



### Table of Contents

<a href="#">Hear the Voices</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Helping Hands Ministry</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">CompuPlace</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Margaret Bock Housing</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Note from a Volunteer</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Other Agencies at ECCF</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Ways to Give</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">ECCF Board of Directors</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">Contributors</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Wish Lists</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">You Can Help!</a>	<a href="#">8</a>

## The Ecumenical Community Center Foundation (ECCF)

Sharing Ministries of Humanitarian Care and Service



### Hear the Voices – Believe & Share

*Listen to the stories told by the people we serve:*

Think of the relief you would feel if you received some help that prevented your water from being shut off. Zoe breathes a heavy sigh as her burden is lightened by generous donors.

Imagine how hard it can be to ask for a roll of toilet paper. Anna doesn't have to imagine, and offers a quiet "Thanks."

Do you remember when someone believed in your ability to learn something? George smiles at his computer screen. He has not been able to speak easily all his life and communicates by typing.

Alice pays her bills but it's hard. She is one of ECCF's \$5 and \$10 donors. She has also received help from ECCF's Helping Hands Ministry and paid it back. "I give what I can. I wish I could do more."

Every person has rights to food, shelter, clothing, and dignity. Each of us has the right to pursue basic lifelong learning.

Share your blessings and belief this Holiday Season. Your gifts help people in Linn County with very low incomes. You can help preserve their homes, their dignity, and their hope. These neighbors are grateful for your help.

Your gifts encourage people to persevere past domestic abuse, medical issues, car troubles, and transitions after losing jobs. Join Alice! George, Zoe, Anna, Alice, and I THANK YOU.

Robin Switzer Brunner, ECCF's Chief Operating Officer

Consider a **monthly, tax deductible donation to the ECCF**. Make checks payable to the ECCF or give via PayPal at [www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net), [Donations](#)

**See How Margaret Bock Housing Reduces Homelessness - Page 4!**

**See Fair Trade Gifts for Sale at the SERRV Store - Page 5!**

601 Second Avenue SE #2  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401  
Phone: 319-366-2651



Email: [helpinghands@ecc-cr.net](mailto:helpinghands@ecc-cr.net) Jessica Stamper, HHM Program Manager

Neighbors in need told these *stories and over a hundred more on one single day*:

I moved here to help a relative who lost her legs in a terrible accident. A social worker is helping too, but we need more help. Rent and a deposit at the same time is so hard. I'm looking for a job and my apartment won't be ready for a couple of weeks. I need some bus tickets too. Can you help?

I finally got custody of my kids. I've had lots of extra expenses getting them out of a bad situation. Can you help with rent or utilities to get us through?

I had a good job. Really good. But then I was off work after a surgery for a few weeks. I haven't quite been able to pay all the bills. I just got a three-day eviction notice. Can you help me?

We moved here a few months ago. We have three kids. My husband is a veteran with PTSD. I heard you might be able to help us with the light bill.

Can you help me get my birth certificate so I can get my ID and sign up for energy and food assistance?

We just got to town and we don't have a place to stay or a safe place to park. We left our old place for our kids' safety. Where is there a meal, and other kinds of help? Where do we go?

My kids and I have all been sick with walking pneumonia. I've missed a lot of work, and my paychecks have been really short. Is there any way you could help some with rent?

My wife had a stroke. She is recovering, but I have to help her a lot. Can you help with utilities?

We were homeless until a few months ago. We both got jobs and an apartment. My husband just lost that job but is looking for another one. We're so afraid of being homeless again. Can you help with rent?

Can you help with gas for my car? I've been driving to the Iowa City hospital a lot for my mom. She doesn't have anybody else.



I finally was able to leave with my kids and got out of a dangerous home situation. I have a job and can pay rent but need help with my deposit. Is there anything you can do?

I heard I can get laundry soap here. Do you have any gloves? Oh – some lotion! Great!

*I don't know what we would have done without your help. Thank you so much.*

601 Second Avenue SE #3  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401  
Phone: 319-362-4284



Email: [admin@ecc-cr.net](mailto:admin@ecc-cr.net) Robin Switzer Brunner, ECCF Chief Operating Officer & CompuPlace Director

***You'll hear this when you believe in people & encourage them to believe in their own abilities:***

My son does not talk easily, but has learned to type some of the things most important to him here. He is much calmer, and more able to tell us what he's excited or worried about and what he wants to do.

I heard that you can go to the Louvre on the Internet. Can we do that here?

I need some help looking for a job. I found some open positions on my phone, but it's hard to apply using the phone. It's so small. I don't have a computer at home. Please help.

My friends know some other languages. I want to learn Spanish!

I want to find out about white tea, and I need some healthy recipes.

I have to get better at typing, or they won't hire me.

This is hard! Wouldn't my old math teacher be proud of me?

I like to play computer games just like everyone else. Cool! Puzzles!

