



**Let us worship God.**

**\*HYMN (insert)      “O God of Every Nation”**

**O God of every nation,  
of every race and land,  
redeem the whole creation  
with your almighty hand.  
Where hate and fear divide us  
and bitter threats are hurled,  
in love and mercy guide us,  
and heal our strife torn world.**

**From lust for wealth and power,  
from scorn for truth and right,  
from trust in bombs that shower  
destruction through the night,  
from pride of race and station  
and blindness to your way,  
deliver every nation.  
Eternal God, we pray.**

**Lord, strengthen those who labor  
that we may find release  
from fear of rattling saber,  
from dread of war's increase.  
When hope and courage falter,  
your still small voice be heard;  
with faith that none can alter,  
your servants undergird.**

**Keep bright in us the vision  
of days when war shall cease,  
when hatred and division  
give way to love and peace,  
till dawns the morning glorious  
when truth and justice reign,  
and Christ shall rule victorious  
o'er all the world's domain.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**Gracious God, by your power we are created and by your love we are redeemed. Open our ears to hear your voice and to follow your call; open our hearts that wisdom and mercy may abound; and open our hands to reach out to others in peace. In Christ, you give us a friend and a guide through the shadow of death, leading us into light. Through these lengthening days, continue to call forth acts of tenderness from us. Strengthen us by your**

**Spirit, that we may live this day in love toward one another and toward you; through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#476, vs. 5)

**Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,  
In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail.  
Thy mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,  
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!**

ANTHEM                    “Set Me as a Seal”     David Childs

#### TIME OF PRAYER

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer

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            “Larghetto”     Friedrich Schneider

\*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            John 11:1-44

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather, it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not

stumble because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them.” After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

\*PSALM HYMN 181                      “Come Sing to God” (Psalm 30)

**Come sing to God, O living saints,  
Sing praises to God's name.  
God's anger is not permanent,  
God's love will never wane.**

**Though tears may tarry for the night  
With sighs of deepest pain,  
Yet joy comes with the morning sun,  
A peace that is not vain.**

**In my success I felt secure.  
How good You've been to me.  
I said that this is my own work,  
Ascribing all to me.  
But when You turned aside Your face,  
My life was filled with fears.  
I begged for help, to You I cried  
With loud and bitter tears.**

**What good is gained by my disgrace  
What profit in defeat?  
My grave cannot confess Your name,  
Nor praise for You repeat.  
Now hear, O Lord, my plaintive cry;  
Be merciful to me.  
Accept my longing heart's request  
And from death set me free.**

**You change my grief to joy-filled dance,  
My sorrows You destroy.  
In faithfulness You hear my cry  
And fill my life with joy.  
And so to You my heart shall sing,  
My voice Your goodness raise.  
You are my God, forevermore,  
My life shall sing Your praise.**

**SERMON     “A Life-Giving Encounter”**

**\*HYMN (insert)     “By Gracious Powers”  
By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered,  
and confidently waiting, come what may,  
we know that God is with us night and morning  
and never fails to greet us each new day.**

**Yet is this heart by its old foe tormented,  
still evil days bring burdens hard to bear;  
O give our frightened souls the sure salvation  
for which, O Lord, you taught us to prepare.**

**And when this cup you give is filled to brimming  
with bitter suffering, hard to understand,  
we take it thankfully and without trembling,  
out of so good and so beloved a hand.**

**Yet when again in this same world you give us  
the joy we had, the brightness of your sun,  
we shall remember all the days we lived through,  
and our whole life shall then be yours alone.**

\*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE            “Fugue”            Louis Niedermeyer

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Christian Education:	Hope Spragg
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Dr. Chris Nakielski
Children’s Choir Director	Rachel Burchett
Office Manager	Nancy LeaVesseur

#### TODAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Church School for All Ages	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am
Coffee Hour	After Worship
Choir Rehearsal	After Worship
AWE	After Worship
LGBT Subcommittee	After Worship
Confirmation Class	4:00 pm

#### TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga	11:00 am
Church Council	7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

