

THE EVANGEL-AUGUST 2020

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

From one Christian to another.



Hear the words of Paul to "Titus, my true son in our common faith." Titus 3 "But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned."

Well, have you noticed the division not only growing in the world but in our churches too? I want us to think very carefully before we react to things going on right now. Experts say this and other experts contradict and it seems we are running out of people to trust. Wow, that is definitely a tool the evil one could use to face us against one another. Believe me, I am sure I have views that are different than yours but I choose to love you and certainly try my best to not put those views in your face. Please, I beg you, as Paul is begging his son in the faith, take a stand to love each other! Let's post things that encourage! Let's remind people that we have their backs! Let's give God the glory for the great things He has done! And most of all let's keep our differences amicable and not hostile. Remember, our Nicene Creed states the things in our faith that are non-negotiable. Just a simple reminder that someone gave me this week. What matters most is the price Christ paid for you and me no matter WHAT you believe, that is different than what I believe.

Blessing of peace and love in your dealings with each other in this season of life.

In Christ

Pastor Jason Collier

PARKING LOT WORSHIP SCHEDULED PLUS ZOOM

Once each month, each church (Ainsworth and Crawfordsville) will host an outdoor worship in the parking lot. Following is the worship location schedule for August. The pandemic trajectory does not support worshipping in the sanctuary at this time.

Saturday, August 1 - Zoom & Facebook Live	Saturday, August 22 - Zoom & Facebook Live
Sunday, August 2 – Facebook only	Sunday, August 23 – Crawfordsville Church Parking Lot and Lawn
Saturday, Aug. 8 – Zoom & Facebook Live	Saturday, August 29 - Zoom & Facebook Live
Sunday, August 9 – Ainsworth Church Parking Lot and Lawn	Sunday, August 30 - Facebook only
Saturday, August 15 - Zoom & Facebook Live	Saturday, Sept. 5 - Zoom & Facebook Live
Sunday, August 16 - Facebook only	Sunday, September 6 - Ainsworth Church Parking Lot and Lawn

WORSHIP: HOW TO ACCESS ZOOM AND FACEBOOK

Pastor Jason will conduct worship **live on Saturdays**. It will be posted online to view later. To **WATCH** and participate in the worship, there are two options:



- a. You may **watch** on **Facebook**: "Ainsworth Community Church".
- b. You may **watch** and visit with Jason and other participants before and after service by using **Zoom**. Type: Zoom.com into your browser. On the Zoom page, click on the option listed near the top, "Join a Zoom Meeting". When asked for a **meeting ID, enter: 319.658.2366**. Then just keep clicking yes you want to participate with both audio and video. Jason will handle it from there.

You may **LISTEN** to worship using your telephone (does not need to be a cell phone or smart phone), follow these instructions:



1. Dial the number: **1.312.626.6799**
2. When asked for meeting ID – dial this number: **319.658.2366#**

PASTOR PHONE VISITS AND PRAYER LIST

Please let the church know if you would like Pastor Jason to call you (until it is deemed safe for him to see you face to face) or if you need to be on our prayer list. You may call **Pastor Jason's cell 563.343.3390** at any time; or call **Jan's cell 319.330-6175**. Jan will be working from home as much as possible rather than at the office.



OFFERING/TITHING TO ACC



Options for donating when we aren't meeting face-to-face include:

- Checks may be written **payable to "ACC"** and mailed to: **Ainsworth Community Church; PO Box 40, Ainsworth, IA 52201**
- Utilize Direct Debit (ACH transfer) – If you need a copy of the form, contact Jan at 319.330.6175 and she will send the information.

FOOD PANTRY APPOINTMENTS AND PICK-UP

The Mission Committee Food Pantry will distribute food on the first Wednesday of the month for the foreseeable future. Here is the schedule:



Order Deadline Date	Pick up Date
Friday, July 31	Wednesday, August 5
Friday, August 28	Wednesday, September 2, 5-7 PM

To receive food, you must place your order with Kathi **BEFORE** stopping to pick it up. When you call, you will determine your order pickup time. IF you need food and these dates aren't workable, please call Kathi at 319-461-1339 to make special arrangements.

