

Comfort Comfort
Comfort
my people ISAIAH 40:1

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 N. CLINTON ST.
IOWA CITY, IA 52245
319-337-4301

WORSHIP FOR NOVEMBER 28, 2021
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

PRELUDE “Veni Emmanuel” Gerhard Krapf

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE
Margaret MacInnis and Lila MacInnis-Baumert

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in preparation,

for good news is about to be proclaimed.

We gather in expectation,

for joy is about to burst forth in our midst.

We gather in celebration,

**for we are those people who have said yes to the manger,
yes to love made flesh,**

**yes to the one incarnate for others,
yes to the wholeness of God.**

With preparation and in expectation, let us worship God!

HYMN 9 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain:

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death’s dark shadows put to flight. [Refrain]**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven’s peace. [Refrain]**

OPENING PRAYER

God, come to us as a way through the wilderness of life. Come to us, for the mountains we need to climb seem much too high and the valleys through which we must pass seem much too deep. Come to us, for life is rough and rugged.

Come to us, O God, with a new way. Come to us with a new meaning and purpose for our lives. Come to us with a love that will not let us go. Free our imprisoned hearts and our chained-up minds, that a new day of promise may stir us and our weary world to rejoice in the hope of new day dawning. Amen.

TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “O Praise God in His Holiness”

TIME OF PRAYER

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer

The Prayer of Our Savior

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Choral Response

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 40:1-11

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

You have been gracious to your land, O Lord,
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

I will listen, O Lord God, to what you are saying,
for you are speaking peace to your faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to you.

**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**Truth shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

O Lord, you will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**Righteousness shall go before you,
and peace shall be a pathway for your feet.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 3:1-6

SERMON “The Long and Winding Road”

HYMN 3 “Comfort, Comfort You My People”

**Comfort, comfort you my people;
tell of peace, thus says our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness
bowed beneath oppression's load.
Speak you to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over.**

**For the herald's voice is calling
in the desert far and near,
bidding us to make repentance
since the kingdom now is here.
Oh that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
let the valleys rise in meeting
and the hills bow down in greeting.**

Make you straight what long was crooked;

**make the rougher places plain;
let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign,
for the glory of the Lord
now o'er earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Veni Emmanuel” Robert J. Powell

Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children’s Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Chris Nakielski
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING. We are putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first. Masks are required for all people in all parts of the building. We will keep social distance in the pews. There will be no coffee hour, although you are encouraged to talk with one another outside after worship.

WE ARE NOW LIVE STREAMING OUR WORSHIP SERVICES AT 10:15 ON SUNDAY MORNING. You can join us online in real time at <https://vimeo.com/event/1424751>. This streaming address will be the same each week.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted on Sunday afternoon at <https://vimeo.com/channels/1547852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES—If you would like to contribute flowers for the worship services on upcoming Sundays please call the office to let Jenn know or sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall.



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

ALTERNATIVE GIVING

In anticipation of Christmas, the Mission Board has organized Alternative Giving opportunities beginning November 21. Tree tags for the Salvation Army Angel Tree will be available. Gifts for kids will need to be returned to the church by December 12.

Project Holiday tree tags/envelopes will also be available starting November 21. This is the CommUnity annual holiday food distribution. Donations will be mailed by the donor, and need to be received at CommUnity by December 12.

Mission Board members will take orders for Heifer Project gifts after church on November 28, December 5 and December 12. Payments by check will be received, and Ginny Clemmons will personalize gift cards that can be mailed by the purchaser. The catalog can be seen here: <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html>

LOOK AHEAD TO ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Like everything else, our Advent preparations and Christmas celebrations are expected to be different this year. We are still in the process of creating inspiring and joy-filled events. Here are some dates to keep in mind.

November 28—First Sunday in Advent; Lighting of the Advent Candles begins.

December 5—Second Sunday in Advent; Children's Pageant

December 12—Third Sunday in Advent; Special Music Sunday—*Gloria* by John Rutter

December 16—Winter Solace Service—7:00 p.m.

December 19—Fourth Sunday in Advent.

Christmas Eve is Friday, December 24.

Stewardship Is Heart Work: Pledge/estimate of giving cards for 2022 have been sent out. If you have not received one, please contact the church office. If you have received a card, please prayerfully fill it out and return it to the church as soon as possible. 2021 has been filled with many challenges and we have responded faithfully and with a generous compassion. We anticipate more challenges in 2022. Your deeply considered, prayerful support will help us to continue our Church's mission in downtown Iowa City and around the world. Thanks again for your generous giving.

GIVING UPDATES AVAILABLE: If you have any questions about your giving to the church or if you would like an update on your giving, please call the church office (337-4301) or email our Office Manager, Jenn Harden at uccicadmin@uccic.org.

A new Bible Study has begun. We're looking at the scripture lessons—primarily from the Old Testament—that are used in the Christmas section of Handel's *Messiah*. The sessions will be held on Zoom at 7:00 p.m.—no parking worries! The next session will be on Wednesday, December 1. If you are interested or want more information, please talk with Bill Lovin.