

Sharing the Lord's Word.



Ripley United Church of Christ



9am Sunday Service

In person and on line via Face Book Live .
Bridge Minister Jim Coppoc leading worship.

The Covenant and the Sacrament

As I type these words, I am also preparing a sermon around the Baptism of Jesus. In this story, although he is the actual Messiah, Christ Jesus requests the sacrament of baptism by his cousin, John. John points out that this seems sort of backward. Jesus answers, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness."

Baptism is the great equalizer. In the United Church of Christ, Baptism is one of only two sacraments, and it represents the forming of a covenant, or set of promises. In an infant baptism, the candidate's parents promise to raise them in the church, the church promises to spiritually support the candidate, and we pray and read scripture to invoke God's promise to be present in all of it.

Although I was baptized in a different church, I have never felt more held and supported by covenantal bonds than here, at Ripley United Church of Christ. Just in the past year, you have walked with me through marriage, a major surgery, the deaths of both of my parents, and the deployment of my oldest son to a war zone. You have shown grace when I needed it, and held me accountable when I needed that too. I cannot imagine a better church home as member or as pastor, and I truly hope that everyone who walks through our doors comes to feel the same way.

If we at Ripley can be better covenantal partners for you—baptized or not—please reach out. If we can pray for you, tell us what to pray for. If we can help connect you to resources, let us know your needs. And as always, if you find yourself in need of beloved community, we are here.

As we at Ripley are so fond of saying, "no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

NORTH TAMA TELEGRAPH

Pastor's Column

Bridge Minister Jim Coppoc is the featured columnist.

December 2025 Column: Are we all going to Hell?

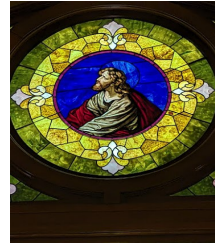
<https://www.northtamatelegraph.com/opinion/local-columns/2025/12/19/pastors-column-are-we-all-going-to-hell/>

Bridge Minister Jim Coppoc is available to our community at:

515-708-4343 (text is best)

jimatripley@gmail.com

[Facebook.com/jim.at.ripley](https://www.facebook.com/jim.at.ripley)



Ripley United Church of Christ
400 South Main Street
Traer, IA 50675

January / February 2026 Vol 14

Ripley In the Know

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From your Board Chairs.....

Christmas services were brought to us with Joyful noise of brass instruments and the ringing sound of the organ pipes! We rang in the new year with our neighbors from across the street, the Methodists, which takes us right into our theme for 2026, "Who is our Neighbor." Making more connections with the under served and inviting them in with open arms.

Board of Deacons Chair—Christy Flamme

The Trustees have delighted in the new paint in the basement done graciously by one of our members. We had to find new snow removal for the sidewalks this year. To help further develop the faith of our littles, the need a for kids Christian Education curriculum was brought to our attention and one had been selected to try out. We have been reviewing next years budget for the annual meeting.

Board of Trustees Chair—Josie Hulme

Your bi-monthly newsletter is brought to you by The Board of Deacons.

Keeping Ripley's congregation "In The Know"!

Available in paper or digital form.

Follow Ripley UCC on Facebook! #ripleyucctraer

Feel free to reach out with "news" via the link below or to Annette at annetteatripley@gmail.com or text : 574-298-7949

<https://forms.gle/NsUDiMUXK8NafCyG8Ripley> Newsletter - Share with us

Ripley UCC Missions...

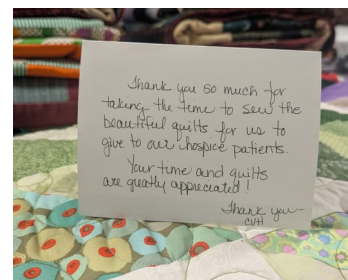
Over the past couple of months, Ripley's members has been busy living out our call to serve others. It was decided to donate the proceeds earned from volunteering at the Tama County Fair this summer to support the Traer Theater, helping sustain a valued community gathering place.



Our Giving Tree was displayed before Thanksgiving, inviting parishioners to participate in CHAT's Adopt-A-Family program. Ripley was excited to help provide extra special surprises in each family's box this year. In addition, we were glad to adopt four children in foster care so they could receive Christmas gifts and experience the joy of the season.

Meanwhile, our Quilt Ladies have continued their faithful work, donating handmade quilts to multiple organizations and individuals in need.

Looking ahead, the Mission Committee has begun discussions and planning for 2026, guided by the theme **"Who Are Our Neighbors?"** as we continue to seek meaningful ways to serve our wider community.



