



The Tidings is published monthly by  
First United Methodist Church  
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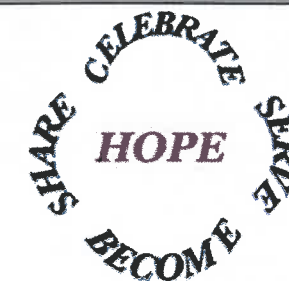
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A Monthly Update for First United Methodist Church Burlington Iowa Volume 87 Issue 12

*As Christ's Light of Hope,  
together we Become, Serve,  
Celebrate and Share*

# Tidings



Traditional Worship 9:00 am or Live Stream with link on Facebook

*Many  
Thanks!*

The SPRC (HR) committee would like to say thank you to everyone who made Pastor Melisa's celebration so wonderful!! Sunday worship and the open house was filled with so much warmth, happiness and love. Everyone was so excited and anxious to help, there are too many of you to list (I know I would miss someone). What a wonderful tribute to Pastor Melisa. You are all special and such a blessing to our faith community. Thank you again for your willingness to help.

And stay tuned for more news about our permanent pastor who will be joining us the first of February.

Please remember to wear a name tag, this will be such a help to Pastor Joan as she leads our congregation for the next few weeks.

As always if you have comments or concerns, please let Pastor Joan or anyone from SPRC know. Giving thanks to GOD!! Pati Toops.

SPRC Co-Chairs  
Duane Hartman & Pati Toops  
Members: Julie Anderson, Larry Crabtree,  
Shauna Freitag (Lay Leader)



## Poinsettias

Please consider donating a poinsettia for our sanctuary. We would like to purchase a poinsettia for \$16 each. We will order the plants from Zaiser's Florist on December 15th. **Your payment** must be received with your basic information and who the Poinsettia is in honor/memory of. Please make the checks out to First UMC.

## Thank you for all the love!!

A wonderful day of celebration, memories, and love was gifted to me and my family on October 31. I can't tell you how much deep down gratitude I've had these years of ministry with you. Together, we have taken risks, stretched our faith understanding, and partnered to grow in the mystery of faith. Words can not contain how much caring compassion you have given me and my family during the cancer journey. Thank you.

Thank you for supporting Joan as she fills in the gap for us. Please continue to help her these next few months. Celebrate the birth of Jesus well by purposefully pausing to listen to God. Thank you in advance for welcoming the new pastor in February. Thank you for taking time to get to know her. To be willing to be stretched in serving and becoming more like Christ. Thank you for transforming our corner of the Kingdom.

Thank you for the \$2,875 worth of gift cards for Burlington Building Bridges. Building Bridges connects our congregation with transforming lives in our community. If you are interested in learning more about Building Bridges, consider coming to the Christmas Party on December 7th at 6 pm to hear some testimonies. Lives are being changed for God. Lives are changing for generations to come.

<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/melisabracht-wagner>

Rev Melisa BW 401 N Broadway,  
Mt Pleasant, IA 52641 319.929.3281

Contact us at 319-754-8421 [www.umcburl.org](http://www.umcburl.org)

Facebook: [fumcburlington](https://www.facebook.com/fumcburlington)



Up to date news found in Pew News >>>>

For congregational prayer concerns plus weekly updates, please contact the church office to subscribe to the **Pew News**. Call 319-754-8421.

### December 16th

Living Windows on Jefferson Street

### December 19th

9:00 am Children's Program

3:00 pm Community Christmas Cantata

### December 24th with Jacob Yochum

5:30 pm Puppets share the Christmas Story

8:00 pm Communion and Candlelight

### December 26th

9:00 am Christmas Hymn Sing

Celebrations >>>

**Birthdays**

Dennis Wischmeier	12/04
Jeff Schulz	12/05
Deagan Pilger	12/07
Mark Crooks	12/08
Jim Priebe	12/08
John V. Rockwell	12/08
Cora Johnson	12/09
Scott Zaiser	12/10
Dana Readinger	12/11
Scott Williams	12/11
Cody Crooks	12/13
Jerry Jochims	12/14
Carl Brueck	12/17
Lori Rockwell	12/17
Josephine Toops	12/20
Richard Eggenberger	12/21
Vicki Koeller	12/22
Amy Dodge	12/24
Chester Dalrymple	12/25
Tobin Gach	12/26
Luck Cockrell	12/27
Cole Williams	12/27
Brian Garst	12/28
Kim Knight	12/31
Roxy Riessen	12/31

**Anniversaries**

John & Patty Jaeger	12/06
Rachel Oliverio & Tracy Gach	12/12
Jim & Pam Farr	12/20

UMM will continue meeting Wednesdays at 8 AM at the All-Star Diner in West Burlington.

