

The

December 2021 Vol. 40 Issue 12

Communicator

Connecting People



Collegiate United Methodist Church
and Wesley Foundation
Ames, Iowa

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Weekly Email Announcement Deadlines:

Send Weekly Email submissions to mail@cwames.org by NOON on Wednesday. Type *weekly email* in the subject line.

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Cover Pictures:

Front: Taken in the early morning in early November.

Back: Taken in the afternoon in early November.

About *The Communicator* and deadline submission dates —

The Communicator is a monthly publication of Collegiate United Methodist Church and Wesley Foundation. The goal of *The Communicator* is to inform and involve people in the life and work of the church. To submit articles, please email them to mail@cwames.org and put “*Communicator*” in the subject line. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the church office at 515-292-6936.

January Communicator Deadline: December 16, 2021

Message from Pastor Mary

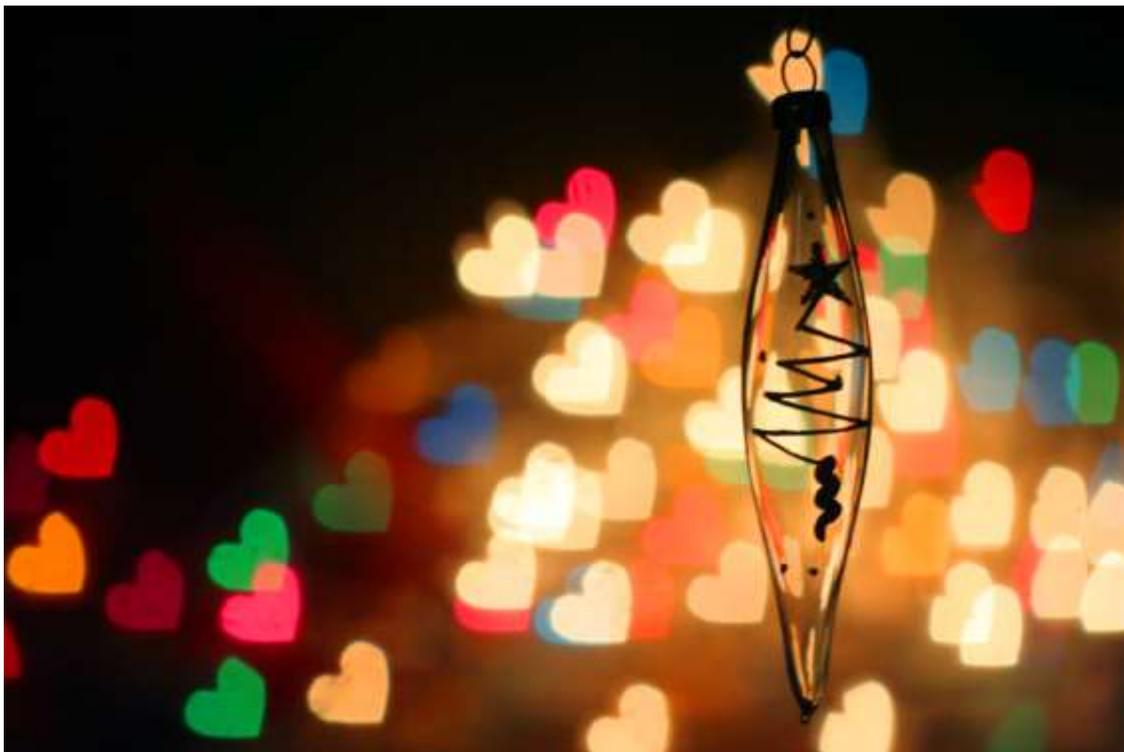
by Rev. Dr. Mary Lautzenhiser Bellon

*When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn --
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth. (Madeline L'Engle)*



Each year, as we begin to plan our Christmas celebrations and parties, we may also take stock of the year behind us. Maybe we are sending **Christmas letters or writing in journals about 2021. We aren't quite to** January, when we make our promises and resolutions for what we hope to live or complete or accomplish ahead of us. And every December there are things going on in the world that confuse or concern us. Yet, as we decorate our sanctuary, put our trees up in our homes, attend musical concerts or parties, pull out the holiday sweaters, and light our Advent Wreath here at the church every Sunday, we might feel a sense of an awareness growing in us, something very special. In December, we are celebrating that Love still takes the risk of birth. We know that despite everything, and because of everything, Love keeps awakening in our hearts: love for people dear to us, love for our lives, love for the world around us, and love for God. We arrive at Christmas Eve and we cross a threshold into knowing again how much the world and we in it mean to God, who comes in the form of a baby to show us again that the only thing that holds it all together is in fact Love.

