

Shalom,



United Church of Christ -  
Congregational

902 Broad Street  
Grinnell, IA 50112

Office #: 641-236-3111  
Fax#: 641-236-3112

Church Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday:  
8:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Friday:  
8:00 am - 12:00 Noon

Visit our church website:  
[www.grinnellucc.org](http://www.grinnellucc.org)

Pastor Susan K. Weier  
641-236-3227  
[revdrsue@aol.com](mailto:revdrsue@aol.com)

What a busy time in our lives and in the church. There is conflict that we are dealing with, a stewardship campaign (11 new pledging families), dreaming big (visioning), and preparations for Amahl and the Night Visitors coming up Dec. 11-12! In this busyness, let us remember what it means to be the community of faith (church). On Nov. 15, I had a reading in worship from Jean Vanier. "Community is a place of belonging, a place where people are earthed and find their identity. ...The difference between community and a group of friends is that in a community we verbalize our mutual belonging and bonding. We announce the goals and the spirit that unites us. We recognize also that this bonding comes from God: it is a gift from God. It is (God) who has chosen us and called us together in a covenant of love and mutual caring". (from Community and Growth).

Janice and I are feeling blessed by so many. In celebration of our wedding, we asked that donations be given to a few church organizations that are important in our lives. In these difficult economic times, it pleases us that Grinnell UCC has received \$415 in honor of our marriage. Our Sacred Space (Pilgrim Heights) has received \$290 given to celebrate our legal union. We are thankful for the love expressed and opportunity to celebrate our 21 year relationship.

We also want to thank Parish Life for organizing and taking care of the reception we had at the church in celebration of our marriage. Thank you Parish Life members and spouses for all your work.

Our Monday morning bible study (7:30 a.m.) is now studying the book of Joshua. If you are interested in exploring this book with us beginning Nov. 30, please join us at Don and Jeananne Schild's home at 724 Broad Street. Join us for a book if you don't feel you can commit to the study long term.

We are continuing to study the parables of Jesus on Mondays at 2 p.m. in the Meditation room at Mayflower (above the health center). Because we are covering the parables, the classes are pretty individualistic. We deal with one parable at a time. On some parables, we give it more than one session, but you are more than welcome to drop in and check it out.

Our caring team (visitation team) is wondering if we have any other people interested in joining us. We would not only like people willing to visit our people who find it difficult to get out and about, but those willing to perhaps check in on those who have been in the hospital and

might need food a few days as they recover, or willing to organize a prayer group to pray for specific people and concerns. It would be nice if we had someone willing to send cards on behalf of the church to people who have experienced a loss in their family or are struggling with other issues. We are open to any caring outreach that demonstrates our love as a church. If you have an idea or are willing to be a part of the caring team, give me a call at 236-3111.

“Communities are truly communities when they are open to others, when they remain vulnerable and humble, when the members are growing in love, in compassion and humility. Communities cease to be such when members close in upon themselves with the certitude that they alone have the wisdom and truth and expect everyone to be like them and learn from them. The fundamental attitudes of true community, where there is true belonging, are openness, welcome, and listening to God, to the universe, to each other and to other communities. ...Community life is inspired by the universal and is open to the universal. It is based on forgiveness and openness to those who are different, to the poor and the weak. Sects put up walls and barriers out of fear, out of a need to prove themselves and to create a false security. ...Community is the breaking down of barriers to welcome difference”. (From *Community and Growth* by Jean Vanier). If these quotes spark some interest in a book study, let me know. It is possible that we could have a book study in January or February on one of Jean Vanier’s books.

May this Advent and Christmas season be holy!

In Christ,  
Pastor Sue

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Available in our church library is a new book. [The Children are Free: Reexamining the Biblical Evidence on Same-sex Relationships](#) by Rev. Jeff Miner and John Tyler Connoley.



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### ***Fall 2009 Clean-up Day Thanks!***

A belated thanks goes to the great crew of workers that gave up valuable time on Saturday, Oct. 31st to prune, now and mulch, rake and bag leaves, wash windows and generally spruce up the yard and exterior of the church. And, an equal thanks goes to those inside workers who dusted, washed windows, cleaned inside refrigerators, sharpened pencils, organized furniture and whatever else was needed to make the interior look great.

