



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
October 2025



Friends in Christ—

Liberal Protestants proposed World Communion Sunday in the 1930's and encouraged its wider observance beginning in the 1940's—during a time of economic inequality and uncertainty: during a time when the whole world sensed a gathering cloud of tension between nations and peoples. This is to say, World Communion Sunday developed in a time much like our own. It continues to inform our faith in these days as we see anew what we share with other Christians, with other people of faith, and really, with all people.

We speak theologically and say that this is a fallen world—that we are alienated from God, from one another, even from the best in ourselves. In this fallen world there is war and terror and greed and human evil.

We don't like to hear that in America. In America we like to hear that we are exceptional—beyond evil, exempt from suffering, and incapable of inflicting suffering on others. We like to hear that we are capable—on our own—of overcoming anything that might come our way. And if things are not going well, we like to hear that we can make America great again.

We don't like to hear about suffering. And I don't like to be the one to write about it, but there it is, all around us.

The global refugee crisis continues. At least 117 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes. Among them are nearly 43.4 million refugees, around 40 per cent of whom are under the age of 18. Violent political actions all over the world have created waves of refugees and displaced people, unable to return home for fear of their lives.

Refugees fleeing horrendous situations—life threatening situations—choose not to be overcome by evil. They come to the United States in the hope of overcoming evil through the welcome and embrace of what remains of the goodness of this nation.

I don't need to convince you that one way we live out our faith is by offering this welcoming goodness. Over the years our congregation has supported refugees from Vietnam and the Republic of Congo. Such a welcome is becoming more crucial even as it becomes more dangerous. You have heard the attacks in recent months. Powerful voices continue to speak loudly against refugees and immigrants.

From its start in the twentieth century, the ecumenical movement has been a movement seeking to establish bonds of compassion and mutual concern across and beyond national borders. It cares for the worldwide household of faith, recognizing that our neighbors are both near and far.

World Communion Sunday, then, turns out to be far more important than we might ever have realized. It prepares us for the work that is still ours to do in these days of unraveling—weaving a new fabric of peace so that we might be a part of the realm of heaven that God is creating among all people. Join us on Sunday, October 5, for this special time of celebration.

Peace,

Bill

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congregational UCC Iowa City Christian Education

October 2025



We had a great turn out for our Ready, Set, Shine! Rally Day on September 5 and first day of our new Sunday school classrooms on September 12. We are settling into our age cohorts and coming together on some Sundays for special activities like our Sept. 28 September Soup making. If you're interested in a tour of our new classrooms, ask a student and I'm sure they'd be happy to show you around!

Upstairs:

Pre-K/lower elementary
(east class room)

Teachers: Ms. Bea, Ella Lewis & Nadia Spragg

Children's Church
Music & Movement Room
(west room)

Children's Choir Director: Rachel Burchett; Assistant: Nadia Spragg

Downstairs:

Middle grades
Blue room (east)

Teachers: Hope Spragg & Virginia Simone

Breakfast & Fellowship
(middle room with ping pong table)

Teen

Orange room (west)

Teachers: Tina Koepnick & Sally Strang

CE Calendar

Sunday, **October 5 No Sunday School (ICCS D Fall break)**
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Regular nursery hours 9-11:30

4-6 PM Youth Group

Tuesday, **October 7 CE Board Meeting 6 PM**

Sunday, **October 12 Sunday School 9:15**
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; **Special music season**
nursery hours begin hours 9-12:30

Sunday, **October 19 Sunday School 9:15**
Teen class serves hospitality
Children's Choir sings during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30
4-5:30 Confirmation

Sunday, **October 26 Sunday School 9:15**
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30

Every Sunday: Sunday School & breakfast at 9:15; Children's Church during 10:15 worship; **Nursery hours expand hours starting Oct. 12 9-12:30 (through Dec. 7 for special music Sunday)**

September Soup

Ingredients: any harvest vegetables, olive oil, water or broth

Directions:

1. Separate vegetables into root or those that would benefit from roasting: peppers, carrots, squash and tomatoes. Wash & cut.
2. Roast at 400° for 40 minutes or until edges are dark. Cool & peel, if necessary. Use water or broth to blend.
3. Wash and tear or cut the rest of the vegetables.
4. Use Instapot or stovetop to sauté aromatics like garlic, shallots and onion. After softened, add other torn or chopped softer veggies like kale and zucchini. Sauté until vegetables start to soften and change color.
5. Add blended roasted mix and 2 cups of water or any kind of broth. Use "soup" setting on Instapot. If using stovetop, bring to a boil then lower heat and simmer for one hour.
6. You may blend part, none or all of the soup, depending on how you like your soup.
7. Option to add bread & butter. Serve and enjoy with friends!



