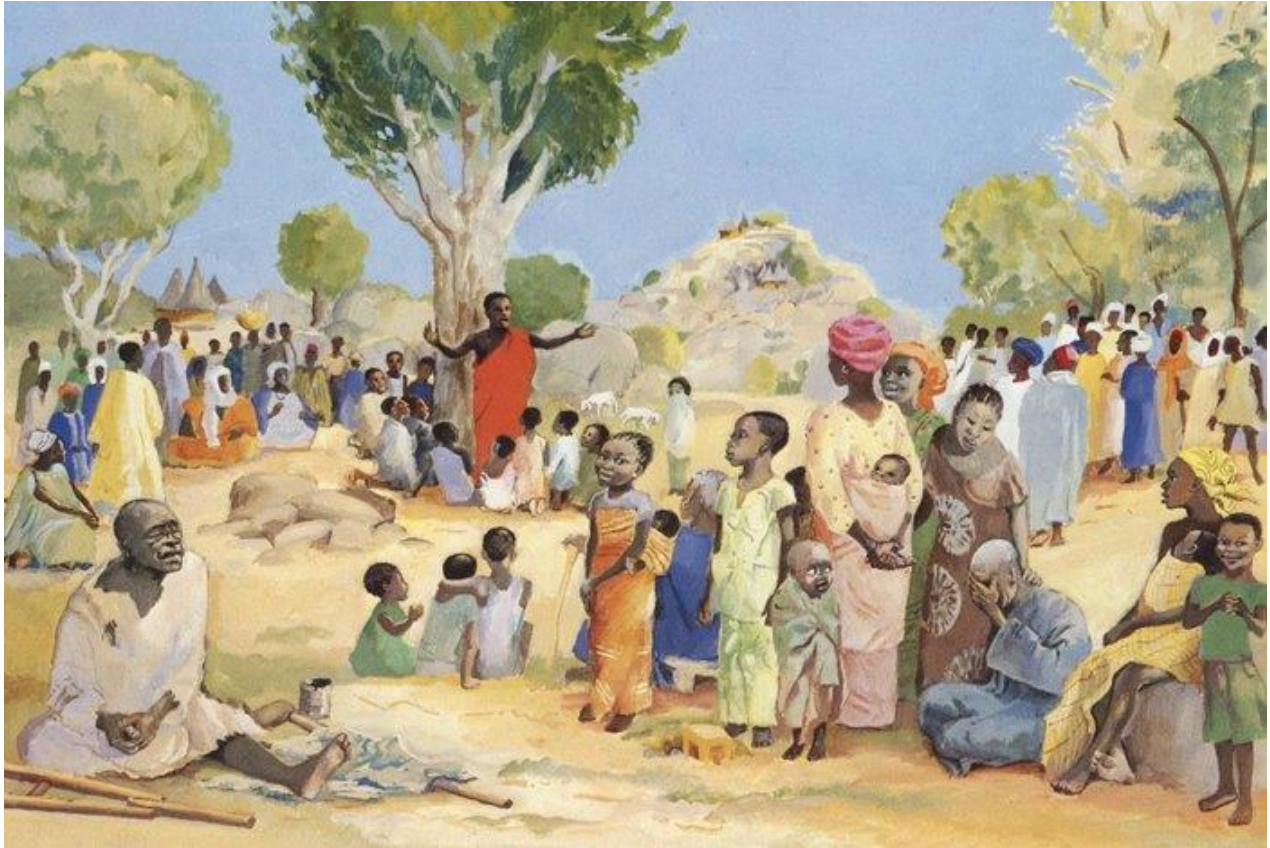


Finding the Good News in the Sermon on the Mount

Fifth Sunday in Lent



“Sermon on the Mount” (Used with permission)

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

WORSHIP FOR MARCH 17, 2024
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

“Nothing in the Golden Rule says that others will treat us as we have treated them. It only says that we must treat others in a way that we would want to be treated.”

Rosa Parks

PRELUDE “Adagio” Jonathan Battishill

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chuck Connerly, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Jesus says:

Ask, and you will receive;

seek, and you will find;

knock, and the door will be opened.

