

THE UNITER

APRIL 2018

Maquoketa
United Church of Christ
God is still speaking



Testify

Last month, Jess and Cat Bierling made the most out of their 24 hours in Maquoketa. Seeing that the Caves were closed to visitors, they hiked at Prairie Creek instead. Further delights ensued: they enjoyed the incomparable queso dip at La Casa de Pancho (I swear I'm not being paid to promote it). They then donned green beads to attend the Sandbergs' final St. Patty's Day party. And then, after all that, they came to worship with us on Sunday morning. Whew!

During worship, Jess reflected on her life as a transgender woman. Speaking quietly, but powerfully, I was struck by how courageous she was: coming here to speak intimate and vulnerable truths to a church she had never stepped into, in front of people she had never met. Later in a Facebook post, she described what she had done as preaching. I deliberately avoided that word with her before she came—I didn't want to scare her off. But she was right. That Sunday, she *did* preach. She fulfilled the essence of preaching, which some of us who do it every week forget occasionally: she testified. She testified to what she has seen, to who she was and who she is now becoming. First-hand, real. And sometimes raw. Preach it, Jess. *Preach.*

The essence of the Easter season is testimony. Jesus shows up at the empty tomb, in the upper room, in a garden, on a road, by the shore. There is no evidence of the resurrection, in the scientific sense. There's just testimony. First, second and eleventh-hand accounts of God's great redeeming surprise. Easter spreads because of one person's testimony to another. The gospels told, then written down and circulated in communities. Stories about Jesus treasured, embellished, enriched by time. Easter sets the tone for our faith. Because faith itself is based on testimony. Pure and simple. "I once was lost/ but now am found/I was blind/and now I see."

(Continued on page 2)

Every person of faith—which means you—has something to testify. An illness healed. The presence of God in a difficult time. The birth of children; the deaths of cherished ones. A beautiful moon. A social movement led by the young. Maybe even your own transition from an empty tomb into resurrection life.

They say every person has at least one sermon in them. This Easter, I'm counting on it.

God bless you,
Pastor Stephanie



Jess Bierling, Pastor Stephanie, and Cat Bierling

Rewards

Do you have some items you have gotten in a gift box that you like, but really aren't going to use? Do you have some playing cards, gently used games or something you think a middle school student would enjoy?

Maquoketa Middle School has a Cards Store that could use these items. Students are given rewards for exceptional behavior or deeds. They can turn in their rewards for items at the store. If you have some items of this nature that you want to share you can drop them off at the middle school office or give them to me and I will get them to the school.

Cosmetics, soaps, and things of that nature should be unopened.
Thank you,
Marilyn Dean

Join us to observe the Rites of Spring!



Hunting the first woodland wildflowers

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 15

RAIN DATE APRIL 29

Karen Manning, David Manning and Sarah Hobbs will again sponsor a wildflower walk near their homes on the banks of the South Fork.

Meet at **4 p.m.** at Karen's home at 6776 116th Avenue to be guided to a prime site. Five different native flowers or your money back!

Plan to join us back at the house for a potluck supper, probably about 5:30. Table service, drinks and main dish will be provided. Bring a friend!

April 2018

Maquoketa United Church of Christ

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
1 No Sunday School 10:00 a Worship 11:45 a Qigong 	2 Pr. Stephanie on vacation, returning 4/10 6:00 p Karate Club	3 7:30 p Yoga	4 7:30 a Centering Prayer 5:15 p Meal Deal (potluck) 6:15 p Centering Prayer 7:00 p Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p Alcoholics Anonymous	5 8:00 p 1:00 p at Unit
8 8:45 a Adult Bible Study 9:00 a Sunday School 10:00 a Worship 11:45 a Qigong	9 Carolyn on vacation all week 6:00 p Karate Club	10 9:00 a Ministerial Association 7:30 p Yoga	11 7:30 a Centering Prayer 9:30 a Women's Fellowship 11:00 a Spiritual Outreach 1:00 p Worship Committee 5:15 p Meal Deal 6:15 p Centering Prayer 7:00 p Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p Alcoholics Anonymous	12 8:00 p 6:00 p 7:00 p
15 8:45 a Bible Study 9:00 a Sunday School 10:00 a Worship Lucy Breuch Baptism 11:45 a Qigong	16 6:00 p Karate Club	17 5:15 p Open & Affirming 7:30 p Yoga	18 7:30 a Centering Prayer 5:15 p Meal Deal 6:15 p Centering Prayer 7:00 p Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p Alcoholics Anonymous	19 8:00 p 2:30 p 6:00 p
22 8:45 a Bible Study 9:00 a Sunday School 10:00 a Worship 11:45 a Qigong	23 6:00 p Karate Club	24 5:00 p Pastor Parish Relations Committee 7:30 p Yoga	25 7:30 a Centering Prayer 11:30-1:00 SafePath Lunch and Learn in Duncan Room 5:15 p Meal Deal 6:15 p Centering Prayer 7:00 p Choir Rehearsal 8:00 p Alcoholics Anonymous	26 8:00 a 6:00 p
29 8:45 a Bible Study 9:00 a Sunday School 10:00 a Worship 11:45 a Qigong	30 6:00 p Karate Club			