LOOKING AHEAD



Special Event:

**In honor of National Quilt Day
Ripley Stitchers will host a Quilt Show
Saturday March 21st
10am—4pm**

Meetings:

- Board of Deacons: Monday Feb. 9th @ 6:00 pm South Office
- Board of Trustees: Tuesday Feb. 10th @ 5:30 pm South Office
- Mission Committee: TBD
- Annual Church Meeting: Sunday Feb 8th after service
Weather Make Up: Feb. 15th, 2026 after worship
Annual Reports are due to the Trustees by Jan. 18th

Church/Community/Missions Involvement:

- Gather to stitch Thursdays starting @ 9:00 am Fellowship Hall
- Soul Stitching 2nd Saturday Feb 14th @ 9:00 am Fellowship Hall
- Soul Stitching 2nd Saturday Mar 14th @ 9:00 am Fellowship Hall
- Ripley Stitchers host National Quilt Day Quilt Show Sat Mar. 21st
- Noisy Offering - Jan. 25th: Project to be Announced

Your Help is Wanted:

- Sign up in the Fellowship Hall to provide Fellowship or Be a Scripture Reader
- Sign up in the Fellowship Hall to assist with music

Keep up on What's Happening via the website!

<https://ripleyucc.org/>

Did you know?

*On line giving is available through Tithly.com? It's easy!
One time or designated times - direct your donations to the area of your Choice—see the drop down options.
We thank you for your continued support of Ripley UCC!*

Let's Celebrate!

January Birthdays

- 4th—Arlene Schmidt
- 7th—Bill Calderwood
- 8th—Cody Jones
- 11th—Annette Knoop
- 16th—Heather White
- 23rd—Joan Reuman



February Birthdays

- 2nd—Lindsey Coppoc
- 6th—Christy Flamme
- 8th—Bob Steffeny
- 9th—David Calderwood
- 14th—Charles Dinsdale
- 18th—Danny Bagenstos
- 25th—Carston Calderwood

Please update those special occasions with Annette : annetteatripley@gmail.com or text 574-298-7949



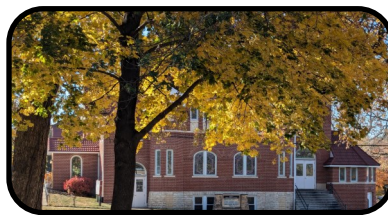
Smiles all around!
Jhonny Watson,
Laura Henrichs—
So many choices!

Josie and Kayce
Hulme smile for the camera!



Right around Ripley

Fall Gathering 2025



Fellowship over Newsletter Trivia
game and good food brings Fall to
Ripley!



Jane Knoop dishes out Pastor Jim's favorite!

The choices! Smiles
and smiles as Ruth &
Bill Calderwood enter the
Potluck Zone!



Our Angles adorn, our
tree is decorated, we are ready for Advent!

Advent 2025 begins..with decorating the sanctuary...Thank you to all of our helpers!

Kayce is making
suggestions to G-pa.



Paul Henrichs detangles, Patty Calderwood gives direction, Fionn Coppoc fluffs
and Pastor Jim makes sure it is all looking good!

Luka supervises
from the balcony. A
wave of approval!



Carston Calderwood gets the
next level ready for Dalton
Hulme to reach new heights!



The Ripley Christmas Tea

So many decisions for Luka! And Lindsey too!



Pastor Jim is getting the
event started!

Carissa & Patty
Calderwood serve
punch and coffee.



Have you impacted someone's life? Shared your talents with others? Thankful for what others have done?
Whatever the occasion may be—we want to hear your stories!
Please share via the link below, through a Deacon or by emailing Annette at annetteatripley@gmail.com

<https://forms.gle/NsUDiMUXK8NafCyG8Ripley> Newsletter - Share with us



So many angels in our lives...2025 Advent decorations contained the story of your angels. Thank you for bringing your angels into the sanctuary at Ripley! Thank you to Lesia Ubben for the artwork on the notecards used to share your Angel's story.

"...with it's flowing hair and round face and hands clasped in prayer, will always remind me of her."

"As a young child I remember a framed print my Aunt Frances ...the figurine is of that print..."

"This angel holds special meaning ...our hymnal still had purpose...keeping Ripley close."

"This angel was on our tree every year...she had made it around 1987...she could make such beauty ...from a piece of string."

Those who loaned angels:

Jim & Lindsey Coppoc, Ruth Calderwood, Annette Knoop, Denis Winkelpleck Sr., Kathy Sivertson, Joan Reuman and Becky Gaston.



Christmas Eve Candle Light Service at Ripley

Our Purpose:

"to serve God by serving others."



Children's Celebration



2025

Thank you to those who celebrate the spirit of the season by sharing a poinsettia and pine in memory of their loved ones



Luke 2:21 - Jesus is Named
"Go Tell It On A Mountain" (#258)

A special note of gratitude for all who provided pictures :

Becky Gaston, Patty Calderwood, Annette Knoop, Jim Coppoc, Alex Bagenstos & Artist Lesia Ubben

Remembering When....

The Stories of Those Who Stitch
At Ripley United Church of Christ.

