



# Hopeful Connections

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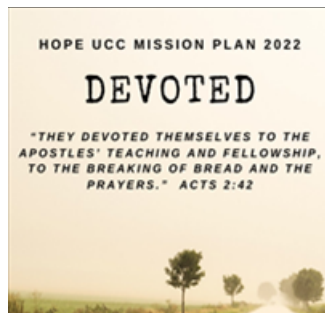
## RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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## \*NOMINATING COMMITTEE



## Stewardship 2021: Devoted to Be the Church

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."*  
Acts 2:42

Hope UCC has definitely kicked off our new program year with a bang. I am always so grateful for the energy and inspiration that the end of the summer season offers. As much as I love summer, fall brings so many new opportunities as we start our 'routines' again. It's

time to shake off (reluctantly) the joy of staying up late, enjoying the longer hours of daylight and being able to sleep in a little later in the morning. When fall begins and the kids are back in school, setting that alarm clock again can be jarring. Even if it has been YEARS since we have had to do the 'back to school' routine, fall still compels us to start getting organized: get the mulching attachment ready for the mower, get our rakes and greenery bags stocked up, put away the patio furniture, and (insert a sad face here) get our sweaters, coats, boots, and snow shovels out from the back of our closets and sheds. Fall is here and along with all these ways we face a new season in our lives, we do the same in our congregational lives here at Hope UCC.

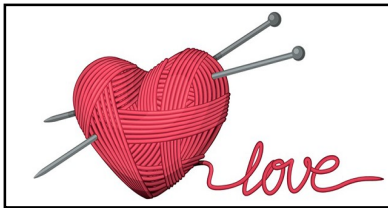
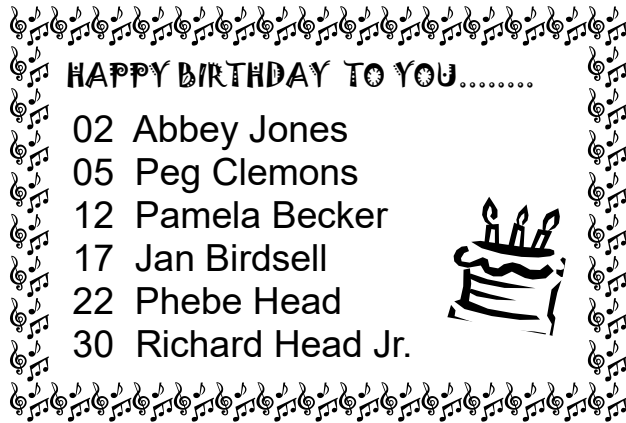
As we begin our new program year, we once again study our mission at Hope UCC. We do this in a variety of ways through our time in worship and prayer and in our ministry teams as each one discerns how we are being called to serve others and live out the ways in which God is calling us to love God through loving others. It is in doing so that we develop our mission spending plan, or budget, which describes how we will manage the gifts given to this congregation and be faithful stewards of these gifts of time, talent, and treasure offered by Hope UCC's members and friends. Creating the mission spending plan and the pledge campaign each year is a joyful mission that we take seriously and prayerfully. And as we enter the month of October, we begin this process anew in order to present a fully formed financial presentation at our Annual Meeting in January.

This year our stewardship campaign will reflect what we are studying in our Fall Worship Series: 'Be the Church.' As we learned in Acts 2:38-47, our first scripture selection in this series, as the early church began to come together and grow, four practices were evident: teaching, fellowship, prayers, and breaking of bread. The people of the early church devoted themselves to the mission of the church. And now today, so many generations later, we still grow in the same ways. All that we do at Hope UCC is woven together to shape our mission, glorify God, and share God's Good News. These four practices are how we accomplish this. In the coming weeks we will speak more about Hope's Mission Spending Plan with our proposed 2022 budget and how these practices shape our mission. I hope you will prayerfully discern how you see the many ways these we devote our lives, both individually and in our communal life together on this shared faith journey, to these practices – to God. I look forward to sharing this experience with you.