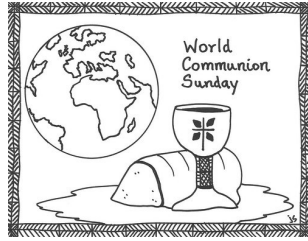
When we make September Soup, we gather the vegetables that have grown all summer- tomatoes, corn, beans and onions. Each ingredient tells part of the story of God's creation.

In Genesis, God creates the world step by step, day by day- light and darkness, sky and water, land and plants, sun and moon, animals, finally people. At the end of the creation story, there is time for rest, reflection and enjoyment. Each part of creation has its place and together it makes a good, whole, world.

Making soup can be like that: we add one ingredient at a time. We start with roasting and sautéing for the base (like God starting with light and order). Then we blend and create a broth (like the seas and sky). Then we add the softer vegetables (like the plants and living creatures). Each piece is good on its own, but when stirred together, it becomes something more- nourishing, warm and shared.

Just as God looked at creation and said "It is good," we can look at our soup and say "this is good." Cooking and eating together reminds us to be grateful for the harvest, the earth that gives us food, and the people we share it with.

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



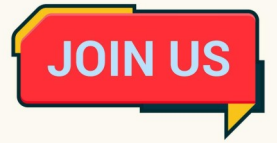
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 5 is World Communion Sunday. **2025 marks the eighty-ninth year of celebrating this day.** World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday) originated in the Presbyterian Church in 1936. From the beginning, it was planned so that other denominations could join in the celebration of this day. After a few years the idea spread. Through our prayers and music on this day we recognize our connection with Christians in every nation.

AFTER WORSHIP ENCOUNTER (AWE) BEGINS OCTOBER 12

After Worship Encounter (AWE) will meet after worship on Sunday, October 12th. We will gather on the Sundays that the choir meets after worship to rehearse for the Christmas Music Sunday on December 7.

We will be using *Living the Questions-The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity*. In this study we will be meeting again progressive theologians that were introduced in the original Living the Questions series: Borg, Crossen, Spong, Pagel. This is a beginning class that will introduce you to Progressive Christianity. Rev. Ann Molsberry will be leading the discussions. Please purchase your own book and read the first chapter for our first session. See you on Sunday, October 12, in the library.



RUN FOR THE SCHOOLS—SUNDAY OCTOBER 12

One of the joys of worship is navigating the challenges presented by downtown events. The 27th Annual Run for the Schools will be held on October 12. Some streets to the south and east of the church will be closed. **The church and the parking lot will both be accessible.** It might take a few extra minutes to get to church that morning. Plan accordingly, but plan to worship with us.

College St. will be shut down from Linn St. to Muscatine Ave. Gilbert St. will be shut down from Burlington St. to Washington St. Dodge St. will be shut down and southbound traffic will be rerouted on to Washington St. Governor St. will be shut down and northbound traffic will be rerouted on to Burlington St.

WINTER CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION—HOW TO HELP

The Winter Clothing Distribution (WCD), sponsored by the Consultation of Religious Congregations, will be from the afternoon of Sunday, 10/12, through the early afternoon of Saturday, 10/18. Over the span of these days they will set up, accept clothing donations, sort & organize clothing, distribute the clothing, & clean up after the event.

The event will be held in the gymnasium of The River Community Church (RCC), 3001 Muscatine Avenue, in Iowa City. This facility has plenty of parking space and is on a bus route.

Again this year, CRC will be partnering with the Iowa City Police Department (ICPD), which will provide clothing donations & volunteers.

As in past years, they are looking for donations of gently used or new WARM winter wear, with an emphasis on coats, snow pants, hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, boots & winter shoes. Heavy sweaters & sweatshirts are also appreciated. You can drop off clothing at the River Church during the week of October 12.

