



UP Church

Love God. Love Others.

December 2025

*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!*

*Children's Christmas Program
Dec 21st 10am*

*Christmas Eve Service
Dec 24th 7pm*



Church Contacts

P.O. box 32
209 E Main St
Washington, IA
319-653-6588
Upchurch.org

Scan for
Church Website



Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8am-12pm Office open

**The phone is answered during
the following hours:**

Monday-Friday 8-12pm

Monday-Thursday 1-4pm

Donate through



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Staff

Pastor Erin Kaye

pastorerinkaye@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Krystle Moore

upsecretary@gmail.com

Organist

Virginia Bordwell

Virginia@washingontitle.org

Youth Coordinator

April Cuddeback

upwashyouth@gmail.com

Youth Curriculum Coordinator

Cory Canny

upwashyouth@gmail.com



Friends,

During my sabbatical, I met with a colleague who warned me, 'The first six months back are rough, because you have to choose these people all over again!' Another asked, 'Are you going to be one of the people who leaves shortly after your sabbatical?'

As I have completed the first week of being back in the office, I have mused on these interactions. For me, my sabbatical was less about choosing this congregation or a new place to be and more about reminding myself that I am God's beloved child and choosing to care for myself and my relationships. I love this congregation. I love being your pastor. This is the place God has called me to be at this time in my life, and I feel no pull to be elsewhere. I am deeply appreciative of the time I was given to remember who I am, whose I am, and to rest. It was an incredible gift, and I look forward with renewed energy to the future God is planning for us!

As we continue to grow and flourish together, I invite you to remember for yourselves who you are, whose you are, and to look forward with joy to the future God has already prepared!

Blessings,
Pastor Erin



**Potluck and PJs Worship
December 28th
10am**

**Bring a brunch dish to share. We will eat, sing carols,
talk about the wisemen, and work on a mission project.**



Tithes & Offerings

worship through giving



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Please enter in the
memo what it is for.

**OTHER
WAYS TO GIVE**

WEBSITE: upcwash.org

MAIL: UP Church
PO Box 32

Washington, IA 52353



December Highlights

- 1st UP Home Communion
- 3rd Jam Kids
- 10th Finance
- 13th Family Movie Night
- 14th Congregational Meeting
- 15th Blood Drive
- 17th Jam Kids
- 17th Session
- 21st Children's Christmas Program
- 24th Christmas Eve Service
- 25th Christmas
- 28th Brunch Church
- 31st New Year's Eve



Class Structure for 2025-2026

8:45am

- Birth-4yo Preschool: Upstairs in the Nursery
- Kindergarten-5th Grade: Downstairs in Son City
- 6th-8th Grades: Middle School Room
- 9th-12th Grades: Youth Room

Adult Classes Offered:

- Pathfinders: Chapel
- Families of Faith: Lounge
- Coffee Group: Fellowship Hall

Please have receipts for the church turned into the office no later than Dec 23rd

Please have all donations and pledges turned into the office by Dec 29th, so that they can be recorded for 2025

In observance of Christmas the office will be closed December 24 and 25th

Krystle will be on vacation Dec 12, 26, and 29th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Linda Boston | 21 Joe McConnell |
| 2 Nick Shelman | 21 Ali Oliveria-Kurth |
| 5 Emma Alderton | 24 Sue Reed |
| 5 Jim Buitendorp | 26 Erin Thorius |
| 7 Lois Holland | 28 Krystle Moore |
| 9 Katie McWhirter | 28 Alecia Goff |
| 12 Barry Johnson | 28 Delta Schluetter |
| 13 Lisa Buitendorp | 29 Dorothy Koehler |
| 14 Josh Anderson | 30 Lorraine Williams |
| 20 Sarah Robison | 31 Jayse Thorius |

Our website: <http://www.upcwash.org/>

Other ways to connect:

Facebook-Washington United Presbyterian Church

Smart TV- download the Boxcast app and look for UPCWash- you can watch the stream from your TV this way!

Computer- Use the following link: <https://boxcast.tv/channelaozuqohexe93npq2xjr> for our boxcast page. If you do not have the technology to connect in these ways; or you're having problems using the technology you have, and you'd like help, please call the church office at 319-653-6588.

UP CHURCH FAMILY & YOUTH NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025



Sunday School

Sunday School for elementary, middle school, and high school will begin practicing for the Christmas program immediately following Thanksgiving. All of our kids will be involved so please try to have them here each Sunday. And then be prepared to be enchanted and entertained by our wonderfully talented youth and volunteers on Sunday, December 21st when they perform for the congregation during worship.

