



The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

30 N Clinton St.
Iowa City, IA 52245
319-337-4301

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

WORSHIP FOR OCTOBER 11, 2026
TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

*Welcome to Congregational UCC.
We ask that you silence your cell phone as you enter the sanctuary.*

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE. PLEASE ASK AN USHER.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Ann Mary Mueller, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Adagio” from *Sonata I* Felix Mendelssohn

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

God calls us from many places
and gathers us together.

**God meets us in our joy and in our weariness,
in our hope and in our anxiety,
in our sufficiency and in our need.**

May we know God’s presence among us.

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 272 (vs. 1-4) “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**

Generous God, we thank you for the day newly begun: for sleep behind us, light upon us, love around us; for the needs and hopes that we have in common with all people and for all that we hold in common with life throughout the earth. God of nighttime and dawn, shine into our lives at this hour. Awaken us with wonder; renew our hope and lift us above our despair. May we worship you now in spirit and in truth and serve you this day with gladness. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#483, vs. 4)**

**Thus all my gladsome way along,
I sing aloud thy praises,
that all may hear the grateful song
my voice unwearied raises.
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart,
both soul and body bear your part:
To God all praise and glory!**

ANTHEM “Grant Us Thy Peace” Felix Mendelssohn

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 *“Offertoire”* Jacques Lemmens

*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 Proverbs 11:24-26

Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;
others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.
A generous person will be enriched,
and one who gives water will get water.
The people curse those who hold back grain,
but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.

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 II Corinthians 8:1-9

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints— and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

*HYMN (insert) “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

**God, whose giving knows no ending,
from your rich and endless store:
nature’s wonder, Jesus’ wisdom,
costly cross, grave’s shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you,
offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever,
gracious donor of our days.
Skills and time are ours for serving,
that your will on earth be done:
all at peace in health and freedom,
races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor,
lest we strive alone in vain;
use our talents talents,
guide our service
that our work your love proclaim.**

**Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through powers your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred,
and to spread the gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing
as we heed Christ’s ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming,**

honoring you by loving all.

**Lend your joy to all our giving,
let it light our pilgrim way,
from the night of anxious keeping,
lead us into generous day.
Then when years on earth are over,
and we've lived our human span,
God fulfill beyond our dreaming,
all our loving work began.**

SERMON “Growing in Generosity”

***HYMN 464 “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”**

**Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!**

**All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee.**

**Mortals, join the happy chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
Love divine is reigning o'er us,
Joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.**

***BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE “Allegro maestoso e vivace” from *Sonata II* Felix Mendelssohn

COVER GRAPHIC by Congregational UCC member Robyn Hepker.

CALL TO WORSHIP: The Rev. Dráusio Gonçalves, Church of Scotland, adapted.

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Christian Education:	Hope Spragg
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director:	David Puderbaugh
Children’s Choir Director:	Rachel Burchett
Office Manager:	Nancy LeaVesseur

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.

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

TODAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
❖ CE for Children and Adults	9:15 am
❖ Worship Service	10:15 am
❖ Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall	After Worship
❖ AWE	After Worship
❖ Choir Rehearsal	After Worship

TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga	11:00 am
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WEDNESDAY

❖ Staff Meeting	10:00 am
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THURSDAY

❖ Women’s Lunch	11:45 am
❖ Finance Committee	1:00 pm
❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal	6:30 pm

SATURDAY

❖ Men’s Breakfast	8:00 am
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NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
❖ CE for Children and Adults	9:15 am
❖ Worship Service	10:15 am

❖ Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall	After Worship
❖ AWE	After Worship
❖ Choir Rehearsal	After Worship
❖ Youth Group	5:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: NO YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT.

AWE 3—YES! AFTER WORSHIP ENCOUNTER (AWE 3) WILL MEET AFTER WORSHIP TODAY. We will be using *Living the Questions-The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity*. We are reading the THIRD SECTION: Transformation. Please read Chapter 15: A Kingdom Without Walls for our first session this fall. Grab your coffee and meet us in the library!

