



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

WORSHIP FOR JANUARY 31, 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Jesus, the Christ, however little we know your Gospel, it is light in our midst. However little we grasp your presence, it is light for us. We search for you, Jesus, the Christ, sometimes with uncertain steps, but you have already come. You bring light into our anxiousness. You know we would never want to choose darkness but always welcome your inner light. Amen.

Brother Roger of Taizé

PRELUDE “Andante” G.H. Reichardt

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

God said, “Let there be light,”

and God saw it was good.

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world,”

and those who follow him have the light of life.

Jesus said, “You are the light of the world,”

so let your light shine.

HYMN "O Day of Radiant Gladness"

**O day of radiant gladness, O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness, most beautiful, most bright;
This day the high and lowly, through ages joined in tune,
sing "Holy, holy, holy" to the great God Triune.**

**This day at the creation the light first had its birth;
This day for our salvation Christ rose from depths of earth;
This day our Lord, victorious the Spirit sent from heaven,
And thus this day most glorious a triple light was given.**

**That light our hope sustaining, we walk the pilgrim way,
At length our rest attaining, our endless Sabbath day.
We sing to you our praises, our Hope, our Joy, our Sun:
the church its voice upraises to you blessed Three in One.**

OPENING PRAYER

We pause here O God to hold in your light our concerns about our world, our lives and all that is before us.

Let your light suffuse all we hold in our minds.

**We sit for a moment to become aware once more of your light in our lives
and the ways we may allow it to bring grace and strength to all we must do and decide.**

Bring your clarity to our understanding.

Illumine our way forward.

Let your light shine on us, in us and through us. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 58:1-12

PSALM 112:1-9

Hallelujah!

Happy are they who fear the Lord
and have great delight in the Lord's commandments!

**Their descendants will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.**

Wealth and riches will be in their house,
and their righteousness will last forever.

**Light shines in the darkness for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.**

It is good for them to be generous in lending

and to manage their affairs with justice.

**For they will never be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.**

They will not be afraid of any evil rumors;
their heart is right;
they put their trust in the Lord.

**Their heart is established and will not shrink,
until they see their desire upon their enemies.**

[Unison]

**They have given freely to the poor,
and their righteousness stands fast forever;
they will hold up their head with honor.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Philippians 3:7-16

SERMON “Power and Light”

TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “For the Beauty of the Earth” arr. John Rutter
Avery Nabholz, Wen Chin Liu, Colin Wilson, Josh Ramseyer

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN “God, Bless Your Church with Strength”

God bless your church with strength!

**Wherever we may be,
up build your servants as we work
in common ministry.**

**Urge us from fledgling faith
to venture and to soar
through open skies to sing the praise
of Christ whom we adore.**

**God bless your church with life!
May all our branches thrive,
un blemished, wholesome, bearing fruit,
abundantly alive.**

**From you, one holy vine,
in freedom may we grow;
sustain us in our mission, Lord,
your love and peace to show.**

**God bless your church with hope!
Despite chaotic days,
may we in darkness shine to light
a pathway through life's maze.
May justice be our aim,**

**and kindness ours to share;
in humbleness oh may we walk,
assured our God is there!**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Sortie” Jacque Lemmens

Swanson, John August. Festival of Lights, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56546> [retrieved January 29, 2021]. Original source: www.JohnAugustSwanson.com - copyright 2000 by John August Swanson.

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children’s Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Kristin Ramseyer

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC OF IOWA CITY will be held by Zoom at 11:30 a.m. on this morning, Sunday, January 31, 2021. We will receive reports of Boards and Committees, vote on the budget for 2021, vote on proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the congregation, and transact any other business that is fitting and necessary.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted by early Sunday morning each week 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.

DO YOU HAVE A HYMN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SING IN THE COMING MONTHS? Let Bill Lovin know. This is no guarantee that we will sing it, as the hymn will need to be covered by our reprint license, fit with the rest of the worship service and work for the person who will be leading the singing—but we’d like to hear from you and sing a new song.