Our workers were: Janice Springer, Judy and Lyle Kuehl, Netia Worley, Bill Vosburg, George Britton, JoAnn Britton, Esther Bethel, Sue Ramsey, Katya Ayvazova, Tom Marshall, Lisle Dunham, Ann Brau, Sam Pederson, Emily Lof, Imogene Knowles, Dot Anderson, and Merle Zirkle. We apologize if anyone was omitted. It should be noted that this was the largest group of workers to show up to work for several years. Bless you all for taking pride in the appearance of our church property and helping to take care of it.

- Merle Zirkle

## Board of Trustees Report

What a Taskforce! With a beautiful day, an opportunity to start out with a good breakfast hosted by the youth leaders and all the leaves on the ground, there was an eager crew that turned out for a vigorous morning of raking, dusting, washing windows and putting things in order on October 31. Thanks to all who pitched in. It was one of the best turn-outs we've ever had.

Just a not to let you know, the Trustees, Council and Stewardship committees have been meeting in concert to try to get a handle on our annual budget. It is a thankless task made easier by the cooperation of many rather than a few. I want to thank everyone on those committees for their dedication and service to our church.

Faithfully yours,  
Bill Vosburg, Chair

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## Christian Education News

I freely admit that I am more of an Advent person than an Lent person. I'm getting better at Lent, but for me, I do find Advent more spiritually transformative. I understand Mary's waiting having been with child myself twice during Advent and Advent was never the same. When I mentioned this to a friend, I was promptly gifted with a copy of "To Dance With God," by Gertrud Mueller Nelson. Nelson writes that she too is drawn to the traditions of waiting and preparation during Advent. Nelson writes, "We equate waiting with wasting...The tempo of haste in which we live has less to do with being on time or the efficiency of a busy life - it has more to do with our being unable to wait."

Nelson also writes about our world being engineered toward instant gratification. We want it NOW. We don't have the time to write a letter. Why call when we can text message someone? Why save our money for a purchase when we have a credit card and can take it home today? This is the world we live in...and our children live in.

This is a season that can catch us off-guard. The scent of pine, a beloved carol, the vision of a child dressed like an angel in the Sunday School pageant, can transport us and open us to emotions we otherwise keep hidden. Sometimes these emotions are tender and welcomed, sometimes they are difficult for us.

Learning to wait, learning patience, are ways of preparing for God's entry anew into our lives. There are many ways to do that at Grinnell UCC this Advent.

The Advent Workshop on Sunday, Nov. 29, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Friendship Hall is a way of preparing for Christ's coming by creating special holiday crafts, enjoying cookies and the company that is our church community. Bring friends! All are welcome.

There are a wide variety of Advent devotionals available in the parlor, many geared for families with children. Feel free to pick one up that interests you.

(continued next page)

"Amahl and the Night Visitors" will be a wonderful treat for the entire family. Another great opportunity to invite others to come to the church. See the information elsewhere in this newsletter for details.

Children and youth will begin working on the Christmas Pageant during Sunday School time, from 9:30 to 10:25 a.m. starting Nov. 29. The pageant will be Sunday, Dec. 20, at 5 p.m. with a finger food potluck to follow. A fun tradition for all at Grinnell UCC.

The Seekers adult class meet from 9 to 10 in the Seekers Room at the bottom of the alley stairs next to the kitchen. All are welcome to join and participate. December topics for the adult Seekers Class will be: December 6: Vic and Wilma Graden will make the Bible lands come alive as they share their "Trip to the Holy Land, Walking Where Jesus Walked." They will share how their experience of seeing the land where Jesus lived and spread the word of God brought them new understanding. They visited Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, Bethlehem, and much more.

December 13: Tommy Haas will lead a class on the many images of Mary throughout the ages. From the mother of Christ, to protector of cities, to a simple maiden, to a holy person - all are presented in a DVD format with discussion time for reflection.

December 20: Seekers are invited to bring a story, a family tradition, a special ornament or decoration to share with the class to enrich other's meaningful observance of Christmas.

There will be no Sunday School or Seekers on Dec. 27. The Seekers will resume on Jan. 3, but the Sunday School for children and youth will not return until Jan. 10.

Let us prepare our hearts for the coming of Emmanuel, God-with-Us. Will this be a transformative time for you? See you in church!

Peace,  
 Laura Nelson Lof  
 Christian Education Coordinator

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### **Child Sponsorship Program - a joint venture for Outreach and Christian Education Boards**

The Outreach and Christian Education Boards are working together to participate in a new mission opportunity—taking part in the sponsorship of a child through our Wider Church Ministries.

