



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
United Church of Christ  
April 2022



Friends in Christ:

In Percy Dearmer's beautiful Lenten hymn that has been guiding us this Lent, we sing:

To bow the head in sackcloth and in ashes  
or rend the soul, such grief is not Lent's goal;  
but to be led to where God's glory flashes,  
his beauty to come near.  
Make clear, make clear, make clear where truth and light appear.

In these early spring days, as the snow melts and the ground thaws and the rain falls, things get messy. What we portray as a time of the flowers blooming and the birds singing and the sun shining is often enough a time of mud and streets filled with wintry detritus and too much rain.

The ancient Hebrew people, preparing for the Passover, were told: "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses . . ." Since Passover occurs in the spring, the total cleaning of the house to eliminate leaven was easily expanded to a comprehensive spring-cleaning: throwing out the accumulated staleness and the deadness of winter. It's said that in the Middle East these spring housecleaning activities are so intense that some there have called Passover *az frihli*—"the festival of falling apart."

For us, Lent is a time to "make clear"—to clear away the clutter that has accumulated over the past winter, the past year, maybe over a lifetime.

Spring is a time for housecleaning. Lent is a time for heart clearing. This is a time to remember again what really matters, to separate the important in life from merely what is urgent, to get rid of what has been allowed simply to stand around, all that has become stale and dead.

Clearing the clutter isn't simply a matter of doing away with, of throwing things out. Sure, your life is full of demands and commitments and obligations and desires. But it's not a matter of cutting out your family commitments, or of calling into work tomorrow and saying "I won't be in until after Easter, I'm clearing the clutter from my life."

Start instead by asking, "What is important in my life—and why?" It might be your family, your work, your relationship with God, your commitments to other people. It's probably some combination of all of the above. Seek to be clear about what it is you value.

You might want to put all that is important to you into new relationships with each other—a new fit, a new balance. Knowing what is important for you—and moving toward it—will go a long way toward clearing up the clutter.

The days lengthen. The light shines brighter. In that light, let us clear the clutter that our hearts may be filled with the grace of God.

Peace,

Bill

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Be-Loving, Be-Caring, Be-Kind...the Be-attitudes.**

Sunday School students are studying the Beatitudes for Lent this year.



### IMPORTANT DATES IN LENT AND EASTER

(As with all things as the pandemic continues, these dates, times, and places are subject to change.)

- April 3—Fifth Sunday in Lent: Communion Sunday
- April 10—Palm Sunday: Worship with Distribution of Palms, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
- April 14 Maundy Thursday: Worship in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.; Communion and Service of Tenebrae
- April 15, Good Friday: Worship in the Sanctuary at Noon
- April 17, Easter Sunday: Early Service 8:00 a.m.; Easter Breakfast; 8:30 a.m.; Festival Easter Service in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m.



### PLEASE HELP “SHOWER” THE SANCTUARY WITH FLOWERS

“The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come . . .”  
(Song of Solomon 2:12) Starting the first Sunday in April, the 3<sup>rd</sup>, please feel empowered to bring flowering plants to fill the sanctuary by Easter.

If the Easter lilies, tulips, crocus or daffodils are a memorial for a loved one, please let the office know.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

### COFFEE HOUR RESUMES AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAY, APRIL 3.

The Deacons will once again be serving coffee—and, yes, donut holes—after worship. What could be more “normal” than that? Rockwood Hall will be open for conversation. So, get a cup of coffee and catch up with friends. Masks will be optional during Coffee Hour.

Want to help serve? Sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall, call the church office (319-337-4301) or talk with Deacon.

COFFEE  
FELLOWSHIP

Join us!



### ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

On Palm Sunday, April 10, we will dedicate our One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. This offering has long been an important part of the life of our congregation. For many years now, we have been on the list of Top 100 giving churches.

This year's theme, "Love Remains," comes from Paul's well-known words: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13) In a world where communities are being displaced by the catastrophes of war, famine, and natural disaster, our congregation joins with many others in standing in faith, hope, and love with those who seek to move beyond the trauma of displacement toward the promise of healing and peace. Your generous gift will support the relief work of not only the UCC but also many other denominations united in caring for refugees, in providing medical care, and in disaster recovery efforts. You can watch videos about the work that OGHS makes possible [by clicking here](#):

Let us join in this great tradition and give generously, not because we have to, but because we can.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.



### CONGREGATIONAL UCC SPONSORS HUNGER BANQUET—APRIL 21

Our Church Council voted to be a sponsor for the CommUnity Hunger Banquet at the \$2500 level, using money from our Engagement Fund.

