



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

WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER 3, 2023
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today is a communion Sunday. Before joining the worship service, you are invited to get whatever you eat and whatever you 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 “Veni Emmanuel” Rudolf Moser

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE Erin, Dave, McKenzie and Izzy Brown

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

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

***HYMN (insert) Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying”**

**Wake, awake, for night is flying;
The watchmen on the heights are crying, “Awake, Jerusalem, arise!”
Midnight hears the welcome voices and at the thrilling cry rejoices;
Christ comes, O Church, lift up your eyes!
Rise up, with willing feet go forth, the Savior meet: Alleluia!
Lo, great and small, we answer all; we follow now with joy the call.**

**All who hear the watchers singing,
Whose hearts with deep delight are springing, awake and rise up from your gloom.
For the Savior comes, all glorious, in grace arrayed, in truth victorious;
Our Star is risen, our Light is come!
Now come, O blessed One, God’s own beloved Son, Alleluia!
We haste along, an eager throng, and gladly join the advent song.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

The hour has come, O God: wake us from our sleep. Let your grace keep us alert as we watch together for signs of your realm in our midst. Come to us with a new way. Come to us with a new meaning and purpose for our lives. Free our imprisoned hearts and our chained-up minds, that a new day of promise may stir us and our weary world to rejoice in the hope of new day dawning. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#15, vs. 3)**

**Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, Thou sun so longed for, Above this shadowed sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted, We plead, O Lord to see
The day of earth’s redemption, And ever be with Thee!**

ANTHEM “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning arr. Lloyd Larson

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Veni Emmanuel” Gerhard Krapf

*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 Romans 13:11-13a

PSALM 130

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

**If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss,
O Lord, who could stand?**

For there is forgiveness with you;
therefore you shall be feared.

**I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits for you;
in your word is my hope.**

My soul waits for the Lord,
more than sentries for the morning,
more than sentries for the morning.

**O Israel, hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;**

[Unison]

**there is plenteous redemption with the Lord,
who shall redeem Israel from all their sins.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 25:1-13

SERMON "Keeping Watch Together"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

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

**O come thou Wisdom from on high,
and order all things, far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice!...**

O come desire of nations, bind

**all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!...**

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 that you have not left us alone.
Each year you come to us, Emmanuel,
God with us, in a manger.
Each time you come to us
in the broken bread and the cup we share.
May they speak to us
of the extraordinary found in the lowly,
of your coming to make all things new,
and of the hope for your realm among us.**

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 pastor'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

We give you thanks for this meal which strengthens us and encourages us in this season and every season. Let it fill us with the grace to see you in all those around us. Keep us alert to recognize the inbreaking of your realm. Amen.

*HYMN “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning” (insert)

Fm

1 Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your
 2 Dark - er mid - night lies be - fore us, dark - er
 3 Lo, the morn - ing soon is break - ing, lo, the
 4 Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your

C C7 Fm

lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps trimmed and burn -
 mid - night lies be - fore us, dark - er mid - night lies be - fore
 morn - ing soon is break - ing, lo, the morn - ing soon is break -
 lamps trimmed and burn - ing, keep your lamps trimmed and burn -

Fm B♭7 C Fm *Refrain* C7 Fm

- ing, for this work's al-most done.
 us, for this work's al-most done.
 - ing, for this work's al-most done. Chil-dren, don't grow wea-ry, chil-dren,
 - ing, for this work's al-most done.

B♭7 C Fm C7 Fm B♭7 C Fm

don't grow wea-ry, chil-dren, don't grow wea-ry, for this work's al-most done.

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Veni Emmanuel” Robert J. Powell

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children’s Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Chris Nakielski
Children’s Choir Director	Majesty Constable
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

TODAY—FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

❖	Church School Breakfast	9:00 am
	Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
	Christian Education	9:15 am
	Worship Service w/Communion	10:15 am
	Choir Rehearsal	After Worship
	Confirmation Class	4:00 pm

TUESDAY

❖	Board of Christian Education	6:30 pm
	Mission Board	7:00 pm

NEXT SUNDAY—SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

❖	Church School Breakfast	9:00 am
	Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
	Christian Education	9:15 am
	Worship Service—Special Music	10:15 am
	Advent Potluck	After Worship

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

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

ADULT EDUCATION DURING ADVENT: Join Marsha Lowe around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. Come and experience Scripture passages leading up to and including the Christmas story.

12/10 Special Music Sunday-no adult education

12/17 The Christmas Story Luke 2:1-20 What does this say about God? about people? about the relationship between God and people?

PLEASE HELP WITH PARKING IN THE CHURCH LOT: A number of people currently have mobility issues and need to park in our small parking lot off of 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.

MAGNIFICAT BY TAYLOR SCOTT DAVIS: Please join us on Sunday, December 10, when the Congregational UCC Choir, directed by Dr. Chris Nakielski and accompanied by Bill Crouch, will perform *Magnificat* by Taylor Scott Davis. Premiered and recorded by the acclaimed Voces8 in 2020, this gorgeous five-movement setting of the Magnificat is scored for SATB divisi voices and soprano solos (featuring Rachel Burchett and Marie Von Behren) with organ, harp, and percussion. The second movement is in English, opening and closing with a soloist. The remaining movements are choral only and are in Latin.