GENEVA LECTURE SERIES FEATURES MARILYNNE ROBINSON in conversation with Nicholas Kristof on “How Can We Hope When It All Feels Hopeless?” Monday, October 19, 7:00-8:30 p.m., MacBride Hall Auditorium. Admission is free.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 1: Each year on the First Sunday in November, Congregational UCC observes “All Saints Sunday.” This is a time for us to remember and give thanks to God for the lives of those members of Congregational UCC who have died in the past year—and for all the saints. This year we will remember Bob Stein, Bob Ashman, Richard Bloesch, Del Brown, Ann Romanowski, and a friend of our congregation, Larry Koepnick. Our worship service on this day is both solemn and joyful, befitting a congregation of people who live in the light of the resurrection. As is our custom, we will have a jazz band leading our worship on this Sunday to help us look toward that day when the saints go marchin’ in. This year the well-known local jazz pianist Dick Watson will again lead the music in what promises to be an inspiring event. Please plan to join us for this special time of worship.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be Monday November 9 at 6:00 p.m. If you would like to provide food for the dinner see the signup sheet in Rockwood Hall.

GENTLE YOGA every Tuesday at 11 AM! This 45-minute class is appropriate for beginners, experienced or anyone wishing to focus on body awareness, increased mobility, and relaxation. The \$10 suggested donation goes entirely to the Immigrant Welcome Network. If you’d like to join us, call the office to register.

SHARE THE HARVEST: Members and friends are invited to bring produce and flowers from their gardens to sell after worship each Sunday. And members and friends are invited to buy the abundant harvest. All proceeds go to the Food Pantry and CommUnity Crisis Center. So far this summer we have “harvested” \$593. Last year’s total was \$1300. Eat your vegetables (they’re good for you) and pick up some flowers (they’re good for you, too) and contribute to a great cause. Thanks!

THE ANNUAL CONSULTATION OF RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS WARM WEATHER CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION WILL BE HELD THIS WEEK. Your new or gently used/clean items will benefit our neighbors who are in need of **warm** winter wear. The following items are needed in infant, child, youth & adult sizes: Coats, snowpants, hats, gloves &

mittens, scarves, boots / winter shoes, warm socks, sweatpants, sweatshirts, vests & sweaters, long underwear & warm pants/jeans. Donations can be dropped off at The River Community Church, 3001 Muscatine Ave, Iowa City at 1-4 pm on Sunday 10/11, 9 am-6 pm on Monday 10/12, & 9 am-6 pm on Tuesday 10/13. Please use the marked driveway on Muscatine Ave. & enter by the Gymnasium door on the southeast side of the building.

THE JOY OF INDIGENEITY: STORYTELLING AS RESISTANCE: Monday, October 12, 6:00–7:30 PM, Iowa City Public Library - Also streaming online. Through conversation, poetry, literature, history, and lived experience, our guests Amber Esau, Monique Malcher, and William Green will explore the ways storytelling can honor identity, preserve culture, reclaim history, and become a source of resistance, connection, and renewal. Learn more and join us in person or online: [Upcoming Programs | Iowa City Foreign Relations Council](#)

OPEN HEARTLAND ELVES NAVIDAD EVENT—SIGN UP BY OCTOBER 15: Each year, families with children under 18 create a Navidad Wish List, sharing two gift wishes for every family member. Community members make those wishes come true by purchasing those gifts. This year, they are expecting over 400 immigrant families to participate. You can be a Navidad Elf by emailing openheartlandholiday@gmail.com. You will be matched with a local family by Oct 15, giving you plenty of time to purchase and deliver the gifts before the holiday party in early December. While the gifts themselves are much appreciated, what touches the immigrants the most is the love, care, and solidarity behind the tradition, reminding them that they are seen and valued.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR—Nametags help newer members and friends trying to put names and faces together. And—admit it—they help long-timers know who the new people are as well. They are available on the board outside of the sanctuary. Please wear them. And if you'd like one, please contact the church office.

SENDING USED MEDICINE BOTTLES TO AFRICA FOR REUSE IN CLINICS—IMPORTANT REQUEST:

1. Please donate only **orange** bottles; other colors should be recycled. Caps can be any color.
2. Bottles must have labels and all adhesive removed. Sticky bottles or bottles with residue should be recycled. I can't use them. If this is difficult for you, consider finding a partner who can help you prep the bottles.
3. Bottles should be washed in warm, soapy water. We don't want to inflict harm on individuals who could come into contact with foreign medicine.

100 Grannies, a local environmental activist group, is sending used plastic medicine bottles to Africa to assist clinics in distributing medication. Donna Hirst is in charge of this project and would be pleased to have participation from members of our congregation. For more information contact donna-hirst@uiowa.edu. She will pick up bottles on Sundays. Thank you for your assistance.

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.