

2020 Annual Report
The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



Annual Meeting
January 31, 2021

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The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
30 N Clinton St.
Iowa City, IA 52245
www.uccic.org

2020 Annual Report

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United Church of Christ
Iowa City, Iowa**

ANNUAL MEETING

January 31, 2021

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MISSION STATEMENT

We, as people of God joined together in the Congregational United Church of Christ, strive to be faithful to the call of Jesus Christ as we minister in love through worship, education, fellowship, service, and daily living. The defining center of our faith community is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the Spirit of Christ, we welcome all people into our community of faith. We respect each person's search for an understanding of the Christian faith and its meaning for our lives and for the issues of today. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we work and pray for peace and justice and fullness of life for all people.

CHURCH COVENANT

We covenant with one another to seek and respond to the Word and will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of Jesus Christ, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our forebears, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the reign of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021
AGENDA

Call for a Quorum

Call to Order

Opening Prayer

Opening Remarks

Approval of January 26, 2020 annual meeting minutes

Approval of 2020 Annual Report

Approval of Nominating Committee Report

Approval of 2021 Annual Budget and 2020 Financial Reports

Housing Allowance

The Congregational United Church of Christ, Iowa City, Iowa, has budgeted a \$40,000 housing allowance for its Pastor, William H. Lovin, in 2021.

The Congregational United Church of Christ, Iowa City, Iowa, has budgeted a \$15,718 housing allowance for its Director of Children Christian Education, Rev. Ann Molsberry, in 2021.

Old Business

New Business

Review and approval of [changes to Constitution and Bylaws](#)

Announcements

Adjournment

2020 ANNUAL MEETING

January 26, 2020

The moderator, John Fieselmann, called the meeting to order at 11:10 am. A count of members was made and a quorum was determined to be present.

John Fieselmann gave some opening remarks noting the accomplishments made in the past year and thanked the boards, church council and church staff for their contributions. Our office manager, Nan Martin, retired and Leo Agnew was hired as her replacement. Rev. Ann Molsberry replaced Rev. Patte Henderson as the Director of Church School. Kristin Ramseyer (choir director) and Bill Crouch (organist) continue to inspire us during worship with music. Sharyn Reitz (financial secretary); Kevin Koepnick, our treasurer; and our financial committee have continued to do an outstanding job with our finances. The church council finalized the priorities of the five year plan that centered on our church's purpose and value. We would like more input from the congregation, particularly from the young adults. Finally, John thanked Rev. Lovin for leading us in worship, education, and pastoral care. Specifically, he notes that Bill's spiritual leadership and mentorship encourages each of us to develop a strong faith while providing support for us on our religious journey.

Bill Lovin gave thanks to the congregation and church staff for their work over the past year and thanked the boards, church council and church staff for their contributions. He welcomed new members to the congregation, stated that we had two new confirmands in 2019 and two members passed away (Virginia Spalding and Rod Malcolm).

Barb Sisley thanked all the people on boards and called for a close of board nominations. Carroll Hanson moved and John Reitz seconded to close the call for board nominations.

Chris Knapp moved and Bob Hanson seconded to approve the minutes of the 2019 annual meeting on January 26, 2020. The motion was approved.

James Robinson moved and Bob Hanson seconded to approve the 2019 Annual Report. The motion was approved.

Kevin Koepnick presented the 2019 Financial Report and the 2020 Proposed Budget. He noted we are close to being on track for our budget. We went over budget slightly for the lighting and ceiling fans in the sanctuary. We paid off the elevator loan and we need to replace the general funds we borrowed internally. He stated that members are always welcome to pay their pledges early if they wished. Kevin Koepnick moved, and it was seconded to approve the 2019 Financial Report and the 2020 Proposed Budget. The motion was approved.

John Fieselmann asked that we approve a \$30,000 housing allowance for Bill Lovin and a \$17,100 housing allowance for Ann Molsberry. This must be noted in our minutes for the IRS. Barb Sisley moved and Carroll Hanson seconded to provide for this allowance. The motion was approved.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Pearson

MINISTER'S REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT

Friends in Christ:

I miss you!

I have felt this way since March 15, when we canceled our in-person worship services, through Maundy Thursday and Easter, into the summer and fall, and through our celebrations during Advent and Christmas. This takes on almost a biblical sense as I have come to better understand what Paul meant when he wrote to the Philippians, “God knows how I long for you all with the deep yearning of Christ Jesus himself.” (Philippians 1:8)

2020 was a difficult year in so many ways. Members became ill and some died because of Covid-19. Many have friends and relatives who were affected by the virus. The pandemic changed how, where, and if we worked. It changed education for those in kindergarten and those who are graduate students. In the middle of this, cries for racial justice became louder and more persistent. And there was the political turmoil of an election year unlike any other that we have known.

We quickly learned how to record and post our worship services online and how to worship in front of a screen, finding a new sense of community. We quickly learned how to Zoom our meetings and other gatherings. In the summer, as we adjusted to our new “normal,” we turned to scripture and found both lament and good news. We kept in touch with each other through email and phone calls. And because we are a congregation that always looks beyond itself, we found ways to significantly support efforts toward racial justice, hunger relief, and responding to increasing homelessness brought on by economic turmoil.

Often the reports of boards and committees get skimmed over at best. I encourage you to take some time to read the reports thoughtfully and prayerfully and with an openness to the wonders that they contain. This year's annual report documents the many ways in which we have grown stronger as a congregation through the pandemic and all the other challenges of 2020. Together we have worshipped, cared for one another, studied, cared for our community and our world, and grown in generosity and gratitude.

I want to thank our staff for the many ways in which they have creatively responded to the challenges of this year. Bill Crouch and Kristin Ramseyer rearranged schedules so that they could be at the church to record the worship service each week. Bill's organ and piano music have sustained us through the year. Kristin's creative approaches to vocal music gave us not only solos, duets, and quartets, but even virtual choirs that delighted and inspired us. Ann Molsberry and Avery Nabholz made sure that our children's programs adapted and continued so that the youngest in our congregation continue to grow in faith. Our administrative staff, Sharyn Reitz, Nan Martin, and Christina Patramanis were at the church office even when the building was closed to keep our ministry and mission functioning smoothly and to respond to the needs and concerns of members. And our custodians, Douglas Herrera and Claudia Landaverde, have cared for our building and grounds so that they are ready when we meet together once more.

