

UNITER

DECEMBER, 2021

Jesus, The Light of The World



MAQUOKETA UNITED CHURCH of
CHRIST

 UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

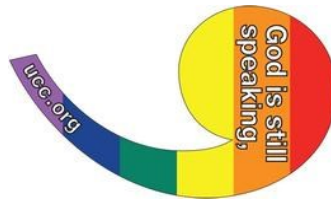
Maquoketa United Church of Christ

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Life is not always either/or

One of the gifts I have received by learning from and about folks who identify as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning) is a greater willingness to see life not as black and white, either/or, normal or abnormal, right or wrong. The queer community calls it the “binary”, the habit of dividing the world into only two parts.

It’s a big challenge at my age to make this change. It’s something like changing the lenses in my glasses (I’m in the midst of eye surgery, so sight metaphors come easy!). After I have made the change, everything looks different, more colorful, with more depth. I find that I less often react by automatically judging new or unfamiliar knowledge.

The Open and Affirming group has acquired some books, as well as suggestions for online presentations, that may be of help to those wanting to understand the challenge of loving a relative or friend who is gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender or who is questioning their gender identity. Here are short introductions to two of them. More will come in future newsletters.

These resources are available for loan to anyone who would like to use them. Look for a display in the north hallway.

Unashamed; a coming – out guide for LGBTQ Christians, by Amber Cantorna. This book is both personal and informative. The dedication in the beginning is a good summary of the contents:

“To every LGBTQ person who has wrestled in isolation,

who has felt the sting of rejection,

who has been scarred by religion,

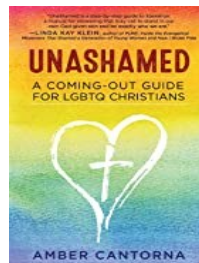
or who has lost family in the name of love;

to those who have found the courage to live transparently in the eyes of others

and to those who do not yet feel safe enough to make their identity known--

this book is for you.

You are seen, you are heard, you are loved, and you are enough.”



Community Virtual Blue

Christmas Service



*The Christmas season can be hard for those whose hearts are hurting. The Blue Christmas Service is a service of remembrance and hope. It is a gentle, contemplative service that acknowledges the loss and provides a sense of peace. We may need a moment to hear words of guidance and comfort from the privacy of our homes. We need to feel we are not alone. Pastors Alberta Ervin and Maxx Tone and Funeral Celebrant Colleen Petaros will lead us in a virtual service where we acknowledge the losses we face because there is an empty chair at our table. The service is nondenominational. This will be a time for remembering and honoring the lives of persons we miss. We invite you join us on the longest night of the year, **Tuesday, December 21 at 6:30 P.M.** You can access the service in these ways: **Facebook: Maquoketa First United Methodist** or **YouTube: Maquoketa First United Methodist Church**. As part of the service, we encourage you to light candles in remembrance and hope in your home. We encourage you to have ribbons or other forms of remembrance that you can place on your tree. We look forward to spending some special time together as we remember and share part our grief journey in virtual community.*

Announcements:

2021 Christmas Fund

Good New...

Great Joy..

All the People!

And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you **Good news** of a **Great joy** which will come to **All the people** !" Luke 2:10

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need.

Thank you for your support.
Stewardship Team:
James Dean
Marilyn Dean
Karen McClintock

**The Christmas Fund Offering will be received
Sunday, December 9, 2021.**

Church Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday

9am-12pm

Pastor's Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday

9am-12pm or by appointment

563-652-4296



<http://www.facebook.com/maqucc/>

Thank you All for your Generosity!

Newsletter Staff:

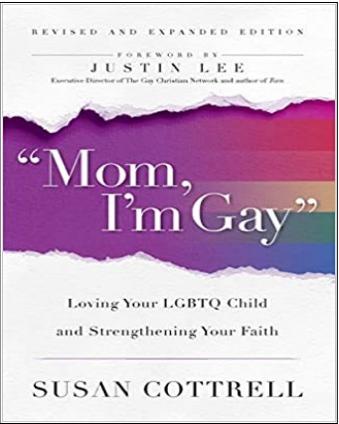
Karen McClintock's name was inadvertently left off the committee listing in last months newsletter.

Karen, Thank you for all you do for the church !!

Life is not always either/or...continued

"Mom, I'm gay"; Loving your LGBTQ child and strengthening your faith, by Susan Cottrell.

Chances are good that someone you love has heard this declaration from a beloved child. A reviewer recommends this title for helping "any parent who is confused, hurt, afraid, angered, or surprised by their child's coming out."



ATTENTION: Following are CONGREGATIONAL meetings.

Please place the following dates on your calendars. The time shall be 11:15, directly after worship service. No meals, just cookie and coffee.

