

THE HARBINGER

December 2018~January 2019

**United Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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**Justin Dryden, Pastor
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An open and affirming congregation

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

10:30 a.m.

The Welcoming Church – Doing Good Stuff to Make God’s Love & Justice Real

Pastor’s Message:

Dear Butte UCC Family,

Entering into Holy week has been and continues to be a very important time for the Church. The Roman branch of the church calls it “The Great 100 Days.” In the scriptures the 100 days begin when Jesus goes up the mountain and is “transfigured” before his disciples and Abba tells Jesus once again before the disciples “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” The days conclude on Pentecost when the Spirit comes to the disciples in the upper room. The church has for the last 1,000 years been celebrating these “holy days” with Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Passion. All of these days are special in themselves, but it’s what the church did for its first 1,000 years that particularly drew my attention.

As many of you know I am all about the journey. The journey to what you ask? The journey of life and transformation. I am just entering in to my middle age years and I can tell you now that all I truly long for in life is transformation. Being the young man *seeking* an identity can only last for so long before hungering for more. The same thing could be true of our church. Our goal is not to just coast through and continue to hold services week after week. If all we are doing is seeking some identity within our four walls, then we might be like the young man. Instead, we should always be seeking ways to be transformed as a community to dream beyond the four walls, and unleash our gifts and talents to our beloved town.

This was partially what the early church sought before Holy Week and the events leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. They pursued transformation by reforming themselves as a community of people who followed Jesus. And what they pursued in particular was unity. Unity with those who were different than themselves. Slaves ate with free men, women ate with men, Jews ate with gentiles (non-Jews) which was scandalous to the world outside the church. So this diversity also brought challenges, arguments and other problems that threatened the young church. Thankfully, what they decided to do was take time out of the year to have special ceremonies that reminded them of not only their union with each other, but more importantly their union in God. The early church knew that no behavior, no ethnicity, no sexual orientation, could ever separate them from the love of God. And God’s love is mirrored in the eyes of the holy other, meaning every other person on earth. Knowing that all human beings share the same divine DNA could possibly set all people free from a judgmental spirit, which can often present itself as simply thinking of oneself in some way as better than someone else.

So as we enter into Holy Week, I hope we don’t get too caught up in all of the ceremonies and become like those who are accused of worshipping the figure that points to the moon, instead of being

transformed by the moon itself. May we see in our neighbors (who are different than us) that same divine DNA and so love and treat all as our equals. I pray during this season we would take time to reform ourselves as a community for unity. And may that attitude spill out of our doors and into Butte. May we dream big dreams this year of moving beyond the homilies and music, beyond the four walls. Let's dream of ways to unite ourselves to those on the fringes of our society. May we follow Jesus out into the deep waters where an abundance of grace awaits to greet us.

With love and joy, trust and hope, Justin Dryden, Pastor

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SERMON</u>	<u>LITURGIST</u>
December 2	<i>The Hope of Advent – Justin Dryden</i>	Joan Carelli
December 9	<i>Make Ready – Justin Dryden</i>	Alice Rae
December 16	<i>Joan Carelli as Pastor Justin was ill</i>	Rnady Paul
December 23	<i>The Queen of Lowly – Justin Dryden</i>	George Robertson
	Following the service was the Christmas Story put on by the children with Pat Ryan as Reader of the Holy Story	
December 24	<i>Christmas Eve Service - Justin Dryden</i>	
December 30	<i>Becoming the Man</i>	Alice Rae
January 6	<i>The Gospel to All People! Now What's Gospel? Justin Dryden</i>	Alice Rae
January 13	<i>Initiated by Great Love – Justin Dryden</i>	Randy Paul
January 20	<i>Re: First of Jesus's Miracles – Justin Dryden</i>	George Robertson
January 27	<i>Course He Isn't Safe, But He's Good, He's the King</i>	Joan Carelli

Monthly Events

First Sunday	Holy Communion
Second Sunday	Second Sunday Sandwiches for We Deliver after Worship
Second Monday	6:30 pm Church Council Meeting
Third Sunday	Collection for Butte Emergency Food Bank
Fourth Sunday	Passing the Peace

Concerns

Arlene Higgins is back attending worship services after a fall at her home. Stay safe and no more falls.

