



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

WORSHIP FOR AUGUST 29, 2021
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“I hate being away from home.”
Charlie Watts

PRELUDE “Prelude in D Major,” BWV 936 J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

To everything there is a season
A time to break down and a time to build up
A time to cast away stones
And a time gather stones together.

Let us worship God
As we attend to the work of our time,
That we might be equipped for those tasks
We are called to do in our time.

HYMN “Earth and All Stars”
Earth and all stars, Loud rushing planets
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Hail, wind, and rain, Loud blowing snowstorm
Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!

Steel and machines, Loud pounding hammers
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Limestone and beams, Loud building workers
Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!

Classrooms and labs, Loud boiling test tubes
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Athlete and band, Loud cheering people
Sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!

Knowledge and truth, Loud sounding wisdom
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Daughter and son, Loud praying members
Sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!

OPENING PRAYER

Living God, we seek your presence now.
Our minds cannot understand you, yet our hearts rest in your love and compassion.
Our faith cannot grasp you, yet in you we live and move and have our being.
Our way ahead into this week is hidden from us, but we trust that we go through these days
kept in your gracious care.
Renew our vision of the goodness in which our day-to-day lives are lived.
Open our eyes to see your presence in the simple glories of everyday things.
Strengthen our relationships with other people.
Help us so to see where we went wrong in the past, that we shall be able to take our bearings
afresh for the way ahead.
In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Nehemiah 3:1-3, 6, 11-12

PSALM 24

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and all who dwell therein.

For it is the Lord who founded it upon the seas

and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.

"Who can ascend the hill of the Lord?
and who can stand in God's holy place?"

**"Those who have clean hands and a pure heart,
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,
nor sworn by what is a fraud.**

They shall receive a blessing from the Lord
and a just reward from the God of their salvation."

**Such is the generation of those who seek the Lord,
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.**

Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors;
and the glorious Sovereign shall come in.

"Who is this glorious Sovereign?"

**"The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle.**

Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors;
and the glorious Sovereign shall come in.

"And who is this glorious Sovereign?"

"The Lord, the Lord of hosts is the glorious Sovereign."

SCRIPTURE LESSON Revelation 21:1-4, 15-21

SERMON "Returning Home"

TIME OF GRATITUDE

SOLO "Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens Adore Him" Rowland Prichard, arr.
Rachel Burchett

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN "Give to Me, Lord, a Thankful Heart"

**Give to me, Lord, a thankful heart
And a discerning mind;
Give, as I play the Christian's part,
The strength to finish what I start
And act on what I find.**

**When, in the rush of days, my will
Is habit bound and slow,
Help me to keep in vision, still,
What love and power and peace can fill
A life that trusts in you.**

**By your divine and urgent claim,
And by your human face,
Kindle our sinking hearts to flame,**

**And as you teach the world your name
Let it become your place.**

**Jesus, with all your church I long
To see your kingdom come:
Show me your way of righting wrong
And turning sorrow into song
Until you bring me home.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Fugue in D Major,” F. 31, No. 3 Wilhelm Friedemann Bach

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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

Thanks to Rachel Burchett for singing this morning.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted by 10:15 on Sunday morning 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.

REOPENING NEWS:

The Church Council met in early August and considered the recommendations of the Reopening Committee for resuming in-person worship on Sunday mornings. As many of you know, our plans for in-person worship on August 1 were changed because of electrical problems that affected the air conditioning and ventilation in the building and the lights in the sanctuary. These electrical problems continued into the week of August 8. As we were recording Bill’s sermon on August 7, the power went out! Concerns about the increase of the Covid Delta variant were also taken into account by the Council.

In early August, the Iowa UCC Conference strongly suggested that congregations who are still meeting and worshipping online only continue to do so until the conditions improve.

Putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first, **we have decided to set Sunday, September 12, the first Sunday after Labor Day, as the date to resume in-person worship.** This will allow us to accomplish several things in the coming weeks:

1. Fix any outstanding electrical problems.

2. Monitor Covid cases to make sure they are at a safe level. This is especially important as students begin to arrive from across the state, nation, and world in the coming weeks.
3. Finish preparations for live-streaming worship services so that those who are unable to attend in person can still participate.

Our worship schedule will be as follows;

- August 29—Online only, Bill Lovin preaching
- September 5—Online only, Bill Lovin preaching
- September 12—In-person worship in the sanctuary, 10:15 a.m.

This was a difficult decision and we understand the disappointment that some might feel. Everyone wants to get back to worshipping together as soon as possible. A few more weeks away during the summer will prepare us for coming together once more at the time when our program year traditionally begins.

TEE OFFERING Will Be Received on September 19: Our annual offering to support the Theological Education by Extension College in South Africa (TEE Offering) will be received during worship on Sunday, September 19. This offering has been a tradition in our congregation for several decades. It was initially started when the brother of our then minister, the Rev. Ed Heininger, worked for TEE in South Africa. TEE is a private, nonprofit, distance learning institution serving five south African countries. The mission of the college is to equip men and women for Christian ministry. Students come from 28 denominations across southern Africa including the UCC of South Africa. For more information about this amazing program, please visit their website at www.tee.co.za. Please plan to give generously—our support makes a difference.

The Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC) is hosting two October candidate forums at the Kingdom Center: Oct. 2 for the School Board and Oct. 16 for City Council. We are planning to have translators and sack lunches for attendees to take when they leave. Various JCIC congregations have been hit hard by COVID, so we are requesting special donations from individuals within our JCIC churches to assist with the forum expenses. We are hoping you can assist us in making these October events a success by contributing \$50 or \$25. More would be wonderful, and any amount would be helpful. If you are able to assist, send a check to:

Johnson County Interfaith Coalition

Bea Hicks, Treasurer

PO Box 966

Iowa City, IA 52240

Put “2021 Candidate Forums” in the Memo Line.

FAN CLUB UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY CRISIS CENTER: We set out to distribute 700 box fans to local households this summer through the CommUnity Fan Club. Box fans help keep our neighbors cool and reduce the cost of utilities during the hot summer months. Thanks to the support of individuals and the Congregational United Church of Christ's matching gift, we **distributed fans to a total of 750 households! Thank you for your support!**