I especially want to say a word of grateful appreciation to John Johnson and Mark Kenaston. Each week they come to the sanctuary to record the worship service. John has also added to the beauty of the chancel with an everchanging display of flowers and plants. Mark takes the recorded material and beautifully edits it into the worship services that are seen and appreciated by people in the Iowa City area, across the United States, and even on other continents. Their selfless devotion to these tasks is an inspiration to me and they have the deep gratitude of the entire congregation.

I also give thanks for the work of our Moderator, John Fieselmann, and the rest of the Church Council along with all the board and committee members whose energy, devotion, thought, and prayers have been central to the well-being of Congregational UCC this year.

As challenging as 2020 has been, 2021 will call us to new actions as we move through months of vaccinations, a time of recovery, and finally gathering together again to worship, to support one another, and to serve the world. (At least I think this will happen.) As individuals and as a congregation, we have changed in many ways this year. The challenge will be to take all those changes and become the church for the new days that we are entering.

I miss you!

In gratitude and hope,

Bill Lovin

MODERATOR'S REPORT

CHURCH COUNCIL — ANNUAL REPORT

The Church Council is composed of the Moderator, who shall act as chair; Vice Moderator, who is one of the two At Large Members; the Clerk, who shall act as secretary; the Treasurer; the Pastor; the chairs of all boards; and the second At Large Member. Under the spiritual leadership of the minister, the Council acts as the executive body of the church coordinating the programs and activities of the various boards and committees. Committed individuals from the boards and congregation translate plans into action. The church is fortunate to have many devoted translators.

This year started out like a typical year for the Church Council. Since working together is so important for a functioning Council, we used our January and February meetings to build comradery and trust as new and continuing Board chairs joined to become a new Council. We set priorities for the year including a need for new financial software and financial on-line giving, giving preferences, CPR training for key members of the congregation, a list of Board plans for the year and Easter, and a review of the 5-year plan so that we could begin to work on major needs. By late March, we had PayPal up and running.

And then, Covid-19! Within weeks the church was closed for service, meetings, and visitors. We began meeting by Zoom to ponder how we would reopen the church once the virus came under control. Social distancing and masking became part of our new lexicon. Without breaking stride, Rev. Lovin started on-line Sunday services with technical help from John Johnson and Mark Kenniston. Our fine music team of Kristen Ramseyer and William Crouch provided musical support for each service utilizing our talented choir singers in a variety of formats. We even developed an after service coffee hour with Zoom. Our Council meeting minutes suggested that it would only be a matter of time before we were back in the saddle. As the months dragged on with increasing Covid cases and deaths, it became obvious that we were in this for the long haul. With the Church shut to public activities, the Council's responsibilities remained but with a change in focus. To create a safety net for our financial base, Sharyn Reitz applied for and received a Payroll Protection Program loan for our church.

The members of this church have always prioritized mission and service. With the onset of the pandemic, it was no surprise to see a record number of requests for resources and support. During this time of great need, our Mission Board requested funding for Table to Table, the Free Lunch Program, Shelter House, Prairielands Freedom Fund, Open Heartland for children who need a location for remote learning and food distribution, Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa, CommUnity Food Bank, United Action for youth, a special matching gift for new mattresses for the Shelter House, and \$8,000 for Derecho and Covid needs. The Council unanimously supported these requests using our multiple church funds. Our members also continued to participate in CROP Walk, the Free Lunch Program, alternative giving programs, and the CRC Winter outerwear distribution.

MODERATOR'S REPORT CONT.

With most of our group activities canceled, the Council used this time to review and revise our Church Constitution and Bylaws, Board and Committee Responsibilities, Gift Acceptance and Fund Description Documents, our "Safe Church Policy", and the Church Policy Manual. A special thanks goes to Sharyn Reitz for her initial work to identify problems in these documents and provide alternatives to correct them. Where descriptions were absent or changed over time, she wrote new or rewrote revisions. Sharyn's work helped us clarify and approve changes. At the Annual Meeting, the congregation can expect a request for approval of these changes made to the Constitution and Bylaws.

There are a number of individuals who deserve special recognition for their service. These include members and board chairs who serve on the Council; those who volunteer to support our mission work and community organizations; our financial team with leadership from Sharyn Hurliaux Reitz, Ginny Clemons, Cynthia Kemp, Rick Ruppert, Kevin Richards, and Kevin Koepnick; Rev. Ann Molsberry and all the volunteers who assist with church school; Kristin Ramseyer and her team of singers and Bill Crouch, our organist, who engage us with music to enhance our worship; Nan Martin and Christina Patramanis, who have more than filled in for our vacant office manager; Kevin Richards and Rick Ruppert and the trustees for prioritizing and implementing projects which care for and preserve our beautiful building; and our silent angels: Marge Hoppin, Barb Hanson, and Gloria Hanson.

During this time of Covid-19, Rev. Bill Lovin has shown great flexibility in adapting worship, education, and pastoral care to our needs during isolation. His on-line sermons continue to inspire us. His sensitivity to national and worldly events helps us deal with recurrent tragedy and despair with faith and hope. He continues to challenge the Council to focus on the major needs of the church. I feel fortunate as Moderator to have Bill as my spiritual leader, mentor, and friend.

We all look forward to the reopening of the Church and face to face together-time.

John Fieselmann

Council Members

John Fieselmann, Kevin Richards, Megan Carnes, Derek Lehman, Laura Stunz, David Dowling, Kevin Koepnick, Connie Parsons, Barb Sisley, Cynthia Kemp, and Bill Lovin.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

The Christian Education Board of the Congregational United Church of Christ provides spiritually meaningful learning experiences for adults and children. We interpret scripture with the understanding that God is still speaking and always creating. We take a progressive theological approach to Christian Education, teaching about the life and death of Jesus Christ as the perfecter and exemplar of our faith; and his resurrection in and through us as the catalyst of our faith.