Volunteers need to register using SignUpGenius at the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B49A9AE2FA20-58487415-2025>

As you sign up, please pay attention to further information & instructions provided on the SignUpGenius.

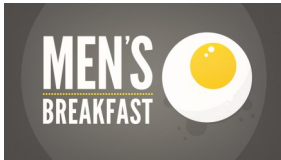


Your donations of quality winter clothing & your volunteer participation will be greatly appreciated!

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPEN HEARTLAND ELVES NAVIDAD EVENT—SIGN UP BY OCTOBER 15

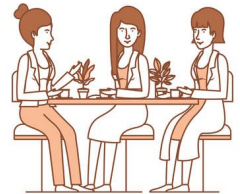
Each year, families with children under 18 create a Navidad Wish List, sharing two gift wishes for every family member. Community members make those wishes come true by purchasing those gifts. This year, they are expecting over 400 immigrant families to participate. You can be a Navidad Elf by emailing openheartlandholiday@gmail.com. You will be matched with a local family by Oct 15, giving you plenty of time to purchase and deliver the gifts before the holiday party in early December. While the gifts themselves are much appreciated, what touches the immigrants the most is the love, care, and solidarity behind the tradition, reminding them that they are seen and valued.



MEN'S BREAKFAST—OCTOBER 18

The October Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 18, at the Waterfront Hy-Vee. All Congregational UCC men who eat breakfast are invited. This is a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. Whether you'll be cheering the Hawkeyes, joining the No Kings protest on Iowa Ave., working at the Winter Clothing Distribution, or doing something else, you need to eat breakfast to get you going. Join us!

THE WOMEN'S LUNCH WILL BE HELD on Thursday, October 16th at Monica's. Martha Ann will be out of town; please call or text Sue Dayton—319-330-4479—to reserve a seat.



THE MISSION BOARD DIAPER AND TP DRIVE CONTINUES THROUGH OCTOBER

Please drop off diapers and training pullups, as well as toilet paper in the box in Rockwood Hall. Large boxes are acceptable, as the pantries will divide them into smaller packets. Items received will go to the CommUnity Crisis Center or the North Liberty Food Pantry. If you want to contribute cash to this effort, the Mission Board will do the shopping—just put “Diaper Drive” on your envelope or check.

Let's all get “behind” the effort and delight others with our generosity!

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 2

Each year on the First Sunday in November, Congregational UCC observes “All Saints Sunday.” This is a time for us to remember and give thanks to God for the lives of those members of Congregational UCC who have died in the past year—and for all the saints. Our worship service on this day is both solemn and joyful, befitting a congregation of people who live in the light of the resurrection. As is our custom, we will have a jazz band leading our worship on this Sunday to help us look toward that day when the saints go marchin' in. This year the well-known local jazz pianist Dick Watson will again lead the music in what promises to be an inspiring event. Please plan to join us for this special time of worship.



CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMBERS HELPING OTHER MEMBERS

There are times when a helping hand is needed by a member to get groceries, run an errand, get a ride to an appointment, etc. If you would like to occasionally help out in this way, please see the signup sheet in Rockwood Hall or call the church office—(319)337-4301.



CHURCH PHOTO DIRECTORY

Our Membership Board is pursuing plans to create an “in house” photo directory to help everyone put names and faces together. If you have a photo that you would like us to use, please email it to Jenn Harden at uccicadmin@uccic.org. This fall we will have opportunities for photos to be taken at the church if you would prefer that option. Please watch for more information.



SERVING OUR CONGREGATION

Every year in January a slate of new members for the various church boards is presented to the congregation for approval. Work to prepare this slate occurs throughout the fall and is managed by the two Council Members At Large, Marie Von Behren and David McCartney.



This work is now underway, and we would like to invite all members of the congregation to consider serving on a Board. Serving on a Board is an excellent way to develop close working relations with other members of the church.

What is involved in serving on a Board? Each of the six church Boards meet monthly, usually on a week day evening. Each of the boards has different responsibilities, and thus the tasks undertaken by each board are different. For example, the Membership Board plans the church picnic and other fellowship events; the Trustees provide oversight of the church budget and the building.

In addition to positions on church boards, there are also several positions representing the church to various agencies and organizations. Members of the church serve as representatives to the Eastern Iowa Association, the Community Pastoral Counseling Service, the Common Fund, and other organizations. As an alternative to serving on a church board, you might serve as a special church representative.