BLOOD DRIVE – AUGUST 17, 2 TO 7 PM-ACC



The Ainsworth Community Church will hold a blood drive on Monday, August 17 from 2-7 PM in the Fellowship Hall of the South Church at the corner of 4th and Washington. The last date you could give and donate now: **June 22, 2020**. For an appointment contact Jan Temple at 319-330-6175 or 319-657-2291. **Bring a photo ID AND wear a mask, please.**

BUDGET REPORT – 6.30.2020

	Offering Income	\$ 9,040.00	Expenses	\$ 5,677.03
	General Fund	\$21,135.62	Building Fund	\$21,21,440.03
	Memorial Fund	\$40,582.21	Need/month for budget	\$ 7,484.31

2020 Combined Presbytery and Methodist dues/apportionments in ACC budget: \$7448.00

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys: Christian Fellowship and concern for others; safely gathering outdoors with family and friends. **Concerns:** The family of Nancy Stewart; Bertie Miller and Linda Lord as they recover from surgery; Everyone as we continue to 'stand together' navigating our way through the pandemic; our church leaders as they make decisions regarding our worship; those on the 'front-line' working with the public; families with children as they weigh school options; educators, employers, and leaders as they make decisions about the future trying to balance safety and well-being. **Serving Our Country:** Our sincere "Thank You!" to members and their families serving our country here and abroad.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS/*ANNIVERSARIES



2) *Harold & Elaine Nicholson; 3) *Larry & Deb Gilchrist; 4) Baily Anderson, Dorothy White; 5) Bill Stout; 6) Samuel Kruse; 7) Steve Augustine; 8) Jared Bean, Anita Rabenold, Samantha Castillo, *Bill & Dorothy Stout; Clifton Dawley; 9) Larry Bean, Jerry Bean; Dennis Bean; 10) Luke Koehler; 13) Brenna Hazelett; 14) Colton Bean; 17) Karen Megchelsen, *Neil & Rebecca Mills; 18) Karolyn Skubal, 19) Nicole Miller; Jakob Grimm; 20) Carol Bean; 21) Kevin Hunter; 22) Ginny Klopfenstein; 23) Marsha Thompson, *Jason & Stephanie Laverman; 28) Christina Collier; 29) Courtney Hahn



PARISH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



An overview of reports and issues discussed at the July 13 meeting **Treasurer's**

Report: Colleen reports we are staying on target with our budget. She paid our property/liability insurance in full. **Pastor Report:** Jason has no mileage or vacation to report. He has been busy with his "Course of Study" classes; they are interesting, and informative, but they are also **very** time consuming. He will be baptizing Shelly Oehlert next Sunday. **Property Committee:** Carson Plumbing submitted a bid of \$2600 to repair gas lines entering the buildings per Alliant Energy recommendations. Joe Skubal thinks the committee may be able to cut the cost a little. Approved. **Mission:** The Food Pantry is continuing thanks to Brenda for packing the boxes and operating under HACAP guidelines. **Nominating:** Both Ellie Anderson and Kate Hartzler will serve as Youth Representatives to Parish Council. **Old Business:** Jason has installed Building Security and Outdoor Worship equipment using Memorial Money. **New Business:** **Outdoor/Indoor Worship** The reason for only offering Outdoor/Parking Lot worship once a month at each church is to comply with the recommendation for tracking/tracing time were there to be an outbreak resulting from our worship. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Ainsworth Community Church Building remain closed for worship and all special functions until "Benchmarks for Resuming Worship Gathering*" recommendations are met. Approved. **Worship Schedule:** It was agreed to continue with the current schedule of Parking Lot Worship one Sunday per month at each church with a week of only online worship in between. The Zoom/Facebook sessions will continue with the service posted on Facebook. The next regular/Zoom meeting will be Monday, August 10 at 7 PM.