❖ Staff Meeting	11:00 am
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THURSDAY

❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal	6:30 pm
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NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Church School for All Ages	9:15 am
Worship Service—Palm Sunday	10:15 am
OGHS Offering	
Coffee Hour	After Worship
Choir Rehearsal	After Worship
AWE	After Worship

**IMPORTANT DATES IN LENT AND EASTER**

- **March 29—Palm Sunday**—Worship with Distribution of Palms; One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
- **April 2—Maundy Thursday**—Worship in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.; Communion and Service of Tenebrae
- **April 3—Good Friday**—Worship in the Sanctuary at Noon
- **April 5—Easter Sunday**—Easter Sunrise Service led by members of the Confirmation Class at 7:30 a.m. Breakfast follows in Rockwood Hall; Festival Easter Service in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m.

**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 IN MARCH—ENCOUNTERS AT THE TOMB:** As we move through Lent this month, the 9:15 Sunday morning adult education sessions will explore the resurrection stories in the four Gospels. Each Gospel gives a different account, but all of them point to encounters that women and men had with one another, with various messengers of good news, and with the risen Christ. We'll look at these connections as we seek new understanding of the resurrection for our lives today.

March 22	John, chapter 20
March 29	General Discussion

Join Bill Lovin around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL BREAKFASTS:** Thank you so much to all who continue to provide breakfast for our children and youth! It is an appreciated gift to families, graciously part of our

radically welcoming tradition. The new sign-up to finish out the school year is up in Rockwood Hall. If you are able, please consider contributing a "breakfast for 12" one Sunday this spring.

**AFTER WORSHIP ENCOUNTER (AWE) WILL MEET THIS MORNING AND NEXT SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP.** We take a break on Easter Sunday, April 5. Generally, we gather on the Sundays that the choir meets after worship to rehearse for their Special Music Sunday on May 31. We are using *Living the Questions: The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity*. This is a beginning class that will introduce you to Progressive Christianity. Rev. Ann Molsberry is leading the discussions. Please purchase your own book and join us in the library.

**ON PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 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 50 giving churches. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) involves us in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, through our offering, we are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS we engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, our contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put us in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. We meet immediate needs and address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Let us continue this great tradition and give generously.

**YOU CAN HELP WITH THE FREE LUNCH PROGRAM THIS MONTH:** The Free Lunch Program is continuing to serve lunches. Members of Congregational UCC serve on the fifth Monday of any month. Our next serving date is Monday, March 30. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Vicki Thomae or call the church office—319-337-4301.

**THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH THE HOPE LODGE DINNER ON MARCH 16:** Jane Kinney, Sally Strang, Diane Dahl-McCoy, Ruth Bradley and Bruce Tarwater, Shelagh Hayreh, Marsha Lowe, Sharyn Reitz, Rebecca Weatherford, and Chuck and Sue Dayton. Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be May 11.

**THE PRIDE ALLIANCE CENTER RAINBOW GRADUATION** will be held at our church on Friday, May 1, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. The Rainbow Graduation Celebration recognizes the achievements of LGBTQ+ students and their allies. This is our second consecutive year hosting this event. Everyone is welcome to attend this joyous occasion and support the graduating students and organizers who are unable to use university spaces, funds, or staff as they have in previous years. If you can help provide refreshments for the reception to follow, please sign up on the sheet posted in Rockwood Hall. For more information, contact Julie Wittig, David McCartney, or Bill Dickinson.

**SAVE THE DATE! IOWA CITY PRIDE FESTIVAL IS SATURDAY, JUNE 20** and the Mission Board members invite you to participate in the parade, help at the booth, or both. Full event details and signup available in May. For more information or to get involved with the planning, please reach out to any member of the LGBTQ+ subcommittee: Dianne Atkins, Martha Ann Crawford, Carson Fixmer, Dean Logan, Linda Muston, Hope Spragg, Rebecca Weatherford or Julie Wittig.

