

FEBRUARY Birthdays

- Feb. 1 Jennifer Swanson
- Feb. 2 Todd Carriker, Roxy Moorman
- Feb. 5 Lee Andeway
- Feb. 9 Jim Veldhuizen, Marcus Christensen-Messamer, Eloise Sloan
- Feb. 10 Janice Mayer, Elaine Eveland, Sharon Staton
- Feb. 11 Tonia Edmundson
- Feb. 13 Angie Shrader
- Feb. 17 Stan Herr
- Feb. 18 Dave Porter, Amanda Hoy
- Feb. 20 Mike Foster, Delia Lahner
- Feb. 21 Mily Michel
- Feb. 24 Gina Christensen-Messamer-Neilsen
- Feb. 25 Jason Herr
- Feb. 26 William Kminek
- Feb. 27 Joan Benscoter
- Feb. 28 Rita Hoogheem, Lucy Canfield

Attendance Records

1/4	79
1/11	73
1/18	68
1/25	57

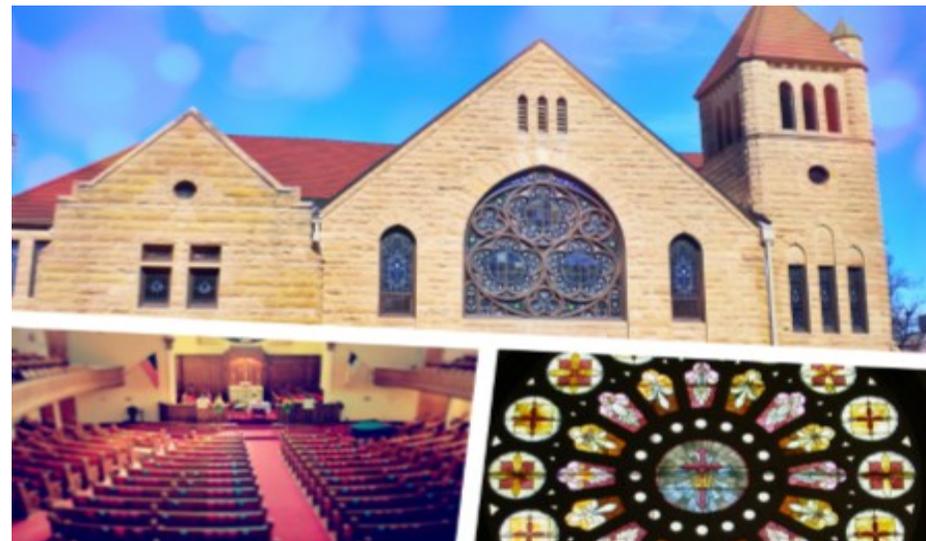
Financial Reports

December 2025 Income	\$36,012.62
December 2025 Expense	\$26,125.54
Difference	\$9,887.08
Total 2025 Yearly Income	\$270,139.87
Total 2025 Yearly Expense	\$241,435.12
Difference	\$28,704.75

CHIMES

Vol. 46 No. 2

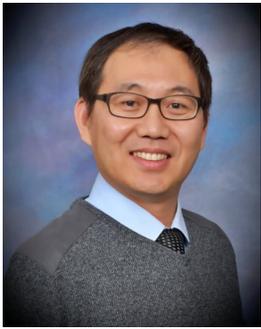
February 1, 2026



“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.” John 4:18



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 Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jihoon Lee



A Message From Pastor Jihoon Lee

Dear Friends on the Lenten Road,

The vineyard was gone.

Blackened posts leaned at odd angles. Ash clung to the soil. The air still smelled of smoke. What had once been rows of green leaves and heavy grapes was now a field of loss. No harvest. No future—at least, that’s how it looked. The family stood quietly, staring at what the fire had taken. Some looked away. Some wiped their eyes. It felt like the kind of ending you don’t come back from. Then the grandfather stepped forward. He bent down, brushed aside the ash, and pointed—not to the destruction, but to a thick, charred vine trunk still rooted in the ground. Burned on the outside. Scarred by fire. But alive. “This vine,” he said softly, “has deep roots. Fire does not end it. Fire only clears the way for what comes next.”

It is a scene from the film *A Walk in the Clouds*. Perhaps the most important scene in the entire story. Certainly the one that stays with you—the one that quiets the room and holds the attention of every viewer. And maybe the reason it does is this: we have seen this scene before. Not on a screen, but in our own lives.