"*Benchmarks for Resuming Worship Gathering": *Beginning Criteria – A clear downward trajectory in the number of reported symptoms, confirmed cases, and/or positive tests for Covid-19 for 2 Consecutive Weeks.* **Note:** These recommendations were compiled by "The Ecumenical Consultation on Protocols for Worship, Fellowship, and Sacraments—an interdisciplinary group of theologians, scientists, physicians, pastors, bishops, and practitioners from United Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, Episcopal, Pan-Methodist, and Roman Catholic traditions. They used CDC guidance issued on May 22, 2020. This is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html> or at https://docs.google.com/document/d/17fhkrkUA050_EaQGviHXKTnS6T4pOY1W7A3w1M9ukM.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2020 (LIVE ON SAT., AUG. 1 AT 10 AM)
NO PARKING LOT WORSHIP THIS WEEK

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

We need no earthly tent, **We have a home from God.**
A house not made with hands, **Eternal in the heavens.**
Of this we can be sure; **Our promise is God's word.**

****HYMN: "O How I Love Jesus"**

1 There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth.

**Refrain: O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!**

2 It tells me of a Savior's love, who died to set me free;
It tells me of his precious blood, the sinner's perfect plea. **[Refrain]**

3 It tells of one whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe;
Who in each sorrow bears a part that none can bear below. **[Refrain]**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Make us ambassadors in your world, O God, and let these gifts we offer speak for us in response to your love and generosity. Join us with our brothers and sisters everywhere on earth, that all may know your mercy and care, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PRAYER ENDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (BELOW)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our *sins*, as we forgive those who *sin* against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

REFLECTION HYMN: "I LOVE YOU, LORD"

I love you, Lord; And I lift my voice, To worship You, Oh, my soul, rejoice!
Take joy my King, In what You hear, Let it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another. Loving God,

When our path becomes difficult, we do not always turn to you. We look for an easy way out. We escape in avoidance and addiction. We forget your promises and seek what does not satisfy. Forgive us and bring us back into the strength of your Spirit.
(Pause for silent prayer and reflection.)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God is generous and loving and forgiving. Hear and believe that your sins are washed away and that new life is yours through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-21

MESSAGE: "WALK BY FAITH NOT SIGHT" PASTOR JASON COLLIER

****HYMN: "I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY"**

1 I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story because I know 'tis true;
it satisfies my longings as nothing else could do.

**Refrain: I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.**

4 I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song,
'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long. **[Refrain]**

****THE BENEDICTION**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2020, PARKING LOT AT ACC, 10 AM
(ZOOM ON SAT., AUGUST 8 AT 10 AM)

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

Though Christ was rich, **Yet he became poor**
That in so doing **We might become rich.**
Rich in the Spirit, **And rich in God's love.**

****HYMN "IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL"**

1 When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll;
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, "It is well, it is well with my soul."

[Refrain: It is well with my soul; it is well, it is well with my soul.]

2 Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, let this blest assurance control:
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate, and has shed his own blood for my soul.

[Refrain]

3 My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought! My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more; praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

[Refrain]

4 O Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend; even so, it is well with my soul.

[Refrain]

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Bountiful God, accept and bless these gifts we bring before your altar, that our abundance may supply the need of others, and as a result our joy might be overflowing, in the power of the Spirit, Amen.

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PRAYER ENDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (BELOW)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

REFLECTION HYMN: "I LOVE YOU, LORD"

I love you, Lord; And I lift my voice, To worship You, Oh, my soul, rejoice!

Take joy my King, In what You hear, Let it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another. Loving God,

When our path becomes difficult, we do not always turn to you. We look for an easy way out. We escape in avoidance and addiction. We forget your promises and seek what does not satisfy. Forgive us and bring us back into the strength of your Spirit. (Pause for silent prayer and reflection.)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God is generous and loving and forgiving. Hear and believe that your sins are washed away and that new life is yours through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-15

MESSAGE: "GENEROSITY" PASTOR JASON COLLIER

****HYMN: "GOD BE WITH YOU TILL WE MEET AGAIN"**

1 God be with you till we meet again, By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you, God be with you till we meet again.

[Refrain]: Till we meet, till we meet, Till we meet at Jesus' feet;

Till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.

4 God be with you till we meet again, Keep love's banner floating o'er you,
Smite death's threatening wave before you, God be with you till we meet again.