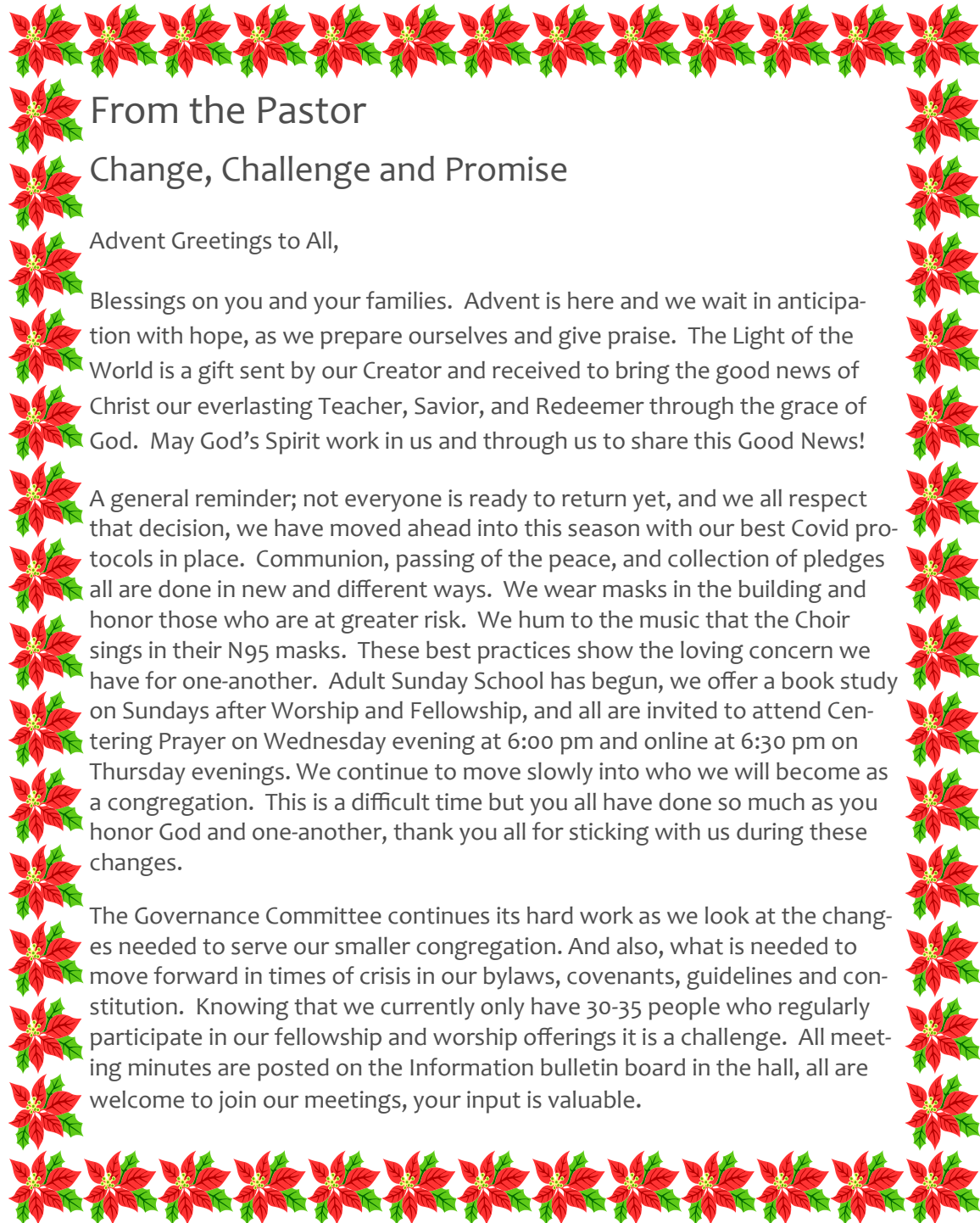
December 12 - Vote to ratify the 2022 budget and introduce proposed by-laws to the congregation

January 9, 2022 – Further discussion of the by-laws

January 23, 2022 -Vote to ratify the by-laws

February 13, 2022 – Annual Meeting

Important Message



From the Pastor

Change, Challenge and Promise

Advent Greetings to All,

Blessings on you and your families. Advent is here and we wait in anticipation with hope, as we prepare ourselves and give praise. The Light of the World is a gift sent by our Creator and received to bring the good news of Christ our everlasting Teacher, Savior, and Redeemer through the grace of God. May God's Spirit work in us and through us to share this Good News!

A general reminder; not everyone is ready to return yet, and we all respect that decision, we have moved ahead into this season with our best Covid protocols in place. Communion, passing of the peace, and collection of pledges all are done in new and different ways. We wear masks in the building and honor those who are at greater risk. We hum to the music that the Choir sings in their N95 masks. These best practices show the loving concern we have for one-another. Adult Sunday School has begun, we offer a book study on Sundays after Worship and Fellowship, and all are invited to attend Centering Prayer on Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm and online at 6:30 pm on Thursday evenings. We continue to move slowly into who we will become as a congregation. This is a difficult time but you all have done so much as you honor God and one-another, thank you all for sticking with us during these changes.

The Governance Committee continues its hard work as we look at the changes needed to serve our smaller congregation. And also, what is needed to move forward in times of crisis in our bylaws, covenants, guidelines and constitution. Knowing that we currently only have 30-35 people who regularly participate in our fellowship and worship offerings it is a challenge. All meeting minutes are posted on the Information bulletin board in the hall, all are welcome to join our meetings, your input is valuable.