The [6TH ANNUAL HUNGER BANQUET](#) will be held on Thursday, April 21, at the Coralville Hyatt Regency. Doors open at 5:00, the program begins at 6:30.

This is a unique event that gives participants a glimpse at the scope of financial hardship and hunger in Johnson County. During this event, guests will be assigned to represent real Johnson County income demographics, which will determine the meal they receive. 13% of attendees will represent 19,600 neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

**If you're ready to make a difference in the lives of local families who struggle with hunger, please register to attend the 6th Annual Hunger Banquet by Friday, April 15.**

Because Congregational UCC is a sponsor of this event we have 3 seats left at a table. If you are interested in attending, please talk with Chuck Dayton, Laurie Stunz, or Bill Lovin or call the church office at 319-337-4301. We need to let CommUnity know the names of those attending. Registration deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup>. Please consider joining us in this cause.

### TRUSTEES ACT TO INCREASE SANCTUARY ACCESSIBILITY

Recently it was suggested to the Trustees that it would be useful to have a means of getting disabled folks from the Nave or Sanctuary floor to the Chancel and Choir loft levels of our sanctuary. John Johnson did some in-depth research and came across an innovative and effective design that will do just that while preserving the stairs.

The mechanism is called Liftup - FlexStep and is both a Staircase & Wheelchair lift that is designed for disabled access in both new and existing buildings. The local source of this device is 101 Mobility located in Coralville and Des Moines. We've met with the General Manager, John Adams, who has provided a quote. The actual unit is manufactured in Denmark and takes about 8 weeks to build and ship to us.

The remarkable part is that unlike traditional lifts, this one does not detract from the interior of the sanctuary. It will rest on the North Stair area of the chancel. When not in use it looks like a normal set of stairs. When in use it flattens out or turns itself into to a lift, lifts the person and chair up to the top level. A platform or riser will allow access to the choir loft level across the chancel at the North end of the chancel. After use it changes back into a set of stairs. Buttons on the lift as well as the wall at both the top and bottom of the lift control the operation of the lift.

The steps will be oak planks and the railing tops will be walnut. It is battery powered from a charger so it can operate in the event the power fails and/or is off. A short ramp will take wheelchairs from the platform to the chancel level. When not in use it can easily be removed.

The general feeling is that this will make those two areas available to all members. The Church Council approved the purchase of the lift at their March meeting and the Trustees are moving forward. We expect the installation to occur in the summer.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.



### THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO THE SPECIAL OFFERING TO SUPPORT THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS RESPONSE FUND OF CHURCH WORLD SERVICE.

Our Mission Board called for this offering to help provide humanitarian assistance to people displaced as a result of the violence and bolster partners in Europe to serve the most vulnerable. Nearly \$3,500 has been received. More information can be found at [www.cwsglobal.org/appeals/ukraine-crisis-response-fund/](http://www.cwsglobal.org/appeals/ukraine-crisis-response-fund/). You can still give—please put “Church World Service” on the memo line of your check.

### CHANGE AGENT: AN ONLINE UCC MISSION BOARD SOCIAL CHANGE BULLETIN BOARD—SIGN UP FOR IT!

The Mission Board is responding to requests from the congregation and creating an Online Social Change Bulletin Board. This monthly email publication will be an alert system that will include notices of rallies, petitions, upcoming legislative or policy actions warranting letters or phone calls, protests, important meetings of the school board or city council, each of which has the potential to increase social justice. Highest priority alerts will be local actions, then state actions and national actions. Notices will not support political candidates or parties.

Initially, the mailing is expected to be monthly. Special notices might be appropriate on occasion. We are expecting to send 3-5 notices a month. The postings will be curated rather than comprehensive.

Megan Carnes has agreed to be editor. Regular contributors will be Chuck Connerly (environment), Chuck Dayton (health care and CRC notices), Ray Muston (immigration), Donna Hirst (racial justice), and Jane Kinney (UCC notices). Anyone in the congregation can submit an item to the editor or one of the contributors.

We would be delighted if everyone in the congregation is interested in subscribing. If you would like to receive these monthly mailings send your contact information to Jenn Harden, [uccicadmin@uccic.org](mailto:uccicadmin@uccic.org). Our goal is to begin the mailings in late April or May.



ONLINE DONATION

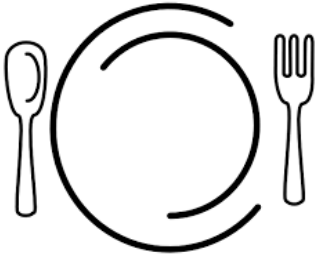
Want to give online? Scan the QR code for our giving app.





## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

### RETURN TO HOPE LODGE! HELP PREPARE THE MAY 9 MEAL



Before the pandemic our church was providing an evening meal for the residents of Hope Lodge once a month. The American Cancer Society Hope Lodge houses cancer patients (and their caregivers) who are receiving treatment at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. Hope Lodge is now back to housing residents but they are not yet allowing volunteers in the building. However, they are welcoming groups to provide an evening meal, enough for 30 people, leaving food off at the door. Our church will be responsible for a meal on May 9. There will be a sign-up sheet in

Rockwood Hall during the month of April. Food will be delivered to Hope Lodge by 4:30 that day and should be in containers (aluminum pans) that do not need to be returned. The address of Hope Lodge is 750 Hawkins Drive (near the Ronald McDonald House). If you have questions about this project, contact Sue Dayton, [cdayton7@mchsi.com](mailto:cdayton7@mchsi.com) or 351-5886.

### CONGREGATIONAL UCC SPONSORS INSIDE OUT SPRING CONCERT— MAY 21

Our church has voted to support the Inside Out Reentry Community in its Spring Concert—*Be an Instrument for Change*—an effort to raise money to aid people returning to the community from prison. Using money from our Engagement Fund, we are an event sponsor at the \$500 Gold Level. The concert is being held on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 5 to 7:30 pm in City Park on the Riverside Festival Stage. Three musical groups, including the Oakdale Community Choir, will perform. Congregational UCC is an event sponsor at the Gold \$500 level. Please join in an evening of music and fun!



Funds raised will be used to further Inside Out's mission to support people involved in the criminal legal system in changing from the inside out in order to promote healing, restore relationships, and achieve success in the community. Services include case management, personalized reentry planning, assistance finding employment, and housing, tutoring, mentoring, and general support. Group programming is offered to provide pro-social activities and build peer support. Support is also provided to currently incarcerated individuals to help prepare and plan for their release.

[Inside Out Reentry Community](#) is the non-profit in Iowa City that serves people returning to Johnson County after incarceration. Returning to and becoming an active member of society after being incarcerated is tough, and they strive to give these individuals the support they need to reach their goals and become active members of our community.

### WANT TO HELP SUPPORT NAMI JOHNSON COUNTY...

...but don't want to walk on May 7th? You can now join one of their Virtual Teams and help raise money for NAMIJC!



At NAMI Johnson and Linn Counties, they know that you can't always attend in-person fundraising walks, so they have made a few teams for those who want to help raise money and awareness, but who don't want to walk!

You can now join one of their virtual teams or start one by emailing Katie McCullough ([katie.mccullough@namijc.org](mailto:katie.mccullough@namijc.org)) and telling her what type of virtual team you want to start!

Every member of the virtual team that raises the most money will get a prize after the walk is over!

## CELEBRATING MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 4/1 William Hoefler  
4/7 Delmar Brown  
4/9 Grace Whittaker  
4/12 Mary Kruse  
4/15 Magill Schumm  
4/19 Ann Ghabel  
4/20 Amanda Bouma  
4/21 Diana Durham  
4/22 Randee Fieselmann  
4/25 Patty Roberts  
Theresa Messlein  
Jacob Koepnick  
4/26 Anna Whittaker  
4/27 Robert McFarland  
Joshua Woolums  
4/29 Jo Bowers



### THE CENTER FOR WORKER JUSTICE HAS FIVE NEW COMMITTEES!

They are looking for anyone who is interested to sign up for one of them! The five new Committees are:

- Grant Committee
- Membership Committee
- Wage Theft Committee
- Fundraising Committee
- Website Committee

If you or anyone you know is interested, click on the link below to sign up.  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ca9a929a7fac16-cwjnew>



**A Community Reading of Martin Luther King's  
"Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence"  
Fifty-five years later**



**Tuesday, April 4, 2022. 1PM - 6PM**

**Outside, in front of, and with thanks to The Congregational  
United Church of Christ, 30 N. Clinton St., Iowa City**

Martin Luther King delivered his most controversial speech on April 4, 1967. One year later, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated in Memphis.

**Come read with us his 1967 Speech, and excerpts  
from his last speech on April 3, 1968,  
"I've Been to the Mountaintop".**

*Free and open to the public. Come listen, or read a portion. The  
presentation will be repeated 5 times. Come and go as you wish.*

**Sponsored by Veterans For Peace**



**Chapter #161**

**Eastern Iowa**



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER



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Visit our Web Site: [www.uccic.org](http://www.uccic.org)

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Music Director

Organist

Office Manager

Financial Secretary

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Rev. Ann Molsberry

Chris Nakielski

Bill Crouch

Jenn Harden

Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

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