[Refrain]

****THE BENEDICTION**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020 (LIVE ON SAT., AUG. 15, 10 AM)
NO PARKING LOT WORSHIP THIS WEEK

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

Praise to our creator! **Holy is your name.**

Praise God's loving kindness! **Holy is your name.**

Praise our maker's mercy! **Holy is your name.**

****HYMN "JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW"**

1 Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.

[Refrain:] Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

2 Jesus loves me he who died heaven's gate to open wide.

He will wash away my sin, let his little child come in. **[Refrain]**

3 Jesus loves me, this I know, as he loved so long ago,

taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me." **[Refrain]**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

When we offer these gifts, we honor you, O God, by showing the same generosity to others that you have shown to us. Keep us mindful of how fortunate we are to be able to call you our creator, and to know that you have called us your own. Amen.

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PRAYER ENDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (BELOW)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our *sins*, as we forgive those who *sin* against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

REFLECTION HYMN: "I LOVE YOU, LORD"

I love you, Lord; And I lift my voice, To worship You, Oh, my soul, rejoice!

Take joy my King, In what You hear, Let it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another. Guiding God,

You have shown us how to live a good life, yet we think we can do better on our own. We do not honor you or our neighbors, instead choosing to follow our selfish desires. We long to be free and yet hold others' wrongs against them. Release us from this endless cycle of guilt and poor choices. Restore us to yourself again, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. (Pause for silent prayer and reflection.)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

We are God's beloved children and we have been forgiven! Now live in the joy which this grace provides, and share the good news with others. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 11:2-4

MESSAGE: "LORD'S PRAYER: GOD'S NAME IS HOLY, WEEK ONE," Pastor Jason Collier

****HYMN: "SHINE, JESUS, SHINE"**

1. Lord, the light of your love is shining In the midst of the darkness, shining:

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us Set us free by the truth you now bring us

Shine on me, shine on me

[Refrain] Shine, Jesus, shine, Fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, Set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow, Flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth your word Lord, and let there be light

2. Lord, I come to your awesome presence, From the shadows into your radiance

By the blood I may enter your brightness. Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,

Shine on me, shine on me **[Refrain]**

3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness, So our faces display your likeness,

Ever-changing from glory to glory, Mirrored here may our lives tell your story

Shine on me, shine on me. **[Refrain]**

****THE BENEDICTION**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 2020, PARKING LOT AT UCC, 10 AM
(ZOOM ON SAT., AUGUST 22, 10 AM)

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

In the world we see around us, **Your kingdom come today.**

Through your church and through your people, **Your kingdom come today.**

In our living every day, **Your kingdom come today.**

****HYMN "GRACE GREATER THAN OUR SIN"**

1 Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!

Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

[Refrain]: *Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin.*

3 Dark is the stain that we cannot hide, What can avail to wash it away!

Look! There is flowing a crimson tide; brighter than snow you may be today. **[Refrain]**

4 Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe!

You that are longing to see his face, will you this moment his grace receive? **[Refrain]**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Bless and use these gifts, O God, for all your good purposes. Give us vision to offer ourselves and all that we have to your mission of feeding the hungry, healing the broken and serving those in need, for the sake of your kingdom on earth, Amen.

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PRAYER ENDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (BELOW)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power
and the glory forever. Amen**

REFLECTION HYMN: "I LOVE YOU, LORD"

I love you, Lord; And I lift my voice, To worship You, Oh, my soul, rejoice!

Take joy my King, In what You hear, Let it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another. Guiding God,

You have shown us how to live a good life, yet we think we can do better on our own. We do not honor you or our neighbors, instead choosing to follow our selfish desires. We long to be free and yet hold others' wrongs against them. Release us from this endless cycle of guilt and poor choices. Restore us to yourself again, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. (Pause for silent prayer and reflection.)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

We are God's beloved children and we have been forgiven! Now live in the joy which this grace provides, and share the good news with others. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 11:2-4