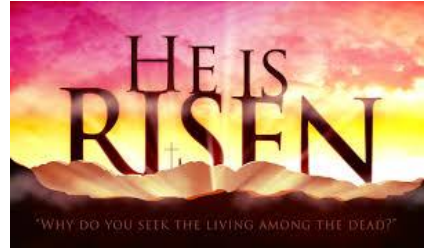
Service Committee

Dianne Barker & Lin Redling

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	Fri	Sat
a Morning Prayer Prayer Shawl Ministry ed Church of Christ	6	7
Karate Club		
00 a Morning Prayer	13	14
Karate Club Council Meeting		
00 a Morning Prayer	20	21
Music Committee Karate Club		
	27	28
Morning Prayer Karate Club		

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April 1—Easter

WC Marta Romer
GR Karen Garien &
Dianne Barker
WL Marilyn Deegan

April 8

WC Sam Sandberg
GR Jane Bentrott &
Phyllis Rockwell
WL David Manning

April 15

WC Mary Hayward
GR Joyce Den Herder &
Ann Miller
WL Karen McClintock

April 22

WC Bill Schwenker
GR Oswalt family
WL Bonnie Schwenker

April 29

WC Barry Francois
GR Marie Holst &
Connie Francois
WL Chris Tubbs



Mara Nissen	April 1
Elaine Tubbs	April 2
Douglas Yarolim	April 3
Garry Anderson	April 5
Karen Manning	April 5
Joe Claeys	April 11
Lynne Quissell	April 12
Joyce Den Herder	April 16
Helen Stewart	April 22
Etta Koon	April 27
Joel Tubbs	April 30

Dates to Remember:

April 1—Easter
April 2-9 Stephanie vacation
April 9-15 Carolyn vacation
April 25 SafePath Lunch & Learn

Meal Deal Dates:

April 4 (potluck)
April 11
April 18
April 25

Need a ride?

If you need help in getting to worship, or other church events

Please call David Manning 563-652-3089.

Council Minutes

The council minutes will be posted on the bulletin board outside Pastor Stephanie's office after they have been approved by the council.



We will be doing highway clean-up on April 22nd from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.. Please meet at the church. We will have refreshments at the church after clean-up.



Buildings and Grounds Information

Buildings and Grounds has met three consecutive Thursdays, accomplishing many small tasks.

Replaced a ceiling light in the sanctuary (shines on the podium.) Barry showed Dan Anderson how to do it.

Replaced the broken door seal on south Platt Street door.

Fixed the basement ladies room door stopper.

Replaced the broken bracket for the rainbow flag out front.

Barry and Bill did the quarterly laser measuring. (Will change it to semi-annual.)

Pulled up wet carpet tiles in the basement, have kept an eye on them throughout the rainy month.

Buildings and Grounds is aware a need for signage, and will be addressing that need in a month or so. They would like to finish blinds project before tackling that project.

Geni Carr

Duncan Do-Over

We have made good progress in choosing a painter (Mike Wagnor, from Preston,) from three bids. It will be probably July before painting. We also have chosen colors: "Freshwater" and "Persimmon." We have met with one blinds company and will try to get a quote from a second.

Geni Carr
Karen McClintock
Pastor Stephanie

Caroline Bybee
Elaine Tubbs

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