The children of our church gained new insights and learned about children in other parts of the world when John Campbell-Nelson, Global Ministry missionary visited our congregation Oct. 18. The Child Sponsorship program provides another way for young people in our church to learn about, and help, a needy child in another part of the world.

First and second grade church school teachers, Becky Petig and Jean Libbey, volunteered to work with members of that class in selection of the sponsored child, and to help the rest of the congregation learn about this exciting venture.

The Child Sponsorship program is committed to aiding children at risk by providing a practical way for individuals and churches to extend a helping hand. Since the 1950s, this global ministry has been working to safeguard the future of children around the world. A commitment to sponsoring a child helps to provide housing, clothing, food, education and basic health care. 100% of all support goes to the children and the centers where they are served.

Brochures explaining the program will be available soon; additional information will be shared through future Newsletters.

**No Room at the Inn” - Friday, December 4 - 10:00 a.m. - 8p.m.  
St. Mary’s Catholic Church Hall (basement)**

**Sponsored by St. Mary’s Catholic Church and Grinnell  
Ministerial Association**



All congregations are welcome to share family Bethlehem manger scenes. Contact John Saxton (236-9219 or 236-6151 Ext. 246) or Judy Kuehl (236-0453) to receive display cards, giving your name and brief history of your Christmas set. Bring your display to St. Mary’s Hall on Thur., Dec. 3 between 4 and 7 p.m.

Volunteers will help you place your scene on tables and shelves. You should pick up your scene after 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 4. This event is part of Jingle Bell Holidays.

There will be holiday music on Friday, home made cookies and warm drinks. Donations may be given for local and area homeless shelters and ministries provided by churches. Lyle Kuehl will make several van runs with Mayflower residents for “No Room at the Inn”.

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The Outreach Board is decorating a tree for the Drake Library “Festival of Trees” Dec. 4-5. Netia Worley is making the star at the top of the tree reminding us that “Christmas is Giving”. To decorate the tree, the board is asking for donations on new scarves, mittens, and socks.

We hope to cover the tree with items to keep both children and adults warm this winter. After the festival, the clothing will be donated to MICA (Mid Iowa Community Action) here in Grinnell as part of our mission to the local people in need.



A bushel basket is located in the **parlor** for you to help us fill with wild socks, colorful scarves, and wonderful mittens. Please be a part of this fun holiday activity, but time is short so hurry to help us. Let’s fill the basket. Thank you!

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**Chocolate, Lemon, Pecan, Cherry, Walnut, Peppermint — OH MY!!!**

It’s cookie baking time BIG time these days, as we bake wonderful goodies for our friends and family. While we are selecting our favorite recipes, we need to think of our neighbors who work on Christmas Eve and Christmas. Please set aside an assortment of your premier treats for them. The Veerhusen-Langerud family (Karen, Steve, Emma and John) will fill bags of your goodies and deliver them to people on the job protecting us. The V-L family will fill bags decorated by the UCC Community Pre-school children. Those artistic efforts will be sure to bring a smile to folks working long hours. If you can donate cookies, please email Karen at [veerhuse@grinnell.edu](mailto:veerhuse@grinnell.edu) or call the church office.

Please deliver your cookies to the church by December 23. Wrap them well, label them, and leave them in the church kitchen. Thank you!

## Christmas Shares Shopping

Some people love to shop and wrap gifts. Others think it is a chore and prefer to dash off a check knowing money is always a welcome gift. Whatever your style, please consider choosing a family from our Outreach Board list of people who need you to do whatever of the above that you do best.

The families, gathered by Carol Nielsen from Second Mile workers, are identified by age, sex, number in family and their needs. Your job, if you should choose to take it, involves being Santa and filling their modest needs.

Many of us have told our children, "just get me something little, I don't need anything at this stage of my life"! Many of our children have waaaaaay more than they can use. Both parents and their children can help "fill the stocking" of those people in our community who don't have enough. A table will be set up after church Sunday, Nov. 29 and Sunday, Dec. 6. An Outreach Board member will be available to help you select a family or to accept your check at that time. All your shopping and wrapping must be completed by Dec. 14. Full details will be available at the Outreach table. Be a Santa and have as much fun as he does by bringing smiles to those in need.

