



Hope United Church of Christ

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A World Filled with Hope

I recently read that the 33rd Anniversary of the confrontation and massacre in Tiananmen Square in China is June 4th. When I read the article, I flashed back to the living room of my childhood home in Anaheim. My family was all gathered there- we had just returned from my graduation ceremony at California State University Fullerton. We were just getting ready to go out to dinner and it was the usual big family happy chaos. The television was on and suddenly it was silent in the room. I don't exactly remember what image made us all pause – was it the multitude of student protestors marching? Was it the soldiers violently suppressing the protests? Was it the tanks rolling in? I don't exactly remember what the reporting was that afternoon, but I remember the hush that came over all of us as we watched and worried what it meant for those students who were protesting and for world peace. We watched the coverage all weekend. Like the rest of the world, when we witnessed that brave gentleman with the grocery bags standing in front of the tank, we held our breath and prayed for his safety and an end to the violence we witnessed from the safety of our homes and our democracy. Later reporting revealed that as the tanks tried to go around him, he repeatedly moved to block their path. Eventually he was overpowered by security forces and taken away. His identity and his fate are unknown. And yet, we know the story and we remember the bravery of the people and that image of that one man in front of the tanks remains.

I confess that I do not know the history of China or any of the changes in policies since June 4th, 1989, but I remember the image of that man and his devotion to the cause. What inspired him, like so many people around the world and in our own country and communities, when faced with an injustice, to stand up and speak out to confront who or what is causing the injustice? I cannot imagine standing in front of a tank, but I am certain I am able to be present and vocal (in person and through written correspondence) where God is calling for justice and love to be known. The power of our voice is immense. Our presence in solidarity, support, and allyship with our marginalized brothers and sisters and siblings is crucial. Jesus proclaimed his mission as he read the scroll of Isaiah, and as followers of Christ, we share that mission. I pray that each of us hears God's call in our lives to share God's love and that we feel God's Spirit moving us forward in response to that call.

Thomas Merton was an American Trappist monk, writer, theologian, mystic, poet, social activist and scholar of comparative religion. A prayer he wrote, called the Merton Prayer, continues to inspire and guide me in this journey and I hope you find this true for your journey as well.

Together in the journey,
Pastor Santina

The Merton Prayer

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

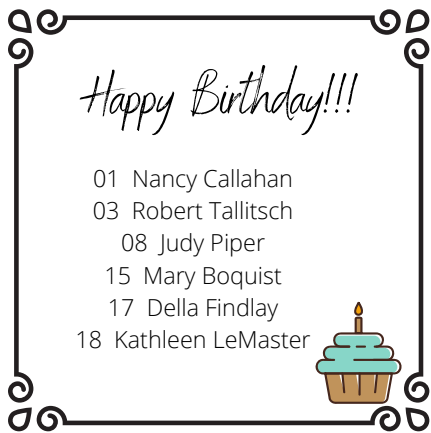
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

"The Merton Prayer" from Thoughts in Solitude Copyright © 1956, 1958 by The Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani.





June Scripture

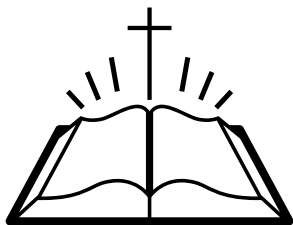
June 5	Acts 2:1-21
June 12	Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Romans 5:1-5 John 16:12-15
June 19	1Kings 19:1-15a Galatians 3:23-29 Luke 9:23-29
June 26	2Kings 2:1-2, 6-14 Luke 9:51-62

Blessing Box Ministry

Our Blessing Box continues to be a source of hope and needed supplies for our community. As we enter into the warmer months, Mission and Outreach is seeking to resupply some of the most needed and sought after items. We are grateful for the following donations:

- Deodorant
- Dental floss
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned fruit
- Dry soups such as ramen soup

cans with pop tops are greatly appreciated!



Lectionary Bible Study

Our weekly Lectionary Bible Study will take a summer break beginning in June. We will reconvene September 13th. We hope you'll join us in September every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. Enjoy your summer vacations!



Welcome Bridget!

We are excited to welcome Bridget Ramirez as an official employee of Hope UCC! You may have already met Bridget in our office. She was hired as our Office Administrator/Bookkeeper back in November. However, up until May 23 Bridget was an employee of Sedona Staffing – the hiring agency who connected us with Bridget. The match was terrific and now Bridget is officially part of the Hope UCC team! Welcome, Bridget! We are so happy we found each other.



I just wanted to say thank you to you all for being so welcoming and kind to me over the past 6 months. I am ever at your service to help. Love, Bridget.

Youth Group Bake Sale – THANK YOU!

Our Youth Group would like to thank this amazing community for your support of their bake sale fundraiser in May. \$800.00 was raised over the weekend and we are blown away by your support. The money raised will be divided between Ukrainian Refugee Relief and the Youth Group's Service/Learning Trip. We hope you enjoyed your treats. Thank you again!



