



Scroll of Isaiah from Qumran

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

WORSHIP FOR FEBRUARY 2, 2025  
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

*Today is a communion Sunday. If you are joining us online, you are invited to get whatever you eat and whatever you drink before the beginning of worship. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.*

“The good news that God bears through Jesus is concurrently jarring news.”  
David Ostendorf

PRELUDE “Lord, All My Heart Is Fixed on Thee” J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Bea Hicks, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 107)**

O give thanks to God, who is good;  
whose steadfast love endures forever.

**For God satisfies the thirsty,  
and fills the hungry with good things.**

**[Unison]**

**Let us worship God.**

**\*HYMN 376 “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”**

**Love divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heaven to earth come down,  
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,  
All Thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,  
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;  
Visit us with Thy salvation,  
Enter every trembling heart.**

**Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit  
Into every troubled breast!  
Let us all in Thee inherit,  
Let us find that second rest;  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty.**

**Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all Thy life receive;  
Suddenly return, and never,  
Nevermore Thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,  
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,  
Glory in Thy perfect love.**

**Finish, then, Thy new creation;  
Pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see Thy great salvation  
Perfectly restored in Thee;  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**Creator of our lives, source and destiny of all that is, we come to you in awareness of the hallowed nature of each human life, and in need of your reviving Spirit for comfort and grace. In the beauty of this place set aside, in the solemn reverence of time set apart, in the strength of mutual care, in the silence and in the songs which attend your redeeming power, we come to worship you and to wait for you.**

**Mend what is broken in us and in our world. Lead us by your gentle inspiration to sense in each moment eternal depths, immeasurable goodness, and the possibilities inherent in tomorrow; through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#442—"The Church's One Foundation" tune)**

**We need your living presence, O Christ of Galilee,  
a presence that revives us and set our spirits free.  
No longer are we fearful, your love pervades each place.  
Empower us with courage to claim your healing grace.**

ANTHEM "Thee, Lord, Would I Serve" Mark Bender

**SERVICE OF GIVING**

Invitation

Offertory "Lord, All My Heart Is Fixed on Thee" Johann Friedrich Alberti

\*Response

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ, all creatures here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

(The children are dismissed to Children's Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Amos 7:10-15

PSALM 147:1-11

Praise the Lord!

How good it is to sing praises to our God;  
for the Lord our God is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

**The Lord builds up Jerusalem;  
and gathers the outcasts of Israel.**

God heals the broken-hearted,  
and binds up their wounds.

**God determines the number of the stars;  
and gives to all of them their names.**

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;  
the Holy One's understanding is beyond measure.

**God lifts up the downtrodden;  
the Holy One casts the wicked to the ground.**

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;  
make melody to our God on the lyre.

**God covers the heavens with clouds,  
prepares rain for the earth,  
makes grass grow on the hills.**

God gives to the animals their food,  
and to the young ravens when they cry.

**God does not delight in the strength of the horse,  
nor is God pleased in the speed of a runner;**

but God is pleased in those who have reverence,  
in those who hope in God's steadfast love.

**We give thanks to you O God.  
We tell of your wonderful deeds.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON    Luke 4:16-30

SERMON    "All Beginnings Are Difficult"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 516    "Lord, We Have Come at Your Own Invitation"

**Lord, we have come at your own invitation,  
chosen by you, to be counted as friends:  
yours is the strength that sustains our vocation,  
ours a commitment we know never ends.**

**Here, at your table, confirm our intention  
ever to cherish the gifts you provide;  
teach us to serve without pride or pretension,  
led by your Spirit, defender and guide.**

**When, at your table, each time of returning,  
vows are renewed, and our courage restored:  
may we increasingly glory in learning  
all that it means to accept you as Lord.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

REMEMBERING AND GIVING THANKS

Now, we remember Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.  
He took his place among us as one with human frailty.

**We remember that he called disciples and ministered to all.**

**He confounded the haughty and gave hope to the poor.  
He ate with sinners and fed the multitude.**

On the night of his arrest...

#### SHARING OF ELEMENTS

(Communion will be served in the pews today. Please receive the bread or cup as they are offered to you by a deacon. Hold it until all have been served, and we will eat and drink together at the pastor's guidance. We serve grape juice, not wine. Gluten-free wafers are on the trays with the bread. In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we celebrate the Lord's Supper with openness and welcome. Everyone is invited to the table, regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation.)

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Thank you, O God, for what we have received here today. May we go out into the world knowing who we are and whose we are. Let us reach beyond ourselves to share what we have been given. Amen.**

\*HYMN 360            "Hope of the World"  
**Hope of the world, thou Christ of great compassion,  
speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent.  
Save us, thy people, from consuming passion,  
who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.**

**Hope of the world, God's gift from highest heaven,  
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,  
still let thy Spirit unto us be given  
to heal earth's wounds and end her bitter strife.**

**Hope of the world, afoot on dusty highways,  
showing to wandering souls the path of light;  
walk thou beside us, lest the tempting byways  
lure us away from thee to endless night.**

**Hope of the world, who by thy cross didst save us  
from death and dark despair, from sin and guilt;  
we render back the love thy mercy gave us;  
take thou our lives, and use them as thou wilt.**

**Hope of the world, O Christ, o'er death victorious,  
Who by this sign did conquer grief and pain,  
We would be faithful to Thy gospel glorious;  
Thou art our Lord! Thou dost forever reign!**

#### \*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE "O Zion, Haste"            Mark Sedio

Scroll of Isaiah from Qumran, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54196> [retrieved January 29, 2025]. Original source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/korephotos/2472547083/>. Used with permission.

