



“Wedding Feast”—John August Swanson

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

WORSHIP FOR JANUARY 12, 2025
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

“Maybe the inviting of friends and family to witness the joy two have found together, and the hopeful future they dare to embark upon, is the best of occasions – outside of a manger – for Jesus to offer us a miracle that changes *no-more* into *more-than-enough* and even into *the-very-best-of-all-good-things*.”

Nancy Rockwell

PRELUDE “Prélude sur l’Intrôit de l’Épiphanie”

Maurice Duruflé

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tina Koepnick, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

God’s love reaches to the heavens,
and God’s faithfulness to the clouds.

**All may take refuge, feast on abundance,
and drink from the fountain of life.**

God is the well of life.

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 265 “Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand”**

**Great God, we sing that mighty hand
By which supported still we stand;
The opening year Your mercy shows;
That mercy crowns it till it close.**

**With grateful hearts the past we own;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to Your guardian care commit,
And peaceful leave before Your feet.**

**In scenes exalted or depressed,
You are our joy, and You our rest;
Your goodness all our hopes shall raise,
Adored through all our changing days.**

***OPENING PRAYER (Church of Scotland, The Rev. Sandy Forsyth, adapted)**

We thank you, God, that you have been with us in the past.

You have led us through the wilderness that life can be.

When we were lost, you searched for us.

When we were in deepest struggle, you comforted us.

For your love and commitment to all people, we praise you, God.

Come to us now in our lives as we look ahead once more.

In worship, speak to us.

In our journey through life, go with us.

When our lives are troubled, be with us.

When we are uncertain, steady us.

For your love which holds us, we give you thanks. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#292, vs. 3)**

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.**

ANTHEM “Arise, Shine, for Your Light Has Come” Martin How

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 “As with Gladness Those of Old” Henry J. Markworth

*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 Amos 9:11-14

PSALM 36:5-10

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens,
and your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Your righteousness is like the strong mountains,
your justice like the great deep;
you save humans and beasts alike, O Lord.**

How priceless is your love, O God!
your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.

**They feast upon the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from the river of your delights.**

For with you is the well of life,
and in your light we see light.

**Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you,
and your favor to those who are true of heart.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON John 2:1-11

SERMON “The Inaugural Event”

*HYMN 434 “Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples”

**Today we all are called to be
disciples of the Lord,
to help to set the captive free,
make plowshare out of sword,
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst,
make love and peace our fast,
to serve the poor and homeless first,
our ease and comfort last.**

**God made the world and at its birth
ordained our human race
to live as stewards of the earth,
responding to God’s grace.
But we are vain and sadly proud;
we sow not peace but strife.
Our discord spreads a deadly cloud
that threatens all of life.**

**Pray justice may come rolling down
as in a mighty stream,
with righteousness in field and town
to cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore
an earth where conflicts cease,
a world that was created for
a harmony of peace.**

**May we in service to our God
act out the living word,
and walk the road the saints have trod
till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we
give thanks in one accord
to God who calls us all to be
disciples of the Lord.**

*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “How Lovely Shines the Morning Star”

Michael Praetorius

Cover Art: Swanson, John August. “Wedding Feast,” from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act->

imagelink.pl?RC=58581 [retrieved January 8, 2025]. Original source: Estate of John August Swanson, <https://www.johnaugustswanson.com/>. Used with permission.

Opening Prayer—Church of Scotland, The Rev. Sandy Forsyth, adapted

“Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples,” Words - ©1985, 1989 Presbyterian Publishing/Westminster John Knox/Geneva Press. Contributors: H. Kenn Carmichael. 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
Legislative Briefing	After Worship

TUESDAY

❖ Board of Christian Education	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, January 12, to learn about the Free Medical and Dental Clinic. The Clinic strives to provide the widest range of medical and dental services possible to people in the Iowa City and surrounding community who would not otherwise have access to care. Next Sunday, January 19, the Director, of Healing Prairie Farm, Heather Bopp, will lead the session.

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!

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE IOWA LEGISLATURE THIS UPCOMING SESSION?

The Mission Board LGBTQ Subcommittee is continuing the “We Are Still Learning” series this morning. **Senator Zach Wahls** will give a preview of the upcoming state legislature session for everyone interested during an expanded coffee hour in Rockwood Hall at 11:30. Senator Wahls represents Senate District 43 which includes Coralville, North Liberty, Solon and part of western Iowa City and rural northeast Johnson County.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST will be held on Sunday, January 26, in the sanctuary, following our 10:15 worship service. We will receive reports of Boards and Committees, vote on the budget for 2025, and transact any other business that is fitting and necessary.

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.

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) or Rebecca Weatherford (319-621-6862, 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.

(the revelation of Jesus to the Gentiles, the coming of the Magi) with us on Sunday, January 5, 2025. In our 10:15 worship service we will bring our observance of Christmas to a conclusion, hearing the story of the Magi from the Gospel of Matthew. We will also share in the sacrament of communion.

Prayer for the Iowa State House

Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz and Rev. Mark Pries

Holy One,

God of all spirit and flesh, defender and friend of our common humanity.

We come before You, as the faithful of many sacred paths:

Muslim, Christian, Jewish – and holy ways not yet represented.

We lift up in prayer our elected public servants who are embarking on their journey to serve the people of Iowa.

We ask You to soften and grow each one's heart

to hold all people in this beautiful state with regard and compassion.

We ask You to steel each one's resolve

to pursue justice, remain honest and see the humanity of all they serve.

We pray each elected one embraces the vulnerable so their voices are heard.

Help our public servants, in the words of Psalm 146,

to 'free the imprisoned, lift up the fallen, straighten the bent and protect the stranger, widow and orphan.'

Holy One, safeguard their conscience,

their moral commitments

and their dedication to democracy.

May this be Your will,

Amen