Ash has a way of convincing us that everything is over. That is why Ash Wednesday feels uncomfortable. We hear words we would rather avoid: You are dust, and to dust you shall return. We come forward to receive ashes on our foreheads—visible reminders of mortality, limitation, and truth. The world tells us to hide these things. God brings them gently into the light.

But here is what Scripture insists: ash is not a symbol of God’s absence. It is a sign of



CAMP REGISTRATION IS OPEN

CUMC will cover half the cost for each camper from our church. Just be sure to only pay up to half at the time of registration. If are unable to pay half of the cost, the camp does have a campership fund you can apply for to help with the cost of camp. The sooner you apply the better. There will be paper applications downstairs if you prefer to register that way. Contact the church office if you have any questions. www.iaumc.org/camps

 End of Month
Meals 

Tues. Feb. 24 & Thurs. Feb. 26

Central UMC
201 N Market St.



**FREE
Community
Meals!**

Doors Open @ 5 - Meal @ 5:30

EOMM hosts and helpers are: Central UMC, St. Paul Congregational UCC,
First Presbyterian Church, and St. Mary's Catholic Church

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noisy Offering—will be collected February 8th and will go towards the Shriner Hospital

College Ministry—cards and notes are due February 8th.

Fellowship Luncheon—Wednesday, February 11 at 11:30am. Lasagna, sides and desserts are on the menu. Please RSVP at 641-672-2564 by February 6th if you plan to be there.

Ash Wednesday Service—You are invited to our Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 18, at 6:30 PM. This quiet and meaningful service marks the beginning of Lent and invites us into prayer, reflection, and repentance. All are encouraged to attend.

Lenten Bible Study—Join us for a Lenten Bible Study during the season of Lent.

Dates: February 22 – March 29 (6 weeks)

Time: After Sunday worship

Location: Blue Room

Study Book: The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus by Adam Hamilton

honesty. And honesty is where grace begins. The prophet Joel calls out, “Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate” (Joel 2:13). Not after you fix yourself. Not after the ashes are gone. Right here. Right now. In the dust. Ash is what remains when illusions burn away. Ash is what’s left when we stop pretending we are self-sufficient. Ash is the soil where God begins again.

We often treat Lent as a season of spiritual effort—things to give up, disciplines to master, habits to improve. But Lent is not about proving how strong we are. Lent is about discovering what is still alive beneath the surface. Like that vine trunk. On the outside, it looked finished. But underground, the roots were untouched. Seasoned vintners know this truth well: old vines often grow stronger after fire. The flames remove what is dead. The roots remain. And when the rains come, new shoots appear. Scripture whispers the same promise: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). Jesus does not rush us past the ashes. He meets us in them.

So this Lent, perhaps the question is not, What should I do more? Perhaps the better question is, What has already burned away—and what is still rooted in God’s grace? Ash is not the end. It is the clearing. It is the beginning of truth. And truth, in God’s hands, always leads to resurrection. The fire has passed. The roots remain. And God is not finished yet.

With grace for this Lenten journey,
Pastor Jihoon Lee

St Paul Congregational UCC & First Christian Church (DOC) presents...

FREE LAUNDRY NIGHT

Need a Ride? Call or Text 641-638-1203

Laundry soap provided

Bring your laundry to Stop & GO Laundromat at 1308 A Ave East in Oskaloosa.

Do your laundry FOR FREE!! (no strings attached!)

OSKALOOSA
No Strings Attached
A partnership outreach of
St. Paul Congregational UCC
and
First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

FEBRUARY 19 4-7 PM



February 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Fellowship Hall—Private Event 10:00am—3:00pm	4 Choir—7:00pm	5	6	7 Fellowship Hall—Private Event 8:00am—2:00pm
8	9	10 SPRC—6:30pm	11 Fellowship Luncheon—11:30am Finance—6:00pm Trustees—6:30pm Choir—7:00pm	12	13	14
15	16 Church Office Closed	17	18 Ash Wednesday Service 6:30pm Choir—7:00pm	19	20	21
22	23	24 EOMM—5:30pm	25 Worship—6:00pm Choir—7:00pm	26 EOMM—5:30pm AD Council—6:30pm	27 Pastor will be gone till March 6th for Cont. Education Training	28