The Reverend Bill Lovin is the program planner for Adult Education and The Reverend Ann Molsberry is the Director of Children's Programs and plans the children's education programs. The Board meets to accept reports from the program planners and to be a sounding-board and springboard for curriculum suggestions, programing ideas, and volunteer assignments for Sunday morning and mid-week events. We thank Ed Keogh and Derek Lehman for serving as co-Chairs and Jeanne Otto for serving as Secretary.

In March 2020, we experienced a worldwide respiratory illness pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The disease caused by the virus was named COVID-19 (COronVirusDisease-2019). Our church went into quarantine in March and has remained so to date.

The Adult Education component of our Board is overseen by The Reverend Bill Lovin. Bill has been with the church since 2007. Bill and the Mission Board coordinated the programming for the Adult Sunday morning education hour. During the quarantine, Bill provided Sunday morning and mid-week on-line Bible studies.

The Children's Education component of our Board is provided by The Reverend Ann Molsberry. Ann has been with the church since June 2019. Ann wrote the curriculum for the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 church school years. During the quarantine, Ann prepared weekly emails for student, teachers and parents of the church school which included their lesson outlines and bulletin/activity sheets for each week. Ann also produced YouTube videos with a lesson and story-time for Sunday School gatherings online for our Sunday Mornings Facebook time.

We continue to receive excellent programing from Avery Nabholz, our Children's Music Director. During the quarantine, Avery posted weekly music lessons during our Sunday Morning Facebook time.

Calendar of Events:

- January-Epiphany Gift-created Blessing Bags for the Homeless

- February-Lenten Journey-created a masking-tape Labyrinth in the Church Nursery. Lenten Breakfast: served 80 folks!
- Sunday, March 13, 2020 Quarantine begins.
- June 8-12-Peace Camp Vacation Church School: planned but canceled.
- August 24-ZOOM Family Meeting
- Rally Day, September 13, 2020-ZOOM meeting. Home delivery of 25 Blessing Bags and Prayer Cloths to each child in our Sunday School program.
- September-December 2020-Weekly emailed lesson plans and on-line Facebook Sunday Storytime
- November- Pony Express-style Heifer Project Offering packets went out to Sunday School families.
- December-Online Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Liturgy and Christmas Story, home delivery of Christmas Jars to each child in our Sunday School program.

Prayerfully submitted,

Derek Lehman, Ed Keogh, Jeanne Otto, Michelle Birt Leeds, Margaret MacInnis, Sally Strang, Cynthia Kemp, Sandy Lacina, James O'Neil.

DIACONATE

ANNUAL REPORT

The suspension of in Church services last March 15th greatly reduced the activity of the Diaconate (and the Music Committee which falls within its purview) whose greatest responsibilities center around in-Church activities.

Prior to the suspension of in-building Church services the Diaconate continued their responsibilities in helping with Communion. We also provided ushers, greeters and staff for hospitality during Fellowship hour following Sunday services and assisted with those endeavors as needed. The Diaconate supported the memorial service and reception for Richard MacMillan in January. We helped with a virtual Tenabrae Service in April as well. In May we established a Google Document to recognize our graduating high school seniors and saw to it they received recognition from the church and Prairie Lights certificates.

Since the suspension we have relied on the expertise of John Johnson and Mark Kenaston for their technical prowess in assisting Rev. Lovin with our weekly on line services. Rev. Lovin's superb services have been well followed on line and the Zoom and Facebook Fellowship hours on Sunday mornings have also served as balms during the pandemic.

We also recognize the fine music provided by Kristin Ramseyer, who has managed to steer the choir through some online service anthems while attaining her doctorate in choral conducting (D.M.A)! She has also provided music for and directed our soloists: herself and husband Josh Ramseyer, Wen Chin Liu, Avery Nabholz and Colin Wilson. As always we are ever grateful to Bill Crouch who continues his excellent service as our organist and accompanist.

The Diaconate continues to meet monthly where we are advised of the work of the other Boards and the Church Council. We also receive Pastoral updates and enjoy each other's company by these Zoom meetings. Member Randee Fieselmann has been instrumental in establishing a phone tree to contact parishioners in an effort to maintain contact amongst ourselves.

We look forward to the return of in Church services, hopefully sometime this coming spring or summer, but count our blessings that despite the hurdles thrown our way by the pandemic that The Congregational U.C.C. of Iowa City continues to play a vital role in our lives.

We end with a special thanks to Kathy Fait, Marcy Kuechenmeister and Edie Roberts for their years of service on the Diaconate. We welcome Ray Muston and Patte Henderson to our fold.

Respectfully, Tom Mittman, Chair, Sharon Reitz, co-chair, Vicki Thomae, Secretary, Kathy Fait, Randee Fieselmann, Shelagh Hayreh, Betsy Henson, Allan Hogue, Marcy Kuechenmeister, Theresa Messlein, Ed Murph, Edie Roberts

MEMBERSHIP BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

Because of the pandemic, the Membership Board was not active in 2020. Janet Williams continued to send out cards to members in response to celebrations and concerns.

Connie Parsons, Chair, Joyce Myer, Steve Wolken, Sue Wolken, Diane Jetter, Jane Kinney, Amy Lewis, Rachel Slezak, Margaret Beck

MISSION BOARD REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT

The Mission Board is charged with helping our congregation respond to the needs of people in our wider community and world. We began the year with an educational series that featured local nonprofit organizations and ended with a volunteer fair that afforded the opportunity for church members to commit to engagement with several of the nonprofits. We had presentations by Lia Parillo at DVIP about Human Trafficking, Jessica Pannell of IFIF Immigration, Chuck Connerly about Water Quality, Candance Lewis about Hope Lodge, Michelle Heinz about InsideOut Reentry, Sarah Ziegenhorn from Iowa Harm Reduction, Nicole Vanderlinden about CommUnity Call Center and mental health outreach, Barbara Vinograde from the Free Medical Clinic, and Ally Hanton from United Action for Youth.