Pastor Mary



Children, Youth & Family Information

by Lauren Loonsfoot, Director of Children, Youth & Families

Sunday School

Children's Sunday School and Youth Sunday School will focus on Advent focused curriculum for the month of December. Using God With Us materials from Illustrated Ministry.

* No Sunday School December 26th and January 2nd

Youth Group

Middle School Youth Group- Every other Sunday from 5:30-6:30 pm in the youth room.
November 28th and December 12th

High School youth group meet every Sunday evening from 6:30-7:30 in the youth room.

*No youth groups on December 19th, December 26th and January 2nd.

Acolyte Sign-up

Acolyting is a fun and important way for children and youth to participate in worship. We are in need of volunteers. You can learn more about this important aspect of worship and find the sign-up [here](#).

Children's Christmas Program

This year's Children's Christmas program will be December 19th at the 9:00 am Worship service. We will start practicing for our parts on November 7th during the Sunday School hour. We would love to have your child participate. Please contact Lauren Loonsfoot lauren@cwames.org with any questions.

Advent Small Groups

Advent Small Group with Pastor Mary

Light of the World Small Group

Using Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's book, **Light of the World**, explore the biblical texts surrounding the birth of Jesus from a Jewish perspective this Advent season. This study approaches the stories of John the

Baptist's and Jesus' birth stories with fresh insight and connections to the Gospels and the Old

Testament. Join with Pastor Mary Bellon on Wednesday evenings, via zoom, beginning Dec 1, 8, 15, 22 at 7pm. Sign up [here](#).

All The Good - A Wesleyan Way of Christmas Small Group

The season of Advent offers time and space for Christians to prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ at Christmas through reflecting on the story of grace and love. Take time this season to explore the **scriptures of Christmas using the lens of John Wesley's means of grace. This group will meet on Sunday** mornings, beginning Nov 28th, during the Sunday school hour in the church library. Books are available for purchase (\$10) at the Welcome Center. Sign up [here](#).

All Ages Advent Study

Sunday's November 28, December 5, 12 and 19th.

We will gather from 4:00-5:00 in the Fireside room.

Rediscover the gift of Advent that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows. **We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas.** We just know he did. Using portions of Matt Rawle's book *The Heart that Grew Three Sizes* we will explore the faith themes in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* To sign-up for the group click [here](#).

Thank you Christmas decorators!



Opportunities to Serve

Worship Welcome Team! WE NEED YOU!

We need your help on the, Worship Welcome Team to help people feel supported and welcomed when they enter the church parking lot, find their seats in the sanctuary and go forth back into the world. This team is a vital part of the Sunday morning experience.

We need a minimum of 10 people to fill the Worship Welcome Team roles for each service every single week. If you are interested in being a part of this team, sign up here (<https://cwames.churchcenter.com/groups/worship-support/worship-support-general-sign-up>).

If you are ready to sign up for a Sunday, use this sign up <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044EA4A82AA7F58-worship>. Contact Lindsay Drake with any questions. Thank you for making Collegiate/Wesley an incredible place to be!

Christmas Eve Worship Support Needed.

We need you to help us create a welcoming environment this Christmas season. Sign up to welcome, usher, run slides and more for our Christmas Even services using this link [here](#). This is the perfect opportunity for your family, friends or small group to serve together this Christmas.

Advent Special Offering

This Season we would invite you to participate in our Advent Special Offering. This season we will be collecting monetary donations for HOPE. The Ames School District food pantry and SHOP the Iowa State Student food pantry. Starting on November 28th, in worship in person and digitally, you will hear more about these two organizations that support and provide a basic right and need for those in our community, FOOD. There are multiple ways to support this special offering.