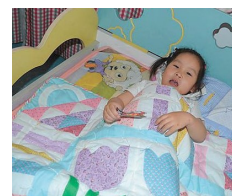


Thanks to the dedication and compassion of the Ripley United Church of Christ quilt ladies, more than 110 orphans now have a warm quilt of their own. The handmade quilts were recently delivered to two specific Chinese orphanages by Charlie, Michelle, Rachel, Victoria and Dale Eastman as part of their summer vacation trip. Michelle is daughter of Hugh & Ruth Calderwood and grew up at Ripley UCC. She and her husband



were married at the hometown church in 1987 and the whole family enjoys worship there when visiting.

"It was an honor to present these beautiful quilts to the children," Michelle said. "I know the ladies put a lot of love into each and every stitch."



As printed in the NT Telegraph on August 8th of 2012

<https://www.northtamatelegraph.com/news/local-news/2012/08/09/quilts-find-their-way-to-children-in-china/>

Ripley UCC quilters mark National Quilting Day with new 'Soul Stitching' group

Quilts to be displayed during Traer's upcoming Birthday Bash

Article published March 23rd, 2023 in the NT Telegraph

Can you believe it has been three years since "Soul Stitching" was started?

On the 2nd Saturday of every month, those who stitch at Ripley gather when the doors open at 9am to the Fellowship Hall. A potluck lunch and fellowship over a quilt is enjoyed.

You know it is a small world when you stitch and find out the person beside you was a part of your child's youth in FFA. When you can hold a newborn so that your friend can tie and be a part of the Mission. When your friends over 400 miles away are aware of the Mission in little Traer IA.

All because of those who stitch at Ripley. On Thursdays—at Soul Stitching. With the financial support of Ripley Missions Committee and donations from the surrounding community, those who stitch have made over 300 quilts, burp cloths, wheelchair caddies and dog beds in 2025.

Because of those who stitch, donations of these items have been given to Tama Co Storks Nest, Sleep in Heavenly Peace in IA & IN. Cedar Valley Hospice, AFIL, Marshalltown Veterans Home, Mercy One NICU, Traer CHAT/food pantry, Angel Tree Families, Salvation Army, Tama County Veterans and area individuals.

Sharing God's Given Talent



Over a decade of stitching.... And the Ripley Stitchers are going to Celebrate in 2026!

Over a decade of stitching small pieces of fabric into quilts that warm the hearts of those in need and they want to share their mission with the community! The Ripley Stitchers are planning a **QUILT SHOW AT RIPLEY UCC! SAVE THE DATE! Saturday March 21st.**

In honor of National Quilting Day on March 21st they are working on a special community event and have invited the Traer Historical Museum and the Traer Library to join them in recognizing the quilting history in Traer, Past-Present and Future. Won't you join us?



[About Us](#) [Our Beliefs](#) [Our History](#) [What's Happening](#) [Gallery](#) [Contact Us](#)

319-478-2482
Sunday Service 9am

Ripley UCC is in the NT Telegraph, find it on our website under "Publications".

Publications

<https://ripleyucc.org/publications/>

What Talent has God given you? Share with Annette by email at annetteatripley@gmail.com



The Story of The Nativity, Part One

Luke 1:26-38 - The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Hymn: "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" (#244)

Luke 1:39-45 - Mary Visits Elizabeth

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (#250, v.1,4)

Luke 1:46-55 - Mary's Song of Praise

Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (#245)

Luke 2:1-7 - The Birth of Jesus



It is always a blessing to hear music in the sanctuary because of such talented musicians!

Laura Henrichs, Fionn Coppoc, Carissa, Landon & Carston Calderwood and our very own Bridge Minister Jim Coppoc.

Thank you all!



The Story of The Nativity, Part Two

Hymn: "Joy to the World" (#270, vv. 1, 2 & 4)

Luke 2:8-14 - The Shepherds and the Angels

Hymn: "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" (#277)

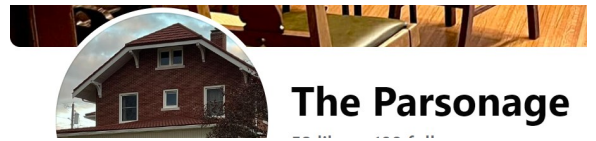
Luke 2:15-20 - The Shepherds and the Angels (cont.)

Children's Celebration:

Luke 2:21 - Jesus is Named

"Go Tell It On A Mountain" (#258)

Prayers
for all...



<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560369864076>

Welcome to the Parsonage, a 1903 Craftsman/Folk Victorian home that serves as both part-time home to Ripley's Bridge Pastor and a venue for serving the Traer Community.



Robert Yeltman finishes the 2025 The Parsonage Series !

Thank you to all who have supported The Parsonage Open Mic Series this year. Another great bunch of local talent entertains the Traer Community. Thank you to hosts Jim and Lindsey Coppoc for bringing such a great family event to Traer!

Prayer requests can be submitted on line at <https://tinyurl.com/3n324nvk> in person to Bridge Pastor Jim Coppoc or to a Deacon or by utilizing the following QR code.

