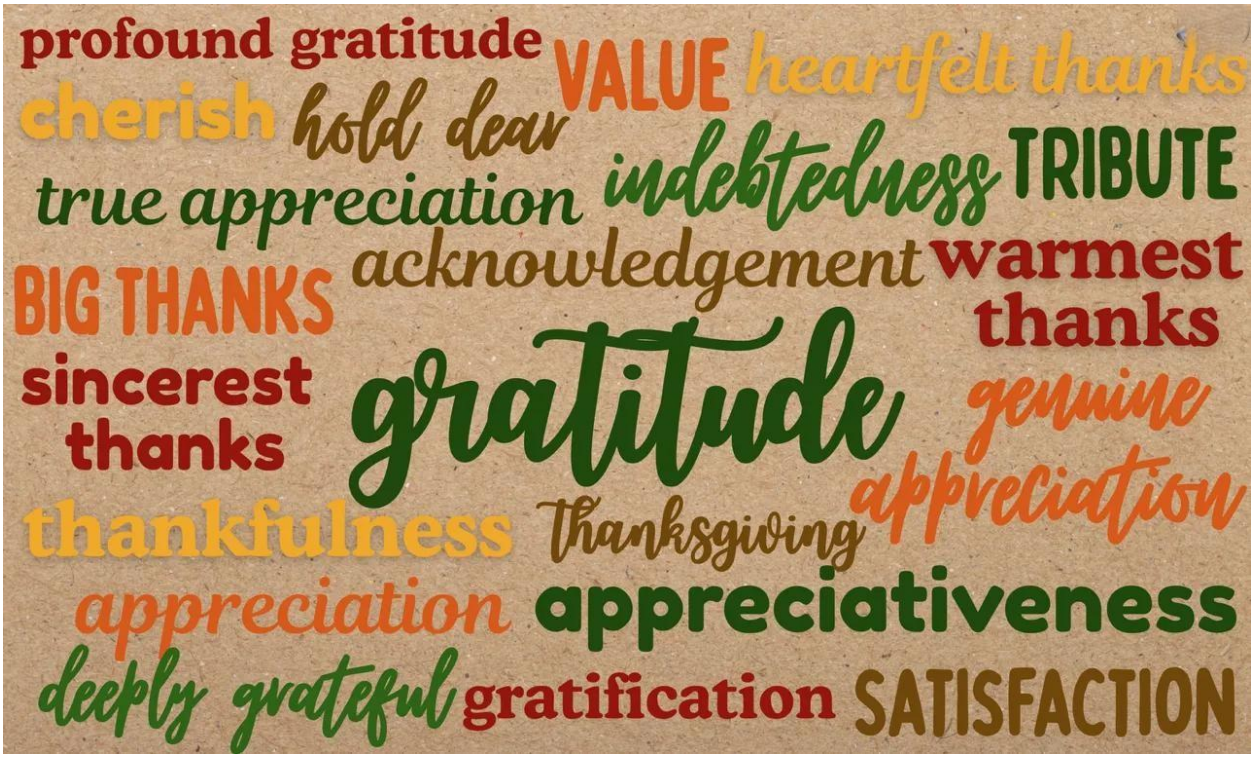


The Congregational Church

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 NOVEMBER 22, 2026
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

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 Kathi Koegle, Liturgist

PRELUDE "We Gather Together" Healey Willan

CHORAL INTROIT

* CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 100)
Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship God with gladness;
come into God's presence with singing.
Enter God's gates with thanksgiving,
and enter God's courts with praise.
Give thanks to God and bless God's name.
[Unison]
Let us worship God.

*HYMN (insert) "Heaven and Earth, and Sea and Air"
Heaven and earth, and sea and air,
All their Maker's praise declare;
Wake, my soul, awake and sing:
Now thy grateful praises bring.

See the glorious orb of day
Breaking through the clouds its way;
Moon and stars with silvery light
Praise God through the silent night.

See how God hath everywhere
Made this earth so rich and fair;
Hill and vale and fruitful land,
All things living, show God's hand.