Our plans for the year were upended by the Covid 19 pandemic. The board continued to meet monthly via Zoom. Community outreach continued, due to the generosity of church members who donated funds for the Mission Board to distribute. The financial record is shown below, curated by the efforts of our treasurer, Donna Hirst and Church Financial Secretary Sharyn Reitz, who have been a great help with all of the additional financial requests. Our regularly scheduled events such as the Pride Festival, Homecoming, and Gifts for Parents have been quashed this year. Our new effort to help with monthly dinners at Hope Lodge led by Chuck and Sue Dayton and Andy Bertolatus and Diane Atkins has also been discontinued for now.

Mission Board and the congregation helped support two efforts headed by Donna Hirst through the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition. The first was a voter registration party held in January, and the second was a series of videos in English, Spanish and Arabic encouraging participation in the census and voting.

The Free Lunch Program, with leadership in our congregation by Vicki Thomae, has continued serving lunches, and our congregation serves on 5th Mondays throughout the year. The Winter Outerwear distribution was reconfigured to allow safe distribution in a “by appointment” format. Paula Forest heads up a group of volunteers at our church who collect coats in the spring of each year for the fall distribution. Alternative Christmas Giving has been reimagined in a smaller, mostly virtual format for this year, but Ginny Clemons is again contributing her talent to create beautifully lettered gift cards for Heifer Project gifts. Project Holiday through CommUnity, and Toys for Tots through the Salvation Army, as well as gifts through Church World Service are all being supported this holiday season.

The Mission Board supports a list of UCC sponsored and other offerings each year. Despite our virtual format, congregational giving to the offerings has been generous.

2020 has been challenging, but we have learned a lot from our experience, and we are grateful to our generous congregation.

Laurie Stunz, on behalf of our current and retiring board members: Laurie Stunz, Bruce Reynolds, Lee Wood, Chuck Dayton, Hope Spragg, Bob Ashman, Donna Hirst, Kyle Flippo

Mission Board Financial Report – Final Financial Report for 2020, expenditures through December 10.

Summary:

Total Mission Board donations from all sources:

\$57,504.04	
Mission Board Discretionary Fund	\$5,000
Endowments (Engagement Fund; Red Lake Fund)	\$12,785.32
Individual donations	\$25,950
Special Offerings	\$8,899.72
Budgeted donations and membership	\$4,869

Broad categories of giving for above funds:

\$57,504.04	
Special Donations to local agencies	\$42,450
Special Offerings and Gifts	\$10,185.04
Budgeted donations and memberships	\$4,869

Special Donations to local agencies:

- \$8500 Shelter House (5000 from 15,000 gift; 1000 from 5/20; 2000 from 10/20 gift)
- \$6800 CommUnity (5000 from Engage. Fund to Food Pantry; 150 from Discretionary for Call Center;
 - 600 Discretionary 8/20, 1000 9/20, 50 12/20 Discretionary)
- \$5500 CWJ (3,000 5/20; 1500 9/20; 1000 from 10/20 gift)
- \$5000 CRC Common Fund (5000 from Engagement Fund)
- \$3400 Table to Table (2000 from 15,000 gift, 400 from 5/20, 1000 9/20)
- \$2700 JCIC video project (2500 from Engagement, 200 from Mission Discretionary, 11/20)
- \$2350 DVIP (150 from Mission Discretionary; 2000 from 5/20; 200 from 8/20)
- \$1900 Free Lunch (1,000 gift; 400 from 5/20, 500 9/20)
- \$1400 UAY (500 from Mission Discretionary, 400 from 5/20, 500 from 9/20)
- \$1400 Eastern Iowa Bond Fund (550 from Mission Discretionary, 150 from gift, 700 6/20 Discretionary)
- \$1150 Inside Out Reentry (150 from Mission Discretionary; 1000 from 5/20)
- \$1000 Open Heartland (1000 from 10/20 gift)
- \$ 550 Free Medical Clinic (150 from Mission Discretionary; 400 from 5/20)
- \$ 500 Funds to purchase coats for 2021 distribution, to Paula Forest (500 from Mission Discretionary, 11/20)
- \$ 150 Iowans for Immigrant Freedom (150 from Mission Discretionary)
- \$ 150 Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition (150 from Mission Discretionary)

Special offerings & gifts

\$1000.00	First Nations Development Institute (1000 from Mission Discretionary, 8/20)
\$3035.00	OGHS
14.72	Unicef (late boxes)
100.00	For immigrant family
300.00	CommUnity from Souperbowl of Caring
285.32	UCC Council for American Indians from Red Lake Fund

630.00	Strengthen the Church
375.00	AIDS Offering
1135.00	TEE Offering
1240.00	Neighbors in Need
100.00	UCC Christmas Fund
1970.00	Heifer Project

Budgeted Donations – to be sent automatically through the year

\$2000	Common Fund (CRC)
125	Free Lunch Program
715	Counseling Service – CPCS
1079	Pastor's Benevolences of \$1029, plus \$50 directed donation

Budgeted Memberships – to be sent automatically through the year

250	Center for Worker Justice membership
100	Affordable Housing membership
600	JCIC membership

Submitted by Donna Hirst, Mission Board treasurer

TRUSTEES

ANNUAL REPORT

Trustees have the long-term goal to maintain and build improvements into our Church home to meet the current and future needs of the Congregation. The Covid-19 Pandemic has created unusual challenges in 2020.

The bathroom between the Counseling Service Office and the Music Director's office has had a number of leak issues resulting from an uneven floor. This year the floor was removed and rebuilt so it is level, and new ceramic tile was installed. New lights were installed in the furnace room. With the church kitchens and bathrooms not in use, Rev Lovin and Kevin Richards perform building walkthroughs a couple of times per month, run garbage disposals, monthly run cycles in the dishwashers, and flush toilets.

The east classroom in the basement had new water damage after recent storms; Rick Ruppert and Kevin Richards unclogged downspouts on the south side and fixed low spots so the water would drain away from the building and hopefully prevent any more damage. The August 10 derecho knocked down the Hawthorne Tree in front of the church. It was cut up and removed. A new snow removal company was hired this year and have been very responsive to the Church's needs.