Opening Prayer by Allen Happe, from *Touch Holiness*, Ruth Duck, ed. Used with permission.

“Lord, We Have Come at Your Own Invitation,” Words - ©1979 Hope Publishing Company. Contributors: Fred Pratt Green. Used by permission. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

“Hope of the World” Georgia Harkness, Words - ©1954, 1982 Hymn Society in the US & Canada, Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Christian Education:	Hope Spragg
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Dr. Chris Nakielski
Children’s Choir Director	Rachel Burchett
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

#### TODAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am

#### TUESDAY

❖ Board of Christian Education	7:00 pm
Mission Board	7:00 pm

#### NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am

### **WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.**

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

**ADULT EDUCATION:** Join us around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m. this Sunday, February 2. Kaitelyn McQuown, Director of the Little Creations Academy will talk about their work. Next Sunday February 9, Mazahir Sahir, Executive Director of the Immigrant Welcome Network, will be our guest.

Each year in January and February, our Mission Board plans Sunday morning Adult Education sessions that give us a chance to learn about the work that we are doing in our community and in the larger world. This year the Mission Board is helping us develop closer relationships with some of the Iowa City area organizations that we support. Join us each Sunday through February 23 in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m. And because Lent starts so late this year (Ash Wednesday is March 5), there will be a special bonus session on Sunday, March 2!

**SOUPER BOWL OF CARING:** Next Sunday, February 9, we will participate in the **Souper Bowl of Caring**, a grassroots hunger relief initiative. Whether you're watching the game and eating some of the 65 million avocados that Americans will eat that day or not, we encourage you to join in putting some money in the soup kettles that the young people of our congregation will have both upstairs and downstairs after worship. The original request with this project was to give \$1.00 if you were watching the game. Now—whether you're watching or not, give whatever you'd like. All money will go to the CommUnity Crisis Center Food Pantry.

**2025 NIGHT OF 1000 DINNERS:** Congregational UCC members and friends are invited to attend the **2025 Night of 1000 Dinners**, hosted by the Johnson County United Nations Association. This community celebration of International Women's Day will be held Thursday, March 6, 6:00-8:00 at the Unitarian Universalist Society.

**Theme.** Sustainable Development Goal #3 "Good Health and Well-Being." The event will honor and raise funds for two local groups and an international project. The honored groups serve the health and well-being of refugees and immigrants, both here in Johnson County and in Africa. Net proceeds will support JCUNA's educational work as well as Free Medical and Dental Clinic, Prairielands Freedom Fund, Healthy Start for Refugee Children, and will recognize the Coralville Public Library for its services to refugees/immigrants.

The event will include an international buffet, entertainment by local performers from varied cultural traditions and recognition of the honored groups. Our congregation has 5 free tickets. Contact Donna Hirst ([donna-hirst@uiowa.edu](mailto:donna-hirst@uiowa.edu)), member of the event steering committee, if you'd like to attend.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 2025 SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE!** This two-day sale will be hosted on Saturday, March 8 and Sunday, March 9 from 10:30 am—4:00 pm both days at 860 Quarry Road (the old Antique Car Museum) in Coralville.

If you have gently used books, CDs, DVDs, vinyl records, and puzzles, you can drop those off during off at 860 Quarry Road in Coralville, **starting Sunday, February 2**. Donation times will be *Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays* from 10:00 am-2:00 pm, and *Sundays* from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm from February 2 until the week of the sale. Now is the time to start going through your bookshelves and deciding which books you'll return to and which books have served their purpose and are ready to inform or entertain another lucky reader. If you have many books to donate, you can take them directly to the site. **YOU CAN ALSO BRING BOOKS TO THE CHURCH AND DROP THEM OFF IN ROCKWOOD HALL AND JOHN FIESELMANN OR DONNA HIRST CAN TAKE THEM FOR YOU.** (Please note, the sale cannot accept contributions of magazines, encyclopedias, reader's digest, books with no covers or water damage, moldy or musty books, textbooks, cassette tapes, or VHS tapes.)

[Click here](#) for all you need to know about the 2025 Book Sale!

Shelter House is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help sort books, organize donations, and prepare the space for the big sale. There are more than one hundred slots that need to be filled: add your name to one today! Sign up today at [bit.ly/booksale2025](https://bit.ly/booksale2025).

**AT EASTER, IT HAS BEEN OUR TRADITION TO DISPLAY ALL KINDS OF SPRING FLOWERS** on the chancel. Bulbs need to be planted soon to bloom in time. Would you be willing to plant, tend and then display a pot of flowers on Easter? Please contact Barb Sisly (319-430-2694, [sisleywebb@aol.com](mailto:sisleywebb@aol.com)) or Rebecca Weatherford (319-621-6862, [weatherfordr1776@gmail.com](mailto:weatherfordr1776@gmail.com)) if you'd like to help so we can order enough bulbs. We'll have instructions for you, so no experience necessary!

**HELP WITH SLEEPING MATS STILL NEEDED:** With our winter weather just around the corner, the need for more sleeping mats for the homeless is growing! By contributing your plastic bags from your purchases we can help the homeless! Bring your clean, unneeded, plastic grocery bags, or similar plastic bags from your purchases here, to Rockwood Hall. We will see to it that they are delivered.

**PLEASE HELP WITH PARKING IN THE CHURCH LOT:** Several people currently have mobility issues and need to park in our small parking lot on Jefferson St. If you are able, please park elsewhere so that the marked and unmarked spaces can be used by those who need them. 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 (319-337-4301) know right away. Thanks.

**USHERS, GREETERS, AND HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITIES:** There are still some 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/1547852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.