I want to get a tablet. Can I bring it here to learn new things a little at a time?

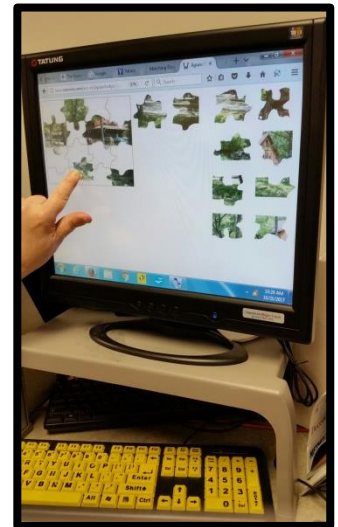
I want to use a picture out of an email to make a special greeting card.

What's a trackball? My daughter has trouble using a regular mouse. Would it help? Can we try it?

I click a lot. My family doesn't want me on their computers until I get better at it. Can you help?

How do I take care of my new computer? My old one got a virus. I don't want it to happen to this one.

***I don't know how I could have learned all this without your help. Thank you very much.***



Don't forget how important a High 5 can be to someone!

You got it! Nicely done! That was great!

A quick cheer for competence may be happily seared into someone's memory forever. Share encouragement at every turn. A kind word, a smile, a nod, are all easily given, and they will come back to greet you!

## These Voices are from MBH - A Home on Third

1021 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

Rooms here stay pretty full. I have lived here a long time. I can afford it, and it's what I need. Some people don't stay long, and they move on.



I'm living here while I get back on my feet. I'm happy I've got a nice room for \$300 with utilities.

I was homeless for a while, and I'm so glad to have a place. I paid my deposit and can make the rent.

They got new flooring in here. The bathrooms are tiled and the rooms have nice vinyl planks.

Board members are having a dinner for us December 10<sup>th</sup> at 4PM at MBH. Come eat good food with us!

I'm glad there are a few rooms for women. I would not have any other place to stay right now.

### *And a voice of innovation and vigorous sharing:*

I've lived at MBH for a while. I've been working on an idea I've had for a project called Hope Builders that will help people on the southwest side and all along the corridor. We find creative ways to address people's needs. We focus on food distribution and access for people in the Westdale area. Hope Builders also offers a bicycle mentoring program where youth learn how to build their own bicycle and learn important life skills. I want to give back and help people to do better. Take a look at this project at <https://www.newdisciples.org/hope-builders/>

*If you can donate single beds, bedding, pillows, small tables, or cabinets for hanging clothing, or if you can help provide a Home on Third by sharing a financial gift, contact ECCF staff or Jim Federer, MBH President, [Jchfed@aol.com](mailto:Jchfed@aol.com) 319-362-6936*

## ECCF's Volunteer News

I retired and wanted to give back to my community. Helping Hands Ministry and CompuPlace were on my short list of places I wanted to help. I have 35 years of experience helping people and wanted to continue to do that. While I'm helping people, I get to see what differences are made in people's lives. I can hear the relief in their voices and see the pain lessen in their eyes. It's hard to see the suffering that people are going through. Sometimes the details about why people need help are hard to hear, and I have to take a break. I don't bring much money when I come because I always want to help people more than I could afford to help. So many people need so much. Continue to be grateful for what you have. Life can change so quickly. *Gail D., ECCF Volunteer*

- AARP Local Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Access 2 Independence Independent Living Center
- Catherine McAuley Center Storage
- Cedar Rapids Aquatics Association Booster Club and Storage
- Green Square Meals with weekday supper at 4:30
- Green Square Meals' Food Pantry
- HarvestLife Christian Fellowship
- Inter-Religious Council of Linn County meets & receives mail here
- NAACP Local Chapter #4013
- Narcotics Anonymous Groups :
  - Face Anything, Fear Nothing Group
  - Freedom & Serenity Area Group Leaders
  - Pioneer Group
- Four Oaks Affordable Housing Network's PUSH-CR Storage
- SERRV Store – SEE BELOW! Contact us to host a sale of Fair Trade items
- St. Paul's United Methodist Church Storage
- Willis Dady Shelter Storage

**Join Us! We Have Office & Storage Space for Rent:**

**Contact Scott Olson, Skogman Commercial Realty, 319-247-5000**



**Shop for beautiful, handmade, Fair Trade gifts** in the SERRV store, located at ECCF. Find book ends, jewelry, scarves, purses, coin purses, puzzle boxes, nativity sets, onyx sculptures, teapots, chocolate bars, baskets, games, musical instruments, and many other items. Through your purchase artisans and farmers in more than 25 countries are lifted out of poverty. They are given a voice and treated with respect. They earn a fair

income, send their children to school, learn new skills, and develop vital community projects like water wells and medical clinics. Learn more at [www.SERRV.org](http://www.SERRV.org). The store is open on Wednesdays, 11:30-1:30, or by appointment. Come visit, or call Karen at 396-4798.