THE ADVENT LUNCH IS MAKING A COMEBACK! It will be held following worship and Special Music on Sunday, December 10. There is a sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall. 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.

WINTER SOLACE SERVICE—DECEMBER 20: The days before Christmas can be difficult, especially for those who are dealing with loss, illness, and other challenges. On Wednesday, December 20, Bill Lovin will be leading a Winter Solace Service in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. We are trying to bring out as much joy as possible in this season, but as we do so, we can also acknowledge our sorrow, our losses, our concerns and our fears. This will be a time of prayer and scripture reading and music. The worship service will be both in person and live streamed.

YOUR CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE is looking for stalwart and generous members to fill remaining board slots. This means we're looking for you. We still have room on the diaconate, membership, trustees, and stewardship committees. Please contact either Andrea Rauer or Megan Carnes, if you'd like to volunteer. Andrea Rauer: amrauer@gmail.com
Megan Carnes: carnesmegan@yahoo.com

ALTERNATIVE GIVING FOR CHRISTMAS: Our Mission Board is ready to help you with your Christmas giving. Our annual Alternative Giving Fair will be held in Rockwood Hall after worship on December 3 & 17. If you have an idea for a sale item or would like to help in other ways, please contact Laurie Stunz (laura-stunz@uiowa.edu). If you knit, please consider making mittens and scarves for the Mitten Tree. Donations of mittens and scarves will be directed to the Iowa City Schools. Think outside of the box and let your giving help others. Gifts can be made in honor of friends and family to the Heifer Project, Habitat for Humanity and Church World Service. We will put up the Mitten Tree and have gift tags available for CommUnity Crisis Center's Project Holiday and Toys for Tots. Members are providing quilts, jewelry, artwork and more for sale—cash or checks only, please.

BLESSING BAGS: Sunday School students will be collecting **NEW single-use personal care/hygiene products** for their January mission and outreach project: Epiphany Blessing Bags. Please contribute to this effort: toothpaste and toothbrush, hairbrush and comb, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, bars of soap, shampoo and conditioner, hand lotion, and Band-Aids. This is a perfect solution for distributing those hotel-sized products that are gathering dust in your bathroom drawers!! Please put these items in the brown baskets found in the Children's Corner. In addition, the students will be adding cash, breakfast bars, socks, and gloves to the Blessing

Bags...so monetary gifts marked “Blessing Bags” can also be placed in the Offering plate on Sunday.

OPEN HEARTLAND CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITY: Our friends at Open Heartland are working to support Latino immigrant families during the Christmas season. They are hosting their 5th annual Christmas celebration on Sunday, December 10. They plan to give a cash gift to each family to spend as they feel best accommodates their individual needs (rent, groceries, medical bills, etc.). Our Mission Board is providing \$400 toward this effort. If you would like to support this project you can send a monetary donation, payable to Open Heartland, PO Box 3357 Iowa City, IA 52244 or use VENMO@Open-Heartland. Last year OH was able to give each family a gift of \$100 to spend on what the family determines is needed.

OPEN HEARTLAND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Open Heartland, an organization meeting a variety of needs of the Spanish speaking population of Iowa City, is seeking volunteers. Our youth are going to be involved, and this is an opportunity for adults in our congregation as well. Volunteer times and activities of sorting donations, packaging bulk foods and other needs are varied and flexible. If you are interested, contact Deb Dunkhase, the director, at debdkhase@gmail.com or call or text her at 319-321-5528. Or for a little more information, ask /Ray Muston or Jane Kinney about the organization.

ADVENT BEGINS TODAY. Our Advent and Christmas observances and celebrations renew some of our traditional activities and events and bring some new possibilities as well. Here are some important dates:

December 3—First Sunday in Advent; Lighting of the Advent candles begins; Communion.
December 10—Second Sunday in Advent; Special Music Sunday; Advent Lunch after worship.
December 17—Third Sunday in Advent; Children’s Christmas Pageant
December 20—Service of Solace—at 7:00 p.m.
December 24—Fourth Sunday of Advent; Worship at 10:15
Christmas Eve is Sunday, December 24—Worship at 5:30 p.m.; Gala Reception follows in Rockwood Hall
January 7—Epiphany Sunday; Communion

NEW FURNACES AND AIR CONDITIONERS WERE INSTALLED IN THE SUMMER. HERE’S HOW YOU CAN HELP: We received a major gift from a family in the congregation to help pay for the new units. Many other members would like to be a part of funding this project. Your gifts to the HVAC Fund will mean that we will need to use less of our reserves for this project. Thanks for your generous giving.

DO YOU HAVE A CHURCH KEY? We have made new keys and are working at getting a better list of people who have keys. If you have a key to the church, please contact Trustee Chairperson, Kevin Richards, at (608) 807-7195 or at kd Richards1958@gmail.com. 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 or Trustee Chairperson, Kevin Richards, know right away. You can reach Kevin at (608) 807-7195 or at kd Richards1958@gmail.com. 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.

WE LIVE STREAM OUR WORSHIP SERVICES AT 10:15 ON SUNDAY MORNING.

You can join us online in real time at <https://vimeo.com/event/1424751>. This streaming address is the same each week.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted after worship on Sunday at <https://vimeo.com/channels/154m7852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.