



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ November 2025



Friends in Christ—

Paul once quoted a Greek philosopher saying that in God “we live and move and have our being.” In life terrible things happen and wonderful things happen. Through all of them—and often right in the midst of them—we sense the reality of God, creating, redeeming, and sustaining all of life.

Out of this awareness, every once in a while we remember the people who have been important in our lives who are no longer living. Although they are no longer present physically, they continue to influence our lives, helping us to be better people than we might otherwise be, strengthening us to love more than we might otherwise love, and giving us the courage to do what is right in the face of opposition. A member of a church I once served told me that in some ways he felt his father more present with him after his father’s death—an experience others have spoken about as well.

Now and then we look around and our hearts are filled with gratitude toward God. This can happen when everything falls into place and life seems very good indeed. Surprisingly, it can also happen when everything falls apart and we are struggling to get through each day. Even then we recognize the sustaining power of God.

From time to time we look forward in hope, realizing that the past and the present are moving us toward something new, that the story isn’t finished yet. In faith at such times we trust in the goodness of that the new thing that is coming into being, that is seen only dimly.

When we remember and give thanks and look ahead all in one month, we call that November. This year November gives us All Saints Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, and the First Sunday in Advent. That’s a lot of religious life to put into thirty days. These days and this month remind us that all of life is in God’s care. Often enough, we need that reminder.

In all our days, we live and move and have our being in God. This is our strength our hope.

Peace,

Bill

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



"All Things Bright & Beautiful" performed during worship October 19

Congregational UCC Iowa City Christian Education

November 2025



"Moses in the Bulrushes" performed by our youngest class for middle/high schoolers on Oct. 26

It's been a fruitful October in Christian education! We began our month with a super youth group gathering. The weather was perfect and a huge thank you to CE board members Tom Mittman and Betsy Hinson for attending and to Saint Andrew's church for loaning us the "Zorb" balls!



CE Calendar

Sunday, All Saints Day **Nov. 2 Sunday School 9:15***
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30

4-5:30 PM Youth Group

Tuesday, **November 3 CE Board Meeting 6 PM**

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

Sunday, **Nov. 16 Sunday School 9:15***
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30
4-5:30 Confirmation

Sunday, **Nov. 23 Sunday School 9:15***
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30

Sunday, **Nov. 30 NO Sunday School**
Children's Church during 10:15 worship; Nursery hours 9-12:30

**Breakfast is served during Sunday School.*

In Sunday school, we've been talking about God as our Helper and sometimes it's easy to see God's help in our lives and many times God's help comes through people who love and support us.

We learned how God helped protect baby Moses through his mom, sister Miriam and the Pharaoh's daughter and discussed how we can be helpers in our lives. The teen class served in Hospitality and gained a new appreciation for the behind-the-scenes work it takes to provide and present those beloved donut holes.

We're excited to expand on our understanding of how God's love is felt through helpfulness. It's empowering to know that we have access to sharing God's love through our acts of service.

Thank you to our volunteer Sunday school teachers: Ms. Bea, Nadia, Ella, Virginia, Sally and Tina for all of your heartfelt service every Sunday!

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



MILESTONE:

Congratulations to Nathan Peters and Tori Tann, new parents of Sylvie Magdalena Peters Tann, born on October 2.

RETURN TO STANDARD TIME

Most of us can use a little extra sleep. Set your clocks back an hour before bedtime on Saturday, November 1. Get some rest and join us for Worship on November 2 (All Saints Sunday) at 10:15 a.m.—CENTRAL STANDARD TIME.

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. This year we will remember Deb Cob and two friends of our congregation, Tom Kinney and Richard Wells. 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. Our friend, the well-known local jazz pianist Dick Watson, will lead the music in what promises to be an inspiring event. Please join us on Sunday, November 2, for this special time of worship.

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WILL RECEIVE OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED (NIN) OFFERING ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2



NIN is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

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. On November 2 & 9, John Johnson will be available to take photos after worship.



