



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 15, 2024
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Welcome to Congregational UCC. We are glad that you are here this morning. While we affirm that God speaks to us in many ways, we ask that you silence your cell phone as you enter the sanctuary. Please use the time during the prelude to quietly prepare for worship.

“We become neighbors when we are willing to cross the road for one another... There is a lot of road crossing to do. We are all very busy in our own circles. We have our own people to go to and our own affairs to take care of. But if we could cross the road once in a while and pay attention to what is happening on the other side, we might indeed become neighbors.”

Henri J.M. Nouwen

PRELUDE “Intermezzo” Healey Willan

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ben Copeland, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Out of the fullness of our lives
we bring all that we are to worship.

Unison

With glad hearts let us join together and worship God.

*** HYMN 272 “God of the Sparrow”**

God of the sparrow

God of the whale

God of the swirling stars

How does the creature say Awe

How does the creature say Praise

God of the earthquake

God of the storm

God of the trumpet blast

How does the creature cry Woe

How does the creature cry Save

God of the rainbow

God of the cross

God of the empty grave

How does the creature say Grace

How does the creature say Thanks

God of the hungry

God of the sick

God of the prodigal

How does the creature say Care

How does the creature say Life

God of the neighbor

God of the foe

God of the pruning hook

How does the creature say Love

How does the creature say Peace

God of the ages

God near at hand

God of the loving heart

**How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Eternal God, we come into your presence bewildered by who we are and how we are to live. We come before you seeking the wisdom of your presence. You know us better than we know ourselves or can know each other. Let us see our lives and the lives of those around us set in relation to your greater life and all you desire for us.

You ask us to love you, our neighbors, and ourselves. Help us to trust that we can love because you love us first. Out of this strength, may we find the ways we can love our neighbors. May we forgive, hold nothing against another, and find the path through our world filled with your compassion. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#335, vs. 1 & 3)**

**Though I may speak with bravest fire,
and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain,
as clanging gongs, and hopeless gain.**

**Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
by this we worship, and are freed.**

ANTHEM “Sing to the Lord a New Song” Robert Lau

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

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Canon” Josef Renner

*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 Choir)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord. You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the Lord. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

PSALM 146

Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

I will praise the Lord as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

**Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth,
for there is no help in them.**

When they breathe their last, they return to earth,
and in that day their thoughts perish.

**Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help!
whose hope is in the Lord their God;**

who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;

**who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger.**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;

**the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous
and cares for the stranger;**

the Lord sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way of the wicked.

**The Lord shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Hallelujah!**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

SERMON “Love Your Neighbor—It’s Important”

*HYMN 332 “Live into Hope”

**Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!**

**Live into hope! The blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.**

**Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.**

**Live into hope of captives freed
from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
to faith and hope and joy and peace.**

BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Fanfare” Healey Willan

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Opening Prayer with acknowledgement to the Presbyterian *Worshipbook*, pg. 205.2.

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

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU ARE WORSHIPING WITH US THIS MORNING.

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

TODAY

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| ❖ Choir Rehearsal | 9:00 am |
| Christian Education Program Begins | 9:15 am |
| Worship Service | 10:15 am |

MONDAY

- ❖ Serving at Hope Lodge

TUESDAY

- | | |
|--------------------|---------|
| ❖ Membership Board | 5:30 pm |
| Diaconate | 7:00 pm |
| Trustees | 7:00 pm |
| Stewardship Board | 7:00 pm |

SATURDAY

- ❖ Men’s Breakfast 8:00 am
- ❖ Kitchen Orientation 9:00 am

NEXT SUNDAY

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| ❖ Choir Rehearsal | 9:00 am |
| Christian Education for All Ages | 9:15 am |
| Worship Service | 10:15 am |

SECRETS OF THE CHURCH KITCHEN REVEALED! Mysteries of the kitchen unlocked!

Please join us for a kitchen orientation on Saturday, September 28 at 9:00 AM.

- Discover where all the silverware is.
- View our collection of dinner plates.
- Is there really a place for the condiments?

Find out—and amaze your friends.

And of course, coffee pots for every occasion.

Please sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall. And while you're there you can volunteer to greet, usher or host hospitality. Don't let this opportunity pass you by.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be Monday, September 16. If you would like to participate, see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall. If you have questions contact Sue Dayton cdayton7@mchsi.com

THE FIRST GATHERING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS will be in late September. Watch for the date. People who have signed up have said they are looking for a place to talk about how current life is going and to share a meal—so that's what we'll do at the first gathering. If you would like to sign up and get more information, look for the table downstairs.

YOU CAN HELP WITH THE FREE LUNCH PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER: Members of Congregational UCC serve at the Free Lunch Program on the fifth Monday of any month. Our next serving date is September 30 and if you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Vicki Thomae at vickithomae@gmail.com.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OUR PROGRESSIVE DINNER on Saturday, October 5, 2024. Ray and Linda Muston and Bill Dickinson will host appetizers for everyone at Oaknoll. Then, in small groups of 8 to 12, we will go to other homes for the catered dinner. After dinner, we will gather at Steve and Sue Wolken's home for dessert. This is always a special event for fellowship. Please make plans to join us.

FALL DIAPER DRIVE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD BANK: The Mission Board is holding a diaper drive in **September and October** to help the Food Bank replenish its supply of diapers for families in need. The Food Bank relies on donations for non-food items such as disposable diapers. Please help babies and toddlers in our community stay dry, clean, and healthy by participating in the diaper drive. **Diaper sizes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are the most needed as well as baby wipes.** There are two ways you can help. Buy a package of disposable diapers and wipes and bring them to Rockwood Hall. We will ensure that everything is delivered to the Food Bank. Or, if you would like to make a personal donation to support this drive, please write a check to the church with Diaper Drive on the memo line and the Mission Board will use the funds to purchase diapers. Whichever way you choose, your donation will help restock the Food Bank's diaper supply, provide free diapers for babies and toddlers in need and bring some economic relief to families.

WINTER CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION will be from the afternoon of Sunday, 10/13, through the early afternoon of Saturday, 10/19. Over the span of these days we will set up, accept clothing donations, sort & organize clothing, distribute the clothing, & clean up after the event. The event will be held in the gymnasium of The River Community Church, 3001 Muscatine Avenue, in Iowa City. (Enter the parking lot via the driveway on Muscatine Ave; please park away from the building)

As in past years, they are looking for donations of gently used or new WARM winter wear, with an emphasis on coats, snow pants, hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, boots & winter shoes. Heavy sweaters & sweatshirts are also appreciated.

Volunteers will need to register using SignUpGenius at the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B49A9AE2FA20-51081789-2024>

As you sign up, please pay attention to further information & instructions provided on our SignUpGenius.

SHELTER HOUSE BBQ BASH—SEPTEMBER 27: Shelter House is hosting this annual fundraiser at the Johnson County Fairgrounds on Friday, September 27 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm. There will be live music, games for all ages, and delicious, mouth-watering barbeque. You can support their mission to move individuals beyond homelessness by purchasing your tickets today. Tickets are on sale now at www.shelterhouseiowa.org/bbq-bash for \$50 for adults and \$17.50 for children. Visit their website for more information and to learn more about volunteering or sponsoring this event.

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.