

COMMUNITY PLATE

Each month our congregation provides support for a community partner who we believe shares our values. We encourage our congregants to learn more about these organizations and actively volunteer in the work they do. On the first (OR 2nd) Sunday of each month, our entire offering is dedicated to that month's partner as well as any checks identified as "Community Plate" during the entire month. Money can also be contributed at the Justice Table at coffee hour. The Community Plate Committee of our Justice Ministry team selects recipients based on suggestions made by congregants.

For more information and nomination forms: uuasheville.org/community-plate.

February's Community Plate recipient is Children First/Communities in School. Children First's mission is to empower children and their families to reach their full potential through advocacy, education and services. The mission of Communities In Schools is to surround students with a community of support, better enabling and equipping them to stay in school and achieve in life.

[Children First/Communities in Schools](#) is currently in five Title I schools that have more than 45% of enrolled students receiving free and/or reduced lunch. They support four Buncombe County schools (Emma, Estes, and Johnston Elementary, and Eblen Intermediate) and one Asheville City school (Claxton Elementary) by providing Student Support Specialists who connect with students throughout the week. In addition to CIS model implementation, Student Support Specialists facilitate Family Resource Centers and after-school/summer enrichment. The future looks brighter when children start their lives healthy and ready to learn, have their basic needs met, and live in supported and connected families. Through their Success Equation initiative, they unite within community to reduce poverty and ensure all children can thrive by advocating for local, state, and federal policies in three areas: Early Childhood Development, Family Economic Stability, and Family Supports.