We are in **need of volunteers to help with Sunday School** following Christmas. If you would be willing to help, please reach out to Cory or April at upwashyouth@gmail.com.

Sundays 8:45 - 9:45 am

JAM Kids

What a great time we have been having in JAM Kids. The kids are settling into the routine we have created and are really enjoying learning about God's superheroes. With about 25 kids registered it takes a large group of dedicated volunteers to keep everyone on track. If you would be willing to be a "back-up" volunteer for when someone has to miss a week, we would appreciate you being on a call list. JAM Kids meets the **1st & 3rd Wednesdays** of each month **3:30 - 5:15 pm**.

Youth Groups

The middle school youth group has been very active lately with bike rides, game nights, service projects, and more. Coming up they are planning a lock-in for December 5th and will travel to Wisconsin Dells for Quake Feb 13-15.

The high school group is also going strong finishing off November with their annual Thanksgiving Soup Supper. Next up is their Christmas dinner

Thank you to both groups for hosting Saturday Kitchen recently.

Bring friends and join in on the fun!





Family Movie Night

Our Christmas Movie Night is coming up Saturday, December 13th at 6:00 pm. We will start the evening with VeggieTales and then show the animated version of The Grinch.

**Popcorn &
Snacks Available**

**WEAR YOUR
JAMMIES!!**



CONTACT INFO

upwashyouth@gmail.com

Cory Canny, Youth Curriculum Coordinator
319.576.8391

April Cuddeback, Youth Coordinator
319.591.0859



Upcoming Events

- Dec 3: JAM Kids (3:30 - 5:15 pm)
- Dec 13: Family Movie Night (6:00 pm)
- Dec 17: JAM Kids (3:30 - 5:15 pm)
- Dec 21: Christmas Program
HS Christmas Dinner
- Jan 7: JAM Kids (3:30 - 5:15 pm)
- Jan 21: JAM Kids (3:30 - 5:15 pm)
Praise Cafe 5:15 - 6:00 pm)
- Jan TBD Chili Cook-Off &
Family Game Night

Son City Update

Cory starts out Sunday School with K-5th singing songs as he plays his guitar. They might also do a game on the white board of Hang-Man.

The kids have been learning about famous Heroes from the Bible. This past month they've studied Samson and Delilah and then Miriam, the sister of baby Moses. They've heard the stories, watched videos, created artwork of Moses in a basket on the Nile, etc. The kids had fun acting out the story of Samson and Delilah, complete with Sampson getting his long hair cut. It ended with strong Samson knocking down the pillars (2 guys wrapped in white sheets) as all the other kids were covered by falling debris. (foam items thrown from behind the stage by adults) God helped Samson destroy the Philistines. Thank you to Jordan joining us from Middle School class to be Samson. The kids during Sunday School all made their own beaded bracelet with their name on it and something special about themselves. (Samson would have chosen the word strength.)

In our Miriam play, the young kids were working as Hebrew slaves for the Pharaoh. He was concerned that too many Hebrew men might fight back. He wanted no more boy Hebrew babies. Moses' mom raised him 3 months, knowing he was special. She then had Miriam take baby Moses to the Nile River and float him down. We had a river on stage, with a wheeled seat pulling the basket as it floated down the river. The Princess and her assistant recovered the basket. The Princess knew he was a Hebrew baby, but wanted to keep him. Miriam offered to locate a woman to feed him. We learned God uses us in many ways and gives us strength. Our memory verses talk about trusting God.

Adult Sunday school classes take turns helping with the Son City program.

Thank you!
Julie Zahs



We Host on the dates listed throughout the year:

Dec 20th

Dec 27th Joint Hosts

Please Help Decorate Our Mitten Tree



We are asking for your help in covering our Christmas tree with mittens, gloves, and hats for the Washington Elementary Schools. The biggest need is for mittens and gloves in sizes appropriate for ages 5 to 11. The tree will be up through December and you are welcome to place items right on the tree. Then the items will be delivered to the schools around Christmas time/first of the new year.