SERVE AT HOPE LODGE! HELP PREPARE THE NOVEMBER MEAL

Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be Monday, November 10 at 6:00 p.m.. You are welcome to help provide and serve dinner, and visit with the Hope Lodge residents. If you would like to contribute food, see the signup sheet in Rockwood Hall. If you have questions, see Sue Dayton.

Our congregation occasionally provides an evening meal for the residents of Hope Lodge. The American Cancer Society Hope Lodge houses cancer patients (and their caregivers) who are receiving treatment at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. The address of

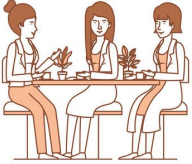
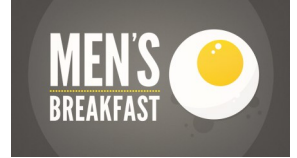
Hope Lodge is 750 Hawkins Drive (near the Ronald McDonald House). If you have questions about this project, contact Sue Dayton, cdayton7@mchsi.com or 351-5886.



CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEN'S BREAKFAST—NOVEMBER 15

The November Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 15, at the Waterfront Hy-Vee. All Congregational UCC men who eat breakfast are invited. There's no game this weekend, so join us for breakfast. This is a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. Join us!



THE WOMEN'S LUNCH WILL BE HELD on Thursday, November 20th at Thai Spice on Gilbert St in Iowa City. Please call or text Martha Ann at 319-855-8340 to reserve a seat.

THANKSGIVING CLOSING

Please note: The Church office will be closed on Thursday and Friday, November 27 & 28, in celebration of Thanksgiving. Please have any material for the November 30 bulletin to the office by Tuesday, November 25.



SHARING OUR GIFTS TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE

Pledge/estimate of giving cards for 2026 were sent out in early October. If you misplaced yours or did not receive one, please contact the church office—319-337-4301. If you have received a card, please prayerfully fill it out and return it to the church as soon as possible. Your deeply considered, prayerful support will help us to continue our Church's ministry and mission in the Iowa City area and around the world.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO THE TEE OFFERING IN SEPTEMBER.

We received over \$700 to support the Theological Education by Extension College in South Africa. [TEE](#) is a private, nonprofit, distance learning institution serving five south African countries. The mission of the college is to equip men and women for Christian ministry. Students come from 28 denominations across southern Africa including the UCC of South Africa.



INCOME FROM SHARE THE HARVEST HAS TOPPED \$1000!

Thanks to Kathy Fait and John Fuller for leading this effort and to all who shared their harvest this summer and fall. All proceeds will go to the CommUnity Food Pantry in Iowa City.

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 sign up sheet in Rockwood Hall.



CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROGRESSIVE DINNER FUN—SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

Great weather, great food, and great company made this year's Progressive Dinner a wonderful time for all. Thanks to Membership Board members Sue Dayton, Martha Ann Crawford, Marcy Kuechenmeister, Dean Logan, Sheila McKenna, Joyce Myer, and Pam Willard for planning and organizing this delightful event. Thanks as well to those who hosted: Linda and Ray Muston and Bill Dickinson (appetizers), Steve and Sue Wolken (dessert), and Rebecca Weatherford, Donna Hirst, Randee and John Fieselmann, John and Sharyn Reitz, Chuck and Sue Dayton, Rick and Phyllis Ruppert and Andy Bertolatus and Dianne Atkins (dinner).



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



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 David McCartney at dfmcc@yahoo.com or Marie Von Behren at marie.vonbehren04@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

ALTERNATIVE GIVING FOR CHRISTMAS—CRAFTS ARE WELCOME!

The Mission Board is ready to help you with your Christmas giving. Our annual Alternative Giving Fair will be held in Rockwood Hall after worship on November 23rd and December 14th. We would like to identify people who would like to offer crafts or other items for sale. If you knit, please consider making mittens and scarves for the Joan Buxton Mitten Tree, which will be directed to the Iowa City Schools.

