



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

WORSHIP FOR MARCH 2, 2025  
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

“It is astonishing how much responsibility we carry as weight, rather than getting to the core and heart of the word, which literally means ‘the ability to respond.’”

David Whyte

PRELUDE “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” John Carter

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Chuck Connerly, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Liberator, Redeemer, Emancipator. (The terms roll easily off our lips.)

**For your power that notices, your passion that descends, your freedom that liberates, we thank you.**

We hold in your presence all those bonded, in fear and despair, in poverty and weariness;

**We hold those caught in crime, war, and violence, in narcissism and self-indulgence.**

**Shine upon us. Work your wonders among us.**

Bless us, Spirit of wisdom and truth, and guide us home. Work your wonders in your strength like war, in your gentleness like nursing, in your abiding love forever.

**Like moving from imposing mountains, to the level plains, to the water's edge.**

**Weakness that confounds. Shine upon us. Work your wonders.**

\* HYMN 263            "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,**

**In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,**

**Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,**

**Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,**

**Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;**

**Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above**

**Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;**

**In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;**

**We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,**

**And wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.**

**Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,**

**Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;**

**All praise we would render; O help us to see**

**'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**God, grant us humility for our journey. Humility is a natural virtue. It's one of those things that everybody has to get eventually, or else die in misery. Diminishment, for instance, is one of the facts of life that breeds humility. Diminishment is part of every experience. We get to practice it all our lives. And sometimes we understand it and sometimes we don't. Your son, Jesus, shone upon a mountain, and then walked down again to be with us. God, grant us humility enough for our journey. Amen.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#380, vs. 1 & 5)

**O Christ the healer, we have come**

**To pray for health, to plead for friends.**

**How can we fail to be restored**

**When reached by love that never ends?**

**Grant that we all, made one in faith,**

**in your community may find  
the wholeness that, enriching us,  
shall reach and prosper humankind.**

ANTHEM "I Was Glad" Roy Hopp

TIME OF PRAYER

Prayers of the People

Bidding response (*in bold*):

. . . Loving God, by your Spirit, **grant what we ask.**

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

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "Beautiful Savior" Gregory Hamilton

\*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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(The children are dismissed to Children's Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Exodus 34:29-35

PSALM 99

Awaken, O you people! Entrust your hearts to Love.

For the Beloved reigns supreme; let all the earth give thanks!

**Your unseen Presence is great in the land;**

**You sit with the leaders of nations.**

**Let them be silent and guided by your Voice! Holy are You!**

You are mighty and love justice, You establish equity;

Out of the Silence, your Word can be heard in the land

inviting the nations to live in peace.

Listen O you people!

Open your hearts to the Beloved, that Truth may be born anew!

**Many who have gone before you followed the Beloved's Voice,  
the unknown saints of all generations.**

**They surrendered themselves into the Beloved's hands,  
and walked with confidence.  
They were guided through difficult times,  
keeping to Love's way, and trusting in Love's promises.**

O Heart of all hearts, You answered their prayers;  
with mercy, you forgave them their wrongdoings,  
always inviting them to new life.

**Sing praises to the Beloved,  
and aspire to ascend the holy mountain.  
Holy are You, O Giver of Life!**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 9:28-43a

SERMON "The Geography of Discipleship"

\*HYMN 73 "Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory"

**Swiftly pass the clouds of glory,  
Heaven's voice, the dazzling light;  
Moses and Elijah vanish;  
Christ alone commands the height!  
Peter, James, and John fall silent,  
Turning from the summit's rise  
Downward toward the shadowed valley  
Where their Lord has fixed His eyes.**

**Glimpsed and gone the revelation,  
They shall gain and keep its truth,  
Not by building on the mountain  
Any shrine or sacred booth,  
But by following the Savior  
Through the valley to the cross  
And by testing faith's resilience  
Through betrayal, pain, and loss.**

**Lord, transfigure our perception  
With the purest light that shines,  
And recast our life's intentions  
To the shape of Your designs,  
Till we seek no other glory  
Than what lies past Calvary's hill  
And our living and our dying  
And our rising by Your will.**

\*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" Heinrich Fleischer

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PSALM: from Nan C. Merrill. “Psalm 99.” *Psalms for Praying: an Invitation to Wholeness*. New York: Continuum, 2008. 194-195.)