1. **Pray.** Pray for our community as it works on food insecurity and how that impacts our children, youth and students.
2. **Give.** You will be able to do that online, through the mail or offering plate.
3. **Share.** Share with others about this giving opportunity and the organizations doing this food insecurity work.



Merry Christmas from the Wesley Center



Merry Christmas to you from the Wesley Students. As the semester comes to an end we are reflecting back on the past semester. This semester we have enjoyed Large group opportunities, small groups, **social gathering events, a fall retreat and much more.** We've connected with new students and have had fun catching up with returning students. We appreciate your continued support with your prayers, financial donations, connecting with students, and Lunch on the Landing support.

(Picture of some of the Wesley Students at our Christmas tree decorating event on November 16th)

Finals Week Packages

We want to support our Wesley students with finals week care packages! Your support is so helpful! You can make a donation for this semester's care package on the [Collegiate Wesley Giving Page](#) or you can make a donation on Venmo. Our Venmo handle is @Wesley-Center; thank you for your support for our Wesley students during finals!



Coming Up in Worship

We would love to worship with you digitally at 8:00 am or in person at 9:00 or 11:00 am.

Sermon Series: Close To Home

First Sunday of Advent, November 28: Luke 21: 25-36. We all Get Homesick (Hope). The last miles of the journey are often the longest. But we are almost there. Advent Wreath Lighting

Second Sunday of Advent, December 5: Luke 1: 57-80 Laying the Foundation (Peace). What our names mean in the story. Advent Wreath Lighting, Baptism of Ellis Talbert, Reception of New Members, Communion

Third Sunday of Advent, December 12: Luke 3: 1-6; 15-18 A Home for All (Joy). Getting out the Decorations. Advent Wreath Lighting, Choir "The Messiah" (11 am).

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19: Luke 1: 26-37 Seeking Sanctuary (love). Conversation with the Angels. Advent Wreath Lighting. Children's Christmas Program (9 am)

Blue Christmas— Monday, December 20th 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve Before You Leave— Tuesday, December 21st 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve, December 24: Luke 2: 1-20 Invited Home. When we need to get Home. Advent Wreath Lighting. Services at 5 (Family); 7 (Traditional); 11 (Lessons and Carols)

First Sunday after Christmas, December 26: Chosen Home. Singing carols and reading stories. Service at 10 am (no service at 9 or 11; no Sunday School)

Helpful links:

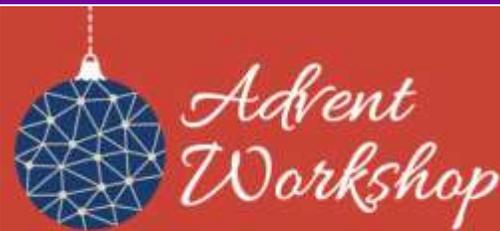
For digital worship you can "tune in" on our [Facebook page](#) at 8:00 am to watch live.

You can also view a recording of outdoor worship and our digital worship anytime on our [Youtube channel](#) or [Digital Worship Page](#)

Whichever way you worship, we would love for you to fill out the [check in form](#) on our website so we can do our best to stay connected. You can also share your prayer requests and give at that link.



Advent Workshop



The Advent Workshop will be held in person on Sunday, December 5, 1:30-4:30pm in the Annex Auditorium. Come join us for fun for all ages, and make some Christmas memories. Each family can make a fresh greenery wreath. There will be various crafts for individuals of all ages. If you would like to volunteer to help, contact Mary Buck at 515-460-4571 or maryeileen51@q.com. Reminder: Masks must be worn.

Have you returned your Generosity Card?

As we look ahead to 2022, we know Collegiate/Wesley needs to continue to make a positive difference in **our community, state, nation, and world. That's why returning your Generosity Card is so important: it allows the Finance Committee to anticipate next year's income and budget for our life-changing missions and ministries.** Your card also signifies your commitment to your membership vows of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. If you have already returned your card, THANK YOU very much!