MESSAGE: "LORD'S PRAYER: YOUR KINGDOM COME, WEEK TWO," Pastor Jason Collier

****HYMN: "Blessed Be the Lord God Almighty" (Sing twice)**

Blessed be the Lord, God almighty, Who was and is and is to come

Blessed be the Lord, God almighty, Who reigns forever more

****THE BENEDICTION**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2020 (LIVE ON SAT., AUG. 29, 10 AM)
NO PARKING LOT WORSHIP THIS WEEK

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

Through sun and seed and earthly growth, **God gives us what we need.**

Through others reaching out to us, **God gives us what we need.**

With spiritual empowerment, **God gives us what we need.**

In many ways throughout our days, **God gives us what we need.**

****HYMN "BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS"**

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

2 Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

5 This glorious hope revives our courage by the way;
while each in expectation lives and waits to see the day.

6 From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin, we shall be free;
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

When we realize how much we have been blessed, we desire that all your children might benefit. May the offering of these gifts out of our abundance be a way to help rebalance the resources of this world, which have been given freely but are not shared equally. Fill our hearts with longing for your justice, through your Holy Spirit, Amen.

JOYS, CONCERNS AND PRAYER ENDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (BELOW)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen

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I love you, Lord; And I lift my voice, To worship You, Oh, my soul, rejoice!

Take joy my King, In what You hear, Let it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess our sins before God and one another. Guiding God,

You have shown us how to live a good life, yet we think we can do better on our own.

We do not honor you or our neighbors, instead choosing to follow our selfish desires.

We long to be free and yet hold others' wrongs against them. Release us from this endless cycle of guilt and poor choices. Restore us to yourself again, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. (Pause for silent prayer and reflection.)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

We are God's beloved children and we have been forgiven! Now live in the joy which this grace provides, and share the good news with others. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 11:2-4

MESSAGE: "LORD'S PRAYER: DAILY BREAD, WEEK THREE" Pastor Jason Collier

****HYMN: "Take My Life, and Let It Be"**

1 Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to thee. Take my moments and my days; let them flow in endless praise, Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

2. Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King. Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee. Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold. Take my intellect, and use every power as though shalt choose.

3. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine. Take my heart it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne. Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store. Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

****THE BENEDICTION**



As we move forward in ministry, I want to briefly share with you our reality, our hope, and our plan, for God is not done with us yet.

Our Reality 1. Attendance and membership in local churches continue to decline.

2. In some places, our local congregations have been unable to find effective ways to offer Christ to their communities.

3. Our financial situation as a conference is serious and was reflected in the decision of the Legislative Session to:

- Not be bound to pay 100% of General Conference apportionments. This change means that the primary decision to pay GC apportionments is up to the local churches of the Iowa Conference. All GC apportionment payments by local churches will be sent by CF&A to the General Church. CF&A and the Cabinet are committed to paying 100% of our GC Apportionments, but this will require all of the Iowa Conference local churches and pastors to be equally committed to 100% payment.
- The IAC budget line item for "uncollected apportionments" has been eliminated for the 2021 budget. This has the potential to lower apportionments for all local churches in 2021. However, the closure of churches and any local church decline in giving in the past year will affect the way in which apportionments are shared among us.
- The adoption of the 2021 budget included additional reductions in Conference mission and ministry expenses while attempting to recapture the depletion of the spent reserves of last year and this year.

As you know, the only funding we receive to support our conference mission and ministry is through what our local churches contribute. And when that funding is not there, we have no choice but to reduce staff positions, programing, and ministry. These are times that call for courageous decision-making. Our cabinet is currently reading Gil Rendle's book, *Quietly Courageous*, which I highly recommend to you. Rendle reminds us that we still have many congregations and clergy who just want to go back to the way things were in the 1950s when churches were growing rapidly and believed that if only they followed the program exactly, their congregation would grow exponentially. It worked for many churches, but that day is long gone, and it is not coming back.

- Today, most of our churches are trying to live off the increased giving of a smaller number of people who are getting older. Unfortunately, this plan is unsustainable.
- Our buildings were constructed to be located for easy access to certain distances and travel patterns that are no longer convenient to current demographic shifts.
 - The current average worship attendance in US churches is 75, which is not enough to sustain full-time ministry.
- We lament and at times deny the loss of the prosperity and waning influence of the church in our society.
- There's a lot of nostalgia going on right now. You and I long for leaders to take us back to the good old days. "Why can't the church be like it was when I was a kid?"