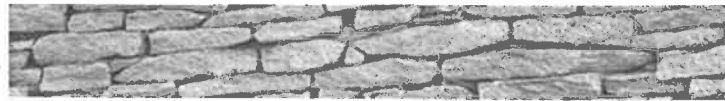


**Confirmation Updates**

SUNDAYS—December Confirmation at 10 am  
5 with Priebe & Sue  
12 with Tim Seibert & Sue  
19 with Becky & Sue

**Mark the Calendar**  
Lock-In January 16-17

Mission Corner >>>



Advent is here! That means that First United Methodists have **Christmas Baskets** to fill! This year we have fifteen families to help with groceries for the Christmas season. With the effects of COVID and rising inflation, there are families who are needing help more than ever to make this season a happy one.

Please sign up to bring grocery items to help these families on the chart that is located at the back of the sanctuary on Sundays and in the Loft office during the week! When you bring these items in to church, cross off your name and place the groceries in the tubs below the chart. The items need to be brought by Sunday, December 11, so the Mission Committee can get them packed. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation to purchase milk and other perishables, please write Christmas Baskets on the memo line of your check.

As we go out and about, preparing for Christmas, we hear the bells of the Salvation Army ringing. Each year our church volunteers to ring their bells to help them in their mission of feeding the hungry. Saturday, December 11, is the date that FUMC will be **ringing the Salvation Army bells** in front of the Agency Street Hy-Vee from 10 am to 6 pm. Please sign up on the board at the back of the church for a one hour shift to spread the good cheer of the season by helping others!

Winter weather is upon us! In January, the Chrisamon tree at the back of the sanctuary will become a **Mitten Tree!** Winter hats, caps, mittens, gloves, and scarves for both children and adults can be brought to church and hung on its branches during January. After the month is over, the adult items will be taken to the Burlington Homeless Shelter and the items for children will go to North Hill School.

Thank you to all the people who sewed bags and who brought supplies for School Kits and hygiene items for Personal Dignity Kits for the annual **Mission Ingathering** in Mt. Pleasant! We had 74 School Kits and 9 Personal Dignity Kits!! These kits have been taken to Midwest Mission Distribution Center near Peoria and will be sent to disadvantaged people who will benefit from these gifts. Again, thank you for your generosity!

Thank you to the helpers who have been fixing and **servicing wholesome and nutritious meals for others in our community!** On October 28, a group prepared and served a meal for almost 100 people for the End of the Month Shared United Ministries at Grace UMC. The Fair Trade Committee served the first Tuesday of the month meal for the Building Bridges graduating class and family members. The Life and Laughter Sunday School class will be responsible for the Building Bridges class on December 7th, and the Bell Choir will be serving in January. If you would like to help fix or serve a meal, please contact Ann Ure at [annlucilleure@gmail.com](mailto:annlucilleure@gmail.com).



**News from the LOFT Market** Christmas ornaments, candles, nativity sets, angels, reindeer, and holiday trees are some of the unique, festive fair trade items waiting for you to see at the LOFT Market! The artisan, hand-crafted gifts available range from one of a kind jewelry to holiday soaps to warm, snuggly blankets and a wide variety of home decor. Organic coffee, tea, and cocoa can be purchased at the LOFT Market as well. The LOFT Market is open Monday through Saturday from 11 am to 3 pm, and starting Sunday, November 28, it will be open for you on Sundays as well from 10 to 3. The LOFT Market is a ministry of our First United Methodist Church as well as a business on Jefferson Street that puts people before profit. Stop by and spread the good cheer!

**United Methodist Women >>>**

**Events/Meetings:**  
Miriam Circle— December 13 at 6:00 pm  
Hostess Carol Zaiser—Potluck



Education in December >>>

The Brunch Bunch continues studying "The Space Between Us" in December. Even if you haven't been part of this study, you are welcome to join the conversation on using the Bible as a guide to help close the divide between us when we hold different viewpoints. The Brunch Bunch meets in Room 217.

The Life and Laughter class continues their travels in the Holy Land with Dave Stotts ("Drive Thru History: The Holy Lands"). Come see where David defeated Goliath, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and the places Jesus walked. The videos make the Bible stories come to life like you never experienced before. Stotts guides you on an adventure that is not only enlightening but also entertaining. Hop on whenever you can by coming down to the Choir Room after church.



