



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

WORSHIP FOR NOVEMBER 29, 2020
 THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Today is a communion Sunday. Before joining 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 as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.

“People say that nothing ever happens to them; what they ought to say is that they see nothing in what is happening—that would be truer. Events are nothing at all, until there is sight to see the miracle in them. The common run of days is merely that portion of time we have not redeemed for eternity by our creative imagination.”

Samuel Miller

PRELUDE “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence - Richard Warner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Dave and Erin Brown, McKenzie and Izzy

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the mingled light and shadow of hope,
let us greet our God.

HYMN “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain:

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death’s dark shadows put to flight. [Refrain]**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven’s peace. [Refrain]**

OPENING PRAYER

In this time when so much is behind us, so much ahead of us and so much before us be here in the present with us, O God. We struggle every day with the work that is in front of us. We would like to be inspired and carried forward on a path to a renewed world. Often we are disappointed and disillusioned with the results of our efforts and sometimes we are depressed by the need to repeat tasks again. Come into our world and remind us of the mystery of our existence: that you embrace the vulnerabilities, contradictions and shortcomings of our human lives and with all of that you find them good. Help us in our discouragement to find the light within all we are given to do and to discover it may shine out from the least expected parts of it. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 64:1-9

PSALM 80:1-7

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?**

You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

**Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Mark 13:24-37

SERMON “How the Light Spreads”

TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “One Faith, One Hope, One Lord” Craig Courtney
Danielle Bridges Avery Nabholz, Josh Ramseyer, Colin Wilson

THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

THANKSGIVING FOR BREAD AND CUP

**We thank you, O Christ,
that scattered though we are, with different needs and hopes
you call us together at this meal and unite us as one body.**

**We thank you for this bread and cup set before us,
food and drink to nourish us in body and in spirit, signs of your life-giving love.
May they speak to us**

**of the everyday made holy,
of life made new,
of hope for your realm among us.**

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF BREAD AND CUP

HYMN “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.**

**King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
In the body and the blood;
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.**

**Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of Light descendeth
From the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away.**

**At His feet the six-winged seraph;
Cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence,
As with ceaseless voice they cry,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord Most High!**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Eternal God, we rejoice in the promise of your coming, a promise that awakens us from the night of fear and sets before us a new day and a new way. We thank you for coming to us in this meal to make us new and strong and whole. Now send us forth as your people, with our minds fixed on whatever is true and honorable and just and pure and lovely and praiseworthy, never forgetting that you are near us with your peace. Amen.

HYMN "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

**It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
From heaven's all gracious King":
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.**

**And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Veni, Emmanuel"

Robert J. Powell

TODAY IS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT. We will light the first Advent candle and begin our preparations for the celebration of Christmas. This is also a Communion Sunday. Next Sunday, December 6, will be the Choir Special Music Sunday.

Stewardship Is Heart Work: Pledge/estimate of giving cards for 2021 have been sent out. If you have not received one, please contact the church office. If you have received a card, please prayerfully fill it out and return it to the church. 2020 has been filled with unexpected trials and tribulations. We anticipate more challenges in 2021. Your deeply considered, prayerful support will help us to continue our Church's mission in downtown Iowa City. **If you would like, you can now make your pledge online by clicking on this link:**

<https://forms.gle/yx7K5buGsJybRzAP8> Thanks again for your generous giving.

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_ix-SCO6dVPBbV0B?usp=sharing

ALTERNATIVE GIVING-2020

This year, of course, all our alternative giving opportunities will be online. We still have many traditional options: Heifer Project, Project Holiday, Church World Service, and Toys for Tots.

Salvation Army TOYS FOR TOTS: Here is the link for purchasing TOYS FOR TOTS through Walmart for our local Salvation Army, and instructions from the site.

<https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/walmart-angel-tree/?fbclid=IwAR0W4PI8HCd-bjbTuMTiHnabFtBSfKXdiGJjEjBrJJ5jFN0rUKLIVfdXxZ4>.

How to Shop Online

1. Enter your zip code below to search for your local Salvation Army unit.
2. Add gifts you would like to purchase for children in your community to your Walmart shopping cart.
3. Choose delivery and Walmart will ship the items directly to your local Salvation Army.

If you prefer, you can also drop items off at a Walmart collection point which can be found in participating Walmart stores starting November 1, or you can hand deliver them to your local Salvation Army

HEIFER GIFTS. You can see the full catalog at <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html>.

Heifer cards can be personalized for your recipient by Ginny Clemons.

Top gifts:

Goat Full : \$120
Share: \$10

Sheep Full \$120
Share \$10

Heifer Full \$500
Share \$50

Water for life \$750

Flock of chicks \$20

Alpaca Full \$150
Share \$20

Gift of trees
Full \$60
Share \$10

Biogas stoves for a village
Full \$1000
Share \$50

Instructions: Please complete your Heifer orders by November 30!

1. Select Heifer gift from short lists on the church webpage or the bulletin
2. Send check to the church or pay via paypal donate button on the church website. Memo line on check or paypal page should indicate Heifer.
3. Fill out a form describing your order. If you are paying by paypal, email or mail the form. If you are paying by check, include the form with your check.

Mission Board will pick up the forms from the church office and deliver them to Ginny. Ginny will personalize the cards, and Mission will address and mail the cards or return them to you as you have indicated.

ORDER FORM for Heifer Project gifts

Your name _____ Phone number _____

email address _____

Description of order	Person to be honored (print)	Amount (see list or use catalog)
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Example: gift of trees (full)	Jonah	\$60
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- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Total: _____

Use addition forms for additional orders

I would like to have the cards returned to me

I would like the Mission Board to address and mail the cards (add addresses below).

I have paid by paypal through the church webpage

I have sent a check to the church

Please provide addresses on this form for cards to be mailed by the Mission Board. Be sure to indicate which address goes with which giftcard.

Address for giftcard 1:

Address for giftcard 2

PROJECT HOLIDAY through CommUnity, holiday meals.

Project Holiday is CommUnity Food Bank's annual holiday meal distribution. Typically held the week before Christmas, **this distribution provides more than 1,500 Johnson County families with all the ingredients needed to make a traditional holiday dinner.**

In its 33rd year, the Project Holiday distribution will take place at CommUnity Food Bank's new location in Pepperwood Plaza and will also be available for delivery to those who face barriers to transportation.

Each \$25 donation will purchase a complete holiday meal for a local family in need.

You can donate here: <https://builtbycommunity.org/project-holiday/>.

Thanks to everyone who gave to the Neighbors in Need (NIN) Offering earlier this month.

We received \$1240 for this special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

If you would like to give a gift through Church World Service, you can now do so through the special Congregational UCC site connected to the CWS site. Please note that this site will be available from November 29 through December 31. To reach the website, please follow this link: <https://fundraise.cwsglobal.org/uccic-best-gift>

If you missed the **CRC RELIGION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE** event, or if you would like to share it with others, you can find a recording on [YouTube](#) and on [Facebook](#).

And here is a [1-page document of some Next Steps](#). These suggested next steps are of course not exhaustive.