



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
April 2023



Friends in Christ:

We have moved through the season of Lent this year, looking for wisdom—what has been called the ability to live optimally in a world that is confusing and never completely understandable. “The search for wisdom is a life-long journey, fraught with bitter disappointments and unexpected delights.” We have listened closely to the words of Ecclesiastes, which speaks eloquently of both disappointment and delight. We have been supported in our quest by the daily reflections from members of our congregation.

Now, as April arrives, as we move through Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday, as we come to the glorious celebration of Easter Sunday and the happy weeks that follow, something new breaks upon us. After all of our searching, we encounter what the 20th century mystic, prophet, and theologian, Howard Thurman, called “the glad surprise.”

“It is ever a new thing,” Thurman wrote, “a glad surprise, the stirring of Life at the end of winter. One day there seems to be no sign of life and then almost overnight, swelling buds, delicate blooms, blades of grass, bugs, insects—an entire world of newness everywhere. It is the glad surprise at the end of winter. Often the same experience comes at the end of a long tunnel of tragedy and tribulation. It is as if a man stumbling in the darkness, having lost his way, finds that the spot at which he falls is the foot of a stairway that leads from darkness into light. Such is the glad surprise. This is what Easter means in the experience of the race. This is the resurrection! It is the announcement that life cannot ultimately be conquered by death, that there is no road that is at last swallowed up in an ultimate darkness, that there is strength added when the labors increase, that multiplied peace matches multiplied trials, that life is bottomed by the glad surprise.”

It is Easter. Look up. Look around. What surprises are coming to you in these days?

Peace,

Bill

P.S.—I will be taking two weeks of vacation after Easter. The Rev. Bob Molsberry will be preaching on April 16 and 23. I thank Bob for his readiness to fill the pulpit and know that you look forward to hearing him. When I return, I will be continuing to follow my general schedule, working from home on Monday morning and being at the church and in the community from Monday afternoon through Thursday. Our church gives me two days off each week and I’m seeking to more consciously take Friday and Saturday as those days. Of course, things come up. Please know that, as always, I’m available when you need me.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

IMPORTANT DATES IN LENT AND EASTER

- April 2—Palm Sunday—Worship with Distribution of Palms; One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
- April 6 Maundy Thursday—Worship in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.; Communion and Service of Tenebrae
- April 7, Good Friday—Worship in the Sanctuary at Noon
- April 9, Easter Sunday—Festival Easter Service in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m.
- April 30—Spring Choir Music Sunday



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

On Palm Sunday, April 2, 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 50 giving churches.

The inspiration for year's theme, "It's Time to Share," comes from Paul encouraging the early Christians to help and care for others: "So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all." Galatians 6: 9–10 (The MSG)

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

(cont'd)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

You can watch videos about the work that OGHS makes possible [by clicking here](#):

Let us join in this great tradition and give generously.



FLOWERS FOR EASTER BRING COLOR TO THE SANCTUARY

Each year on Easter Sunday members and friends of Congregational UCC provide flowers for the sanctuary in memory of loved ones or to honor someone. Because so many people enjoy the burst of color, our Diaconate invites you to bring any type of spring flower—lilies, yes, but also consider tulips, daffodils, crocuses, or any other spring flower. *If you would like to have the name (s) of those remembered in the Easter Sunday bulletin, please get that information to the church office (337-4301) by Tuesday, April 4.*

WOMEN'S LUNCH—APRIL 20

The women's lunch will be at Red Ginger, 2419 2nd St in Coralville on Thursday, April 20 at 11:45AM. Please call or Text Martha Ann Crawford at 319-855-8340 to reserve a seat at the table.



MEN'S BREAKFAST—APRIL 15

The March Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 15, at the Waterfront Hy-Vee. All Congregational UCC men who eat breakfast are invited. This is a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. Join us!



BRUNCH ON SUNDAY, APRIL 30, CELEBRATES FIFTEEN YEARS OF NEW UCCIC MEMBERS: The Membership Board invites you to Brunch on Sunday, April 30, following worship (in Rockwood Hall). Randee Fieselmann will give a talk: "Our Tiffany Window." New members, prospective members, longtime members, and visitors are all welcome. Please sign up for attendance on the sheets provided in Rockwood Hall.



CPR AND AED TRAINING: We will be offering free CPR and AED training to the congregation over the next few months. The training will consist of watching two 2-minute videos, watching demonstrations of CPR and AED use and getting the chance to practice. Trainings will be offered at various times. Sign up on the sheets in Rockwood Hall (Under the Upcoming Events Bulletin) and Dianne Atkins will set up the schedule to make sure everyone gets a chance. Weekday and evening sessions will be in April, Sundays after worship will start in May. You can learn to save a life in just a few minutes.

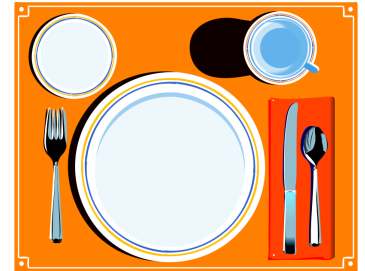
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IS SPONSORING A TABLE at the Table to Table Annual Dinner on May 3. The event takes place on **Wednesday, May 3**, at Celebration Farm in the Double Round Barn. Celebrate the impact T2T's food recovery efforts make in our community and learn more about how you can be involved. Weather permitting the event will utilize both indoor and outdoor space. Funds raised from this event will help us rescue more than 130,000 pounds of good food and deliver it throughout the Johnson County hunger relief network. Learn more [here](#).