Practices are Wednesday at PBJ 5:30-7 pm  
Sundays at JUMP after children's sermon

We want ALL children to join the fun!  
Please contact Sue Dichraff @ 759-4884 !  
**\*masks required**

J.U.M.P  
Jesus You and Me Pray  
Sundays following the  
Children's Message

Church Lower Level with Sue  
Bible Lessons and Games

**Our Financial Health >>>**

Financial Numbers as of  
November 18, 2021

Budgeted Income	\$280,016.68	Budgeted Expenses	\$302,383.43
Actual Income	\$251,313.96	Actual Expenses	\$232,092.58
Event Income	\$ 20,720.00		
Total Income	\$272,033.96		



**All funds have been paid toward the 2021 apportionment. Thank you!**

December, a month that brings joy and smiles and a month that brings stress and fatigue! There are so many things going on! I hope you will join us for worship, in person or online, as we take a journey through the holidays with Kyle Matthew's songs and devotions. I hope you will enjoy the series as it brings us to remember the wonderful story of Jesus' birth, but deals honestly with consumerism, materialism, and even Santa Claus. Mr. Matthews says he "hopes the songs and words will help us celebrate Christmas more authentically, joyfully, biblically, expectantly, and distinctively."

Thank you for all the support last month. I have experienced warmth, caring and generosity! Let us continue to spread those feelings to everyone around us as we share the love and grace of our Lord and Savior.

Please let me know of any concerns or needs.

Peace and Blessings  
Pastor Joan  
[joan@umcburl.org](mailto:joan@umcburl.org)

**Office Hours**

Monday-Friday 8:30 am-3:30 pm

**Interim Pastor** Joan Rodgers  
[joan@umcburl.org](mailto:joan@umcburl.org)

**Office & Event Manager/Choir Director**  
Dane Feenstra 754-8421  
[admin@umcburl.org](mailto:admin@umcburl.org)

**Director of Christian Education**  
Sue Dichraff 319.759.4884  
[education@umcburl.org](mailto:education@umcburl.org)

**Ministry Intern**  
Lucy Cockrell 319.850-2469

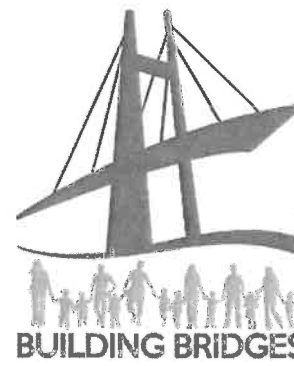
**Organist & Handbell Director:**  
Roxy Riessen

