



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
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WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2026
NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Today is a communion Sunday. If you are joining us online, before the worship service you are invited to assemble what you will eat and what you will drink. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or something as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.

*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 Marsha Lowe, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Communion Meditation” James Patten

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

On this World Communion Sunday,
 **we gather knowing that our sisters and brothers
 from north and south and east and west,
 from every time zone around the globe,
 also gather to share this common meal.**

The Psalmist says: “The world belongs to God.
 the earth and all its people.”

On this day, we are mindful that neighbors near and far are
 **living in the middle of natural disasters,
 living in the midst of ongoing wars,
 living in the middle of changes they cannot control,
 and finding their lives uprooted.**

The Psalmist says: “God is our refuge and our strength,
 a very present help in trouble.”

**[Unison]
 Let us worship God.**

***HYMN (insert) “Saranam, Saranam”* (vs. 1 & 2)**
 *Refuge

**Refrain: Jesus, Savior, Lord, lo, to thee I fly: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam;
thou the Rock, my refuge that's higher than I: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam.**

**In the midst of foes I cry to thee, from the ends of earth wherever I may be;
my strength in helplessness, O answer me: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam. [Refrain]**

**In thy tent give me a dwelling place, and beneath thy wings may I find sheltering grace;
O lift on me the sunshine of thy face: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam. [Refrain]**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Eternal God who creates, redeems, and sustains not only us but all that is:

Let us be at peace within ourselves.

Let us accept that we are profoundly loved and need never be afraid.

**Let us be aware that you are the source of being that is common to all of us and to
all living creatures.**

**Let us be filled with the presence of great compassion toward ourselves and toward
all living things.**

**Realizing that we are all nourished from the same source of life,
may we so live that others be not deprived of air, food, water, and shelter.**

Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be a cause of suffering to one another.

**With humility we pray for the establishment of peace in our hearts and on earth.
Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (insert) "Saranam, Saranam"* (vs. 3)**

***Refuge**

**Refrain: Jesus, Savior, Lord, lo, to thee I fly: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam;
thou the Rock, my refuge that's higher than I: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam.**

**O that I my vows to thee may pay, and that by thy faithfulness to me each day
may live, and on thy love my burdens lay: Saranam, Saranam, Saranam. [Refrain]**

ANTHEM "Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether" Harold Friedell

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "Communion," Op. 39, No. 5 Alexandre Guilmant

***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**

(The children are dismissed to Children's Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 66:18b-23

I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them. From them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud—which draw the bow—to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, just as the Israelites bring a grain-offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites, says the Lord.

For as the new heavens and the new earth,
 which I will make,
shall remain before me, says the Lord,
 so shall your descendants and your name remain.
From new moon to new moon,
 and from sabbath to sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
says the Lord.

PSALM 87

On the holy mount stands the city God founded;
the Lord loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

**Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of God.**

Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babel;
Philistia, too, and Tyre, with Ethiopia.

“This one was born there,” they say.

And of Zion it shall be said:

“This one and that one were born there,”
for the Most high will establish it.

**The Lord records in the register of the peoples,
“This one was born there.”**

[Unison]

**Singers and dancers alike say,
“All my springs are in you.”**

SCRIPTURE LESSON I Corinthians 10:16-17

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

SERMON “Something Special to See Here”

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

From every corner of the earth, Christ calls us to the table.

We come from many peoples, many places, many traditions.

We come with the songs of our ancestors and the prayers of those who came before us.

We come carrying stories of faith, struggle, hope, and joy.

Some come to this table with abundance. Some come longing for daily bread. Christ welcomes us all.

Some come singing. Some come grieving. Some come with questions. Some come with gratitude. Christ welcomes us all.

Today, the walls that divide us do not have the final word.

At Christ's table, there is room for all.

HYMN 515 "Now to Your Table Spread"

Now to your table spread

We come, each one in faith

That You alone provide the words of life and death:

In wine and bread,

On promised food

We find Your loving heart, O God.

Hands of the world stretch out

Your mystery to touch

In longing to believe a truth beyond our reach,

To sing in joy,

To cry in grief,

To know Your meaning for our life.

Here is our common wealth

In sharing what is good,

As though all humankind around one table stood,

This bread to break,

This wine to taste:

One people in the name of Christ.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

REMEMBERING AND GIVING THANKS

Across the world, around each table,

bread is broken and wine is poured.

We remember as we eat this bread

we become the body of Christ together

and as we drink this cup

we become branches on Christ's life-giving vine.

We remember that on the night of his arrest...

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF BREAD AND CUP

(Communion will be served in the pews today. Please receive the bread or cup as they are offered to you by a deacon. Hold it until all have been served, and we will eat and drink together at the minister's guidance. We serve grape juice, not wine. Gluten-free wafers are on the trays with the bread. In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we celebrate the Lord's Supper with openness and welcome. Everyone is invited to the table, regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of every nation and generation,
gather us into the great company of your people—
those who have gone before us,
those who worship beside us,
and those we may never encounter.
Keep us faithful to one another and to you.
Send us from this table as people of Christ's peace. Amen.**

***HYMN 440 "In Christ There Is No East or West"**

**In Christ there is no east or west,
In him no south or north;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.**

**In Christ shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
God's service is the golden cord,
Close-binding humankind.**

**Join hands, disciples of the faith,
Whate'er your race may be.
All children of the living God
Are surely kin to me.x**

**In Christ now meet both east and west,
In Christ meet south and north;
All Christly souls are one in him
Throughout the whole wide earth.**

***BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE "The Church's One Foundation" David Cherwien

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“Now to Your Table Spread”—Words: Shirley Erena Murray-© 1987 Hope Publishing Company. 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:	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
❖ Youth Group	5:00 pm

TUESDAY

❖ <i>Reading Genesis</i> Group (Oaknoll)	10:00 am
❖ Gentle Yoga	11:00 am
❖ Stewardship Board (Zoom)	4:00 pm
❖ Membership Board	7:00 pm

THURSDAY

❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal	6:30 pm
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NEXT SUNDAY

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❖ Youth Group	5:00 pm

WEEKLY YOUTH GROUP for grades 6-12 this afternoon from 5-6:30! Join us for food, fellowship and fun. Dinner is provided and youth are encouraged to bring a friend!

READING GENESIS: Our group that has been reading and discussing Marilynne Robinson's *Reading Genesis* will meet at Oaknoll in room 4 B, 735 George St., from 10:00-11:30 on Tuesday morning, October 6. Everyone is welcome, even if you haven't been a part of earlier sessions. If you would like to be a part of this group, talk with Bill Lovin or Chuck Dayton or call the church office—319-337-4301.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A FALL RETREAT DAY ON GRATITUDE ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10. The retreat day will be based on the book *Grateful: The Transformative Power of Giving Thanks* by Diana Butler Bass. Mark your calendars now for this time of music, art, time in nature and being together. The retreat day will be from 9-3 at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Coralville. Registration will be in Rockwood Hall on Sundays and a \$25 registration fee needs to accompany the registration form. Scholarships are available. Questions? Contact Marsha Lowe or Rebecca Weathrford.

GENEVA FILM SERIES THIS AFTERNOON, 3:30-5:00: Watch and discuss the new film by Anahita Ghazvinizadeh, *My Life Is Wind*, followed by a conversation with Marilynne Robinson.

GENEVA LECTURE SERIES FEATURES MARILYNN 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 in free.

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!

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.

TIME TO THINK WINTER: The annual Consultation of Religious Congregations Warm Weather Clothing Distribution will be held in October. 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.

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.