Always devoted,  
Pastor Santana

## October Scripture

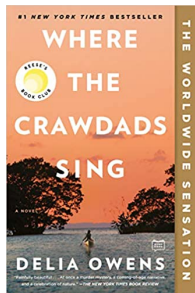
Oct. 3	Ephesians 4:1-7, 25-5:2
Oct. 10	Matthew 25:31-46
Oct. 17	Genesis 2:1-15 Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Oct. 24	Philippians 4:4-13
Oct. 31	Ecclesiastes 3: 1-15



### Prayer Shawl Ministry

With the cool days of fall on our doorstep its time to dust off those crochet hooks and knitting needles. While we won't be back to having meetings, we can continue to make prayer shawls for our friends and neighbors, and bring

them in. Please continue to pray for one another, for those in need, and for the blessings our lovingly crafted shawls and afghans will bring to others.



### Book Club

We invite you to read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens, then join us for discussion October 26 at 6:00 p.m. at church.



### Youth Group October News

Sunday, October 3: **\*\*Time Change\*\*** Meet at Hope at 12:00. We will go to lunch and then walk in the CROP Hunger Walk. We should return to Hope by 3:00. Please wear good walking shoes!

Sunday, October 10: Youth Group at Church 3:00-4:30

Sunday, October 17: Youth Group at Church 3:00-4:30

Saturday, October 23: Please join us for Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 24: No Youth Group



### **Reel Theology on October 15: *Departures***

Please join us as we watch and discuss the film *Departures*. Bring your own dinner at 5:30 if you would like to eat together before the film begins at 6:00. This beautiful, funny, and very touching film tells the story of a young man in Japan who is a devoted cellist in an orchestra who loses his job and returns to his home town with his wife to look for work and start over. He mistakenly answers an advertisement for a job and is hired as a funeral professional. While his wife and others despise the job, he learns to take pride in his work and begins to perfect the art of "Nokanshi," acting as a gentle gatekeeper between life and death, between the departed and the family of the departed. The film follows his profound and sometimes comical journey with death as he uncovers the wonder, joy and meaning of life and living. The film is rated PG13 and is in Japanese with English subtitles.

### **An Illustrated Faith: Deepening Our Spiritual Journey through Creative Journaling** **Saturday, October 16 at 3:30-5:00 P.M.**

Families of one and families of many are invited to join the Faith Exploration Ministry for this fun and informative afternoon workshop. Reverend Lisa Gaston will lead us in this spiritual practice. No artistic background or experience is necessary for this practice which is found to deepen our engagement with scripture and prayer practices. Many have found that Bible journaling brings a new awareness of scripture of texts they have heard and read for many years, because engaging with it creatively offers a fresh perspective to them. This is a fun and meaningful time together designed for all ages to share together so please bring your children and/or grandchildren. Childcare will be available for children under the age of 5 (please let the church office know if you will need childcare).

Faith Exploration will provide the materials for journaling so please let us know you will be attending. RSVP with the church office either by calling or emailing:

309-762-1419 or [office.hopeuccgc@gmail.com](mailto:office.hopeuccgc@gmail.com)

We will have refreshments provided at 3:30 and the program will begin at 3:45. A \$5 donation is suggested. Please contact the Faith Exploration Ministry members with any questions: Laura Black, Sue Grchan, Kim Powell, and Jan Birdsell.



### **Trunk or Treat October 23!**

Our Mission and Outreach Ministry has registered our church for the City of Moline Parks & Recreation's annual Trunk or Treat event. Join us at the Greenvally Softball Complex from 3:00-5:00 P.M. to pass out candy, meet and engage with our neighbors from all around the community, and enjoy the afternoon together. The M&O Ministry will reveal the theme soon so be looking for that information. Would you like to help but cannot make it to the event? We would be thankful for any donations of Halloween Candy you'd like to offer –

please bring any Halloween candy donations to the church office during the week or to Fellowship Hall on the Sundays before October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please see any of the members of M&O for more information or to sign up to help on the 23<sup>rd</sup>: Kathy Hobson, Jenny Hookey, Barb Hawotte, Donna Werner, and Lisa & Brian Williams.