For everyone who asks receives,

and everyone who searches finds,

and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

*HYMN 424

“O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns Be Rising”

**O Jesus Christ, may grateful hymns be rising,
in every city for your love and care;
inspire our worship, grant the glad surprising
that your blest Spirit rouses everywhere.**

**Grant us new courage, sacrificial, humble,
strong in your strength to venture and to dare;
to lift the fallen, guide the feet that stumble,
seek out the lonely and God's mercy share.**

**Show us your Spirit, brooding o'er each city,
as you once wept above Jerusalem,
seeking to gather all in love and pity,
and healing those who touch your garment's hem.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Holy and ever-present God, by your power we are created and by your love we are redeemed. Open our ears to hear your voice and follow your call; open our hearts that true justice and wisdom may abound; and open our hands that peace might prevail on earth. In Christ, you give us a friend and a guide through the shadow of death who leads us into light that we may fear no evil. Strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may give ourselves to your service and live this day in love toward one another and toward you; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Tune: CHARTERHOUSE)**

**God's people, love your sister and your brother!
Where goodwill dwells, the peace of God is there;
to worship rightly is to love each other,
each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.**

Follow with reverent steps the great example

**of Christ whose holy work was doing good;
so shall the wide earth seem a holy temple,
each loving life a psalm of gratitude.**

John Greenleaf Whittier

ANTHEM “How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place” Andrew Carter

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Largo” John Travers

*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

CHILDRENS MESSAGE

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

SCRIPTURE LESSON Proverbs 3:27-32

PSALM 138

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the rulers I will sing your praise.

**I will bow down toward your holy temple
and praise your name, because of your love and faithfulness;**

for you have glorified your name
and your word above all things.

**When I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength within me.**

All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O Lord,
when they have heard the words of your mouth.

**They will sing of the ways of the Lord,
that great is the glory of the Lord.**

The Lord is high, yet the Lord cares for the lowly
and perceives the haughty from afar.

**Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;
your right hand shall save me.**

[Unison]

**O Lord, you will make good your purpose for me;
O Lord, your love endures forever;
do not abandon the works of your hands.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 7:7-12

SERMON “Summing Up the Sermon”

* HYMN (insert) “Before the Cross of Jesus”

**Before the cross of Jesus
Our lives are judged today;
The meaning of our eager strife
Is tested by his way.
Across our restless living
The light streams from his cross,
And by its clear, revealing beams
We measure gain and loss.**

**The hopes that lead us onward,
The fears that hold us back,
Our will to dare great things for God,
The courage that we lack,
The faith we keep in goodness,
Our love, as low or pure -
On all, the judgment of the cross
Falls steady, clear, and sure.**

**Yet humbly, in our striving,
O God, we face its test.
We crave the power to do your will
With him who did it best.
On us let now the healing
Of his great Spirit fall,
And make us brave and full of joy
To answer to his call.**

*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Fugue in D Minor” William Boyce

Cover Art: JESUS MAFA. The Sermon on the Mount, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48284> [retrieved March 14, 2024]. Original source: <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr> (contact page: <https://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr/contact>). JESUS MAFA is a response to the New Testament readings from the Lectionary by a Christian community in Cameroon, Africa. Each of the readings was selected and adapted to dramatic interpretation by the community members. Photographs of their interpretations were made, and these were then transcribed to paintings. 'The Life of Jesus Mafa' is a set of 63 pictures from the life and teaching of Jesus, viewed by the artist as if the events had taken place in a village in Cameroon. Millions of these images have been printed and distributed around the world since their creation in the 1970.

Opening Prayer—alt. from *A New Zealand Prayer Book*

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

TODAY

❖ Church School Breakfast	9:00 am
Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am
Choir Rehearsal	11:30 am

TUESDAY

❖ Membership Board	5:30 pm
Diaconate	6:00 pm
Trustees	7:00 pm
Stewardship Board (Zoom)	7:00 pm

NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Church School Breakfast	9:00 am
Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service—Palm Sunday	10:15 am
Choir Rehearsal	11:30 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.

IMPORTANT DATES IN LENT AND EASTER

March 24—Palm Sunday

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

March 28—Maundy Thursday

Communion and Service of Tenebrae at 7:00 p.m.