God, great wonders workest thou!
To thy sway all creatures bow;
Write thou deeply in my heart
What I am, and what thou art.

*OPENING PRAYER
In gratitude, we come to you today, O God. We give you thanks for all that is: this life, this world, these days. Help us to appreciate the gifts that have brought us this far and to trust we can face the future with the gifts we will receive. Help us to understand that abundance comes from sharing these gifts with others.

In your mercies great and small, O God, we find the ability to go on. Help us to be generous in our mercy towards others. Keep in your care all who are in need, all who sorrow, all who struggle. Let us welcome and embrace all that life may bring. Amen.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (insert: "Come Ye Thankful People, Come)

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home;
All is safely gathered in
Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker doth provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

All the blessings of the field,
All the stores the gardens yield,
All the fruits in full supply,
Ripened 'neath the summer sky,
All that spring with bounteous hand
Scatters o'er the smiling land,
All that liberal autumn pours
From her rich o'er-flowing stores,

These to thee, our God we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow;
And for these our souls shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise.
Come, then, thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home;
Come to God's own temple come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

ANTHEM "All that I Am" William Grant Still

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 "Now Thank We All Our God" Georg Friedrich Kaufmann

*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 Deuteronomy 26:1-11

"When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess and you possess it and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.' You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

*PSALM HYMN #234 "I To the Hills Will Lift My Eyes" (Psalm 121)

I to the hills will lift my eyes;
From whence shall come my aid?
My help is from the Lord alone,
Who Heaven and earth has made.

He will not let your foot be moved,
Your Guardian never sleeps;
God's watchful and unslumbering care
Protects and safely keeps.

Your faithful keeper is the Lord,
Your shelter and your shade;

'Neath sun or moon, by day or night,
You shall not be afraid.

From evil He will keep you safe,
Provide for all you need;
Your going out, your coming in,
God will forever lead.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 25:31-46

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

*HYMN 414 "As Those of Old Their Firstfruits Brought"

As those of old their firstfruits brought
Of vineyard, flock, and field
To God, the giver of all good,
The source of bounteous yield,
So we today our firstfruits bring,
The wealth of this good land:
Of farm and market, shop and home,
Of mind and heart and hand.

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.

With gratitude and humble trust
We bring our best to You,
Not just to serve Your cause,
but share Your love with neighbors too.
O God who gave Yourself to us
In Jesus Christ Your Son,
Help us to give ourselves each day
Until life's work is done.

SERMON "This Far"

*HYMN 553 "For the Fruit of All Creation"
For the fruit of his creation,
thanks be to God.
For his gifts to every nation,
thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor,
God's will be done.
In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will be done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will be done.

For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE "Now Thank We All Our God," Op. 135a, No. 18 Max Reger

COVER GRAPHIC from the October Gratitude Retreat, designed by Abbie White.

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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
- Choir Rehearsal After Worship
- Youth Group 5:00 pm

TUESDAY

- Gentle Yoga 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY

- Staff Meeting 11:00 am

THURSDAY and FRIDAY

- Church Office Closed for Thanksgiving

NEXT SUNDAY

- No CE for Children and Adults 9:15 am
- First Sunday of Advent
- Worship Service with Communion 10:15 am
- Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall After Worship
- AWE After Worship
- Choir Rehearsal After Worship
- Youth Group 5:00 pm

THE ALTERNATIVE GIVING FAIR STARTS TODAY DOWNSTAIRS WITH A SECOND DATE ON DECEMBER 13! There will be Heifer Project gift cards bearing Ginny Clemons' graceful calligraphy and Church World Service "ornaments". Proceeds from cards, jewelry, and gift baskets donated by artists and craftspeople in our congregation will go to local community agencies. You can trim the Mitten Tree with your new or gently used mittens, scarves, and hats for the Joan Buxton School project. And the Angel Tree will have toy request cards from the Salvation Army and envelopes for a holiday meal donation to be distributed by CommUnity. Contact John Reitz at 319-333-9588, john-reitz@uiowa.edu for information. Come have a cup of coffee and browse!