## Stewardship

***"Take the gifts of Christian living as springboards of Christian giving"***

*The Stewardship drive is in full force. Thank you to all who prayerfully considered how much God's work through our church means to you and responded with a pledge for 2010. There are some who have not yet responded and a member of the committee will be contacting you soon. We know that these economic times make giving more difficult, but we encourage you to consider giving whatever you can.*

*Your help and support are vital to the continuation of all of the programs of Grinnell UCC as we attempt to spread God's word and help others in need. We appreciate your generosity.*

## Christmas Fund Offering

The "Christmas Fund Offering" is one of the "5 for 5" **Special Mission Offerings** that our church participates in generously and enthusiastically throughout the church year. The four offerings plus "UCC Basic Support Funds" sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in our country and around the world.

The Christmas Fund helps provide pension and health premium supplements to lower-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants administered by the Pension Boards.

The generous gifts from 2008 provided some form of ministerial assistance to approximately 1,600 people during 2009. Christmas 2009 gift checks will go to over 900 people and of those, 20 are over 100 years old—the oldest being 107! The Christmas Fund also helps with monthly pension supplements to 453 people. Quarterly health premium supplements go to 295 families. During the first seven months of 2009 emergency grants went to 39 people.

The need is great and your help is always appreciated. The enclosed envelope in this newsletter may be used for your contribution and dropped off at the church office or placed in the offering plate any Sunday during Advent. If you would like more information on the Christmas Fund, go to the home page at [www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org). The outreach board thanks you for your generous support this holiday season.

Dear members of the UCC Church:

Thank you for my new Bible. I love reading the stories.

John Langerud

### Kids Against Hunger...

Thank you to all church members who returned your KAH envelopes after six weeks of putting in \$5 per week for our packing event on Nov. 15. We even had one member donating \$150 to our UCC KAH bank account. She shall remain anonymous, but she is deeply thanked for such generous support for the starving. Our present KAH bank account is up to 697.54. So we are ready to participate in the next event on February 21, 2010.

20,304 meals were packaged on Nov. 15 by fourteen teams. The town of Grinnell has packaged 251,858 meals for KAH since the fall of 2006. We should be proud!

A great Christmas gift is a KAH donation card in the name of a recipient on your gift list. These cards can be found in the church parlor during the month of Dec. Please make your donation out to The Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation (GPCF) and put KAH on the memo line. Turn them into the church office or give to Sue Drake and they will be sent to the foundation office at Ahrens Park. These donations are tax deductible and will give children, who wish to package, a chance to learn about the importance of giving to those in need. What better Christmas gift can you possibly think of?

Again, thank you for your support and keep helping the youth to drop quarters in the KAH donation tube each Sunday.

Sue Drake



Poinsettias have traditionally been an important part of our celebration of the season of Advent. We invite you to share in this tradition by providing a poinsettia to be placed in the chancel on Sunday, Dec. 20, the fourth Sunday in Advent, through Sunday, Jan. 3, the second Sunday after Christmas.

If you would like to remember a loved one or honor a friend with a poinsettia, you may place your order with a florist to be delivered to the church library on Saturday, Dec. 19 through the alley door. Or, if you wish, you may personally deliver your poinsettia to the church parlor during that week. Be sure your plant is marked with your name.

We ask that anyone donating a poinsettia contact the church office [grinucc@iowatelecom.net](mailto:grinucc@iowatelecom.net) or (236-3111) to provide your name as a donor and the name of the person you are remembering or honoring.

Poinsettias will be available for you to take home following worship on January 3 and continuing through Sunday, January 10.

	December 6	December 13	December 20	December 27
Acolytes	Marcus Brandenburg Dane Edwards	Parker & Cara Klyn	Jonah Benning-Shorb John Lof	Sam Pederson Daniel Shaffer
Chancel	Teresa McCall	Sara Adams	Oliva Wright	Sue Ramsey
Fellowship Host		Jon & Karen Edwards	Deanna Shorb Heather Benning	<u>Everyone brings!</u>
Greeter (s)	Don & Jeananne Schild	Warren & Nancy Reinecke	Wilma Vosburg	Carol Nielsen
Liturgist	Liz Hansen	Sara Adams	Julie Eberbach	Jim Ahrens
Ushers	Eric, Anne, Christopher, Jordan, & Sam Pederson	Eric, Anne, Christopher, Jordan, & Sam Pederson	Eric, Anne, Christopher, Jordan, & Sam Pederson	Eric, Anne, Christopher, Jordan, & Sam Pederson
Worship Host	Jeananne Schild	Tommy Haas	Elizabeth Trimmer	Jodi Brandenburg
Mayflower Van	Jay Hansen	Lyle Kuehl	Rick Ramsey	Dennis Conway

## **Upcoming Events...Mark Your Calendars!**

### **December 6**

#### **Official Notice To Congregation**

After worship there will be a congregational meeting for purpose of approving the budget for 2010.