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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

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

#### WEDNESDAY

❖ Soup Supper	6:00 pm
Ash Wednesday Worship	7:00 pm

#### SATURDAY

❖ Mission Board Retreat (Oaknoll)	10-2
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#### NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am
Choir Rehearsal	11:30 am
Bible Study	11:30 am

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

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

**WE WELCOME THE REV. CRAIG HENDERSON** to our pulpit this morning. Craig is a UCC minister who has been worshipping with us. He is a graduate of Lancaster Theological

Seminary and most recently served at St. Paul UCC in Denver, IA. Bill Lovin is taking the weekend off and will be back on Monday.

**ASH WEDNESDAY SOUP SUPPER AND WORSHIP SERVICE BEGIN THE SEASON OF LENT ON MARCH 5.** On Wednesday, March 5, our Board of Christian Education will host a supper in Rockwood Hall from 6-7 p.m. Bring your family and friends and join others for soup, good company, and good conversation. After eating, we will hold our Ash Wednesday worship service in the sanctuary at 7:00. This will be a time of music and song, scripture and prayer, and the distribution of ashes for those who want them. The worship service is designed for people of all ages. Easter is Sunday, April 20, this year.

**ADULT EDUCATION:** Join us around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m. this Sunday, March 2. Mission Board member, John Reitz, will lead a discussion about how we make mission funding decisions.

**PLEASE NOTE: DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 9.** Set your clock forward one hour before you go to bed on Saturday and you'll get to church on time.

**8-WEEK SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY:** The Rev. Ann Molsberry is offering an 8-week Bible study that promises to do the whole Bible in one 8-week sweep. We will use *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* by Bernhard Anderson, a progressive introduction/overview of the whole Bible. **We will meet AFTER worship at 11:30 in the library on Sunday March 9.** The choir will be having extended rehearsals after worship beginning Sunday March 9 to prepare Easter music and continue after Easter through Sunday, May 11. We will schedule our 8-week study within that time-frame.

This is a beginner class that will appeal to the "choir widow/widowers," teachers, confirmed youth, and college students. We have childcare. We will provide a sub sandwich lunch at our first session and decide what to do for lunch (if anything) after that first session.

**Please purchase your own book (\$14.00...Amazon offers used copies for less.) and come to the class with the first chapter and Bible readings done.**

**THE WOMEN'S READING GROUP IS** reading *In the Sanctuary of Women* by Jan Richardson. Join us for discussion of chapter 1, "The Beginning of All Things: The Book of Eve," on Saturday, March 15, at 10 a.m. in front of the fireplace in Rockwood Hall.

**ART CONTEST:** The Climate Hope Art Contest that Izzy Brown won an honorable mention for last year is sponsored by the National UCC Center for Environmental Justice. This year's theme is "Planting Seeds of Hope". Sunday school lessons in February will feature stories and reflections on finding/creating hope in sustainability. Artwork may be 9" x 12" or 8.5" x 11" on any surface that can be scanned. Submit your artwork to Hope Spragg by March 7.

**CAN YOU HELP PROVIDE BREAKFAST?** To reduce single-use packaging and highly processed food in Sunday school-provided breakfasts, we are looking for help providing freshly baked or cooked breakfast items and fresh fruit. Label and drop off items in the refrigerator or kitchen the week before or in the morning before 9:05.

**CAMP STRONGHOLD:** Youth entering 6th-9th grade next year are invited to summer church camp June 8-13 (Sunday-Friday) at Camp Stronghold, along the Rock River just south of Rockford, IL. We will join First Presbyterian and Saint Andrews for a week at a 1930's castle on 360 acres including a swimming pool. Activities include Bible studies, singing, night games, skits and more! Cost is \$525 for the week and we plan on creatively funding partial scholarships for families and depending on interest, transportation will be included from the church. Link to brochure: Click here for Camp Stronghold brochure. This is a wonderful opportunity we hope you will consider! If you are interested in (partially) sponsoring a youth to attend, contact Hope Spragg. Fun fact: Ask the Strang about the history of the camp!

**JOIN CHAMBER SINGERS OF IOWA CITY FOR AN EVENING OF CHORAL FAVORITES** designed to chase away the lingering winter blues. Enjoy a diverse program featuring works by Morten Lauridsen, Handel, Haydn, and many more. This concert will transport you with its blend of poignant and uplifting pieces, offering a respite from the cold and a reminder of the beauty that awaits us in the spring. **This afternoon, Sunday, March 2, 7:00 PM Voxman Music Building Concert Hall.** Buy tickets here: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/chambersingersofiowacity/1356613>

**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. Contact Donna Hirst ([donna-hirst@uiowa.edu](mailto:donna-hirst@uiowa.edu)), member of the event steering committee, if you'd like to attend.

**IT'S 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.

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](http://bit.ly/booksale2025).

**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.