We encourage you to consider offering your name for consideration to serve on a Board. If you would like to discuss any of these options, please contact Marie Von Behren at marie.vonbehren04@gmail.com or David McCartney at dfmcc@yahoo.com.

USED MEDICINE BOTTLES NEED FOR CLINICS

100 Grannies, a local environmental activist group, is sending used plastic medicine bottles to Africa to assist clinics in distributing medication. Donna Hirst is in charge of this project and would be pleased to have participation from members of the congregation. If you are interested, Donna can provide a very brief orientation to bottle preparation (donna-hirst@uiowa.edu).



CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO OUR ANNUAL TEE OFFERING

We received over \$700. If you would still like to give, please put “TEE” on your check or envelope. TEE stands for the Theological Education by Extension College in South Africa. TEE is a private, nonprofit, distance learning institution serving five south African countries. Students come from 28 denominations across southern Africa including the United Congregational Church of South Africa. From its start, TEE was open to both men and women and to people of all races. This offering has been a tradition in our congregation for several decades. It was initially started when the brother of our then minister, the Rev. Ed Heininger, worked for TEE in South Africa. Please give generously—our support makes a difference.



THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED AT THE HOMECOMING PARADE

We raised some money for the Community Crisis Center Food Pantry and had a great time—so it was a win-win event. A recent UI alum stopped by, joined by some of our current students.



SAVE THE DATES!

The Alternative Giving Fair will be held on two mornings this year: November 23rd and December 14th in Rockwood Hall.

Plan to do some holiday shopping at the church and support area non-profits, Heifer Project, and Church World Service. Questions: john-reitz@uiowa.edu

HOPE LODGE: Thanks to all who helped with the Hope Lodge dinner on September 15: Rebecca Weatherford, Dianne Atkins, Diane Dahl McCoy, Sharyn Reitz, Ruth Gardner, Marsha Lowe, Jane Kinney, Ann Molsberry, Sally Strang, Ray and Linda Muston, Hope and Peter Spragg, and Chuck and Sue Dayton. The next Hope Lodge dinner will be November 10.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

COMING UP IN THE COMMUNITY

FREE MEDICAL CLINIC OPEN HOUSE

The Free Medical and Dental Clinic invites everyone to check out their newly renovated facility at 2440 Towncrest Dr. in Iowa City on Wednesday, October 8, between 3:30 and 6:30. Refreshments will be served and a ribbon cutting ceremony will take place at 5:30.



PUMPING THE BRAKES ON GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE

Thursday, October 16, at 6:30 p.m.—Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A

What is the role of surveillance in a democratic society? Join the ACLU of Iowa for a deep dive into how state and local governments surveil their own residents--often without their consent. We'll talk about privacy rights, surveillance technology that Iowa governments have adopted in recent years, the dangers of this technology, and what we can do to push for change. Speakers are Becca Eastwood, Deputy Policy Director, ACLU of Iowa and Erica Dubin-Barz, Community Engagement Manager, ACLU of Iowa.

ARMISTICE DAY OBSERVANCE—NOVEMBER 11



Veterans For Peace #161 will be holding the only Armistice Day Observance in the State of Iowa on Tuesday, November 11. There will be an outdoor Observance at the Iowa City Ped Mall, at 11 AM, followed by socializing, a free meal, and peace-making discussions at the Iowa City Public Library. The featured speaker for this year's event will be James Zogby, who will speak at both the outdoor Observance and the library event.

James Zogby co-founded the Arab American Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based organization which serves as the political and policy research arm of the Arab American community, in 1985 and continues to serve as its president. He is Director of Zogby Research Services, a firm that has conducted groundbreaking surveys across the Middle East.

WATCH OUT FOR EMAIL AND TEXT SCAMS

Occasionally, members will receive a text stating it is from "Rev. William Lovin" or "Pastor Bill Lovin" and asking them for a favor, such as buying some gift cards. Often the message will ask that this be done discretely and say that Bill is in a meeting. This is a common scam that has previously targeted some of our members, as well as members of other congregations.