The Trustees work closely with the Finance Committee and this was even more important and apparent this year due to the Pandemic and the unknown impact on our expenses and donations. The Church Treasurer (Kevin Koepnick) and the Church Financial Secretary (Sharyn Reitz) worked closely with the Finance Committee and the Trustees to ensure the Church's financial health and we finished the year with a successful closeout. The Trustees worked with the Church Financial Secretary to update numerous church policies and developed/updated the roles and responsibilities of the Trustees.

To say this has been an unusual year would be a gross understatement. There are many people, from staff to the Trustees, Finance Committee, and committees and volunteer members that work very hard behind the scenes to ensure our church is healthy and well cared for. We are blessed to have such a caring and generous Church Family.

Members of the Board of Trustees:

Kevin Richards, Chair

Bea Hicks, Secretary

Carroll Hanson, James Robinson, Jean Willard, Chris Knapp,

Patty Roberts, Bill Williams Andy Bertolatus, Rick Ruppert

STEWARDSHIP BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

We began the year with big plans. We were going to begin learning about long term giving and how to present it to the congregation. We also had plans to increase our digital giving options and educate the congregation on how to utilize the digital tools. Then came COVID 19.

After the quarantine began and it became obvious that church would not be “normal” for a long time, we changed our plan. The board met on ZOOM and we came up with a series of ideas for reaching out via email, videos and links on the web site. Unfortunately, most of what we hoped would happen did not.

The good news is that we did get our PayPal link on the website and that people are using it. Some are even becoming converts to online giving which is a good thing. Many thanks to the Finance Committee for making PayPal become a part of our giving options. We tried to get a giving page created for the website that would make it easy for people to give in many ways—specific funds, general and designated gifts, and the annual campaign. Due to some difficulties in communication with the web designer, we have not been able to get that page created but hope to get that done next year. Many thanks to Kevin Koepnick for creating the document that allowed our members to create their pledge cards using the link to a Google document. It really helped!

The Annual Campaign was done with regular mail and through announcements and short videos during the worship service. So far, it has been successful. While disappointing to have to go backwards instead of forward technologically, we are very grateful to the members of the congregation for their continuing dedication to giving and their faith in our mission.

I also want to thank the members of the Stewardship Board. They are such a creative, thoughtful group of people. It is a privilege to work with them.

Cynthia Kemp, Chair, Derek Willard, Chuck Connerly, John Reitz, Sharon Garton, Deb Cobb, Martha Ann Crawford, James Savage, Jerry Walker

CHURCH LIBRARY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

Because of the pandemic and committee member resignations, The Church Library Committee was not active in 2020. A new Library Committee will be formed in 2021.

FINANCIAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT

This has not been the year for which we planned. At the end of the first quarter, income and spending were right on target. Our investments were doing well. Then came Covid-19. Finance met a number of times, via Zoom, throughout spring and early summer to monitor our Church's financial situation and make recommendations for budget changes and priorities. By August, our direction was clear. Due mostly to decreased use of our building, and the faithful pledge fulfillment by our members, we were going to be OK. And we are. Your church is on solid financial footing.

This past year has been one of the most volatile in American financial history. Double digit percentage market swings have become relatively unremarkable. Our various investment instruments have smoothed out these quick swings in an admirable manner. The attached report summarizes our investment results. It's notable that savings/CD special fund accounts for all special funds have been established to separate those funds from the church general checking account.

Our Church adapted to the Covid Pandemic in many ways. The following summary describes some strategies that were implemented to help us maintain our financial stability.

- The switch to online worship led to the loss of plate collections. To help account for this, a PayPal account was established to offer an online giving opportunity. Some of our members have become steady users of this option.
- Finance examined the 2020 Budget and made recommendations to Trustees regarding the prioritization of spending lines.
- In consultation with Church Council and Trustees, we took advantage of a Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Plan loan through Hills Bank & Trust. The loan amounted to \$40,200.00 and served as a reserve against a drop in pledged giving to keep our employees in place. In December the loan was forgiven and moved to the asset side of our balance sheet.
- There was no drop in pledge fulfillment, and cost savings associated with decreased building use meant that a frightening budgetary year actually worked out well.

Pledges for our recent Elevator Project have been nearly fulfilled. A total of \$7372.00 remains outstanding in the four-year campaign ending in 2020 thanks to the generosity of the congregation. We encourage everyone to check their remaining pledge amounts and give as you are able.

The proposed 2021 Budget assumes that we will return to in-person services some time mid-year. Line items are based on 2020 actual spending and include a 1.3% cost of living adjustment for our employees. We anticipate a substantial cost increase for insurance coverage, due to widespread damage caused by a record hurricane season and the August derecho.

As we enter the new year, Finance will continue to closely monitor spending and income as we continue to weather the pandemic. We intend to update our Church management software to allow for better, more reliable data access, better coordination between financial and giving information, and improved options for online giving.

A 2020 year-end financial statement and proposed 2021 Budget are attached.

Kevin Koepnick
Treasurer

Kevin Richards
Trustee

Derek Willard
Stewardship

Ginny Clemons
Past Treasurer

Rick Ruppert
Past Treasurer

Sharyn Reitz
Financial Secretary

MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT

Included as part of the Diaconate Report this year.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

BOARD	2022	2023	2024
DIACONATE	Shelagh Hayreh*	Tom Mittman*	Theresa Messlein*
Meets 1 st Tuesday	Ed Murph* Vicki Thomae* Sharyn Reitz*	Allen Hogue Betsy Henson* Randee Fieselmann*	Ray Muston Patte Henderson _____
TRUSTEES	Carroll Hanson*	Rick Ruppert#	Chris Knapp *
Meets 3 rd Tuesday	James Robinson* Andy Bertolatus	Bea Hicks Patty Roberts	Kevin Richards* Jean Willard*
CHRISTIAN ED	Derek Lehman*	Ed Keogh*	Michelle Birt-Leeds*
Meets 1 st Tuesday	Sally Strang Cynthia Kemp	Sandra Lacina Tina Koepnick#	Margaret MacInnis* Edie Roberts
MISSION	Donna Hirst	Rachel Burchett#	Jane Kinney
Meets 1 st Tuesday	Hope Spragg Chuck Dayton	Kyle Flippo Laura Stunz*	Bruce Reynolds* _____
STEWARDSHIP	Cynthia Kemp*	Martha Ann Crawford*	Derek Willard*
Meets 3 rd Tuesday	Sharon Garton* Deb Cobb*	Jim Savage* Jerry Walker*	Charles Connerly * John Reitz*
MEMBERSHIP	Diane Jetter*	Amy Lewis	Lenore Maybaum
Meets 3 rd Tuesday	Pam Willard#	Rachel Slezak Margaret Beck Linda Muston*?	Sue Dayton Marcy Kuechenmeister