Think outside of the box and let your giving help others. Gifts can be made in honor of friends and family to the Heifer Project and Church World Service. We will have the Mitten Tree up by November 23 have gift tags available for Project Holiday food baskets and the Salvation Army toy collection. If you have an idea for a sale item or would like to help in other ways, please contact John Reitz, at john-reitz@uiowa.edu or 319-333-9588.

SAVE THE DATE: The Advent Potluck will be held after worship on Sunday, December 7.

LOOK AHEAD TO ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Each year brings festivity and celebration as we move through Advent and the joy of Christmas. Mark your calendars so that you can be a part of these special events:



November 30—First Sunday in Advent; Lighting of the Advent Candles begins; Communion Sunday.

December 7—Second Sunday in Advent; Special Music Sunday; Advent Potluck in Rockwood Hall after worship.

December 14—Third Sunday in Advent; Children's Pageant.

December 21—Fourth Sunday in Advent; Worship at 10:15 a.m.

Christmas Eve is *Wednesday*, December 24—Christmas Eve candlelight worship service at 5:30 p.m.; Christmas Fund Offering; Gala reception follows.

December 25—Christmas Day; Church office closed.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE EASTERN IOWA ASSOCIATION?

Our **Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC)** is made up of six (6) Associations. The Congregational UCC of Iowa City is part of the **Eastern Iowa Association (EIA)**. We have about 30 churches in the EIA. Associations authorize ministers, support and care for clergy, and encourage churches on their faith journeys.

EIA had their 2025 Annual Meeting on Sunday, September 28th at Edwards UCC in Davenport to report on the activities that our churches and ministers are involved in. We attended to our association's business, we heard from our General Synod delegates, and we recognized the work of our new Iowa Conference Minister and Associate Conference Minister. We had 15 churches represented with 10 delegates, 6 visitors, and 28 clergy. A very strong representation!

The Rev. Ann Molsberry and **Betsy Henson** were installed as new members onto the EIA Committee on Ministry (COM). The EIA COM recognized **The Rev. Bill Lovin** for his 40th Anniversary of Ordination and **The Rev. Craig Henderson** for his 15th Anniversary of Ordination. Congratulations!!!

The Rev. Roberto Ochoa is our new Iowa Conference Minister (CM), he is also the Tri Conference Minister (TCM). The Rev. Kendy Miller is our Iowa Associate Conference Minister (ACM). **The Rev. Bob Molsberry** is our Iowa Conference Deacon. **The Rev. Ann Molsberry and Betsy Henson are our EIA delegates from the Congregational UCC of Iowa City.** Please, if you have any questions or concerns, speak to one of us!

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE IOWA CONFERENCE?

There are about 155 churches in the Iowa Conference UCC. In 2016 the Iowa Conference voted to join with the Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences to form the Tri Conference. We are separate conferences with separate finances, but we share some office staff and resources, a finance officer, and Conference Minister. There are about 250 churches in the Tri Conference UCC. Next year will be the 10th Anniversary of the Tri Conference.

The Iowa Conference UCC had its 2025 Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 11th at Plymouth UCC in Des Moines to report on the business and activities that our churches and ministers are involved in here in Iowa. The Tri Conference meets *biannually* at a Joint Annual Meeting (JAM). The Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conferences also have their *separate* annual meetings during JAM.

WELCOME REV. ROBERTO OCHOA!

In the afternoon, after our annual meeting, we installed the Rev. Roberto Ochoa as our Iowa Conference Minister (CM). Nebraska and South Dakota installed Rev. Roberto Ochoa as their CM on separate dates. The Rev. Kendy Miller is our Iowa Associate Conference Minister (ACM). The **Rev. Bob Molsberry** is our Iowa Conference Deacon. **The Rev. Ann Molsberry and The Rev. Craig Henerson are our Iowa Conference delegates from the Congregational UCC of Iowa City.** Please, if you have any questions or concerns, speak to one of us!



Who is our New Iowa Conference Minister (CM)/Tri Conference (TCCM)?