**AGAPE CAFÉ BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER—MARCH 28:** The Agape Café continues to serve free, hot, breakfast for our neighbors in the Iowa City area experiencing homelessness or food insecurity. The Cafe is celebrating its 33rd anniversary at their annual in-person fundraiser on Saturday, March 28, from 8 am - 11 am at Old Brick in Iowa City. Come have a great breakfast and support their good work!

**THE SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE** will be held March 28 & 29 at 860 Quarry Road, Coralville from 10:30am-4:00pm both days. You can bring your donations of donations of books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles to that location every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 10:00am-2:00pm, and Sundays from 2:00pm-4:00pm. Or drop your donations off in Rockwood Hall and we'll take them for you.

Many volunteers are needed to help sort books and help during sale days. Sign up to volunteer at: [Book Sale 2026: Community Volunteers](#).

**AGUDAS ACHIM INVITES EVERYONE THEIR ANNUAL PEACE AND JUSTICE SEDER.** They will be raising funds for three worthy local causes: HOPE Foundation (rebuilding life in Gaza), One Iowa (LGBTQ rights) and the Immigrant Welcome Network of Johnson County (immigrant support). Please come participate in this joyous event full of song, food and liberation based on the traditional Passover Seder meal but open to all. You can bring a non-wheat-based vegetarian or dairy dish as a potluck contribution. Sunday March 29th, Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. Doors open: 4:15 pm, Seder begins: 4:30 pm. Please register before



March 25th via the QR code.

**PLEASE JOIN UICHR FOR A TALK AND RECEPTION HONORING THE LEGACY OF JIM LEACH** on March 24, 2:30 - 4:00 pm at the Stanley Museum of Art. Visual and political anthropologist and human rights scholar and educator Professor Winifred Tate (Colby College) will discuss community action and art in the wake of violence, dispossession, and collective loss. Tate will consider the intersections, possibilities, and limitations of rights activism and art through an exploration of the visual repertoires and material practices of Colombian sculptor Doris Salcedo and Passamaquoddy artist Jeremy Frey. Professor Tate will also share memories of Jim Leach as a champion of the arts and discuss his commitment to

human rights. For more information visit: <https://stanleymuseum.uiowa.edu/event/36576/0>. This program is free and open to all. Refreshments will be provided.

**A COMMUNITY READING OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S "A TIME TO BREAK SILENCE"** : Martin Luther King delivered his most controversial speech on April 4, 1967. One year later, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated in Memphis. Come read with us King's 1967 Speech, and excerpts from his last speech on April 3, 1968, "I've Been to the Mountaintop."

Saturday, April 4, 2026. 11AM to 6 PM at the Iowa City Public Library

This event is free and open to the public. Come listen to or read a portion of the speech. The speeches will be repeated several times. Come and go as you wish.

*Sponsored by Veterans For Peace, Chapter #161, Eastern Iowa* [www.vfp161.org](http://www.vfp161.org).

**USED MEDICINE BOTTLES NEEDED FOR REUSE IN CLINICS:** 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 the congregation. If you are interested, the labels from the plastic bottles need to be removed, and the bottles need to be washed in soapy water. More information will be in the church newsletter. Donna will pick up bottles on Sundays.

**CARBON OFFSET HELPS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY:** Have you ever wanted to compensate for CO2 emissions from a flight or other carbon intensive activity? Carbon offsets are a recognized way to make an activity carbon neutral. Carbon offsets are also often viewed with skepticism due to concerns about whether the money given is truly decreasing carbon emissions and whether the action would have happened without the donation.

Those concerns can be assuaged with a donation to put solar arrays on Habitat for Humanity homes. The homeowners do not have the resources to make an upfront investment in a solar array and once installed the system is likely to stay in place for the lifetime of the panels. In addition to reducing CO2 emissions the donor would be helping a low income Iowa family with their energy bills.

To estimate your flight emissions and send an offset to Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity go to [www.habitatsolar.org/](http://www.habitatsolar.org/). Please contact Jamie McCoy or see the bulletin board in Rockwood Hall for more information.

**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.

**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/1547852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.