According to Rendle, "Quiet courage in this instance is not to be found in the bold clergy leader who claims to have the answers for others. Quiet courage is with the one who is deeply disciplined in the faith but then stands with the people, helping to name the next questions that they will need to address together in order to be faithful." [i]

Our Hope So where is the hope? God invites you and me at this very moment in the life of the Iowa Annual Conference to stand together and move into a future of hope.

- I see hope in how you have responded to COVID-19, in our commitment to address systemic racism, and in our conversations around human sexuality.
- I see hope in the increasing numbers of people who are live-streaming our worship services because they are yearning for meaning and spiritual connection.
- I see hope in our conference transition to circuit ministry and deepening connections among our local churches.
- I see hope in a renewed commitment to shared ministry through the apportionment system that has been a hallmark of our United Methodist connection for a very long time.
- I see hope in a commitment to reorganize our conference boards and agencies and district committees so that they can function more effectively in making disciples of Jesus Christ.
- I see hope in our insistence upon viewing each human being as a beloved child of God who has a place waiting for them at the table of the Lord.

Our Plan And, finally, what is our plan? First, in this time, we will need to continue to strategically shrink, for we cannot do everything anymore. We must determine priorities and direct our resources in that direction in a prayerful and purposeful manner. Second, we will need an intentional missional focus on equipping clergy and laity to lead the church toward its identified outcomes, address adaptive challenges, and increase the number of healthy congregations and fruitful leaders.

And, third, we will need to demonstrate mercy, justice, courage, and hope. At the same time, we must not be deterred in our call to be missional and courageous leaders. Who are we now? Who is our neighbor now? And what is God calling us to make different now?

My friends, Jesus is at work in communities all over Iowa through your quiet courage and the power of the Holy Spirit! What an exciting time it is to be God's people! Thank you for commitment to ministry in the name of Jesus Christ, and go, be the church! Thanks be to God!

Blessings, Bishop Laurie

[i] *Quietly Courageous; Leading the Church in a Changing World*, Gil Rendle, Rowman & Littlefield, Landham, Maryland, 2019, p. 149.

Ainsworth Community Church
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Nonprofit Organization
US POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 3
Ainsworth, IA

Electronic Service Requested

WORSHIP TIME

Saturday Worship: 10 AM Online only via Zoom, Facebook
Sunday Worship in Church Parking Lot: Aug. 9: Ainsworth
Sunday Worship in Church Parking Lot: Aug. 23: Crawfordsville

GENERAL MINISTRY OF CONGREGATION

PASTOR JASON COLLIER: Home: 319.658.3013; **Cell: 563. 343.3390**;
EMAIL: jwcyyouth@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE: AinsworthChurch@gmail.com

Phone: 319.657.3020

PO Box 40, 318 4th Street, Ainsworth, IA 52201

Facebook: Ainsworth Community Church and

Ainsworth Community Church Youth Group

Web: <http://ainsworthchurch.org> Twitter: AinsworthCC

YOUTH GROUP CONTACT:

Nick Yoder: 319-325-8070; nickyoder97@yahoo.com

Kirby and Demi Shetler

SECRETARY: Jan Temple 657.2291; Cell: 319.330.6175;

OR EMAIL: templejan@gmail.com

ORGANIST: Linda McNeil; Jenny Yoder (substitute)

CUSTODIAN: Jenny Gerot: 319.461.1239

TREASURER: Colleen Bean

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Christina Collier, PO Box 40,
Ainsworth, IA 52201

MISSION COMMITTEE: KATHI: 319.461.1339; Brenda: 319.657.2387;
and Ann: 319.330.0348

Ainsworth Community Church is a United Methodist/Presbyterian Church (USA) union congregation, together since 1973. Aligned with United Church of Crawfordsville since April 1, 2013.

We are the community church. We hope you will come and join us in one or more of these activities: Morning Worship Service, Youth Fellowship, Bible Studies, Women's Group, and much more.