An updated list of what goes into a box of food from HACAP:

Veggies: 4-6 Cans, Examples: Green Beans, Peas, Corn, Carrots, Pasta Sauce, Chili Tomato

Fruit: 3-4 Cans, Examples: Pears, Peaches, Mixed Fruit, Mandarin Oranges, Pineapple

Soup: 2 Cream Soups, Examples: Cream of Celery, Chicken, Mushroom

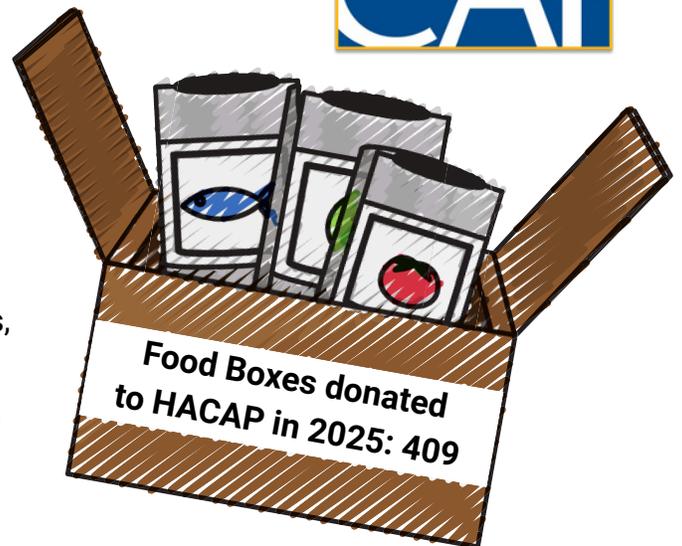
2 examples: Chicken Noodle, Tomato, Beef Stew, Vegetable Soup

Protein: Peanut Butter, 2 Can Meats- Chicken or Tuna

Extra Protein: 1 Can, Examples: Chili Beans, Black Beans, Pinto Beans, Pork N Beans

Starchy Carbs: 2 Items, Examples: Rice, Pasta, Stuffing, Hamburger Helper, Macaroni & Cheese, Egg Noodles

Snacks: 2 Items Examples: Popcorn, Crackers, Granola Bars, Pudding Mix, Cereal Bars



The end of Oct represents 83% of the year. Our income came in at 66%
Our expenses came in at 78%



Articles for the January Newsletter are due Friday, Dec 19th



Blessings We Received:

We're blessed Krista Gaal and Lebowski's shared their huge carpet cleaning machine for us to clean our church carpets. Thanks, Krista and Lebowski's.

We're blessed to have Brad Alderton coordinate having our sweet acolytes participate in worship each Sunday.

We're blessed Brenda Miles and Cyndy McCall are willing to give of their precious time to coordinate with the Carver Hawkeye Arena staff so we have the opportunity to work concession stand events. Due to this opportunity we're able to donate our time making money to help others in need "at home" or on Mission Trips.

Blessings We Gave:

The Families of Faith Sunday School class blessed many when they packed 40 HACAP boxes one Sunday morning. Our boxes are so very much appreciated by RenElla Crawford, HACAP Director, and all those who need HACAP food.

What a blessing our Saturday Kitchen is to the Washington area community. We average about eighty meals served each Saturday noon and probably 30 take-out meals given away. The meal and the opportunity for socialization is a gift to our guests each week.

Our Reach Out and Touch posters are a real blessing to those who are in need of feeling our love and caring. We're SO grateful to Jane Cuddeback who lovingly creates a way for us to put our names on this personal and tangible item that says, God Loves You and So Do We!



Welcome Team Newcomer Gatherings

Our Welcome Team scheduled two opportunities for "newcomers" to get together and learn a bit more about who we are. During Sunday School on November 16th and 23rd, people gathered in our lounge, casually visited and had refreshments.

Additionally, we had church family members come and very briefly share about our local church history and that of our Presbyterian denomination - thanks to Erik Buchholz and Jim Cuddeback. Then Teresa Anderson told about her experience on an adult Mission Trip and other caring, church mission projects. Cory Canny added information about what our kids and youth are "doing" as they learn how to Love God and Love others and all the church family support he and they receive. Christy Buchholz wrapped things up in this fun time of learning and visiting with our newcomers.

Welcome Team Members were grateful for this opportunity to help others learn about our church family and why together we work to show our Love for God and for Others in so many ways.



Session Minutes November 19, 2025

Session members present: Roger Miles, Carrie Septer, Rick Bordwell, Nick Shelman, Cyrus Andrews, April Cuddeback, Christy Buchholz, Tork Whisler, Tracy Strabala, Julie Johnson (Clerk)

Staff and others present: Pastor Erin Kaye, Moderator, New Session members Jack Strabala and Leland Saforek.

