



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

WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER 11, 2022
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

“Believing is not something as special and difficult or even unnatural as we often suppose. Believing means that what we listen to, we listen to as God’s speech. What moves us is not just our own concern, but precisely God’s concern. What causes me worry, that is God’s worry, what gives me joy is God’s joy, what I hope for is God’s hope.”

Karl Barth

PRELUDE “Traditions of Christmas” Chip Davis, arr. Tim Strang

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Kathi Koegle, Liturgist

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Jason Beerends and Jeanna Otto, Hayden, Dylan, and Colin Beerends

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Raise your hearts and voices

Let us be glad

[Unison]

for great is God who comes to dwell among us.

*HYMN 69 “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

**O Morning Star, how fair and bright
Thou beamest forth in truth and light!
O Sovereign meek and lowly!
Thou root of Jesse, David's Son,
My Lord and Savior, Thou hast won
My heart to serve Thee solely!
Thou art holy,
Fair and glorious, all victorious,
Rich in blessing,
Rule and might o'er all possessing.**

**Thou heavenly brightness! Light divine!
O deep within my heart now shine,
And make Thee there an altar!
Fill me with joy and strength to be
Thy member, ever joined to Thee
In love that cannot falter!
Toward Thee longing
Doth possess me; turn and bless me;
Here in sadness
Eye and heart long for Thy gladness!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**Loving God, we open ourselves to you trusting that this is how you made us:
you created us with the capacity for joy.
You light our lives with the power of imagination.
Show us the creative power of hope.
May we rejoice and be glad in this day and in all the days you give to us. Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#602, vs. 1)

**Blest be the God of Israel, Who comes to set us free;
Who visits and redeems us, Who grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, Of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill that promise And bring the people peace**

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.**

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Still, Still, Still” arr. Mark Hayes

*Response

**As with gladness those of old did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
So, true Morning Star, may we evermore your splendor see.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at that manger plain and bare,
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ to you from whom they spring.**

*Prayer of Dedication

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

CAROLS

“Away in the manger”,

“Silent Night”,

“What Child is This?”

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

“Hark, the Herald Angels sing!”

“Go Tell it on the Mountain”

*BENEDICTION

Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice

Like the angels we will go from here proclaiming God’s peace among all people

Open yourselves to God’s gentle, transforming love.

We go forth from here in hope, and peace, and joy.

Strengthen the weak...

POSTLUDE “Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow” arr. Mark Hayes

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 highly recommended. Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

OUR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS OBSERVANCES AND CELEBRATIONS renew some of our traditional activities and events and also bring some new possibilities. Here are some important dates:

December 11— Third Sunday in Advent; Children’s Christmas Pageant

December 18—Fourth Sunday in Advent; Special Music Sunday

December 20—Winter Solace Service

Christmas Eve is Saturday, December 24. There will be one worship service at 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25—Worship at 10:15 a.m.

ALTERNATIVE GIVING OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUE: Tree tags for the Salvation Army Angel Tree are available—gifts for kids will need to be returned to the church by December 18. The Mitten Tree is available to be decorated with your donations of hats, gloves, scarves, etc. These items will be taken to the Iowa City School District for use in the schools, in honor of Congregational UCC member, Joan Buxton, who was a school nurse for many years. Project Holiday tree tags/envelopes are also available. This is the CommUnity annual holiday meal distribution. Donations will be mailed by the donor, and must be received at CommUnity by December 17.

A NEW THREE SESSION BIBLE STUDY looking at the story of the birth of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke concludes this Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. If you are interested, please email or talk with Bill.

THE WOMEN'S LUNCH WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, AT MAGGIE'S PIZZA ON MELROSE AVE., at 11:45AM. Call or text Martha Ann Crawford—319-855-8340—to reserve a seat.

THE DECEMBER MEN'S BREAKFAST WILL BE HELD AT 8:00 A.M. ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 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!

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, DURING 10:15 A.M. WORSHIP, THE SANCTUARY CHOIR WILL BE PRESENTING DANIEL PINKHAM'S *CHRISTMAS CANTATA*.

