

May 13, 2020

To the members of the Congregational United Church of Christ, Iowa City

During this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the Mission Board and the Church Council have been making donations to local organizations on behalf of the congregation. In March and April, we gave significant gifts to the CommUnity Food Pantry, the CRC Common Fund, Shelter House, Table to Table, and the Free Lunch Program. In May we expanded our list of agencies and gave donations to Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP), Center for Worker Justice, Inside Out, Free Medical Clinic and United Action for Youth. As additional funds become available, we will continue giving on behalf of the congregation, doing research to determine which local agencies are in greatest need.

With this note the Mission Board is inviting church members to donate some or all of their stimulus checks to local agencies which can get this money back in circulation virtually immediately. Many in our congregation will need to keep their stimulus money just to make ends meet through the continuing crisis, but many in our congregation are still receiving their regular income and may actually have fewer expenses than usual.

The Mission Board recommends you consider donations to:

**Center for Worker Justice, From My Home to Yours**

CWJ's goal is to pass along payments of \$400-\$600 per family to local community members in crisis, starting with those who are ineligible for any government assistance. CWJ will distribute donations directly to local families who need them, with oversight from a committee of local leaders. As of April 24, 60 families have received checks for \$200-\$600. 100% of the funds raised through this campaign are going directly to families.

Online donations: <https://cwjiowa.salsalabs.org/FromMyHometoYours/index.html>

Send checks to: CWJ From My Home to Yours; 1556 1st Avenue # C; Iowa City, IA 52240

**CommUnity Food Pantry**

Residents of Johnson County, IA can receive grocery assistance once per week. Pre-made bags of food are available. Food delivery is now available to anyone living in Johnson County who needs food but cannot access other resources due to COVID-19.

Online donations: <https://builtbycommunity.org/donate/>

Send checks to: CommUnity; 1121 Gilbert Court; Iowa City IA 52240-4528

**Consultation for Religious Communities' Common Fund**

The Common Fund supports the Emergency Assistance Program, specifically for housing & utilities. Funds are not given directly in cash; vouchers or checks are directed to the need.

Send checks to: CRC Common Fund; c/o CommUnity; 1121 S. Gilbert Ct.; Iowa City, IA 52240; Memo line=Cong. UCC of IC

### **Crop Walk, Iowa City**

\$7445 has been collected to date; typically \$30,000 is raised annually. Donations are split between the CommUnity foodbank and Church World Service. This is the only organization on this list providing assistance internationally in addition to Johnson County.

Online donations: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/iowacityia/Donate>

### **Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP)**

DVIP has created multiple virtual offices for staff. Clients who seek housing assistance are given funds one time in a fiscal year due to their Federal and State grant stipulations. Providing additional temporary housing funds and keeping their shelter fully functional has put a large strain on their resources, which would have lasted until July 1st. It is likely that some families in estranged situations will not have access to the stimulus checks being deposited in their name.

Online donations: [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/j-Jhk7OrRx9SpY8cckh2Q](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/j-Jhk7OrRx9SpY8cckh2Q)

Send checks to: Domestic Violence Intervention Program; 1105 S. Gilbert Court, Suite 300; Iowa City, IA 52240

### **Inside Out Reentry**

Inside Out Reentry Community is based in Iowa City and serves people returning to Johnson County after incarceration. They are having many more returning citizens right now due to early “outs” because of COVID-19. They need funds for health care packets, simple items like deodorant and toothpaste, etc., more than ever. Also, obviously jobs are in short supply for previously incarcerated persons.

Online donations: <https://www.insideoutreentry.com/donate/>

Send checks to: Inside Out; 500 N. Clinton St.; Iowa City, IA 52245

### **NAMI, Johnson County**

The NAMI walk is virtual this year. As of May 11, \$70,682 of the \$120,000 goal has been raised. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), is the nation’s leading grassroots, self help, education, support and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.

Online donations: [https://namijc.org/donate\\_now/](https://namijc.org/donate_now/)

Send checks to: NAMIJC; 1105 Gilbert Ct., Suite 200; Iowa City, IA 52240

These seven agencies are not an exhaustive list of worthy local agencies serving individuals in Johnson County during the pandemic. These agencies were selected based on significant research undertaken by the Mission Board, but congregational members should make decisions based on their broad experience of service agencies in the area.

The Mission Board considered asking church members to funnel this money through the church (like we typically do with the Alternative Giving bazaar at Christmas). In order to get this stimulus money into the community as soon as possible we are hoping you will make donations

directly to these agencies rather than sending the money to the church. We do consider this to be a whole church activity, and if you are able to send us a few sentences about your experience (signed or anonymous) we will compile these and send them to the congregation.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and compassion,

Congregational United Church of Christ Mission Board

Laurie Stunz

Chuck Dayton

Hope Spragg

Bruce Reynolds

Kyle Flippo

Donna Hirst

Bob Ashman