March 29—Good Friday

Worship at Noon

March 31—Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service at 7:30 a.m.; Breakfast in Rockwood Hall; Festival Easter Service at 10:15 a.m.

THIS MORNING’S ANTHEM, “How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place,” by Andrew Carter, was commissioned by our congregation for the 150th anniversary of this church in 2006. It was first performed at the anniversary worship service on October 22, 2006 by the Choir of the

Congregational Church, UCC, with Richard Bloesch, conductor, Marie Von Behren, soprano soloist, and William Crouch, organist.

ADULT EDUCATION FOR LENT LOOKS AT THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: Join Bill Lovin in Rockwood Hall, Sunday mornings at 9:15 for *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*, using material by the New Testament scholar, Dr. Amy-Jill Levine.

OUR UPPER SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSROOM HAS A VERY SPACIOUS CORNER AVAILABLE thanks to the Brock Family Music Company. Their Steinway trained piano movers work all across the United States. They were able to safely move and recycle our upright Schaefer piano. Theresa Brock said “We will be sure to find it a good heavenly home.” We also give many thanks to Peter Bloesch who donated the much needed Clavinova that now takes the place of the Schaefer. Sally Strang, C.E. Chair

SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE—Event Dates: Sorting and Book Drop Off: Sunday, February 18 – Wednesday, March 20; Sale: Saturday, March 23 and Sunday, March 24 from 10:30am-4:00pm both days
Sorting Shifts are Mondays 10:00am-2:00pm, Wednesdays 10:00am-2:00pm, Saturdays 10:00am-2:00pm, Sundays 2:00pm-4:00pm

They are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help sort books, organize donations, and prepare the space for the big sale. There are more than one hundred slots that need to be filled: add your name to one today! Sign up at <https://bit.ly/booksale2024> or just show up at 860 Quarry Road in Coralville, Iowa River Landing.

John Fieselmann, Kathy Fait, and Donna Hirst are on the Steering Committee. If you have questions, please contact one of us. You are welcome to bring book donations to the church and one of us can take them to the sale site.

LOOK FOR THIS YEAR'S LENTEN DEVOTIONAL arriving daily in your In Box. Each day brings a new reflection on words from the Sermon on the Mount from a member or friend of Congregational UCC. Thanks to Patte Henderson and Bryan Clemons for coordinating this project of the Diaconate. If you are not receiving these, please contact Bill Lovin or the church office to be put on the list.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: On Palm Sunday, March 24, we will dedicate our One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. This offering has long been an important part of the life of our congregation. For many years now, we have been on the list of Top 100 giving churches. In a world where communities are being displaced by the catastrophes of war, famine, and natural disaster, our congregation joins with many others in standing in faith, hope, and love with those who seek to move beyond the trauma of displacement toward the promise of healing and peace. Your generous gift will support the relief work of not only the UCC but also many other denominations united in caring for refugees, in providing medical care, and in disaster recovery efforts. Let us join in this great tradition and give generously.

FLOWERS FOR EASTER BRING COLOR TO THE SANCTUARY: Each year on Easter Sunday members and friends of Congregational UCC provide flowers for the sanctuary in memory of loved ones or to honor someone. Because so many people enjoy the burst of color, our Diaconate invites you to bring any type of spring flower—lilies, yes, but also consider tulips, daffodils, crocuses, or any other spring flower. *If you would like to have the name(s) of those remembered in the Easter Sunday bulletin, please get that information to the church office (337-4301) by Tuesday, March 26.*

THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH THE HOPE LODGE DINNER ON MARCH 11: Diane Dahl-McCoy, Michelle and Adelaide Birt-Leeds, Rebecca Weatherford, Julie Wittig, Linda Muston, Joyce Myer, Andy Bertolatus, Bryan Clemons, Peter Spragg, Sue and Chuck Dayton. In addition, we had Bill Lovin and 5 confirmands helping out: Nadia Spragg, Collin Beerends, Dylan Beerends, Izzy Brown, and Ella Lewis. It was great to have these young people involved. Our next dinner will be May 13.

A NEW MEMBER CLASS will be held after Easter. If you are interested in joining Congregational UCC or would like to know more about us, we invite you to attend these sessions. For more information, please talk with Bill Lovin or call the church office, 337-4301.

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.

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.

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.