Want to join with others at our table? Please contact the church office at 337-4301.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be May 22. If you would like to participate see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall. If you have questions, contact Sue Dayton, cdayton7@mchsi.com



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

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

Change Agent is sent out by email each month. Special notices are appropriate on occasion. We generally send 3-5 notices in each monthly edition. The postings are curated rather than comprehensive.

Megan Carnes is the editor. Regular contributors include Chuck Connerly (environment), Chuck Dayton (health care and CRC notices), Ray Muston (immigration), and Donna Hirst (racial justice). 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 were interested in subscribing. If you would like to receive these monthly mailings send your contact information to Jenn Harden, uccicadmin@uccic.org.

SPRING SPECIAL MUSIC SUNDAY—APRIL 30

During our worship on Sunday, April 30, the Congregational UCC Choir will offer a performance of *Illuminare* by composer and Iowa native, Elaine Hagenberg. The work will be conducted by Dr. Christopher Nakielski, with Bill Crouch on the organ, choir members and several area instrumentalists.

Illuminare is Hagenberg's first extended work, consisting of five-movements for chorus and chamber orchestra. Using lesser-known sacred Latin texts, the piece takes us through a season of beauty and goodness that has been disrupted by darkness and confusion. But as Light gradually returns, hope is restored, illuminating our future and guiding us in peace.



Please plan to join others here for this beloved springtime event. And invite a friend!

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



AS ALLIES FOR LGBTQ INDIVIDUALS AND AN OPEN, WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION, THE MISSION BOARD HAS FORMED AN LGBTQ+ STUDY GROUP. The group will look at ways to raise congregational awareness of Iowa's anti-LGBTQ legislation and the potential harm, intimidation and coercion of vulnerable individuals. We will present opportunities to support and act as allies in our community and state. For questions or more information, see the display in Rockwood Hall or speak with a Mission Board or LGBTQ Study Group member: Hope Spragg, Linda Muston, Paula Forrest, Martha Ann Crawford or Rebecca Weatherford.

SAVE THE DATES!—ALL CHURCH GATHERINGS

The Membership Board is looking ahead to a couple of much-loved congregational events and we want you to be a part of them. Mark your calendars now and look for more information in the months ahead about:



ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC—Sunday, June 25, in City Park
PROGRESSIVE DINNER—Saturday, October 14, at lots of locations



DO YOU HAVE A CHURCH KEY? (We know, it's an old joke, but it never gets tired, does it?) We have recently made new keys and are working at getting a better list of people who have keys. If you have a key to the church, please contact Trustee Chairperson, Kevin Richards, at (608) 807-7195 or at kd Richards1958@gmail.com. Thanks.

SEE SOMETHING—SAY SOMETHING: If you notice something in the building that needs attention—a leaky faucet, a loose railing, etc.—please let the church office or Trustee Chairperson, Kevin Richards, know right away. You can reach Kevin at (608) 807-7195 or at kd Richards1958@gmail.com. Thanks.



**See something.
Say something.**



WANT TO GIVE ONLINE? SCAN THE QR CODE FOR OUR GIVING APP.
Your giving makes a world of difference.

FRIENDLY REMINDER!
The deadline to submit items for the March newsletter will be
Friday, April 21st.



April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2 - 9:00 Choir - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Palm Sunday Worship Service	3	4 - Board of Christian Education, 6:30PM - Mission Board, 7:00PM	5	6 - 7:00PM Maundy Thursday Worship	7 - 12PM Good Friday Worship	8
9 - 8:30 Easter Breakfast - 10:15 Easter Sunday Worship Service	10	11	12	13	14	15 - Men's Breakfast @ Waterfront HyVee, 8:00 am
16 - 9:00 Choir - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service - Youth Group, 3PM	17	18 - Membership Board, 5:30PM - Deacons, 6PM - Stewardship Board, 7PM - Trustees, 7PM	19	20 - Women's Lunch @ Red Ginger in Coralville, at 11:45 am	21	22
23 - 9:00 Choir - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service	24	25 - Church Council, 7PM	26	27	28	29
30 - 9:00 Choir - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service						

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.

CELEBRATING APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 4/1 Bill Hoefer
4/7 Del Brown
4/9 Grace Whittaker
4/12 Mary Lea 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
4/30 Oscar Lewis



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 North Clinton Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER



CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 319-337-4301

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org

Pastor:

Dir of Church School

Music Director

Organist

Children's Music Director

Office Manager

Financial Secretary

Custodians:

The Rev. William Lovin

Rev. Ann Molsberry

Chris Nakielski

Bill Crouch

Majesty Constable

Jenn Harden

Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

Douglas Herrera

Claudia Landaverde

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anmolsberry@gmail.com

c.nakielski@cornellcollege.edu

Contact the Office

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sharynreitz@gmail.com

Contact the Office

For up to date announcements, check us out on Facebook.