



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ May 2025



Friends in Christ:

May is often a “wrapping up” time here at Congregational UCC. We conclude the Christian Education year. We recognize high school graduates. We say goodbye to people who have worshipped with us while studying or working at the University. We share plans for summer travels or summer work in our yards.

This year we are doing all of this and more in a big way. The Church School will keep going into early June as Hope Spragg concludes her first year as our Director of Christian Education. Fresh from a trip to Italy earlier this year, John and Randee Fieselmann will lead the two final Adult Education sessions on May 4 & 11, looking at the Last Supper in art. We'll welcome more new member and celebrate the sacrament of baptism. On May 18 the choir will offer “The Hope of Loving” during worship, followed by our spring brunch. We will celebrate graduations and say goodbye.

It's a time of wrapping up.

And yet...

We never really “wrap up” what we're doing here. Our ministry and mission of feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, sheltering the homeless, and sharing the love and compassion of God that we have known in Jesus goes on all year. All of this is becoming more urgent and more important as the voices of those who will not feed, will not welcome, will not shelter, and will not show love or compassion grow louder. This summer, we will let our actions and our words send a loud and clear message that Congregational UCC is a beacon of hope on the corner of Jefferson and Clinton. We will do this together, gaining strength from one another as we worship and work and eat and march and celebrate.

This year, then, May is more of a start-up than a wrap-up. We'll do a lot and then do more in June as we walk in the Pride Parade and get together for the church picnic. And we'll keep on feeding and welcoming and sheltering and sharing all summer long. Be a part of it. Gain strength and give strength through our life together.

Peace,

Bill

P.S.: Once again, I will be taking a mini-sabbatical for the month of June, taking time to further reflect on and write about preaching. I thank our Church Council and all of you for making this possible. By taking a month at a time, rather than the traditional three months at once, I receive valuable time for work that couldn't be done otherwise and I am able to actively plan for the coming 2025-26 year as we continue in this time of growth, renewal, and vital ministry and mission.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Peter Spragg



Ella Lewis



Oscar Lewis



Liliana Lewis

Congregational UCC Iowa City Christian Education

May 2025

- **A special thank you** to Darcie Hutzell, Fielding Woolums, Matt and Peter Spragg and Tom Mittman for participating in our Mercer Park litter clean-up day on April 6!
- **Sunday School:** We will meet during Sunday school time (9:15) through June 8! There will be Children's church during worship throughout summer and we will reconvene SS with Rally Day on Sunday, September 7!
- Mark your calendar for **Iowa City Pride** Festival Saturday, June 21! Children & youth (and families) are encouraged to walk with your church family during the parade and help at our booth during the day.
- **Summer Social Justice Camp:** Mark your calendars for this year's vacation Bible school! All children pre-k-high school are encouraged to attend as campers or helpers! Monday-Thursday, August 18-21 (hours TBD)
See sign-up in Rockwood Hall.

Sunday, May 4 Breakfast & Sunday School 9:15
Children's Choir sings during worship/Children's Church
Nursery open 9-12:30

Sunday, May 11 Mother's Day Sunday School 9:15
Acolytes: Adelaide and Fielding
Children's Church during worship
Nursery open 9-12:30
Bake Sale fundraiser for Camp Stronghold following worship

Monday, May 12 Serve dinner at Hope Lodge 5:45
750 Hawkins Dr, Iowa City, IA 52246
Sign-up in Rockwood Hall

Sunday, May 18 Breakfast & Sunday School 9:15
Acolytes: Ella and Oscar
Children's church during worship
Nursery open 9-11:30
Spring Brunch following worship/special music

Sunday, May 25 Breakfast & Sunday School 9:15
Acolytes: Adelaide and Fielding
Children's Church during worship
Nursery open 9-11:30

SAVE THE DATE:

Sunday, June 8 End-of-School Pancake Party @9:15

Saturday, June 21 Iowa City Pride
Parade @noon; Booth 1-5

Sunday, June 22 Church Family Picnic (approx.) 4 PM
Shelter 12, Lower City Park

Mon-Thurs Vacation Bible School 8 AM-11 AM

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT EDUCATION WRAPS UP WITH THE LAST SUPPER: On May 4 and 11, John and Randee Fieselmann will lead discussions on the meanings of the Last Supper, with slides and commentary about depictions of the Last Supper across the ages, ending with Leonardo's most famous fresco. Join us in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m.



HOPE LODGE:

Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be Monday, May 12 at 6:00 p.m.
If you would like to contribute food, check the signup sheet in Rockwood Hall or talk to Sue Dayton.