CHURCH COUNCIL **Moderator:** John Fieselmann (2023)*
Church Clerk: David Dowling (2023)#
Treasurer: Kevin Koepnick
At-Large Members: Barb Sisley (2022)* Megan Carnes (2023)*

Common Fund: Marcy Kuechenmeister, Chuck Dayton
Community Pastoral Counseling Service: Jim Jetter
Consultation on Religious Communities: John Fuller, Sue Dayton
Delegates to Eastern Iowa Assn: Tina Koepnick, Ethel Bloesch
Delegates to Tri Conference: Anna Mary Mueller, Bea Hicks
Ecumenical Housing Corp: Bill Hoefer
Ecumenical Towers of Board of Directors: Charlie Platz, Sue Dayton
Johnson County Interfaith Council: Donna Hirst, Sally Strang (alternate)

*Denotes second term #Denotes filling unexpired term

IOWA CONFERENCE REPORT

Tri-Conference (Iowa – Nebraska – South Dakota) Conferences of the United Church of Christ Joint Annual Meeting October 17, 2020

The virtual Tri-State Conference Meeting was opened by UCC President John Dorhauer. Executive Conference Ministers Brigit Stevens and Darrell Goodwin assisted. The opening worship was led by the ministerial staff who reviewed the particulars of the tri-state agreement, a 5.01 (c)(3) corporation, and the Life Cycle of Churches, shared that states will also operate separately and that committees are being formed to accomplish ministry and consistency.

Pastoral transitions were highlighted and a spirited address was given by Rev. Naomi Washington Leapheart, Villanova University (PA). Challenges and opportunities for the Conference were presented including our response to Covid-19, Staff and Board reporting and climate change.

At the Iowa Business Meeting Ellis Arnold, Associate Conference Minister, highlighted staff changes and presented 2021 compensation guidelines (+2 percent), the 2021 budget, minutes of the 2019 meeting and Board of Directors Report for approval. One of the highlights throughout the meeting was a bible trivia contest which was a lot of fun! The meeting ended with a closing worship.

Submitted by Delegates Bea E. Hicks and Anna Mary Mueller

EASTERN IOWA ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT

First, a brief organizational history: Three years ago the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ joined with the Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences to form the Tri-Conference Ministries. Each conference retains its own identity and autonomy, but the sharing of administrative and ministry staff allows it to provide comprehensive services more effectively. Brigit Stevens holds the position of Executive Conference Minister. The four Associate Conference Ministers divide responsibility for specific geographic and specialty areas.

There are six regional associations within the Iowa Conference. Our region, the Eastern Iowa Association, includes 32 congregations.

The annual meeting of the Eastern Iowa Association was held Sunday, September 20, 2020. As with most meetings these days, attendees met virtually, in a video conferencing (ZOOM) setting, pandemic style, instead of coming together in a local church. By our count, 35 boxes were present.

Dick Steele, Moderator of the Eastern Iowa Association, chaired the business meeting. It included approval of the 2021 budget, the election of officers, and committee reports. Recognition certificates were given to pastors on their special ordination anniversaries. These included recognition of Bill Lovin on the 35th anniversary of his ordination. Ellis Arnold, our Associate Conference Minister, gave a report on the Iowa Conference, prodding us to reimagine the church in new and more inclusive ways.

A time of worship concluded the afternoon, with a message based on the Gospel of John, chapter 15 (“I am the vine; you are the branches.”)

We missed the usual fellowship time, the meal afterwards, and the drive home together. Perhaps in 2021?

Respectfully submitted,
Ethel Bloesch
Tina Koepnick

CONGREGATIONAL UCC REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ECUMENICAL TOWERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ANNUAL REPORT

Ecumenical Towers (ET) provides affordable apartments for those age 62 and older, and for younger mobility impaired individuals. The building has 10 efficiency and 71 one-bedroom apartments, located in the heart of downtown Iowa City on Washington Street, adjacent to the Johnson County Senior Center. ET was the idea of the Ecumenical Housing Corporation formed in the late 1970s by twelve Iowa City congregations: Congregational United Church of Christ, First Baptist/Spirit of Christ (now disbanded), First Christian, First Mennonite, First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, Gloria Dei Lutheran, St. Andrew Presbyterian, St. Mark's United Methodist, St. Thomas More Catholic, St. Wenceslaus Catholic, and Trinity Episcopal. Each church has at least one representative on the Board of Directors, responsible for the management of the facility. Each member congregation is also allowed to select up to six additional members to the Ecumenical Housing Corporation. These members may be called upon by the Board to help in various ways, but they are not voting members of the Board of Directors. Bill Hoefler, a former congregational representative, continues to serve on the corporation's General Board.

Government subsidies (Housing and Urban Development) allow ET rents to be no more than 30% of a resident's adjusted gross income. Eight of the apartments are considered handicapped accessible, but all of the rooms are large enough for a walker or wheel chair. ET currently has a waiting list, but interested individuals are encouraged to complete an application with the office at 320 E. Washington St., 319-338-7450, or visit Cardinal Capital Management for more information.

