



**HOPE** UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Hopeful Connections

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## Happy New Year!

I grew up in a family that wore glasses. I was one of only 3 of us (out of 10!) that did not need them. I thought it was pretty great that I had 20/20 vision and my sister, brothers, and parents all had to deal with keeping track of their glasses. Of course that all changed around my

43<sup>rd</sup> birthday when I realized that the words on every page I read seemed fuzzier and smaller. My vision is no longer 'perfect' (whatever that means!) but the funny thing is, with age, so many things do become clearer. As we kick off 2020 we cannot help but use that 20/20 vision imagery as we enter this new year. What a wonderful opportunity for our congregation to look to the future and envision and consider how God will use this faith community today and in the years ahead.

I am excited about what I see happening now and for our future at Hope UCC! You are too – thank you for your remarkable support of Hope's 2020 Stewardship Campaign. The pledges from this congregation exceeded our goal of \$95,000 - your pledges and faith promises of financial support totaled over \$108,000! This is a sign that you believe there is much that God is calling our congregation to do this year and the years ahead – and most importantly, you believe we can do it!

Three initiatives that began in 2018 & 2019 continue to work with our ministries and congregation to build our vision for the future of Hope. Our Open and Affirming Committee (ONA), Rekindling Our Congregations Committee (ROC), and the Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations Committee (TPIRC) have been meeting and developing ideas and programs to strengthen our vision. I am grateful for the work and stewardship the members of these committees offer our church. As the year moves forward, please watch for news and information from these groups about ways to be involved in the vision process.

We will celebrate Epiphany on the first Sunday of the New Year. As we celebrate the light that was revealed through Jesus's birth, we will again take a Star Word from the Christmas tree. This year the Star Words are centered on the theme of bravery because living into God's vision in 2020 will require brave and bold faith and action. Star Words are for everyone – young and old. Keep the star close all year and use this spiritual practice to let the word guide your prayers and bring you into a new conversation with God. Trust that your word will have something to offer, some new understanding or insight for you this year. Watch and see how the word appears and makes itself known to you in different ways.

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(Continued from Pg. 1)

At this time each year I read and reflect on this meditation written by the great African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader, the Reverend Dr. Howard Thurman. I share it with you again to remind us that although Christmas day has passed, as a community of faith, we believe Christmas continues as we share the light and love of God. Thank you for a beautiful 2019 and cheers to what 2020 brings as Hope Grows!

### The Work of Christmas by Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman

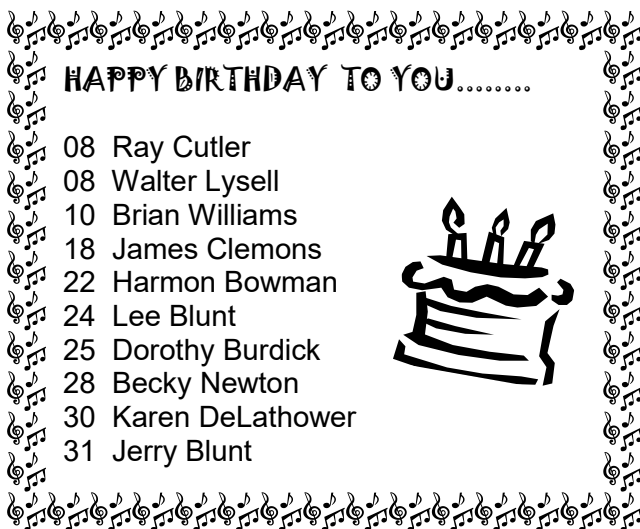
When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal the broken,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people,  
to make music in the heart.



Happy New Year and peace always,  
Pastor Santina

### January Scripture

Jan. 5	Jeremiah 3:7-14 Psalm 146:12-120 John 1:1-18
Jan 12	Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 29 Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17
Jan 19	Psalm 40:1-11 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 John 1:29-42
Jan 26	Isaiah 9:1-14 Psalm 27:1,4-9 1 Corinthians 1:1-18 Matthew 4:12-23



Average church  
attendance  
for December  
83

### January Sunday School Schedule - Daniel and the Lions

Class	Jan. 5 Sunday 1	Jan. 12 Sunday 2	Jan. 19 Sunday 3	Jan. 26 Sunday 4
Lower Elementary Pre-K, K, 1	Science	Cooking	Bible Games All ages together in one class	Art
Upper Elementary Grade 2, 3, 4, 5	Cooking	Art		Science

Thank you to Ruth Circle who served coffee hour for the month of December. Volunteers will serve for the month of January.



# Hope Happenings



## **Hope UCC Annual Meeting Notice: January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

On behalf of Hope UCC's Church Council I would like to announce that our annual meeting will be held immediately after the church service on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Church Council, Trustees, Treasurer, all Committees, Auxiliary Organizations and Church Staff need to have their annual reports turned in to Pam in the church office no later than January 5. Bob Tallitsch, President



**Prayer Shawl Group** The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Group will be on Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Please note: meetings will now be held on the second Thursday of every month from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Please join us!