SPRING SPECIAL MUSIC SUNDAY—MAY 18

Please join us on May 18th as the UCC Choir performs Jake Runestad's "The Hope of Loving," a multimovement work for chorus, string orchestra, and soloists, featuring our own members as soloists, Marie Von Behren (soprano) and Colin Wilson (tenor), along with guest soloist Brian Banion (bass). The "Hope of Loving" uses a selection of writings inspired by spiritual mystics throughout history to explore the idea of love and its manifestation in our lives.

MAY 18 SPRING BRUNCH AFTER WORSHIP

The Membership Board is hosting a Spring Brunch in Rockwood Hall after our worship that morning on May 18, our spring Special Music Sunday. During this time, we will recognize members who joined the church this past year. The brunch will be catered. So, no need to bring anything. To help us plan, we would like to get an approximate count of how many people will attend. Please indicate on the sign-up sheets in Rockwood Hall if you plan to attend and how many may be coming with you. We are looking forward to this time to celebrate spring and enjoy beautiful music.



MISSION BOARD OPEN AND AFFIRMING EVENTS

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here" is a core value of the United Church of Christ denomination and our church has lived this creed through the years. Consistent with this commitment, support for the LGBTQ+ community is one of the top Mission Board priorities for 2025.

There are two Mission Board led opportunities for you to share in support of LGBTQ friends at a time when threatening legislation has been adopted and university support and recognition has been eliminated. For more information and to become involved in either event contact any of the Mission Board LGBTQ Subcommittee members: Diane Atkins, Martha Ann Crawford, Carson Fixmer, Linda Muston, Hope Spragg, Rebecca Weatherford, and Julie Wittig.

CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#1 Wednesday, May 14, 4 to 6:30 p.m.

The Pride Alliance Center Rainbow Graduation will be held at our church. The Rainbow Graduation Celebration recognizes the achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students, as well as their advocates. This annual event honors both undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who graduate in the fall or spring semester.

The Rainbow Graduation Celebration features UI faculty, staff, students, and community members, and is followed by a reception. If you can help provide refreshments, please sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall. The Oaknoll LGBTQ+ committee and allies have generously supported this event with volunteer time and funds. Everyone is welcome to attend and support the organizing students who are unable to use university spaces, funds or staff as they have in previous years.

#2 Saturday, June 21

Iowa City Pride Fest Celebration is Saturday, June 21, in downtown Iowa City and our church family will again participate in the 12 noon parade and with a booth from 1 to 6 p.m. Sign-up sheets in Rockwood Hall are available for parade participants and booth volunteers. Last year more than 40 family and friends represented our congregation in a show of support for the LGBTQ+ community continuing our effort to remind everyone YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

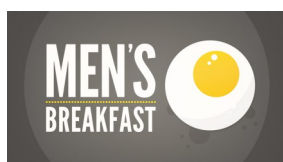


ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



WOMEN'S LUNCH—MAY 15

The May 15 women's lunch will meet at Kava House in Swisher. The address is 122 2nd St SW. Please call or Text Martha Ann Crawford at 319-855-8340 to reserve a seat at the table. **carpool can be arranged!*



MEN'S BREAKFAST—MAY 17

The May Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 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!

SAVE THE DATES!—ALL CHURCH GATHERINGS

The Membership Board is looking ahead to a couple of much-loved congregational events and we want you to be a part of them. Mark your calendars now and look for more information in the months ahead about:



ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC—Sunday, June 22, in City Park
PROGRESSIVE DINNER—Saturday, October 4, at lots of locations

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO OUR ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING on Palm Sunday. So far, we have received nearly \$5000. In a world where communities are being displaced by the catastrophes of war, famine, and natural disaster, our congregation joins with many others in standing in faith, hope, and love with those who seek to move beyond the trauma of displacement toward the promise of healing and peace. Your generous gift will support the relief work of not only the UCC but also many other denominations united in caring for refugees, in providing medical care, and in disaster recovery efforts. There's still time to give—or to give more. Please use the special OGHS envelopes in the pews and/or put "OGHS" on your check memo line.



EASTER BREAKFAST!

We had a joy-filled Easter morning in April, beginning with breakfast in Rockwood Hall. Thanks to Rick Rupert and Bryan Clemons for leading this effort—and to all who helped!



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

FREE LUNCH PROGRAM NEWS

Providing Good Food and Hospitality since 1983

Our church served 127 lunches at the Free Lunch Program on **Monday, March 31, 2025.**

Thank you so much to all who volunteered by donating food: **Sue Dayton, Diane Duncan-Goldsmith, Randee Fieselmann, Betsy Henson, Donna Hirst, Cynthia Kemp, Linda Muston, Rebecca Weatherford and Julie Wittig**

Additional thanks to **Diane Dahl-McCoy, John Fieselmann, Betsy Henson, Kathi Koegle, Marsha Lowe, John Reitz, Kevin Richards, Edie Roberts, Rick Ruppert, Laurie Stunz and Julie Wittig** for their valuable onsite support.