THE LIGHT BREAKS FORTH INTO OUR WORLD:
LET EVERY HEART PREPARE…

Each year brings festivity and celebration as we move through Advent and the joy of Christmas. Join us for worship on Sunday morning and for special events throughout the season.

November 29—First Sunday in Advent—Lighting of the First Advent Candle. Celebration of the sacrament of communion during worship. The Rev. Craig Henderson preaching.
December 6—Second Sunday in Advent—Choir Special Music Sunday. Our choir will present *Gaudete—Christmas Melodies from Piae Cantiones, 1582* by Anders Öhrwall. Advent Pot Luck Lunch in Rockwood Hall after worship.
December 13—Third Sunday in Advent; Children's Christmas Pageant. Alternative Giving Fair after worship.
December 20—Fourth Sunday of Advent; Worship at 10:15 a.m.
Christmas Eve is Thursday, December 24—Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service at 5:30. Bring your family, your relatives, your friends, or come by yourself. A warm and joy-filled celebration of God's love shared with us in Jesus. Gala reception follows in Rockwood Hall after worship.

Beginning on the first day of Advent, November 29, we will be sending out an email Advent Calendar with the theme **"The Light Breaks Forth into Our World: Let Every Heart Prepare…"** Each day's entry will be provided by a member of friend of our congregation.

***GAUDETE* BY ANDERS ÖHRWALL:** Rejoice! On Sunday, December 6, the UCC Choir and woodwind trio will present *Gaudete*, Anders Öhrwall's ten-movement suite of carols based on the medieval collection *Piae Cantiones*. This remarkable source gave rise to several beloved Christmas carols still sung today, including "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming," "In dulci jubilo," "On This Day Earth Shall Ring," "Good King Wenceslas," and many others.

In *Gaudete*, Öhrwall reimagines ten melodies from the collection, accompanied by two flutes and bassoon, creating a work that appeals to modern ears while preserving the ancient joy and vitality of the original songs. Join us at 10:15 a.m. for this festive celebration of the Advent and Christmas seasons.

THE ADVENT POTLUCK LUNCHEON ON DECEMBER 6! Our always-joy-filled Advent Potluck Lunch will be better than ever if you are a part of it. Join us in Rockwood Hall after worship and the Special Music Choral Offering on Sunday, December 6. There is a sign-up sheet

in Rockwood Hall to help the Membership Board with their planning. The Membership Board is providing a main dish and the rest of the meal will be potluck. Plan to bring a salad, vegetable, bread, dessert, etc. to share.
SHARE THE HARVEST: The Harvest is over for 2027, with a total of $1,025. Thanks to Kathy Fate and John Fuller for coordinating this effort and to all who brought or purchased produce and flowers. We enjoy the fruits of their labor, as does the CommUnity Food Pantry, the recipient of the proceeds.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR 2027 PLEDGE CARD: Pledge/estimate of giving cards for 2027 were sent out in early October. If you misplaced yours or did not receive one, please contact the church office—319-337-4301. If you have received a card, please prayerfully fill it out and return it to the church as soon as possible. Your deeply considered, prayerful support will help us to continue our Church's ministry and mission in the Iowa City area and around the world.

WE HAVE A PEW CUSHION that needs a couple of buttons sewn onto it. If you can help with this, please talk with Shirley Woolums.

GIVE THANKS, GIVE FOOD: Youth Group Soup Drive for CommUnity. Please bring cans of soup or other shelf stable items to our collection table in Rockwood Hall through Sunday, November 22. Collected items will be delivered to CommUnity Monday, November 23.

ADULT EDUCATION SESSION RECORDINGS NOW AVAILABLE: If you were unable to attend a Sunday morning adult education gathering, you can now watch the event at your convenience. Please contact Nancy LeaVesseur in the church office (319-337-4301) and she will send you a link to the recording. Please note, the recordings are only available for four weeks after the session.

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.

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.