52 CLUTTER-FREE GIFTS

Experiences

- Concert Tickets
- Sporting Tickets
- Movie Passes
- Theater Tickets
- Golf Passes
- Escape Room
- Symphony
- Community Theater
- Restaurant Gift Card
- Indoor Rock Climbing
- Bowling Passes
- Daddy-Daughter Date
- Summer Camp
- Hot Air Balloon Ride

Classes

- Cooking
- Dance
- Sports
- Swimming
- Music
- Internet Master Class
- Coding
- Painting/Art
- Home Brewing
- Scuba Diving
- Private Coaching
- Physical Trainer

Time

- Babysitter
- House Cleaner
- Professional Organizer
- Car Wash
- Massage
- Manicure/Pedicure
- Yard Service
- Date Night Out
- Oil Change

Memberships

- Children's Museum
- Zoo
- Theme Park
- Trampoline Park
- Art Museum
- Science Museum
- State Parks
- National Parks

Consumables

- Fruit Basket
- Flowers
- Chocolates
- Coffee Beans
- Coffee Gift Card
- Local Foods
- Wine
- Desserts
- Meat/Cheeses





Chris Tubbs	2	Gabriel Weiler	22
Noah Nabb	6	Daniel Weiler	29
Samuel LaMar	18		
Marilyn Dean	20		



TREASURE SALE NEWS:

Council approved the transfer of funds from Novembers sales as follows; \$1000. to Building and Grounds, and \$200. to LEMF. Also, a box of items were donated to the VFW collection.

One last Treasure Sale is scheduled for Friday, December 3, and Saturday, December 4, 2021.

As always, “Thank you” to those who donated items and/or worked in any way to make this years “2021” Treasure Sales very successful.

Looking forward to another successful year “2022”!

Treasure Sale Committee: Geni, Dianne, Marie, Karen, and Mary



From the Pastor—continued

Currently our best account of membership is 106, after the New Member Worship on November 21st. In order to grow we need to make changes in how we can be the church and meet the needs of our aging congregation, may the Holy Spirit guide and inspire this endeavor.

On November 28th, we began our Advent Season. I am hoping some of you and your family would like to participate in the Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent. I will need four families to help lead *Jesus the Light of the World*, Responsive Litany and Prayer during our December 5, 12, 19, and 24 worship services. Please call if you are able to help! Christmas Eve Worship will be at 7:00 pm, I hope you will join us here in our beautiful sanctuary. There will also be a regular worship service on the 26th, I hope many will join us as well!

It is my hope that we will have Advent devotionals available in a timely manner, this month. In other news this year we will have a giving tree, located in our sanctuary to help support those in need. Let’s help to make a great Christmas for those who have little. We will be taking donations for the Christmas fund on December 19th, showing our support for retired UCC pastors. Also know I will do my best to get our videos out in a timely manner for those who are unable to attend worship. And lastly, I will be participating with the Methodist Church as they will be hosting the Blue Christmas Worship online on the 21st.

Remember beloveds, if you are in need; reach out to me or the office, I am here for you and only a phone call away.

Shalom! Pastor Maxx





DECEMBER 2021

Maquoketa United Church of Christ

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Every Sunday: 8:45am Adult Bible Study and Fellowship, Church Parlor. Coffee Fellowship after services			1 7:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00-6:45 pm Centering Prayer in the Butterscotch room	2 6:30pm Centering Prayer Zoom	3 Treasure Sale 8 am to 4 pm	4 Treasure Sale 8 am to Noon
5 10:00 a.m. Worship WC-John Dague 12-4 UCCMP Worship	6	7	8 7:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00-6:45 pm Centering Prayer in the Butterscotch room	9 5:00 pm Council Meeting 6:30pm Centering Prayer Zoom	10	11
12 10:00 a.m. Worship All Congregational Meet- ing WC-Barry Francois	13	14	15 7:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00-6:45 pm Centering Prayer in the Butterscotch room	16 6:30pm Centering Prayer Zoom	17	18
19 10:00 a.m. Worship WC-Tom Breuch 12-4 UCCMP Worship	20	21	22 7:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00-6:45 pm Centering Prayer in the Butterscotch room	23 6:30pm Centering Prayer Zoom	24 7:00 p.m. Worship WC-Mary Hayward	25 CHRISTMAS
26 10:00 a.m. Worship WC - Steve Tubbs 12-4 UCCMP Worship	27	28 Pastor Maxx— Vacation—December 28, through January 11, 2022	29 7:00 pm Choir Prac- tice 6:00-6:45 pm Centering Prayer in the Butterscotch room	30 6:30pm Centering Prayer Zoom	31	

Service Chairs:

Dianne Barker

Geni Carr

Coffee Fellowship following Sun-
day Church services in the Belva
Duncan Room.

Dec. 5, Mary Hayward

Dec. 12, Carol Breuch

Dec. 19, Jane Bentrrott

Dec. 26, Dianne Barker



BLESSED
CHRISTMAS

Weekly Community Events: Monday & Thursday—Karate @ 6:30pm Wednesday @ 7pm AA & Al-Anon