

COVENANT CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(Disciples of Christ)  
2700 72nd Street  
Urbandale, IA 50322

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Permit 1586

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED

**Visitors**  
Lorri Radcliff  
Ryan & Kaylee Schultz

**Attendance**  
Sunday, Mar. 3      Worship 41  
Sunday, Mar. 10    Worship 47  
Sunday, Mar. 17    Worship 58  
Sunday, Mar. 24    Worship 49

The next newsletter will be mailed on  
Wednesday, April 17. Articles to be  
submitted by Monday, April 15.

**How to Reach Us**  
Church Phone 515-276-3781  
FAX 515-253-0174  
pwitmer@covenant-christian.org  
blundy@covenant-christian.org  
church@covenant-christian.org  
www.covenant-christian.org

www.uppermidwestcc.org  
Christian Church in the Upper Midwest  
www.disciples.org



# the COMPASS

“Stand at the crossroads, and look,  
and ask for the ancient paths.” Jeremiah 6:16

## Sabbatical: What and Why?

*“Sabbaticals are a wise and healthful investment for all involved. Those taking sabbatical leave benefit, as do those left behind. If they are open to it, all involved in and affected by a sabbatical have an opportunity to grow and explore new opportunities, and, in some cases, responsibilities. In turn, this growth, renewal, and experience of opportunity produce significant results, including lower staff turnover and fewer high-level conflicts leading to terminations.” Clergy Renewal*

When I was called to serve as pastor of Covenant Christian Church, we all agreed that a sabbatical after seven years of service was a good idea. It’s hard to believe that those seven years have now passed. For the past few months, I have been planning the sabbatical leave that will take place this summer, and I begin meeting with a team this week to make further plans for the congregation’s ministry in my absence. It can be an exciting time for all of us.

The essence of sabbatical is rooted in the Hebrew word sabbat (Sabbath) and the biblical traditions surrounding it. For the Jews, the emphasis of Sabbath is on rest and playfulness: it is a time to study Torah, to sing, to dance, to celebrate and to reflect on what the previous six days have been. This emphasis on rest and play would likely be viewed as countercultural by many, and might explain why Jesus was often getting in trouble around these issues.

I am planning a sabbatical that includes study, rest, play and celebration. I hope to help the congregation plan a similar Sabbath experience! Stay tuned for more to come!

Volume 5 Issue 3  
March 27, 2013

covenant  
christian  
church  
sunday  
worship  
10:00 a.m.



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street  
urbandale, iowa  
50322

church phone  
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christian.org

In Sabbath Peace, Paul Witmer

We are spiritual seekers working to grow in our love of God,  
 deepening our connection to each other and  
 sharing with the world our passion for justice and peace.

... journey up. . . to grow in our love of God.

... journey in. . . deepening our connection  
 to each other.

### education update

The children and youth at Covenant Christian Church are welcoming Spring this March and April! We have enjoyed our Intergenerational SPLASH on Wednesday evenings during the months of February and March. On Saturday, March 30, we will host an Easter Egg Hunt with our friends from Urbandale UCC. There will be lots of colorful eggs, chocolate, and joyful celebration! Stay tuned for more information about our Intergenerational Earth Day event coming up in April. We hope to see you there!

### a children's covenant



We are all beloved children of God, and we learn about what that means together in community. It is a beautiful thing to know that we are all unconditionally loved. At some point along the journey, we encounter this question: what are we going to do about it? How are we going to be in the world, knowing that we are children of God?

In January, the children wrote a covenant together over the course of several weeks, addressing these questions. As children of God, how will we act? What will we do? Sunday School teachers wrote a brainstorm list on a piece of parchment paper, and I compiled that list into the ten major themes of the children's responses. After the covenant was created, the teachers thought that what the children had created was so brilliant that it would be helpful to share with the adults, too! **The children's covenant is:** *"Listen to adults and to each other. Keep our hands and feet to ourselves. Show kindness to everyone. Participate. Be responsible for our shared space. Embrace our differences. Be respectful to all people and things. Help others. Practice non-violence. Observe the Golden Rule."*

Each week at Sunday school, we have a conversation about one or two of the statements before breaking off into our smaller groups. Last Sunday, we imagined what "Be responsible for our shared space" might look like at church and out in the world—that we could help to put craft supplies away even if we weren't the person who took them out. Outside of church, if we see a piece of garbage on the ground, we might pick it up anyway. We then moved on to "Embracing our differences," and had a discussion about differences and similarities among people and friends, including skin color, languages spoken, sports and hobbies, food preferences, and even hairstyles. Eventually, we came to the conclusion that embracing our differences means that we are welcoming and friendly to others, no matter what you look like, where you come from, or whether you prefer macaroni & cheese or peanut butter & jelly.

... journey out. . . sharing with the world our  
 passion for justice and peace.

**CFUM** Thanks for your support of our feeding efforts with Children and Family Urban Ministries. We will be providing a meal on Friday, April 5. If you'd like to support this ministry with a donation, please look for the red and green donation box where casseroles are being dispersed. Covenant has also committed to provide milk for all the meals we serve. Your support is much appreciated! Thank You!

### IN OUR PRAYERS

Jayde Hildebrand  
 Paul Ratashak  
 Shirlee Holmes  
 Donna Wilcox  
 Don Twombly  
 Gretchen Pope

### NOTES & NEWS

- Congratulations to **Ray and Helen Heckert** on celebrating 60 years of marriage!
- Congratulations to **Sarah Hughes** for her acceptance into seminary at Pacific School of Religion, and for being awarded a generous scholarship from the seminary!
- Welcome **Kate West** to our pulpit on Sunday, April 7. Kate is an ordained Disciples Pastor and recent seminary graduate.
- **Paul** will be away leading a retreat **April 5-13**.

### SPLASH for ADULTS April 10 through May 29 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Don Hiscox is offering continued study for adults at Covenant, with Adult SPLASH. We will be exploring Disciples of Christ history, polity and theological understandings with "An Overview of the Christian Church." Join us for the Wednesday study beginning April 10. A meal will be shared with the kids when they gather for SPLASH (**April 10, May 1, and May 8**). On other Wednesdays, adults will share a simple meal together. Study sessions will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. and conclude at 7:30 p.m.



Please join us for  
**Leslie (McAtee) Dunbar's**  
 baby shower for **Sammy!**  
 It will be held in Fellowship Hall  
 following worship on **Sunday, April 7.**

Everyone is invited!  
 (We're asking for Target gift cards, so she can use them for formula, diapers and other supplies.)



### April

#### BIRTHDAYS

Judy Searcy	4/2	Tracy Isaacson	4/7
Emily Sohn	4/10	David Twombly	4/11
Ed McAtee	4/13	Dave Wharff	4/16
Jo Sohn	4/26	Michelle Yeoman	4/29

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Olin & Jane Shane	4/4
Don Hiscox & Karen Vroman	4/28