## **Reel Theology January 11: *The Peanut Butter Falcon***

Please join us to watch and discuss the 2019 film, *The Peanut Butter Falcon*. This comedy-drama tells the story of a young man with Down syndrome who dreams of becoming a professional wrestler and attending the wrestling school of his hero, the Salt Water Redneck, whose videos he watches obsessively. He escapes from an assisted living facility and befriends a wayward fisherman on the run. As these two men form a rapid bond, they journey together and experience several adventures as they are pursued by 'bad guys' and a social worker who would like to bring him back to his assisted living facility. This film has been called a modern day Mark Twain adventure.

Families of one and families of many are welcome to join us – the film is rated PG-13. We will begin with a potluck at 5:00 and the movie will begin at 5:30 with the discussion following the film. See you at the movies!

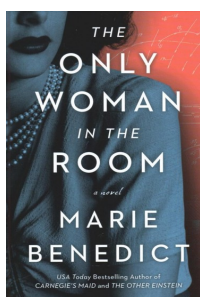
## **Hope UCC's Mission & Outreach Ministry**

How wonderful to begin a new ministry at Hope UCC! As per our congregational vote in April, our new Mission and Outreach Ministry (M&O) launches in January. This ministry is responsible for the stewardship of Hope's service and outreach projects and programs. Having this ministry means that our congregation has a team in place through which our outreach is developed and coordinated which is so important as our faith community continues to prayerfully discern how God is calling us to serve in the Quad Cities and beyond. A survey will be distributed during worship on January 5 that will ask each of us some questions about Hope and our involvement in the community. We hope that you will answer the questions and return it before you leave church that day. It is the first step in our 'Rekindling Our Congregations' process with Quad Cities Interfaith, from whom members of M&O are receiving training to develop a mission plan so that Hope's passions for outreach will intersect with the needs of our community in a way that reflects our faith and call as disciples.

This ministry is here to work with our whole congregation. You do not have to be on the M&O Ministry in order to see a special service project happen. Do you have a passion or an idea for a certain service project? It might be a one-time opportunity or an on-going project in the area of food or housing insecurity, education, environmental care, or mental health ministries, or something not on this list; if so, please speak to any of the members and let them know what you're thinking. This ministry will coordinate with you to make it happen! We are stronger together! Hope Grows in 2020 as we build God's kingdom together!

## **Feeding Our Community**

After much prayerful discernment, Hope ended our participation as the Sunday evening location for Churches United's Meal Site program on December 29. However, this does not mean that Hope UCC will no longer be involved in programs that offer nutrition and fellowship and feed the spirits and stomachs of our neighbors. Beginning in February, we will offer a dinner church program on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Also, there are many organizations in the Quad Cities that need assistance with their breakfast, lunch, and dinner programs as well as help with their food pantries. We have provided volunteers at our sister congregation, Church of Peace, for their weekly food pantry and will continue to do so. If you know of other congregations or organizations that need extra hands and help, please make sure to speak with our Mission and Outreach Ministry in order to coordinate Hope UCC's participation and support. Sign-up sheets for Mission and Outreach opportunities will be posted on the bulletin board across from the church offices and will always be announced at church and through our notifications. Please speak with anyone on this ministry about your idea – let's make it happen!



## **Hope Book Club**

We invite you to read *The Only Woman in the Room*, a novel by Marie Benedict, then join us for discussion January 27 at 6:00 p.m. in the Platinum Room at the Moline Public Library.

## **Youth Group News**

We have lots to do this month. Please save these dates and bring a friend to our gatherings. We'll go out for lunch after our service project on January 18 – please save the date and we'll have the time set as soon as I get confirmation about the event. ☺

**January 5:** No Youth Group meeting

**January 12:** Youth Group 4:00-5:30

Please come to get information about the UCC National Youth Event July 22-25 at Purdue University. We'll start making plans for fundraising at this meeting! We will also discuss our service project for January 18!

**January 18:** Day of Service for MLK weekend!

**January 19:** No Youth Group meeting

**January 26:** Youth Group 4:00-5:30

**KEEP  
CALM  
AND GO TO  
YOUTH  
GROUP**



## **Thank You!!**

A BIG thank you to Stacey Demarest and Kim and Dan Beug for procuring Hope UCC's new AED machine! This vital, life-saving equipment will hopefully never be needed, but how wonderful to have it in place if it is necessary. Stacey will arrange for training on the equipment and the date will be announced. Thank you again to Stacey, Kim, and Dan for helping to keep our church members and friends safe and sound!





01-03-2003

EDWARD WAS SO FOND OF HIS NEW SNOWMAN  
THAT HE COULDN'T HELP BUT MAKE HIM A  
GUARDIAN SNOW ANGEL