If you have not yet returned your card, please prayerfully consider your estimated contribution for 2022, note it on your Generosity Card, and return it to the church office.

Questions about the importance of returning a Generosity Card? Need a card? Please contact me at 515-415-6033 or david@cwames.org.

COVID-19 and Finances

We know that COVID-19 has hit some of you harder than others. Whether you have lost a job, seen a significant loss in your finances, or have been ill, we want you to know that your church community is praying for and standing with you. Please let us know how we can be with you in your time of need. Call the church office (515- 292-6936) or email Pastor Mary (mary@cwames.org).

We also know that some of you are looking for ways to make a difference. We are committed to keeping **our staff employed and our church in excellent condition so when we are ready to return to “normal”** – whatever that looks like – your church will be ready. That, friends, does cost money. If you have come through this pandemic time without too much economic turmoil, and if you find a way to increase your giving in 2021 - knowing that others in our church might be struggling - it would be greatly appreciated by the many who will be positively affected by your generosity.

Endowment Fund

Year end Giving to Collegiate Wesley Endowment

On All Saints Sunday we honored the individuals who have been saints in our personal lives and in the life of Collegiate Wesley. **Another way to celebrate a saint's role in your life is to make a contribution in that person's name to the Collegiate United Methodist Church and Wesley Endowment Fund.** The Endowment Board members oversee the investment of those funds and use a percentage of the annual interest to support special projects for Collegiate Wesley. As 2021 draws to a close please consider giving to the CW Endowment Fund to honor a saint, to recognize a life event, to celebrate that you reached the end of a challenging year, or just because. If you have questions, contact the Endowment Board Chair, Mary Wickham (wickhammary@gmail.com or 309-550-2594).

Trustees/Building

by Doug Warren, Facilities Superintendent

This month's article spotlights the makeover the main office received for our Office Manager, Janelle. The office was due for a paint refresh, so the walls were repaired and repainted for a clean, bright look. Next, broken and unused furniture was disposed of or taken to Rummage Rampage. After the old furniture was removed, the office could be rearranged for a better workflow. During this time it was decided that a dedicated work space would help Janelle, so a counter and a half-wall was added. Final touches included replacement of the old lights with new LED bulbs. We think the new office feels full of energy!



Our Prayers



Prayers of Thanksgiving:

- for the Food at First crew on October 22: Bev Kruempel, Dee Dreeszen, Dean Phillips, Sally Wilson, Betty & Tom Barton, Lauren Loonsfoot, Xavier Johnson, Marjy Howe, Miah Manker, and Isabel Jackson.
- for the Food at First crew on October 29: Bev Kruempel, Dee Dreeszen, Dean Phillips, Sally Wilson, Betty & Tom Barton, Mary Ann & Paul Lundy, Cinian Durbin, Caden Olsen, Grant Olsen, Myah Smith, Carsen Janes, Ellian Jones, John Shriver, Elizabeth Orth, Kai Johnson, Brady Hurn, Dave Matulac, and Lauren Loonsfoot.

Prayers of Concern:

- for Darra Johnson, continued recovery.
- for my dad's friend David who is recovering from a stroke at home in Silt, CO. ~ Sicily Canny
- for Diane Miles, in rehab for Covid. ~ Henrietta Klarenbeek
- for my brother-in-law Larry Bosch in hospital for complications from radiation and chemotherapy. ~ Steph Scherbart
- Prayers for Fairfield Iowa High School and community. Prayers for the tragic loss of the slain High School Spanish Teacher Nohema Graber. ~ Annie Arbuckle
- for Darra Johnson, continued recovery.
- for Jim Okey, at Senior Care in Nevada.
- that all Ames High students feel safe while at school and that the district and administrators make this a priority. ~ Kari Smith
- For my sister-in-law Ilene who is in the hospital in Virginia. ~ LaRue Clark
- For our daughter Marit as she proceeds through treatment for breast cancer. ~ Bruce & Barbara Munson

Alternative Gift Market

Alternative Gift Market Coming in December!

