



Walton First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Updates October 1, 2026

Celebrations

October

Birthdays

7th: Marc Evans
7th: Ginny O'Dell
10th: Charlotte Kelly
11th: Janet Brienza
17th: Donna Truman

Anniversaries

4th: Chaz & April Epps

Remembrances

October

Heavenly Birthdays

12th: Lynn Parkinson

Day of Resurrection

1st: Leroy Sawyer
26th: John Meredith

On the Calendar

Sunday, October 4: Sanctuary Worship and **Communion** 10:15 am; Sunday School; Coffee Hour, hosted by Diane Meredith

Tuesday/Thursday, October 6 & 8: Chair Yoga 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Saturday, October 10: Walton Fall Market 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Sunday, October 11: Sanctuary Worship 10:15 am; **No** Sunday School

Tuesday/Thursday, October 13 & 15: Chair Yoga 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Thursday, October 15: Ministry Committee Meeting 3:30 pm

Friday, October 16: Operations Committee Meeting 4:30 pm

Sunday, October 18: Sanctuary Worship 10:15 am; Sunday School; Prudential Board Meeting

Tuesday/Thursday, October 20 & 22: Chair Yoga 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Sunday, October 25: Sanctuary Worship 10:15 am; Sunday School

Tuesday/Thursday, October 27 & 29: Chair Yoga 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Elijah's Closet

Fridays and Saturdays 10:00 am-2:00 pm

Board Updates

To honor loved ones that are no longer with us, we would like to add birthdate/memorial dates to our newsletter. If you would like to have a loved one included, please submit their names and dates to April.



CarePortal

We have responded to two more CarePortal requests!

Member Updates

Please place your non-perishable food and toiletry donations in the wagon located at the back of the sanctuary. Loraine Davila will drive donations to the food bank the last Tuesday of each month.

If you have anything that you would like included in our bi-monthly Updates, please contact April at 607-865-4066 or secretary@uccwalton.com

CHAIR YOGA FOR OLDER ADULTS

WHERE? First Congregational Church, UCC
Corner of Mead and North Sts., Walton, NY
Enter using the North St., back entrance

WHEN?

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Sept 29 & Oct 1 October 20 & 22

October 6 & 8 October 27 & 29

October 13 & 15 November 3 & 5

FREE CLASSES – no registration required. Come to 1 or come to all.

If you have any questions, call the church at
607-865-4066

Wear comfortable clothes and bring water with you.

There will be paperwork to be filled out, so please come 20-30 minutes early to your **FIRST** class - even if you completed paperwork in the past.

Previous Sermons and Liturgy

❖ September 20, 2026

- ▶ Sermon: Longtimers and Latecomers
- ▶ Scripture Reading: Philippians 1:21-30
- ▶ Gospel Reading: Matthew 20:1-16

❖ September 27, 2026

- ▶ Sermon: Decisions or Choices?
- ▶ Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:1-13
- ▶ Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:23-32

Devotionals from Pastor Janet

Shame Is Us by Mary Luti

Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them take up their cross and follow me." - Matthew 16:24 abridged (NRSV)

Biblical phrases and images often lose their teeth when they enter everyday parlance. Take "good Samaritan," for example. In scripture, it's the loathsome enemy who, shockingly, saves your life. Today, it's the kindly stranger who rescues your cat from a tree. Nothing against cat rescue, but it doesn't pack quite the same punch.

Likewise, "Take up your cross." These days it means accepting life's vicissitudes, as in "we all have our crosses to bear." But Jesus wasn't talking generically about bearing up under personal challenges, making a virtue of suffering. He was talking specifically about being paraded, in Andrew McGowan's words, "from prison to gallows, carrying the instrument of torture and death."

It would've been a familiar spectacle; the Romans weren't stingy with crosses. Slaves, insurrectionists, robbers, people of low status and no hope whipped through the streets in processions choreographed for dehumanization. They were warnings, object lessons, the violent moral of the empire's heartless story. To take up your cross was to join that humiliating parade, as Jesus himself soon would. And later, many of his disciples, too. For his sake, they became all shame.

Now, Jesus was no sadist. He didn't want the cross for himself, and he never commanded us to run after torture and disgrace. But he did call us to love. And because a life that looks like love affronts everything that passes for wisdom in this world, that parade may yet await us. As someone once observed, "If you don't love, you're dead, and if you do, they'll kill you." We may yet become a warning. Christ's shame may yet be us.

Prayer

Jesus, disabuse me of the notion that I can follow you without incurring rejection and ridicule. If I'm not yet all shame, grant me a closer following.

Like a Tree Beside the Waters by Talitha Arnold

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. - Psalm 1:3 (NRSV)

Christians use particular words to describe the Church. "Congregation" from the Latin *con* (with) and *grex* (flock). *Koinonia*, Greek for "community." We call ourselves an "Easter People," sing about being "part of the family," or refer to "our church home."

I have another name for the Church: "Riparian Community." You may not know the term, but you've probably seen riparian places. They're the areas around a riverbank or tidewater where bushes and trees take root. Today's psalm sings of riparian places.

Riparian areas are easy to overlook in lush landscapes. But they stand out in the browns and golds of the desert Southwest. They're *green*. They're also noisy. Birds nest in the bushes and trees. Insects cling to the leaves. Deer, kangaroo rats, even coyotes seek out riparian areas for shade and water.

In riparian areas, you see life not found elsewhere in the desert. As a child, I thought red-winged blackbirds only lived in rain-blessed places like New England or the Midwest—until I saw one perched on a cattail near a desert stream outside Phoenix. It felt like a miracle.

Refreshment, renewal, protection from harsh surroundings, unexpected new life. Those are the gifts of riparian areas in dry and hard lands—or dry and hard times. What better calling could we have as a church than to be a riparian community? A place to rest and re-charge. A place that offers the gift of life, over and over again.

Prayer

For this dry and weary world, O Lord, help us be like “trees planted by the waters” and our churches to be your riparian communities of faith. Amen.

Lifted in Prayer

Lorraine Miller

Pastor Janet

Karen Eckhardt

Roy Tiesler

Courtney Tempel

Bruce Ellis

Betty Johnston

Nadene Kopetz

Dorothy Welch

Rosemarie Tiesler

Bill Meredith

The family of Kathy Terry Brundege

The family of Gladys Jacques