### **Be the Church: Enjoy This Life Worship on October 31**

We will conclude our worship series, 'Be the Church,' as we explore what it means to *Enjoy this Life*. What a great coincidence that it falls on October 31<sup>st</sup>! We will enjoy life together in a fun way during worship on October 31<sup>st</sup>. We invite you to come dressed in costume as your favorite Bible character, event, or item, or as your favorite religious figure/character. Yes, this is for all ages! ☺ Get creative – enjoy the fun of thinking about and creating your costume. Our Worship and Music Ministry team will host a baked potato lunch following worship. Your free will offering will be used to support the Blessing Box ministry.

### **Celebrate Our Saints**

We will celebrate All Saints Sunday on November 7<sup>th</sup> this year. We will honor the memory of the saints in our lives during worship by adding to our 'Circle of Saints' wreath. The Circle of Saints holds ribbons with the names of beloved people in our lives who have died. Each year we add to the circle as we honor their memories. You can repeat the name(s) you included last year as well as adding any new names this year. Ribbons will be available beginning October 17 and we invite you to take one (or many) and write the names of the people in your lives whose memories you wish to honor. We are happy to mail them to you as well. Simply call or email the church office and let us know how many you would like. Please return the ribbons to church before or on the morning of November 7<sup>th</sup>, and they will be attached to the circle. Ribbons will be available at church during the weeks leading up to November 7<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor San-

### **"A Gift Money Can't Buy" Advent Devotional Booklet**

The story we celebrate during Advent can get lost in the chaos of consumerism during the Christmas season. This year we want to slow down and remember the beauty of the gift God gives us in the birth of Jesus. Hope UCC will once again produce an Advent Devotional filled with your reflections. We invite you to consider and reflect on the question, *"What is the best gift you have received that money cannot buy?"* In other words, what has someone done for you or given to you that has brought you joy or made a difference in your life? Likewise, maybe you have done this for someone else. How did it make you feel to give or receive this gift? As we all know, some of the very best things in life, the greatest gifts, cannot be wrapped up and put under the tree. The most precious treasures are not the ones that cost the most money.

We invite you to share these experiences and tell us about these special gifts you have received or have given and how the experience brought joy, renewal, love, hope, or the many other impacts that were created. We will combine our stories and experiences together with daily scripture and prayers in our devotional.

Your stories are important! This congregation will be the authors of this devotional - please consider sharing your story. Contact Kathy Hobson to sign up and get more details. Stories will be due to Kathy by October 31<sup>st</sup>. If you have a story and would like help writing it for publication, we can help with that. Handwritten and dictated stories are welcome too! Also, we need help with the overall publication so if you would like to help with writing prayers, reviewing, editing, or construction of the devotional, please let Kathy Hobson know.

### **Hope UCC's Blessing Box Ministry**

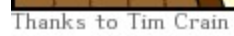
Our Blessing Box will be installed in the coming weeks! Hooray!

Mission and Outreach has created a list of essential items to stock the Blessing Box. We are grateful for your assistance in the collection of these items. If you would rather offer a monetary donation towards the stocking of the Blessing Box, we are grateful for that support too. Please indicate "Blessing Box" in the memo of your check or on your envelope. In October there will also be a sign-up sheet available for folks who would like to volunteer to look after the Blessing Box each month by keeping it stocked and maintained.

Thank you for your donations!

- ♥ Fruit Cups
- ♥ Canned Fruit: 11 and/or 15 oz sizes
- ♥ Canned Soup: 10.5, 15, and/or 19 oz sizes
- ♥ Dried Ramen type soups
- ♥ Canned Vegetables
- ♥ Small boxes/Single serving packages of nuts and/or dried fruit
- ♥ Powdered Milk
- ♥ Canned Tuna
- ♥ Canned Chicken
- ♥ Creamy Peanut Butter: 28 oz size jar or smaller
- ♥ Toothbrushes
- ♥ Toothpaste
- ♥ Deodorant
- ♥ Women's hygiene products
- ♥ Bars of Soap
- ♥ Laundry Detergent Pods

We thank you for your support of Hope UCC's newest mission project. We look forward to helping our neighbors when they need it .



10-27-2000

EVEN IF I DID WANT TO TAKE YOU ALL  
TRICK-OR-TREATING I COULDN'T, AS  
THERE ARE NO HOUSES IN THE WILDERNESS