Daniel Pinkham's 1957 Christmas Cantata remains one of his most popular works and is one in which his synthesis of early music and contemporary styles is clearly evident. The Latin texts are taken from the traditional responses from the Christmas masses and are set for three equal ensembles: chorus, brass choir and organ. The first movement opens with a rather declamatory statement ("Shepherds, what have you seen? Tell us!") before moving into a dance-like section of ever shifting meters and syncopated rhythms. The second movement features an arched melody which is passed antiphonally between the two instrumental choirs, over which is spun a long, dreamy choral line set mostly for women's voices. The final movement is an extended crescendo of continually shifting tonalities, with verses taken from Psalm 100 alternating with the chorus the angels sang to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will."

The *Christmas Cantata* will feature Bill Crouch on organ, area professionals playing in the brass quartet, and the voices of the UCCIC Choir under the direction of Dr. Christopher Nakielski.

WINTER SOLACE SERVICE: The days before Christmas can be difficult, especially for those who are dealing with loss, illness, and other challenges. On Tuesday, December 20, Bill

Lovin will be leading a Winter Solace Service in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. This year the worship service will be in person and live streamed. We are trying to bring out as much joy as possible in this season, but as we do so, we can also acknowledge our sorrow, our losses, our concerns and our fears. This will be a time of prayer and scripture reading and music.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 5:30

Join us for worship on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24.

At 5:30 p.m. we will have a service for people of all ages. This will include a special time for children, special music, Christmas carols, a reading of the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke, and lighting of candles. If you would like to be an usher for this worship service, please sign up in Rockwood Hall or call the church office.

Everyone is invited to the gala reception in Rockwood Hall after worship. This is a warm and wonderful time of fellowship and a chance to catch up with students and friends who are home for the holidays. The reception will be even better if you volunteer to bring some cookies or other goodies to share. Sign up in Rockwood Hall or call the church office to let us know what you're bringing.

Members and friends may provide poinsettias for the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve worship service. If you would like to remember or honor someone with a poinsettia, please let the church office know that you will bring a poinsettia and the name of the person by Monday, December 19.

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 kdrichards1958@gmail.com. Thanks.

THE STEWARDSHIP BOARD THANKS YOU for your generous gifts to support the ministry and mission of Congregational UCC again this year. In our presentations during the past several weeks you have heard about the great work these gifts have made possible. We are inspired by the compassion, caring, and community that we find here. If you haven't already, please prayerfully decide on the amount of your support for the coming year as you give thanks for God's surprising gifts. We ask that you fill out the pledge card and return it as soon as possible.

CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING: Each year, the United Church of Christ's Christmas Fund Offering allows the UCC to assist retired pastors living on limited incomes as well as to supplement small retirement annuities and health premiums and to provide emergency grants to active and retired clergy and lay employees. The mission of the Christmas Fund is to provide assistance dollars in situations of critical need, while preserving the dignity of those who receive the aid.

We will receive the Christmas Fund Offering during our worship on Christmas Eve. Please remember that your generous contributions can and do make a difference in the lives of many people.

A NEW MEMBER CLASS WILL BE HELD IN JANUARY. If you are interested in joining Congregational UCC or would like more information, please talk with Bill Lovin.

CHILDCARE IN THE CHURCH NURSERY is extended one hour from **9:15-12:30** on Sundays until December 18. This is to accommodate the extra choir practice for the adult choir.

USHERS, GREETERS, AND HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITIES: As we continue to reopen, there are new opportunities to greet people coming to worship, to usher, and to provide hospitality during coffee hour after worship. Please sign up on the sheets in Rockwood Hall or call the church office--319-337-4031.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE AS A LITURGIST ON SUNDAY MORNING? This is a great opportunity to welcome people and to lead them in worship. Bill Lovin provides the material. You provide the spirit. Contact Bill if you are interested or would like more information.



Want to give online? Scan the QR code for our giving app.
Your giving makes a world of difference.

WE LIVE STREAM 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 is the same each week.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted after worship on Sunday at <https://vimeo.com/channels/154m7852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.