WE WANT TO SEE YOU! We would like to have members and friends be a part of the greeting time during our online worship. Please send us a brief—10-30 second—video of you or your family waving, saying “Hi,” singing, or whatever you would like. Or send a photo. We’ll start including a few of these in the worship service each week as a way to strengthen our connections with each other. Send your greeting videos to https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UcrZ4ya9xFir39cG_1x-SCO6dVPBbV0B?usp=sharing

The Bible study of Paul's letter to the Philippians continues this Wednesday. Paul wrote this letter from prison and did not know what his fate would be. Although Paul was suffering and writing out of uncertainty, a sense of joy comes through in this letter. It seems to me that this letter might speak to us in these uncertain days. We gather by Zoom at 7:00 on Wednesday evenings, looking at one chapter of this book each week. This Wednesday we'll look at chapter 4. If you are interested in being a part of this study, please let Bill know by calling him at the church (337-4301) or sending an email to him at uccicrev@uccic.org.

LENT BEGINS ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17. We will have a “live” Ash Wednesday worship service on Zoom starting at 7:00 p.m. Please plan now to be a part of this as we begin preparing for the celebration of Easter. The Zoom invitation will be sent out in February.

RACIAL JUSTICE–SOCIAL ACTION DISCUSSIONS: AN INVITATION

The Mission Board invites you to participate in any or all of five discussion groups to be held via Zoom during February, March, and April of this year.

We will come together with the hope of understanding and combating racism—within ourselves and in the world around us. Through the questions we ask and the answers we propose, we will seek specific projects and goals that can lift the burden of racism that our sisters and brothers of color—indeed, all of us—carry in our daily life.

Each session will highlight a different area for social action. Each will open with brief introductory remarks, and guided discussion will follow; we encourage *all* participants to voice their own thoughts! (If attendance warrants, Zoom will help us arrange smaller discussion groups.) The sessions are scheduled as shown below.

Registration instructions: please read carefully!

Registration will be handled through **Kyle Flippo, kyle-flippo@uiowa.edu**. Please email Kyle indicating the discussion(s) you'd like to join. Approximately a week before each session, registrants will receive a welcome letter with a Zoom link. Be sure to save space on your calendar for each session!

Education	Feb. 16, Tuesday, 7:00–8:30
Affordable Housing	Feb. 25, Thursday, 7:00–8:30
Health Care	Mar. 9, Tuesday, 7:00–8:30
Immigration	Mar. 25, Thursday, 7:00–8:30
Environmental Justice	Apr. 27, Tuesday, 7:00–8:30

After you register, you'll also be offered a *few* pages of suggested reading for each session. After each discussion, you'll receive a list of proposed actions and activities.

We welcome you, and encourage you to pass our invitation on to others who may wish to join us. **If you have questions, please email Kyle Flippo, kyle-flippo@uiowa.edu.**

We need *you* for this project; please join us if you can. Few of us live without the benefits or harms of racial injustice. This is a chance for you to connect to the community and learn how you might help “to form a more perfect Union.”

UI Lecture Committee announces the Cassandra S. Foens M.D. 2021 Lecture to be held on Tuesday Feb 16 at 7:00 pm. The title will be: "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks": A Discussion on Race and Medical Ethics

Henrietta Lacks was a young Black woman who was treated at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in the early 1950's for an aggressive case of cancer. At the time of surgery, a Hopkins physician/scientist used cells from her tumor to create an immortalized cell line (designated as HeLa cells) which has been widely used in research over the years. This use of her tissue was done without her consent. The case received wide attention in recent years due to the publication of the book "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks", written by Rebecca Skloot.

The lecture committee has invited two members of the Lacks family to come and serve as a panel. Congregational UCC member, Dr. Andy Bertolatus, will serve as moderator. This will be a virtual lecture - it will be livestreamed at <https://lectures.uiowa.edu/live/>. It will also be recorded and made available after the livestream.