



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

WORSHIP FOR FEBRUARY 4, 2024  
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

“Community cannot feed for long on itself; it can only flourish where always the boundaries are giving way to the coming of others from beyond them — unknown and undiscovered brothers and sisters.”

Howard Thurman

PRELUDE “Communion Song” Simon Clark

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Bea Hicks, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Lord, you have searched me, and you know me;  
you know my sitting down and my rising up.

**You discern my thoughts from afar,  
and you are acquainted with all my ways.**

There is not a word that comes to my lips that is unknown to you, O Lord.

**Knowledge like yours is too wonderful for me;**

**therefore I give you thanks and praise.**

**\*HYMN 272            “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**

**O God, we come to worship you.**

**In this place you invite us to be in communion with you; you call us to be in conversation with others.**

**We come before you and recognize how limited we are. Alone, we do not possess the knowledge that we need. Help us to recognize the knowledge in others and bring us into**

community so we are able to talk with each other. Help us to see that we are all part of your creation and that in you all the parts are made whole.  
Be among us. Give the hopeful satisfaction. Give the weary and worried support.  
Carry us all on into the world you are creating still. Amen.

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#470, vs. 3 & 4)

**This day God's people meeting, the holy scripture hear;  
Christ's living presence greeting, through bread and wine made near.  
We journey on, believing, renewed with heavenly might,  
From grace more grace receiving on this blessed day of light.**

**That light our hope sustaining, upon the pilgrim way,  
at length our rest attaining, our endless Sabbath day.  
We sing to you our praises, our Hope, our Joy, our Sun:  
the church its voice upraises to you blessed Three in One.**

ANTHEM "Sing to God" Jane Marshall

#### SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "Meditation" Alan Ridout

\*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

(At this time, children are dismissed to attend Children's Church.)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 61:1-4

#### PSALM 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,  
then were we like those who dream.

**Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations,  
"The Lord has done great things for them."

**The Lord has done great things for us,  
and we are glad indeed.**

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,  
like the watercourses of the Negev.

**Those who sowed with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.**

[Unison]

**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,  
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON      Mark 6:7-13

SERMON      “Mission Possibility”

THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN (insert)      “As We Gather at Your Table”

**As we gather at your table,  
As we listen to your word,  
Help us know, O God, your presence;  
Let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
Nourish us with sacred story  
Till we claim it as our own;  
Teach us through this holy banquet  
How to make Love’s victory known.**

**Turn our worship into witness  
In the sacrament of life;  
Send us forth to love and serve you,  
Bringing peace where there is strife.  
Give us, Christ, your great compassion  
To forgive as you forgave;  
May we still behold your image  
In the world you died to save.**

**Gracious Spirit, help us summon  
Other guests to share that feast  
Where triumphant Love will welcome  
Those who had been last and least.  
There no more will envy blind us  
Nor will pride our peace destroy,  
As we join with saints and angels  
To repeat the sounding joy.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

REMEMBERING

Jesus gathered with others at many tables to share a meal and enter into conversation.  
He took his place among us as one with human frailty.

**We remember that he called disciples and ministered to all.**

**He confounded the haughty and gave hope to the poor.  
He ate with sinners and fed the multitude.**

On the night of his arrest...

#### SHARING OF ELEMENTS

(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 thank-you God for the bread and cup passed among us, for this meal shared, for the strength we receive from this communion.**

**Let it carry us to join with others at many tables in your wider world. Amen.**

\*HYMN 343            "Called as Partners in Christ's Service"

**Called as partners in Christ's service,  
Called to ministries of grace,  
We respond with deep commitment  
Fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing,  
Side by side and friend with friend,  
Equal partners in our caring  
To fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring,  
Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
Let us follow, never faltering,  
Reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer,  
All God's people, young and old,  
Blending human skills together  
Gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ's mission,  
In a small or global sense,  
Help us bear each other's burdens,  
Breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of vision,  
Words of challenge, said with care,  
Bring new power and strength for action,  
Make us colleagues, free and fair.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow**

**Ways to order human life  
That surround each person's sorrow  
With a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living,  
Our compassion to increase,  
Messengers of faith, thus giving  
Hope and confidence and peace.**

\*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE "Fanfare" Rosalie Bonighton

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#### TODAY

❖ Church School Breakfast	9:00 am
Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am

#### TUESDAY

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

#### NEXT SUNDAY

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

**WE'RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.**  
Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

**ADULT EDUCATION CONNECTS WITH IOWA CITY ORGANIZATIONS** Join us each Sunday through February 18 around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m. Our Mission Board is helping us develop closer relationships with some of the Iowa City area organizations that we support. Next Sunday, February 11— Deb Dunkhase, Director, Open Heartland

**CONTRIBUTE TO THIS YEAR'S LENTEN DEVOTIONAL:** We're inviting members and friends to write a short, one paragraph reflection on a particular Biblical text—we'll provide the text, you'll provide the reflection. If you are interested in being a part of this or have any questions, please contact Bill at [uccicrev@uccic.org](mailto:uccicrev@uccic.org) or call the church office at 337-4301 or call Patte Henderson at 594-7185 or Bryan Clemons at 330-7882. Lent begins on Wednesday, February 14. Easter is Sunday, March 31.

