



“Hosanna in the Highest”—Hanna Varghese (Used with permission)

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

WORSHIP FOR MARCH 29, 2026
PALM SUNDAY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Anna Mary Mueller, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna” J. Wayne Kerr

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Lift up your heads, O people;

God draws near.

Shout, O people. Rejoice and praise.

Let us face with courage the path before us.

[Unison]

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

***HYMN 89 “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”**

**Hosanna, loud hosanna,
The little children sang;
Through pillared court and temple
The joyful anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them
Close folded to His breast,
The children sang their praises,
The simplest and the best.**

**From Olivet they followed
'Mid an exultant crowd,
The victor palm branch waving,
And chanting clear and loud;
The Lord of earth and heaven
Ride on in lowly state,
Nor scorned that little children
Should on His bidding wait.**

**“Hosanna in the highest!”
That ancient song we sing,
For Christ is our Redeemer,
The Lord of heaven our King.
O may we ever praise Him
With heart and life and voice,
And in His blissful presence
Eternally rejoice.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**Holy God, we shout “Hosanna,” asking you to help us in so many ways. Be our rock and our salvation.
When we are lost and afraid, be with us.
When we are troubled and uncertain, comfort us.
Give us strength to see the truth about ourselves and our world and to say it.
When we lose our nerve and cannot speak, encourage us by your grace and accompany us with your Spirit so we may find our voices.
Guide us to continue the journey that leads to life and peace. Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the city with palms adorned your way;
our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you today.**

**As you received their praises, receive our prayers today,
whose justice and whose mercy, and sovereignty hold sway.**

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

ANTHEM “God So Loved the World” K. Lee Scott

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 “All Glory, Laud and Honor” 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

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

(The Children are dismissed to Children’s Church.)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

*PSALM HYMN 177 “Psalm 24” (Lift Up the Gates Eternal)

Refrain:

Lift up the gates eternal; lift up your voices:

The King of glory comes; the nation rejoices.

**1. See, all the earth is God's, its people and nations;
God built it on the deeps and laid its foundations.**

**2. Who can go up this mountain, who stand in praising?
Those who are pure, who come with clean hands upraising.**

3. They shall receive forgiveness and have God's blessing if they will search for God, their Savior confessing.

(Refrain)

4. Come, lift your voices high: be lifted to glory; the Lord our God approaches; come, shout the story.

5. Who is this glorious one, for whom we are waiting? We wait the mighty Lord, our God celebrating.

(Refrain)

6. Come, lift your heads with joy; come, lift up your tower; the King of glory comes in full might and power.

7. Who is this King of glory of whom we're singing? Our God, the Lord of Hosts, the victory is bringing.

(Refrain)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 19:29-44a

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus, and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. Now as he was approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king

 who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,

 and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Indeed, the days will come upon you when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another.

SERMON "Encountering Peace"

*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 from *Sonata VP*” Felix Mendelssohn

Cover Art: “Hosanna in the Highest” by Hanna Varghese. Used with gracious permission from her daughter, Georgina Varghese. Hanna Varghese (1938-2009) was a Malaysian Christian artist. She started her career as an art and English teacher. She was also a wife, mother and grandmother. Hanna used to say that as a visual artist, she did not get enough hours to paint and batik-dye as other demands of daily life usurped her time. Hanna worked with different medium like oil colors, metal-tooling and wood-block printing. Her passion was painting with Acrylic on canvas and batik-dyeing in fabric. You can learn more about the artist at <http://hanna-artwork.com/>.

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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

MONDAY

❖ Serving at Free Lunch Program

TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY

❖ Tenebrae Rehearsal 7:00 pm

THURSDAY

❖ Maundy Thursday Worship Service 7:00 pm

FRIDAY

❖ Good Friday Worship Service Noon

NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Easter Sunrise Service	7:30 am
Breakfast Following	
Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Festival Easter Worship Service	10:15 am
Coffee Hour	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: This morning we wrap up our exploration of the resurrection stories in the four Gospels. Join Bill Lovin around the fireplace in Rockwood Hall for a general discussion at 9:15.

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 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.

THIS MORNING 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.

SEEKING CHURCH LIBRARIAN: The board of Christian Education would like to thank Patte Henderson for her faithful stewardship of our library for the past several years! Patte is stepping down from her position and we are seeking a new Church librarian. This volunteer

position works with the CE board to manage and develop the church library collection. If you are interested, please speak to Hope Spragg or anyone on the CE board.

MYSTERIES REVEALED: The Deacons invite everyone to help with hospitality, ushering, and greeting. In an effort to unveil the mysteries of these duties, the Deacons are having an informational get together on April 18th at 9AM in Rockwood Hall. Please join us! There is a sign up sheet in Rockwood Hall.

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.

THE SHELTER HOUSE BOOK SALE ENDS TODAY: The sale is at 860 Quarry Road, Coralville from 10:30 am-4:00 pm.

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.

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/. 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.