Please know that Bill will never send anyone a text or an email asking for a "favor," for gift cards, or the like. Always check the email address before replying to suspicious emails; if it isn't from "@uccic.org," it is a fake email address. And the main phone number Bill uses is the church's landline: 319-337-4301. Any other number with a suspicious request is another sign of a scam.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

FREE LUNCH PROGRAM NEWS

Providing Good Food and Hospitality since 1983

Our church served 149 lunches at the Free Lunch Program on **Monday, September 29, 2025.**

Thank you so much to all who volunteered by donating food: **Dianne Atkins, Bill Dickinson, Sue and Chuck Dayton, Diane Duncan-Goldsmith, Randee Fieselmann, Betsy Henson, Marsha Lowe, Alfrieta Monagan, Linda Muston, Rebecca Weatherford and Julie Wittig**

Additional thanks to **Bryan Clemons, Diane Dahl McCoy, Bill Dickinson, John Fieselmann, Betsy Henson, Alfrieta Monagan, John Reitz, Rick Ruppert, Rebecca Weatherford and Julie Wittig** for their valuable on-site support.

Our next scheduled serving date is **Monday, December 29, 2025.**

If you would like to begin to receive the signup sheet sent by email, please contact me at vickithomae@gmail.com

Vicki Thomae

LATE BREAKING NEWS

As we went to press, word arrived about Linda Muston and Julie Wittig's Diaper Drive shopping spree. Using over \$300 contributed by members and friends of Congregational UCC, they were able to get a lot of diapers. The drive continues through October—see the article on page 5. Thanks for your support.



USHERS, GREETERS, HOSPITALITY AND LITURGIST OPPORTUNITIES: Sunday morning brings an abundance of opportunities to be involved in making the morning a time of joy and renewed energy. Everyone is invited to greet people coming to worship, to usher, to lead the congregation in worship and to provide hospitality during coffee hour after worship. Please sign up on the sheets in Rockwood Hall or call the church office--319-337-4031.



WANT TO GIVE ONLINE? Scan the QR code for our giving app.
Your giving makes a world of difference.

CHURCH CALENDAR

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 -Progressive Dinner, 5pm
5 - 9:15 CE all ages - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service - 4:00 Youth Group	6	7 -Gentle Yoga, Noon - Mission Board, 7pm -Stewardship, 7pm (Zoom) - CE, 7pm	8 - Staff Meeting, 11:00	9	10	11
12 - 9:15 CE all ages - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service - Choir Rehearsal, AWE after worship	13	14 -Gentle Yoga, Noon	15 - Finance committee, 10:00	16 - Women's Lunch, 11:45am at Monica's	17	18 - Men's breakfast, 8am
19 - 9:15 CE all ages - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service - Choir Rehearsal, AWE after worship -Confirmation class, 4pm	20	21 -Gentle Yoga, Noon -Membership Board, 5:30pm -Diaconate, 7:00pm -Trustees, 7:00pm	22 - Staff Meeting, 11:00	23 - Student Gathering, evening	24	25
26 - 9:15 CE all ages - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service - Choir Rehearsal, AWE after worship	27	28 -Gentle Yoga, Noon -Church council, 7:00pm	29	30	31	

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATING OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10/1—Margaret Beck, Andrea Rauer

10/3—Willis Sisley

10/5—Jason Beerends

10/6—Roger Jensen

10/7—Bob Ashman, James Savage

10/8—Martha Ann Crawford, James
Robinson

10/11—Dick Kruse

10/12—Ginny Clemons

10/13—Marnie Campbell, Vernetta
Knapp, Joyce Myer

10/18—Becky Hoefer

10/19—Elizabeth Oakes

10/27—Patricia Hansche, Anna Mary
Mueller, Tim Strang, Betty Stein

10/31—Peter Bloesch



ARTICLES FOR THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER
are due to the office by Monday, October 20.



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 North Clinton Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 319-337-4301

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org

Pastor:

Interim Director of CE

Music Director

Organist

Children's Choir Director

Office Manager

Financial Secretary

Sexton:

Custodian:

The Rev. William Lovin

Hope Spragg

Dr. Chris Nakielski

Bill Crouch

Rachel Burchett

Jenn Harden

Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

Douglas Herrera

Claudia Landaverde

uccicrev@uccic.org

c.nakielski@cornellcollege.edu

Contact the Office

uccicadmin@uccic.org

sharynreitz@gmail.com

Contact the Office

For up to date announcements, check us out on Facebook.