**SOUPER BOWL OF CARING—FEBRUARY 11:** On February 11 we will participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring, a grassroots hunger relief initiative. It is a time to lift up the reality that there is another contest going on today—the daily struggle against food insecurity and hunger here in Iowa City and across our nation. So, whether you're watching the game and eating some of the 65 million avocados that Americans will eat or not, we encourage you to join in putting some money in the soup kettles that the young people of our congregation will have both upstairs and downstairs after worship. The original request with this project was to give \$1.00 if you're watching the game. Now—whether you're watching or not, give whatever you'd like. All money will go to the CommUnity Crisis Center Food Pantry.

**ASH WEDNESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER AND WORSHIP SERVICE BEGIN THE SEASON OF LENT ON FEBRUARY 14:** On Wednesday, February 14, our Board of Christian Education will host their annual pancake supper in Rockwood Hall from 6-7 p.m. Sure, it's a day after Mardi Gras, but we Congregationalist have never been ruled by the church calendar. Bring your family and friends and join others for pancakes, eggs, sausage, good company, and good conversation. It will help with planning if you sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall or call the church office (337-4301) to let us know how many will attend. But please join us even if you haven't done this.

After eating, we will hold our Ash Wednesday worship service in the sanctuary at 7:00. This will be a time of music and song, scripture and prayer, and the distribution of ashes for those who want them. The worship service is designed for people of all ages.

Easter is Sunday, March 31, this year.

**WE'RE STILL LEARNING** is a series planned by the Mission Board LGBTQ subcommittee for the entire congregation. After considerable deliberation about relevant issues and educational opportunities, the committee came to the conclusion that as a group and as individuals *all are still learning* about relevant LGBTQ+ issues and ever changing challenges.

The Mission Board invites you to stay for a potluck lunch after church on Sunday, February 18, and experience an important presentation "A Look at LGBTQ+ History in Iowa City presented by David McCartney, Congregational UCC member and retired University of Iowa archivist.

David's information is designed to provide a foundation for future WE'RE STILL LEARNING sessions and to broaden understanding for longtime Iowa City residents and anyone new to the area.

David McCartney is university archivist emeritus at the University of Iowa, a position he held from 2001 until his retirement in 2022. He has master's degrees in history and in library science, both from the University of Maryland at College Park, and a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. David has served on the steering committee of the Society of American Archivists College and University Archives Section, is a past president of the Midwest Archives Conference, past chair of the Big Ten University Archivists Group, and past chair of the Consortium of Iowa Archivists. Before entering the archives field, David was a reporter for radio stations in the Midwest and in Alaska. David and his husband James live in Iowa City.

**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.

**THE LGBTQ+ SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE IS LOOKING FORWARD** to a year of advocating and activism. Join us and mark your calendars for the following dates:

**Monday, February 5: Lobby Day at the Capital-** All day field trip to Des Moines leaving church @7:15 am, returning early evening. Contact Hope Spragg for a seat in the van and itinerary information. (Must register two weeks in advance to participate in the luncheon at the capital)

**Saturday, June 15:** Iowa City Pridefest 11:30-4-ish parade and booth shift opportunities will be available.

**ANOTHER WAY TO HELP THE HOMELESS:** Trinity United Methodist Church of Riverside Iowa has purchased a loom and is using clean, plastic bags to construct Sleeping Mats for the homeless. These are lightweight, waterproof, and easy to pack and carry. By contributing our clean, plastic bags, we can help them help others. Bring your clean, unneeded, plastic grocery bags, or trash bags, any color, any size, here, to Rockwood Hall. We will see to it that they are delivered.

**SOUND OF FRIENDSHIP CONCERT AND DESSERT RECEPTION: SATURDAY, FEB 17.** Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church, 140 Gathering Place Ln, Iowa City. Doors open 6p / Concert 7p / Desserts After the Concert

**Performers:** Al Zimmerman, Kol Shira, Two-bit Maniac, Old Capital Chorus, Tanya English Band

Tickets available here: <https://compeer.yapsody.com/event/index/515571>

**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.

**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.