**ECCF Endowment Fund**

The ECCF's Endowment Fund is administered by the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. This endowment fund was established with a gift from Scott and Penny Olson, and provides a vehicle for gifts that ensure the long-term future and success of ECCF. If you are interested in helping beneficiaries of ECCF services in this way, please contact us, or the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

With the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015, the QCD rules have finally been made permanent and make it easier to engage in proactive charitable giving strategies that help to minimize the tax bite and meet IRA's Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) obligations.

Donors must be over 70 ½ on the date of the distribution and the maximum dollar amount of a QCD is limited to \$100,000.00 per year. The distribution must be from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and must go to a public charity (excluding public foundations and donor-advised funds).

The primary benefits of doing a QCD directly from your IRA to a 501(c)(3) charitable organization are that the distribution is not counted as taxable income and that it does meet your annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). Notably, there is no charitable deduction for making the QCD contribution to the charity. To use this giving strategy to support neighbors in need who come to the ECCF for assistance, it is important that the IRA distribution be made directly from your IRA and made directly payable to the ***Ecumenical Community Center Foundation***. Please consult your tax advisor or attorney for legal and tax advice.

**[Or Donate Using Our PayPal Button](#)**

**[You Can Also Join Us](#)**

**[Helping our Neighbors in Need](#)**

**[by Volunteering at the ECCF!](#)**

**ECCF Board of Directors**

**Peter Riley, President, At-Large**

**David Jiruska, Vice-President, Westminster Presbyterian**

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**Jim Kennedy, Secretary, First Lutheran**

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**J.D Combellick, People's Unitarian Universalist**

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**Maryann Stewart, Lovely Lane United Methodist**

**Beverlee Valant, Immaculate Conception Catholic**

**Marcia Whiteford, First Congregational / UCC**

**Vacancy: First Presbyterian**

**Vacancy: Moundview Neighborhood Association**

**Meets: 4th Thursdays @ 7:00 P.M. in the Ecumenical Community Center Foundation's Scott & Penny Olson Community Room**

***With Gratitude to Each Director for Your Active Concern and for Your Generosity of Time, Talent, and Treasure.***

# Thank You For Your 2016 & 2017 ECCF Contributions!

7

ALLIANT ENERGY FOUNDATION	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST	LIVING WATER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH	ST. JOHN XXIII CATHOLIC CHURCH
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## Helping Hands Ministry Wish List

- Laundry soap & a few laundromat quarters
- Funds for local bus tickets & auto gas
- Gift cards (special dietary & other basic needs)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toilet paper, soap, deodorant
- Disposable razors, toothbrushes & toothpaste
- Shampoo, conditioner & lotion
- Postage stamps
- Colored 8 1/2 x 11 copier paper
- **Adopt a Family** or offer encouragement with one-time financial gifts, monthly pledges and **High 5** donations (with a 5 in the amount)!

## CompuPlace Wish List

- Colored A-2 (invitation sized) envelopes
- Photos and sounds of animals, vehicles and more—help us develop learning games!
- Internet hubs (4 or more ports)
- Volunteers to help teach clients, or for projects making learning games for specific clients
- Volunteers to help run basic anti-malware and other simple maintenance software
- Funds for specialized adult learning software
- **Adopt a Learner** or offer encouragement with one-time financial gifts, monthly pledges, and **High 5** donations (with a 5 in the amount)!

Printing of this ECCF newsletter, The Echo, is graciously provided by First Lutheran Church of Cedar Rapids.

Send articles, inquiries & suggestions to Robin Switzer Brunner, ECCF's Chief Operating Officer & ECHO Editor.

To receive a link to our newsletter via email, send a request to Robin at [admin@ecc-cr.net](mailto:admin@ecc-cr.net)



**Ecumenical Community Center Foundation (ECCF) Sharing Ministries of Humanitarian Care & Service**  
601 2nd Ave SE #1, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

See our privacy policy at <http://ecc-cr.net/ECCFPrivacyPolicy.html>

Questions? – Contact us! [admin@ecc-cr.net](mailto:admin@ecc-cr.net), 319-362-4284 or [helpinghands@ecc-cr.net](mailto:helpinghands@ecc-cr.net), 319-366-2651

Donate online at [www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net) (Donate via PayPal) OR:

***EVERY DOLLAR HELPS!***

\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check\* in the amount of: \_\_\_ \$500.00; \_\_\_ \$250.00; \_\_\_ \$100.00; \$\_\_\_\_\_ (other)

***\*PLEASE: Checks payable to Ecumenical Community Center Foundation***

\_\_\_ Give to the ECCF Endowment Fund at Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

\_\_\_ I cannot give today, but would like to pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ once; or \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month, or volunteer:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please include any company matching gift forms where applicable.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT. We DO NOT sell or exchange donor information.**