The first residents moved in on November 16, 1981. At that time the Board of Directors was managing the property, but as this proved to be too large a task for a volunteer board, the decision was made to employ HOMZ Management of Madison, Wisconsin to take over management under the supervision of the Board. In January 2020 HOMZ notified the Board that it was disbanding in March, (after 18 years of excellent service!) and recommended the Board consider retaining Cardinal Capital Management of West Allis, Wisconsin as their replacement. The Board approved this decision and in March Kelli Cogdill (who had formerly been with HOMZ) assumed the position of Manager. Most of the onsite staff remains the same: Faith Bird is the Resident Relationships Coordinator; Jeff Kapparos the Service Coordinator, has succeeded Amber Fruetal; and Mike Plath is the Maintenance Specialist, all now employed by Cardinal. The resident Relations Specialist and the Service Coordinator create a sense of community among the residents through monthly activities, movies and seasonal parties. The Service Coordinator links residents to appropriate service providers within the larger Iowa City community, provides information on benefits, serves as a liaison, and provides educational programming, encouragement and support, which allows residents to maintain a self-reliant lifestyle. We have maintained a 95 to 100% occupancy over the past year.

The Board has typically planned and hosted four events each year for the residents: a soup supper around St. Patrick's Day, an ice cream social in the summer, a dinner near Thanksgiving, and the passing out of "Santa Sacks" containing fruit and candy at Christmas time. Needless to say, however, these activities have been suspended this year due to the pandemic. In lieu of some of these activities gift certificates for \$25 were given to each of the residents in April, and \$50 was given to each in late November. The residents have proved to be very understanding of the situations we all face, and both staff and most residents have been conscientious about masking and distancing. In addition, Board meetings have been by ZOOM since March. Gerald Peterson, Board president, resigned in November. Charles Platz, vice president, is filling in as chair, and Lee Gullickson and Sue Dayton remain as treasurer and secretary respectively.

The Board monitors the activities of the staff, the maintenance and needs of the building (with the help of Mike Plath), and the financial status of the corporation. We have continuing discussions on how to encourage more involvement by our sponsoring church members in general. We were notified earlier this year of a pending decision to establish part of the downtown area as "historical," however our building is apparently too new to be affected by this decision. We have also been notified that our tax exempt status will expire in 2022, at which time we will need to begin paying property tax. The amount is not yet established, but is likely to be something on the order of \$100,000. There will be an opportunity to negotiate this in 2022.

Sue Dayton and Charles Platz are the representatives of Congregational UCC to the Board.

THE COMMON FUND

ANNUAL REPORT

The Common Fund is the fund of last resort for households struggling to stay in their home during a time of financial crisis. This program of the Consultation of Religious Communities is focused on preventing and reducing homelessness by providing utility and housing assistance to households when no other resources are available. By making it possible for families and individuals to stay safe and secure in their homes, children can stay in school and parents and individuals can keep their jobs. Providing this assistance creates stability in our community.

The program is administered through CommUnity (formerly the Crisis Center) where applicants are interviewed, counseled, and screened to determine eligibility for funds. Referrals to other agencies are made as appropriate, and CommUnity may act as an advocate on behalf of recipients. The process also works to enable recipients to take responsibility for meeting their future needs.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic this year and an increased need for assistance for families and individuals, various resources were made available through grants and other temporary resources. In a band-aid approach, assistance programs were prioritized with the Common Fund the last resort for many families. For example, the moratorium on evictions made it possible for more families to stay in their home without additional assistance. Since that has expired, they are seeing an increase in the need for rent/housing and utility assistance.

In 2020, the Common Fund provided assistance to 123 households, with an average of \$113 per assist. The funds helped 356 individuals stay secure in their home by avoiding eviction or by having their water or electricity turned off. The funds assisted 32 households with rent or rent deposit, 28 households with water bills, and 62 households with energy bills this year. Forty percent (40%) of the individuals that benefitted from Common Fund assistance were 18 years of age or younger.

As examples, the Common Fund was used to:

- assist a woman in getting water turned back on after returning home following several days in a shelter to seek safety from a domestic violence situation;
- keep power on for a family dealing with desperate times and unable to pay bills on time.

When COVID arrived here in March, a call was made for additional donations to the Common Fund and our church answered with a donation \$5,000, over and above our budgeted amount. The generosity of our church and congregation is acknowledged and greatly appreciated. We are making an important contribution to the stability of our community. Our continued support works to help improve lives, strengthen our community, and prevent homelessness.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Kuechenmeister
Church representative

COMMUNITY PASTORAL COUNSELING SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT

The Rev. Bruce Williams has served as counselor for CPCS for 40 years. At the Quarterly Board meeting on November 21, 2019 Rev Williams announced his retirement and submitted his resignation effective May 31, 2020.

The Board had 6 months to find a new counselor. The search involved placing notice of the opening in the various professional organization publications. There were no qualified applicants by the time Covid hit in March 2020. Rev. Williams agreed to continue his service to patients via telephone conferencing until a replacement was found. As of our November 2020 Board meeting we had received several applications only one of which was qualified. That person did not accept the job due to the complications of trying to find time for both a private practice and CPCS. It is the Board's intention to continue the search.

The Board wishes to thank the Congregational United Church of Christ for the many years it has supported the CPCS financially and with the use of the church facilities and staff.

Submitted by,
Bryan Clemons, Board Member of CPCS

CONSULTATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES (CRC)

ANNUAL REPORT

The Consultation of Religious Communities is an interfaith council composed of more than thirty faith communities and related agencies of Johnson County. Clergy and lay representatives from each member body meet on the third Wednesday of each month (except July) to conduct business and learn about issues in our community. John Fuller and Sue Dayton serve as representatives from Congregational UCC. Member organizations take turns hosting the monthly meetings. This year, because of Covid-19, there were no meetings in March, April, or May and the remaining meetings of the year were held on Zoom.

During monthly meetings there is usually a program presentation, which provides information about various groups/agencies and also promotes conversation about how faith communities can get involved in ministry in our community. During 2020, programs were presented by: Rabbi Hugenholtz on Jewish Holy Days, Steve Panther on Bread for the World, Susanne Watson Epting on the Beloved Community Initiative, Mayor Bruce Teague on community issues, and Julia Erickson on CommUnity.