Dan Hunter and Randy Paul will be leaving Butte in the near future to be closer to their parents. The plan is for them to be living in the Tri-City area of Washington in order to help their parents with health issues. Dan and Randy have been dedicated to the the Butte community and our church family since their arrival in Butte. We wish both Dan and Randy well wishes on their journey in the future.

Prayers for Dan Hunter as he continues with healing of his foot following surgery earlier in the season.

Frank Gerry noted that Randy Scharf has been dealing with some complicated health concerns and would like prayers put forth for Randy during this trying time.

Congratulations to Emily and family on the new addition to their family. Welcome to Caroline Schulte, born January 23, weighing in at 8 pounds 12 ounces and measuring 19 inches long.

Special Thanks

Thank you to Pat Ryan for the supervision and reading of the Christmas Story following services on December 23, 2018.

Joan Carelli and Darlene Allen for the presentation of a deficit budget at a special congregational meeting following services on February 3.

Jim Cramer continues to inspire everyone with his organ and piano music.

Thank you to all who have taken their turn to shovel the sidewalks and keep them clean during these white winter months of epic snowfall. Thank you to Bill Carelli and friend for plowing the parking area behind the church.

Thank you to Pastor Justin for teaching us new music and testing our abilities to learn new songs. Remember, new things help us to stay alert and young.

Mission Moments

- December 2 Joan Carelli – Report on Stewardship Campaign and Mining City Christmas. Two families were chosen and provided for during this holiday season.
- December 9 Pastor Justin – Butte Ministry has opted to provide shelter for the homeless at Motel 6 and Quality Inn at a cost of \$75/week for one person.
- December 16 Darlene Allen – Spoke on the offering to be taken on Christmas Eve and how it goes to benefit retired clergy, spouses, and families of the UCC ministry.
- January 13 Joan Carelli – US Synod leadership event in New Hampshire offering leadership, support, and confirmation to UCC Churches
- January 27 Judy Reel on the newly formed Furniture Bank Outreach Program from the Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church has served 26 families since the program was founded in 2018. Needed is gently used furniture to be donated to the program. Should someone need this service, a referral must be made to and from Action Inc. to the Furniture Bank Outreach Program. Contact person for the UCC is Darlene Allen.

Council Highlights

Planning for fundraisers to assist with funding for our UCC Church. Any ideas, talk to Joan, Darlene, or Francene.

Coming Up:

Save the dates for the following upcoming events:

The Lenten time will soon be upon us. Ash Wednesday, March 6, is the beginning of this solemn time in our church. Currently we are looking at Soup & Bread time on Wednesday beginning on March 6 and each following Wednesday

until Easter. A sheet will be placed on the bulletin board in the Narthex for those who wish to attend and provide a soup or bread for the conversation, which will follow.

On March 16, 2019, there will be a Pancake and Sausage Breakfast at the Heart of Butte Café. This will be a fundraiser for our church. Thanks to Dan and Randy for their input on this and the help they are giving to support our church. If you are able, volunteers are needed to bus tables, take orders, do dishes, deliver food, and other chores that may be required to make this a success. Timetable for this is from 7 am until 1 pm. More information to follow! Hope to see you there.

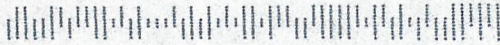
Changes Coming

This will be the last Harbinger with the assistance of Barbara Griffiths. Barbara has turned the reins over to Darlene Allen to become the editor beginning with the February issue. She will bring new style to the Harbinger having graduated from Montana Tech with a B.S. in Professional Technology and Communication. Darlene also sits on the church council as Treasurer following the retirement of Bruce Sloan in 2017. Barbara Griffiths retires after the publication of the December 2018 – January 2019 Harbinger. Barbara has been on the editorial board since 2005 along with Darlene, Alice Rae and Vernon Griffiths until his passing in 2017. Barbara credits the Harbinger with acknowledgement of their contributing to the welfare and mission of the Butte UCC.

Also, stay up to date on Facebook @ *Butte United Congregational Church*

Editorial Board: Darlene Allen, Alice Rae, Barbara Griffiths

December 2018 – J
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