Pastor Erin opened the meeting.

December Devotions – Nick Shelman.

Action Items:

Moved and approved the Session meeting minutes dated October 15, 2025.

Moved and approved the Finance Reports to be filed for full financial review.

Moved and approved February 1, 2025 for Congregational Meeting.

Moved and approved Cyndy McCall as Treasurer and Julie Johnson as Clerk for 2026.

Moved and approved Pastor's housing allowance until changed further by session in the amount of \$30,000.

Moved and approved office closures for 2026: April 6th Monday following Easter, May 25th Memorial Day, July 3rd Independence Day, Sept 7th Labor Day, Nov 26th and 27th Thanksgiving, Dec 24th and 25th, Christmas, January 1st 2027 New Year's Day.

Moved and approved 2026 communion dates: Jan 4th, Feb 1st, Apr 2nd (Maundy Thurs), Apr 5th (Easter Sunday), May 3rd, June 7th, July 5th, Aug 2nd, Sept 6th, Oct 4th, Nov 1st, Dec 24th (Christmas Eve).

Moved and approved to remove Barb and Steve Liebe to the inactive rolls of the church per their request.

Moved and approved for Carrie Septer to contact First Baptist to explore opportunities in renting their van and reporting back at the next session meeting.

Moved and approved for Roger Miles to talk with Kalona Van Rental and report back at the December meeting regarding renting/buying a van.

Moved and approved to have a congregational meeting on December 14, 2025 to elect Elders, Leland Saforek and Jack Strabala, Deacons, Karla Maxwell, Megan Craig and Kevin Caldwell and Nominating Committee Members Jane Cuddeback and Megan Craig.

Discussion Items:

Discussed Saturday Kitchen/Funerals

Devotion assignments for 2026: January, Roger Miles, February, Katie Lujan, March, Leland Saforek, April, Jack Strabala, May, Tork Whisler, June, Tanya Stalder, July, Christy Buchholz, August, Tracy Strabala, September, April Cuddeback, October, Cyrus Andrew, November, Rick Bordwell, December Nick Shelman. Kevin Caldwell reviewed the church liability insurance and believes it to be enough coverage. (Insurance coverage attached)

Discussed Camp Bear Creek pledge of \$50,000 due in 2027.



Communications & Report of Clerk:

Sacrament Report for November 2, 2025:

10am service,

United Presbyterian Home, 104

Sacrament Report for November 3, 2025:

United Presbyterian Home, 15

Other Business & Concerns – Report of Session Areas:

Report of the Pastor (Rev. Erin) - I'm back, glad to be back. Vice Moderator for Presbytery now.

Report of the CE Team (Christy & April) – Running smoothly- JAM KIDS and Sunday School. Will be a lock in for the middle school. Several middle schoolers signed up for QUAKE. Soup Supper, Christmas Movie on December 13, and Christmas Program.

Report of the Worship Committee (Carrie & Tracy) Will be talking during Minute for Ministry to get the nursery coverage covered. Sunday after Christmas – Having a potluck breakfast and maybe working on a small mission gift bag.

Report of Mission (Roger, Cyrus & Tanya) HACAP packing transition seems to be moving forward. Will try to meet in December.

Report of Deacons – Deacons met on Monday. (Report attached)

Report of Property (Nick) - Replaced 10 outside lights, all under warranty. Front door lock has been fixed.

Getting bids on the roof and recommendations will be coming. What is the plan with the church van?

Report of Nominating Committee (Julie & Tracy) – Complete. Election will be on Dec. 14th.

Financial Reports (Rick & Tork) - The end of October represents 83% of the year. Our overall income is at 66% of budgeted and our overall expenses are at 78%.

Report of Personnel Committee (Katie & Nick) – Met on November 3rd. Presented Youth Coordinator and Youth Curriculum Coordinator position descriptions, contracts need to be written. Will meet again in the next few weeks to discuss staff salary increases.

Dates to remember:

Nov 26th H.S. Soup Supper

Nov 27 and 28th Office closed for Thanksgiving

Nov 30th first day of Advent

Dec 3rd Jam Kids

Dec 15th Blood Drive

Dec 17th Jam Kids

Dec 17th Session

Dec 21st Youth Christmas Program

Dec 24th Christmas Eve

Dec 24 and 25th office closed for Christmas

Julie Johnson, Clerk of Session