? On the other hand are there things we should not be doing and saying?

Not knowing the answers to these vital questions led me to develop a survey asking for personal input from gay and lesbian people (I don't know any bisexual or transgender persons). In particular, I asked for the opinions of four gay men and four lesbian women who are members of UUCC. This article is Part I of the results I received.

My first question was, “What can people say and do to be caregivers to gay and lesbian people?” One respondent said we should follow the proclamations of the rights of “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” A couple said we need to use supportive language, such as referring to partners as “*spouses*.” Another couple said we should affirm gay and lesbian brothers and sisters with supportive words that all people are God's children. Still another couple said that our hospitality at UUCC should extend to all of God's children.

One couple stated we should acknowledge that it is difficult for gay and lesbian persons to have their civil rights questioned and threatened. We need to affirm that *all* people are created in God's image and are beloved just as they are. We should celebrate the milestones of gay and lesbian families, such as marriage, and the birth and adoption of children, just as we would for straight families. One couple said we need to ask them how they wish to be referred, i.e., as partners or spouses.

Another person said that it is all about love and acceptance of each other, whether we are straight, gay, or lesbian. We can sum this up in Jesus' command for us to love one another as we love ourselves. Still another person stated that we need to speak and treat each other the way we wish to be spoken to and the way we want to be treated. It's just that simple!

Next month I will continue to report the results of my survey questions.



URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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*“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s
journey, you are invited and welcome here.”*

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

9:15 am Coffee & Conversation

10:00 Worship

The Rev. David P. Sickelka, Senior Pastordavid.sickelka@urbucc.org
The Rev. Amy Murray, Ministry Program Coordinator amy.murray@urbucc.org
Elsie P. Naylor, M.M., Music Program Directorelsie.naylor@urbucc.org
Bobby Stinnett, M.M., Organist,
 Children/Youth Choirs and Handbells Director.....bobby.stinnett@urbucc.org
Tara A. McConnell, Office Coordinator tara.aukes@urbucc.org
Sadmira Omerhodzic, Custodian sadmira.omerhodzic@urbucc.org
The Rev. Gayle Strickler, Jr.,
 Adjunct Minister for Community Concernsgayle.strickler@urbucc.org

Church office hours are 9:00am – 3:00pm