First Congregational Church of Ithaca
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

October 23, 2026

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you for your ongoing support of First Congregational Church of Ithaca. Your faithfulness is a blessing! Our church's ministries are made possible through the generous sharing of the time, talents, and treasure of so many members of this church family. In the warmest and truest sense, *you* are the church: through your prayers, presence at service, and generosity, the love of Christ becomes visible and life-giving among us and beyond our walls.

The enclosed infographic shows our 2026 ministry and achievement highlights as well as a reflection of where our funding comes from and where it is spent. Also enclosed is the return slip where you may share your financial intention for 2027. This estimate of giving is prayerful statement of your intended support for next year. We create our 2027 budget using a projection that is based on your response. Each year, the Church Council develops and approves a budget to carry out FCCI's mission in the coming year. The Council is now preparing the draft budget, which the congregation will consider for approval early in 2027.

Each of the past few years, our congregation's giving has fallen short of our goal. This gap, together with rising costs, has made it more difficult to sustain our ministries at their current level. Please thoughtfully consider your ability to support worship, pastoral care, outreach, faith formation, and the daily life of our church.

If you are able, we ask that you increase your support by 4%, consistent with the increase in inflation. Indicate this on your return slip and consider a recurring monthly online gift.

Please return your completed return slip on or before Commitment Sunday, November 8, 2026. If you choose online giving, set up or adjust your contribution beginning January 1 so the church can rely on steady support throughout the year. Regular recurring gifts throughout the year help a lot!

Each Sunday, we gather to be renewed by worship, strengthened by prayer, opened by scripture, and drawn into fellowship with God and one another. From that shared worshiping

life, our congregation becomes a spiritual home where lifelong members, newcomers, families, seekers, and friends find grace, care, and belonging.

And from that center, your generosity carries Christ's love outward through faith formation, outreach, compassionate presence, and service—feeding neighbors in body and spirit, offering welcome and care, and standing with the vulnerable so every person is treated with dignity and compassion.

As you prayerfully plan with purpose, and consider your participation in this year's campaign, we invite you to reflect on God's goodness and on the calling we share as followers of Christ. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

As you respond to this call, together we name how God may be leading us to share our blessings for the work of God's church.

Thank you again for your faithful support of our church and for the many ways you help make our common life and ministry possible. If you have questions about the church's budget or the stewardship campaign, please reach out to the church office at (607) 257-6033.

In the spirit of love,

The Rev. Dr. David A. Kaden Melanie Weymer, Stewardship Chair

PS We are deeply grateful for all you've given—and all you continue to give!

2026 FCCI OVERVIEW

EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE TO FCCI IS CAREFULLY, PRAYERFULLY, AND LOVINGLY INVESTED IN MINISTRY.

WORSHIPING

Sunday Services: Scripture Reading
Communion
Memorials, Baptisms & Special Services
Music & Music Licensing
Sanctuary Flowers & Decor
Music Sundays & Guest Performers
Choir, Handbells
Piano & Organ Maintenance
Livestreaming & Equipment
Weekly Bulletin

CONNECTING

Greeters & Welcoming
Coffee and Conversations
Fostering Inclusivity
Maintaining Clear Communication
Monthly Dish to Pass
Highland Highlights
Men's & Wo/men's Groups
Interfaith Dinners
Social Media Outlets
Kendal Communion Services



GROWING

Adult Education
Embracing Hospitality
Children's & Youth Ministry
Book Studies
Progressive Christian Bible Study
Public Community-Based Events
Mentoring New Leadership
Welcoming Visitors
Christie Library Resources
Foote Workshops

SERVING

Pastoral Care to Members
Feed My Starving Children
Food Drives & Blue Cabinets
Social Justice Initiatives
Thanksgiving Baskets & Giving Tree
Clothing & Supply Drives
Hosting Scouts & Red Cross Blood Drives
Prayer Shawls
Sanctuary Ministry
LGBTQIA+ Ally & Safe Space

KEEPING THINGS RUNNING

Buildings & Grounds (Roof Needs, Parking Lot Needs, Lawn Care, Gardens, General Daily Custodial Maintenance), Insurances, Inspections, Contracts & Space Use Management, Audio-visual equipment, Financial Reviews, Copier, Phones, Internet & Wi-Fi, Candles & Candle Oil, Website, Administrative Staff and Custodian.

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Giving Together, Serving Together, Growing Together. Give Today.