### **December 11-12**

“Amahl and the Night Visitors” - time to be determined later.

### **December 20**

5:00 p.m. Sunday School Pageant and finger food supper.

### **January 31, 2010**

We will have our Annual Meeting



## December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Noon - Lectionary Study 2 pm - Staff Meeting 7 pm - Pastor Parish	2 5pm - Parish Life 7pm - CE 7:45 pm - Pealers	3 Noon - AA Meeting	4 Festival of Trees at Drake Community Library 10-8 pm - No Room at the Inn 5-8 pm - Jingle Bell Holiday 5:30-8 pm - Live Nativity on our lawn	5 Festival of Trees at Drake Community Library
6 9 am - Seekers 9am - Breakfast 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship/ Communion 11:40 am - Sonshine Ringers	7 7:30 am - Bible Study at Schild's home 10 am - Mod Squad Noon - AA Meeting 2 pm - Parables of Jesus	8 Noon - Lectionary Study 2 pm - Staff Meeting	9 7:45 pm - Pealers	10 10 am - SAG Noon - AA Meeting	11 7pm - Amahl in Sanctuary	12 7 pm - Amahl in Sanctuary
<b>Congregational Mtg. Following Worship</b>						
9 13 9 am - Seekers 9 am - Breakfast 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 11:40 am - Sonshine Ringers	14 7:30 am - Bible Study at Schild's home Noon - AA Meeting 2 pm - Parables of Jesus 7 pm - Trustees	15 Noon - Lectionary Study 2 pm - Staff Meeting 6 pm - Outreach	16 6:30 pm - Council 7:45 pm - Pealers	17 Noon - AA Meeting	18 <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b>	19
20 9 am - Seekers 9 am - Breakfast 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:30 am - Worship 11:40 am - Sonshine Ringers 5 pm - Christmas Pageant and Potluck	21 7:30 am - Bible Study at Schild's home Noon - AA Meeting 2 pm - Parables of Jesus	22 Noon - Lectionary Study 2 pm - Staff Meeting	23 7:45 pm - Pealers	24 <b>Christmas Eve Office Closed</b> <b>Worship Service:</b> 5:30 pm - Music 6 pm - 1st Service 11 pm - 2nd Service Children's Choir Sing	25 <b>Merry Christmas Office Closed</b>	26
27 10:30 am - Worship 11:40 am - Sonshine Ringers	28 7:30 am - Bible Study at Schild's home Noon - AA Meeting 2 pm - Parables of Jesus	29 Noon - Lectionary Study 2 pm - Staff Meeting	30 7:45 pm - Pealers	31 <b>Office Closed at Noon</b>	<b>Happy New Year!</b>	

## Our Church Greeting

United Church of Christ-Congregational  
 902 Broad Street, P.O. Box 322  
 Grinnell, IA 50112  
 Phone: 641-236-3111 Fax: 641-236-3112  
 Email: [grinucc@iowatelecom.net](mailto:grinucc@iowatelecom.net)  
 Website: [www.grinnellucc.org](http://www.grinnellucc.org)  
 USPS 414-140

### Monthly Periodicals

# Happy Holidays...



### United Church of Christ—Congregational

An Open and Affirming Church—Just Peace Congregation —Still Speaking Ministry

**Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Susan K. Weier

**Christian Education Coordinator:** Laura Lof

**Office Administrator:** Gayle Uhlenhopp

**Clerk:** Janis Peak

**Historian:** George Drake

**Children's Liturgical Arts Director:** Sally Anderson

**Treasurer:** Austin Jones

**Music Director:** Phil King

**Moderator:** Gerald Adams

**Moderator Elect:** Nancy Wolff

**Past Moderator:** Esther Bethel

**Church School on Sunday:** adults at 9 a.m., all youth at 9:30 a.m. (September-May)

**Worship:** Sunday at 10:30 a.m. (September-May)

Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (June-August)