Just as you are beginning to think about Christmas giving, the Alternative Gift Market will be available in early December. With COVID-19 still a major concern around the world and with the shipping problems here in the U.S., Alternative Gifts would be take some of the stress out of holiday gift-giving. It is also a wonderful opportunity to show our Christian love and to learn about projects around the world that relieve poverty and suffering. You may choose from thirty international and seven local projects for your gifts, available through Alternative Gifts International. You may find a thoughtful gift to the interests of a friend or family member or encourage children to think about others. Donors choose an attractive card to send, along with an insert telling about the selected project and its impact on the world. Since the beginning of AGM more than 25 years ago, more than 19 million dollars has supported many charities worldwide.

Please consider participating in the market by giving an alternative gift to someone on your list. Watch your mail for more information.

Thanks for your support. ~ Maureen Wilt

Giving Tree

While doing some holiday shopping grab an extra \$20 gift card for The Bride Home (formerly ERP). Gift cards will be shared with clients of The Bridge Home. You will find the giving tree located in the gathering space starting on November 28th. On the tree you will see tags will Walmart, Hy-Vee, Dollar Tree, Fareway, Hy-Vee, Aldi and Target on them. Each tag represents a \$20 gift card. Take a tag for a gift card or two that you would like to purchase. You can drop off your gift cards on Sunday mornings or during the week until December 12th. Thank you for helping share the holiday season with our community partner, The Bridge Home.



Pass Along Party

The Food at First Pass Along Party will once again be held at Collegiate Wesley. We are in need of donations for the party. Donations needed: New or gently used toys, games, puzzles, household goods, items for all ages etc. no clothing please

Items can be donated at the East door of the building on the following days: Monday, November 29, 3:30-6:30pm and Tuesday, December 7th 12:30-3:30pm

The pass along party will be help on December 11th. During the event folks are able to walk through and select items by taking turns until all the items have been selected or shopping is done. Thank you for your support!



Volunteer Opportunities

Clothing That Works has evolved in the years of its existence. While it began in part to provide office wear for those reentering the workforce, that kind of clothing does not serve our current clientele. We need usable, clean casual clothing of all kinds that is in good repair. We have virtually no clients looking for men's suits and sport coats, so please do not drop off suits and sport coats.

These are some of our current needs: Men's winter coats, gloves, hats, t-shirts, blue jeans, shoes, boots and socks. Women's winter coats, gloves, hats. We are in need of XXL to XXXXXL sizes for both men and women. We also need men's small and medium clothes.

So clean out your closets and help people in our community!



Food at First Volunteer Opportunity

We have the opportunity to prepare and serve the daily meal for Food at First on the fourth and fifth Friday of every month. There are two shift opportunities 2:30-5:30 AND/OR 5:00-7:30 pm. Early shift volunteers work together on prepping and packaging the meal for service. Second shift volunteers help package the meal and distribute the meal outside, along with cleaning up following the meal. We are serving on **December 31st**. We are preparing for 100+, thus more volunteers would be welcome. This is a great opportunity to build community, have fun, and serve others. To learn more, email Lauren Loonsfoot at lauren@cwames.org or sign up at [Food at First Volunteer](#).

Little Food Pantry

Wow! Thank You for Your Continued Generosity!

The Little Food Pantry is thriving and it is all due to the wonderful donations of this congregation. Your continued support is needed and very welcome as the winter months approach.

Here are some ideas from the Food Bank of Iowa that may help as your shop:

Boxed milk is a treasure as kids need it for cereal.

Oil is a luxury but needed to prepare other items such as Rice-a-Roni.

Spices, salt & pepper. Tea bags and coffee. Sugar and flour.

Tuna and crackers make a good lunch.

Cake mix and frosting make it possible to make a child's birthday cake.

Dishwashing detergent is very expensive and always appreciated.

Feminine hygiene products are also a luxury.

Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing!



You are Welcome Here!

Collegiate United Methodist Church and Wesley Foundation welcomes and affirms all persons without regard to gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental ability, marital status, economic condition, or anything else which **threatens to divide God's family.**

The purpose of C/W is to build an inclusive community that invites all people to **experience God's unconditional love, grow in faith, and serve others.**



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