Special Congregational Meeting: Sunday, June 5th following

Worship

Please plan to stay after church on Sunday, June 5, for a special congregational meeting. The topic for discussion is a proposal for Hope UCC's roof repair. The cost is substantial and all the information regarding the project will be presented to the congregation for a discussion and vote. We will discuss the roofing issues, the process by which the proposal for work was decided, and a review of the estimate of costs for the project. We will also discuss where the funding for the project will come from and our strong financial position that supports this project. If you have any questions about this project or the information that will be discussed, please reach out to any of the following people: Bob Poor (Chair, Trustees Ministry), Bob Tallitsch, (Treasurer), and/or Kathy LeMaster (Council President). Thank you for your continued stewardship of our wonderful community.



Blessing Box: Help Wanted!

Our Blessing Box is a hit! Many people in our community able to find the items they need within it and our Mission and Outreach Ministry (M&O) has been able to keep it stocked with items this congregation has lovingly donated. Thank you! Now that the weather is warming up again, we are able to once again provide a variety of food items in the blessing box. We'll let you know what is needed in upcoming newsletters. M&O has worked hard to figure out a 'system' for the best way to keep it stocked and is ready to train volunteers from the congregation to help with this ministry. If you have a little time during the week or weekend to offer, please consider volunteering for this ministry. It takes as little as 30 minutes a week to help bring relief and kindness to our friends and neighbors in this community. Please see anyone on M & O for more information and to sign up to help: Jenny Hookey, Ginny Anderson, Sue Grchan, Donna Werner, Lisa & Brian Williams, Kathy Hobson, and Barb Hawotte.



June is Pride Month!

As we witnessed last year, the presence of a faith community offering an authentic witness affirming God's love for our LGBTQIA siblings is a deeply moving experience. As we put our ONA covenant into practice, we have been more fully opened to the importance and meaning of our covenant and what it means to live faithfully as an Open and Affirming congregation. There are a few different opportunities to show our pride this month in the Quad Cities. Hope UCC is once again joining with our sister Open and Affirming congregations, Edwards UCC and First Congregational UCC Moline, as sponsors of the events during the week of June 12-18. On Saturday, June 18th, we will once again have a contingent marching in the Pride Parade. If you prefer to ride instead of walk, we have a car in which you can ride and wave to the crowds. The parade is later in the day this year—we'll gather at the staging area at 3:00 p.m. Carpooling will be available and more information will be available soon. We hope you'll join us for this fun and meaningful event! Make sure to save the parade date on your calendar.



Reel Theology June 17: Encanto

Join the fun – sing along if you know the songs – as we watch and then discuss the film Encanto. This film is a joy and has meaning for all ages. Encanto tells the tale of an extraordinary family, the Madrigals, who live hidden in the mountains of Colombia, in a magical house, in a vibrant town, in a wondrous, charmed place called an Encanto. The magic of the Encanto has blessed every child in the family with a unique gift from super strength to the power to heal—every child except one, Mirabel. But when she discovers that the magic surrounding the Encanto is in danger, Mirabel decides that she, the only ordinary Madrigal, might just be her exceptional family's last hope.

This film is rated PG. As usual, bring your own dinner at 5:30 if you would like to eat together before the film begins at 6:00 with the discussion following.



Youth Group News for June

Youth Group meets Sundays from 3:00-4:15 P.M. unless otherwise noted.

June 5: Worship at 10:00: Honor Graduates and offer blessing to Youth Group for their Service/Learning Trip during worship. Meet at 3:00 for final planning details for trip.

June 7: Meet at church at 9:00 a.m. for departure to Elmhurst

June 10: Return to Hope UCC

June 12: Worship at 10:00: offer presentation on Service/Learning Trip experience. No Youth Group

June 19: Father's Day -No Youth Group

June 26: Youth Group at 3:00 p.m. – Discuss Elijah and Elisha's story. Plan for August Welcome Retreat.

Youth Group will take a break during the month of July



Youth Group Summer Service/Learning Trip- June 7-10

Please pray for our Youth Group (and your pastor) as we take a week this summer to serve in our community as well as explore more deeply world, regional, and local history and the implications and impact of the policies of unjust systems while also celebrating the strength and resilience and courage of oppressed and persecuted people targeted for their race and ethnic heritage. We will travel to Skokie to visit the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Evanston to visit the Mitchell Museum of the Native American (while staying at Elmhurst University). Following that we will travel to Aurora and spend the day volunteering at Feed My Starving Children. We will visit the Geneseo Historical Museum on the way back to Moline and learn about the role that area served as part of the Underground Railroad. The Youth Group will share their experiences in worship on June 12. We thank you for your support of this great group of kiddos.



Celebrating Our Graduates: June 5th

On Sunday, June 5th, we will take some time during worship and celebrate the journeys of the graduates in our congregation. This year we will celebrate the achievements of Kate Birdsell, Martin Poor, and Annika Zemek.

Kate graduated from Blackhawk College's Nursing Program.

Martin is graduating from Moline High School

Annika is graduating from Moline High School. (You may not have met Annika. She and her sister Karenn have been active in our Youth Group since we reconvened in October of 2020 following the Covid break. Her church membership is held in another congregation, but she and her sister have found a supportive and meaningful community in our Youth Group.)

We look forward to offering our prayers and blessings with these young adults and celebrating their journeys during worship on June 5th.