The Rev. Roberto Ochoa has been with the United Church of Christ for 20 years and served most recently as the Lay Pastor for Lake View Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation in Worcester, MA since 2012 and as Outreach Minister for Worcester Fellowship, an out-door Church ministry to the homeless, the economic poor and marginalized communities since 2016. He has over 30 years' experience in the areas of Latinx, Communities of Color, LGBTQA+ and cross-cultural ministries within the Christian Church and Multi-Faith settings. He earned his Master of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School in 2017 with Certificates in Ethics and Social Justice, and for Spiritual and Pastoral Care.

The Rev. Roberto Ochoa was installed as the Iowa Conference Minister (CM) on Saturday, October 11th. He was installed as the Nebraska CM on Saturday, May 17th and he was installed as the South Dakota CM on Saturday, October 4th. The three conferences will share the Rev. Roberto Ochoa's time and expenses through the Tri Conference (TCM).

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

MISSION BOARD FOOD DRIVE IN NOVEMBER



As many of you know, the government shutdown will result in a suspension of SNAP benefits starting Nov 1. This will lead to significant problems for those depending on these benefits to purchase food. In addition, food banks have been very stressed as the price of food has risen considerably. The Mission Board is sponsoring a food drive in November to respond to this crisis. Please bring stable shelf items to the church on the Sundays in November and the MB will deliver to the local food banks. If you prefer a monetary gift, just place it in the offering plate and it will be sent. As you consider the items to donate, be aware that many boxed items require additional ingredients such as butter and milk for mac and cheese boxes, and meat for hamburger helper. If those items are not available, the food is not useful. Protein sources, such as tuna, canned chicken and peanut butter are often requested.

DR. JAMES ZOGBY JOINS VETERANS FOR PEACE ARMISTICE DAY OBSERVANCE



On Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2025, beginning at 11 a.m. CST, the local chapter of Veterans For Peace will hold three public events in Iowa City to re-dedicate ourselves to the work of peace. Members of the public are encouraged to attend.

- 1) Beginning at 10:45 a.m., we will assemble at the Iowa City Ped Mall. Bells will ring at the 11th hour, 11th day, 11th month, as is tradition. Dr. James Zogby will make brief remarks. In 1985, 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. He continues to serve as its president. Zogby is also Director of Zogby Research Services, a firm that has conducted groundbreaking surveys across the Middle East.
- 2) Immediately following the outdoor observance, Veterans For Peace will host a free luncheon at the Iowa City Public Library. Dr. Zogby will address the group in a longer format. His topic is "The war that didn't end all wars and instead launched a century of conflict."
- 3) At 6:30 p.m., Veterans For Peace will sponsor a screening of the film "Earth's Greatest Enemy", a film by Abby Martin at FilmScene, 404 East College Street, Iowa City. This is a documentary exposé of the world's biggest—and most unaccountable—polluter: the US military. Learn the environmental cost of having a military Empire. Co-director/co-author of the film, Mike Prysner, will attend and offer brief remarks before the screening. He will host a question-and-answer period immediately afterward. FilmScene requests a free will donation to attend. This is the sole Armistice Day observance in the State of Iowa.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE AS A LITURGIST ON SUNDAY MORNING?

This is a great opportunity to welcome people and to lead them in worship. Bill Lovin provides the material. You provide the spirit. Contact Bill if you are interested or would like more information.

USHERS, GREETERS, HOSPITALITY AND LITURGIST OPPORTUNITIES

Sundays bring 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

November 2025

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATING NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

11/1	Frank Zlatnik
11/7	Scott Hansche
11/8	John Fuller
11/10	Michael Seidl
11/11	Jeanna Otto
11/13	Amy Lewis
11/20	Marcia Kuechenmeister
11/27	Caroline Tolbert
11/29	Hayden Beerends Kevin Richards



ARTICLES FOR THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER
are due to the office by Monday, November 17.



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NOVEMBER 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

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