During the business meeting portion of CRC meetings, updates are given on the Common Fund, The Center for Racial Justice, Inside Out, Veterans for Peace, Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity, Johnson County Affordable Housing, Shelter House, and the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC). Information is distributed on events such as the NAMI Walk, the Crop Walk, and MLK activities. The CRC By-laws were updated this year and a vote to approve the changes occurred at the December meeting.

Each fall, the CRC, with the help of many volunteers, organizes and carries out the Outerwear Distribution. Because of the need for social distancing and safety concerns, the event was spread out over several weeks in October and November, and was held at the old Carquest building on South Clinton. Paula Forest from our church was instrumental in providing leadership and volunteering for this project. Gifts for Parents, usually held in December, was cancelled for this year because of the pandemic.

Sue Dayton
John Fuller

JOHNSON COUNTY INTERFAITH COALITION(JCIC)

ANNUAL REPORT

Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC) - 2020 Accomplishments

JCIC is composed of 18 churches and organizations in Johnson County. JCIC commits to work to create justice, especially for persons of color experiencing racial and economic inequality in the county, region and state.

- a. Voter Engagement Video Series. 24 videos (8 topics in 3 languages); 1695 total views. Congregational UCC donated funds for translation and foreign language directors.
- b. \$30,000 Wage Theft Recovery. With the Center for Worker Justice recovered wages for immigrants hired to work on derecho relief.
- c. Iowa Freedom Riders/JCIC Webinar
- d. Hate Crime Ordinance–N. Liberty awaiting approval
- e. Speak up Speak out-Rallies over the summer
- f. Change Assembly. Online assembly of the JCIC community. Cong. UCC leadership included Bill Lovin, Donna Hirst, and Ethel Bloesch.
- g. Solidarity for an Anti-Racist Community-sponsored by Beloved Community. JCIC co-sponsored.
- h. Voter registration and engagement party at the Kingdom Center in January. 176 attendees. Many Cong. UCC volunteers including Donna Hirst, Sally Strang, Megan Carnes, Kyle Flippo, Bill Hoeffler, Jane Murphy, Pam Willard, Lee Wood and others.
- i. Derecho Relief. Arranged for several semi's of frozen food for Cedar Rapids and Johnson county.
- j. Clear Creek Amana School–Support to counter racial discrimination in the schools
- k. Letter to Governor–COVID Response to Meat Packing Plant Employee abuse

In addition to the above JCIC county wide activities, the Congregational UCC JCIC Core Team Hosted a viewing of the film Healing Justice in January, and held two online discussion and update sessions on zoom. Bea Hicks, Sally Strang, Pam Willard, and Donna Hirst are Core Team Leaders.

Respectfully submitted by
Donna Hirst, Cong. UCC delegate to the JCIC Board of Directors

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

ANNUAL REPORT

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

November 2020	Rachel Burchett Diane Duncan-Goldsmith Jim Martin
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DEATHS

March 26, 2020	Judith Doorenbos
March 29, 2020	Delores Fate
October 11, 2020	Frank Snider

We also remember a friend of the congregation:
January 15, 2020 Richard MacMillan

SUMMARY

Membership – December 31, 2019	321
New Members Received	3
Members Removed	3
Membership—December 31, 2020	321

**CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
STAFF MEMBERS 2020**

Minister	The Rev. William Lovin
Director of Children's Programs	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Music Director	Kristen Ramseyer
Organist	William Crouch
Children's Choir Director	Avery Nabholz
Office Manager	Leo Agnew, then Christina Patramanis
Financial Secretary	Sharyn Huriaux Reitz
Stewardship Assistant	Nan Martin
Communication Assistant	Christina Patramanis
Custodians	Douglas Herrera Claudia Landaverde

OUR CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD – 2020

The Church building was closed after March 15, curtailing some volunteer activities and use of the building due to the Covid-19 pandemic

Adult Education

- Social Justice and Area Service Organizations
- Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story (Film)
- Accessible Elections
- Volunteer Fair

Affordable Housing Coalition

Bible Study: Lamentations, Gospel of Mark

Book Groups

Bread for the World Offering of Letters

Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa

Church World Service Virtual Projects

CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank

Community Pastoral Counseling Service

Consultation of Religious Communities Common Fund, Outerwear Distribution

Crop Walk

Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) supplies

Ecumenical Housing Corporation

Free Lunch Program

Heifer Project

Hope Lodge

Johnson County Interfaith Coalition

Knitting Group

Meditation Chapel

NAMI Walk

Pastoral Counseling

Project Holiday Meals

Recitals

Salvation Army Toys for Tots Virtual Collection

Shelter House Book Sale Collection (postponed)

Voter Registration/Meal/Video Project

CONGREGATIONAL UCC FINANCIAL OUTREACH 2020: \$72,577

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST/CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

One Great Hour of Sharing	3035	
Strengthen the Church	630	
Neighbors in Need	1240	
Christmas Fund	720	
Tee College Fund	1135	
CWS Projects	100	
OCWM-Our Church's Wider Mission	10500	
Eastern Iowa Conference	528	17888

CONSULTATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES - CRC

Common Fund	7000	
CRC Support	650	7650

HOUSING, FOOD, SOCIAL SERVICES

Rental Assistance to Immigrant Family	100	
Affordable Housing Coalition	150	
CommUnity (formerly Crisis Center)	7100	
Shelter House	12300	
Free Lunch Program	2025	
Table to Table Food Rescue	3400	
Heifer Project	1995	
Direct Assistance to individuals	1079	
United Action for Youth	1400	
Open Heartland (Childcare)	1000	30549

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE

Community Pastoral Counseling Service - CPCS	715	
Domestic Violence Intervention Program - DVIP	2350	
Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition	150	
Iowa City Free Medical Clinic	550	
AIDS - UN	375	
UNICEF	15	4155

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Eastern Iowa Center for Worker Justice	5750	
First Nations Development	1000	
Council for American Indians	285	
Inside Out Re-entry	1150	
Johnson County Interfaith Coalition	3300	
Iowans for Immigrant Freedom	150	
Eastern Iowa Community Bond Project	700	12335

TOTAL FINANCIAL OUTREACH **72577**