Our next scheduled serving date is **Monday, June 30, 2025.** If you would like to begin to receive the signup sheet sent by email, please contact me at vickithomae@gmail.com

Vicki Thomae



CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

Dylan Beerends, McKenzie Brown, and Noam Morton are all graduating from City High on May 31. They will be recognized during worship this month.

Ben Copeland graduates from UI this month. He will be moving to Indiana to pursue a Masters Degree in Music at Indiana University.

Former Congregational Church member, the Rev. Raven Rowe, received her Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in the Twin Cities (a UCC seminary) in April.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CONGREGATIONAL UCC MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to:

Tom Mittman, CBS Channel 2's #20 prep coach of the century. In 20 years as City High girls cross country coach, he led the Little Hawks to the State meet every single season, and won 5 State championships.



Roger Mills, who will be inducted into the Johnson County Democratic Party Hall of Fame on Saturday, May 10.

THE UNITED ACTION FOR YOUTH'S FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

The Mission Board is a presenting sponsor for the United Action for Youth's Festival of Flowers, which provides us with a table for 8. This event, May 22, 2025 at the Graduate Hotel at 5 PM is the single fundraiser for UAY. Hors d'oeuvres and wine will be served. The show will feature over 100 floral arrangements from community members and professional florists, available to purchase in a silent auction. Dinner parties, travel packages and more will be featured in a live auction. UAY's mission is to nurture the potential for all youth to create, grow and succeed. They provide crisis and mediation programs, counseling, health education, music programs, LGBTQ+ programs, homeless youth services, and a young parent program. In 2024, the counseling services provided 3146 sessions for 314 families, safe and stable housing for 46 youth, and support to 65 families including 102 children. UAY supports three of the six MB priorities for 2025: Medical/Mental Health, Children/Youth, and LGBTQ+. If you would like to attend, please let Jenn Harden (uccicadmin@uccic.org) know.



SEE SOMETHING—SAY SOMETHING: If you notice something in the building that needs attention—possums in the pews, racoons in Rockwood, a leaky faucet, a loose railing, etc.—please let the church office know right away. Thanks.

USHERS, GREETERS, AND HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITIES: Each Sunday morning brings 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.



CHURCH CALENDAR

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 -9:00 Choir Rehearsal - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service w/ communion - 11:30 Choir Rehearsal	5	6 -CE Board, 7:00pm - Mission Board, 7:00pm - Stewardship Board (Zoom), 7pm	7	8	9	10
11 - 9:00 Choir Rehearsal - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Sunday Worship Service - 11:30 Choir Rehearsal	12 - Hope Lodge, 6pm	13	14	15 - Women's Lunch, 11:45am at Kava House, Swisher	16	17 - Men's breakfast, 8am
18 - 9:00 Choir Rehearsal - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Sunday Worship Service, Special Music - Spring brunch after worship	19	20 - Membership, 5:30pm - Deacons meeting, 7pm - Trustees, 7pm	21	22	23	24
25 - 9:00 Choir Rehearsal - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service	26	27 - Council Meeting, 7pm	28	29	30	31

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATING MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/5	Ed Leighton-Dick
5/13	Allan Hogue
5/14	Edie Roberts
5/15	Elizabeth Groff
5/16	Gloria Hanson Barbara Sisley
5/17	Dylan Beerends
5/19	John Rauer
5/20	Janet Williams Betsy Henson
5/22	Karen Smith Courtney Nelson
5/24	Kathy Thede-Reynolds Megan Carnes Hannah Leighton-Dick
5/27	Cynthia Kemp
5/28	Robyn Wood Groff
5/30	Oscar Hill
5/31	David Dowling



ARTICLES FOR THE JUNE NEWSLETTER
are due to the office by Wednesday, May 21.



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 North Clinton Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER



CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 319-337-4301

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org

Pastor:

Interim Director of CE

Music Director

Organist

Children's Choir Director

Office Manager

Financial Secretary

Custodians:

The Rev. William Lovin

Hope Spragg

Dr. Chris Nakielski

Bill Crouch

Rachel Burchett

Jenn Harden

Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

Douglas Herrera

Claudia Landaverde

uccicrev@uccic.org

c.nakielski@cornellcollege.edu

Contact the Office

uccicadmin@uccic.org

sharynreitz@gmail.com

Contact the Office

For up to date announcements, check us out on Facebook.