

A Service for the New Year



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

WORSHIP FOR JANUARY 1, 2023
THE EIGHTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS
NEW YEAR'S DAY

“We cannot make disappointments, sadness, loss, or winter go away. But we can say ‘Now I begin!’ Today I will let the light of faith shine on my dark morning. Today I will look for signs of spring among the dead leaves of another year. Today I will take the path before me where Christ has gone ahead to clear the way. Today, I will look for the miracle that will change the impossible situation into the birthplace of joy. Today I will be grateful for what I have instead of bitter about what I have lost. Today I will laugh. Today I begin again.”

Tim Haut

PRELUDE “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” Wilbur Held

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Marsha Lowe, Liturgist

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

“All glory be to God on high,
 and peace on earth!” the angels cry.

[Unison]

**Rejoice, rejoice, with thanks embrace
 another year of grace.**

Let us worship God.

***HYMN “All Beautiful the March of Days”**

**All beautiful the march of days, as seasons come and go;
the hand that shaped the rose has formed the crystal of the snow,
Has sent the silver frost of heaven, the flowing waters sealed,
And laid a silent loveliness on hill and wood and field.**

**O’er brilliant fields of sparkling snow the radiant morns unfold;
The solemn splendors of the night burn brightly through the cold.
Life mounts in every pulsing vein, love deepens 'round the hearth,
And clearer sounds the angel hymn, "Good will to all on earth."**

**O God from whose unfathomed law the year in beauty flows,
yourself the splendid vision seen in crystal and in rose,
The passing days with grace declare, and passing nights proclaim,
In ever-changing words of light, the wonder of your name.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**God of wisdom and truth, we look back with gratitude and we look forward with
expectation. Remembering the year that has passed, we are thankful that you were present
with us and we rejoice that nothing could separate us from your love.
In the year ahead, give us grace and give us courage, that we might live with faith in this
imperfect world; that we might live with hope in these challenging days; and that we might
live with love as we follow in the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#414, vs. 2)**

**A world in need now summons us To labor, love, and give,
To make our life an offering To God that all may live.
The church of Christ is calling us To make the dream come true:
A world redeemed by Christ-like love, All life in Christ made new.**

ANTHEM

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.

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "The First Noel" Wilbur Held

*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

SCRIPTURE LESSON Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

PSALM 90:1-4, 12-17

Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.

**Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.**

You turn us back to the dust and say,
"Go back, O child of earth."

**For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night.**

So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

**Return, O Lord; how long will you tarry?
be gracious to your servants.**

Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;
so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

Make us glad by the measure of the days that you humbled us
and the years in which we suffered adversity.

Show your servants your works
and your splendor to their children.

**May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands;
prosper our handiwork.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Ephesians 5:15-20

SERMON “The Living of These Days”

*HYMN 28 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow,
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice,
With heart, and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door,
And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice,
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all,
To gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “God Rest You Merry” Wilbur Held

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OPENING PRAYER, by John W. Vest, adapted.

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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

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING. We are putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first. Masks are highly recommended. Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED TOMORROW, JANUARY 2 IN CELEBRATION OF THE NEW YEAR. Jenn will be in the office from Tuesday through Friday this coming week.

OUR CHRISTMAS OBSERVANCES AND CELEBRATIONS renew some of our traditional activities and events and also bring some new possibilities. Here are some important dates: New Year’s Day, Sunday, January 1—Worship at 10:15 a.m. January 8—Epiphany Sunday; The Sacrament of Communion

CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING: Each year, the United Church of Christ’s Christmas Fund Offering allows the UCC to assist retired pastors living on limited incomes as well as to supplement small retirement annuities and health premiums and to provide emergency grants to active and retired clergy and lay employees. The mission of the Christmas Fund is to provide assistance dollars in situations of critical need, while preserving the dignity of those who receive the aid.

There is still time to give to this offering. Please remember that your generous contributions can and do make a difference in the lives of many people.

A NEW MEMBER CLASS WILL BE HELD IN JANUARY. If you are interested in joining Congregational UCC or would like more information, please talk with Bill Lovin.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC OF IOWA CITY will be held in the sanctuary following our worship on Sunday, January 29, 2023. We will receive reports of Boards and Committees, vote on the budget for 2023, and transact any other business that is fitting and necessary.

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

A BUSY CHRISTMAS SEASON HAS DELAYED THE PUBLICATION OF THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER. It will be posted later this week. We thank you for your understanding.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be on Monday, January 23. Please see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall if you would like to participate.

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 or Trustee Chairperson, Kevin Richards, know right away. You can reach Kevin at (608) 807-7195 or at kd Richards1958@gmail.com. Thanks.

USHERS, GREETERS, AND HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITIES: As we continue to reopen, there are new 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/154m7852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.