**Custodians:**  
Bruce Dichraff & Tim Votaw

**Childcare Providers:**  
Isabella Murphy & Riley Richards,  
Aeva Babcook

**Live Stream and Tech**  
Shawn Johnson  
Rohit & Savannah Bhawle

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 8am - Chancel Choir 9am - Worship Service 10am - Confirmation 10am - Sunday School 3pm - Basketball 5pm - Cantata Practice 5pm - N.A. Group	29 5:30pm - Pickleball 6:30pm - Prayer Group 7:30pm - Basketball	30 9am - Mahjong 5:30pm - Bridges	1 8am - UMM Breakfast 8:45am - Quilters 3pm - Silver Singers 4pm - Basketball 5:30pm - Wednesday 7pm - Basketball	2 10am - Fluid Movement 1:30pm - Bible Study 4pm - Homeless Prevention 5:30pm - Pickle Ball 7:30pm - Basketball	3 4pm - Basketball	4 9am - Four Oaks 2pm - Birthday Party
5 7:30am - Chancel Choir 9am - Worship Service 10am - Confirmation 10am - Sunday School 11:30am - Volleyball 3pm - Basketball 5pm - Cantata Practice	6 9am - P.E.O. 2pm - NAMI 5:30pm - Pickleball 6pm - Four Oaks 7:30pm - Basketball	7 9am - Heritage Baptist 9am - Mahjong 5:30pm - Bridges	8 8am - UMM Breakfast 8:45am - Quilters 3pm - Silver Singers 4pm - Basketball 5:30pm - Wednesday 7pm - Basketball	9 10am - Fluid Movement 1:30pm - Bible Study 5:30pm - Pickle Ball 7:30pm - Basketball	10 4pm - Basketball	11 6pm - Celebration of Life
12 7:30am - Chancel Choir 9am - Worship Service 10am - Confirmation 10am - Sunday School 11:30am - Volleyball 12pm - Christmas Party- 3pm - Basketball	13 3pm - UMW Exec. Board 5:30pm - Pickleball 6pm - Miriam Circle 6:30pm - Prayer Group 7:30pm - Basketball	14 T.C.A.B. 9am - Mahjong 5:30pm - Bridges 5:30pm - Fair Trade	15 8am - UMM Breakfast 8:45am - Quilters 3pm - Silver Singers 4pm - Basketball 5:30pm - Wednesday 7pm - Basketball	16 LIVING WINDOWS 10am - Fluid Movement 1:30pm - Bible Study 3:30pm - Christmas Party- 5:30pm - Pickle Ball 7:30pm - Basketball	17 4pm - Basketball	18
19 7:30am - Chancel Choir 9am - Children's Program 10am - Confirmation 10am - Sunday School 11:30am - Volleyball 3pm - Basketball 3pm - Christmas Cantata	20 12pm - P.E.O. 2pm - NAMI 5:30pm - Pickleball 7:30pm - Basketball	21 9am - Mahjong 5:30pm - Bridges	22 8am - UMM Breakfast 8:45am - Quilters 3pm - Silver Singers 4pm - Basketball 5:30pm - Wednesday 7pm - Basketball	23 10am - Fluid Movement 1:30pm - Bible Study 5:30pm - Pickle Ball 7:30pm - Basketball	24 5:30pm - Christmas Eve- 8pm - Christmas Eve-	25
26 7:30am - Chancel Choir 8am - Chancel Choir 9am - Hymn Sing Worship 10am - Confirmation 10am - Sunday School 11:30am - Volleyball 3pm - Basketball 5pm - Cantata Practice	27 9:30am - Sarah Circle 5:30pm - Pickleball 6:30pm - Prayer Group 7:30pm - Basketball	28 9am - Mahjong 5:30pm - Bridges	29 8am - UMM Breakfast 8:45am - Quilters 3pm - Silver Singers 4pm - Basketball 5:30pm - Wednesday 7pm - Basketball	30 10am - Fluid Movement 1:30pm - Bible Study 5:30pm - Pickle Ball 7:30pm - Basketball	31 4pm - Basketball	1



## Building Bridges Testimony

First I wanna say, words could never express how truly grateful I am for this opportunity. I didn't have the easiest childhood. I've been on my own since I was 14, trying to survive through people and poverty-stricken situations and unsafe "homes." I found myself in many unsafe predicaments with no one to help me out of them! I became a mother at 19 and knew I had to do whatever I could to prevent these struggles from ever touching my children. 6 months ago, when I first met Mona and signed up for Bridges, I was in such a desperate, stuck, and unstable situation. I was unsuccessfully searching for housing assistance because I was homeless, jobless, and supportless. I was newly separated from my kid's father because life's struggles had turned our love very sour. I took my 3 babies and stayed where I could when I could. Eventually I found myself scrounging and scraping up \$60 a night to get motel rooms and when I couldn't, we slept in a tent on campgrounds. We spent the summer trying to get food stamps and government assistance. Outside of this incredible struggle, I was going through mental battles, some of the toughest of my life. My babies had lost everything but each other.

Mona put plans in action, made ALL the phone calls, checked on me regularly, and stayed on my butt about getting things done. Just knowing someone was not only rooting for me, but actively trying to help me made my view on our struggle do a complete 180. I was so nervous on Day 1 in this room full of beautiful strangers, but very quickly grew to love each and every one of my Bridges' family members. We share, cry, confide, and laugh! We learned **so much** about systemic poverty and the cycle tyranny of the moment puts us in! At one point we were making mental models of what a wealthy person's lifestyle is like. I was so angry reading it, but Mona explained to me why it's so important to understand the cycle of someone from wealth. It made me really think! She was right, of course...if I want the wealthy to empathize and understand, I must do the same and learn to set my poor man's pride aside.

Now after 6 months of learning and having support I'd never experienced before, I've pulled myself together mentally, and have made leaps in my life! I mended my relationship with my kids' father, and we got married after 10 years! We are happier and healthier than we have ever been. I was even able to get a good paying job and a new home of my own, which Mona filled up for us, and even helped the IRS recognize me as a legal citizen! Now that Bridges has taught me about resources, community connections, and given me these new supportive relationships, I have a better understanding of how to ensure my children's success, and THAT'S the real dream! I know it's only going to get better from here, and without Bridges, this would NOT be my reality. So thank you for changing my life forever <3

December 7th at 6:00 pm LOFT 2  
Christmas Fun and Testimonies

# WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Join us this Giving Tuesday to partner in the life changing work of Bridges, helping our neighbors struggling in poverty

[#givingtuesday](#)