



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

WORSHIP FOR APRIL 2, 2026
MAUNDY THURSDAY

We will celebrate the sacrament of communion in our worship tonight. If you are joining the worship service from home, you are invited to assemble what you will eat and what you will drink before the service begins. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or something as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.

“To eat this particular meal together is to meet at the level of our most basic humanness, which involves our need not just for food but for each other. I need you to help fill my emptiness just as you need me to help fill yours. As for the emptiness that’s still left over, well we’re in it together, or it in us. Maybe it’s most of what makes us human and makes us brothers and sisters.”

Frederick Buechner

PRELUDE “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” Setting by John Carter

GATHERING

As we gather this evening, we are reminded that where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, Jesus promises to be in their midst.

No matter who you are, whether you are here for an evening or a lifetime, Christ welcomes all of us as friends.

Friends in Christ: It is Maundy Thursday, the day of the new commandment—that we should love one another.

On this night we remember the events that make us who we are:

The meal Jesus shared with his disciples and gave to all who follow him.

The example of Jesus kneeling to wash the feet of others.

The betrayal and desertion of Jesus by those closest to him.

His faithfulness to death, even death on a cross.

On this night we receive the things that nourish who we are:

The bread broken and wine poured out for us and for all people.

The good news that even in the darkest hour

Christ is risen and goes before us.

*HYMN 353 (vs. 1-4) “Great God, Your Love Has Called Us Here”

**Great God, Your love has called us here
As we, by love, for love were made.
Your living likeness still we bear,
Though marred, dishonored, disobeyed.
We come, with all our heart and mind
Your call to hear, Your love to find.**

**We come with self-inflicted pains
Of broken trust and chosen wrong,
Half-free, half-bound by inner chains,
By social forces swept along,
By powers and systems close confined,
Yet seeking hope for humankind.**

**Great God, in Christ You call our name
and then receive us as Your own,
Not through some merit, right or claim,
But by Your gracious love alone.
We strain to glimpse your mercy seat
And find You kneeling at our feet.**

**Then take the towel, and break the bread,
And humble us, and call us friends.
Suffer and serve till all are fed,
And show how grandly love intends
To work till all creation sings,
To fill all worlds, to crown all things.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Ever gracious God:

We come bearing the marks of a bitter and broken world.

We come from anonymous places, with dry and thirsty spirits.

Help us to recognize your presence in our midst this evening.

Remind us in the breaking of the bread of our need and of your sufficiency.

Refresh us and make us whole with the cup of forgiveness.

Draw us nearer to each other in mutual service and closer to you in faithfulness and thanksgiving.

As the night advances, deepen in us a sense of your steadfast love for us in Christ Jesus, our friend and redeemer. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#353, vs. 5)**

Great God, in Christ You set us free

Your life to live, Your joy to share.

Give us Your Spirit's liberty

To turn from guilt and dull despair

And offer all that faith can do

While love is making all things new

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Matthew 26:17-19, 26-29

John 13:3-11, 34-35

MEDITATION BEFORE COMMUNION

SOLO "Benedictus" J. S. Bach
Chris Nakielski

Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 503 "Come Risen Lord"

**Come, risen Lord, and deign to be our guest;
no, let us be your guests and with you dine;
at your own table now be manifest
in your own sacrament of bread and wine.**

**We meet as in the upper room they met;
now at the table, blessing, yet you stand:
'This is my body': this you give us yet;
faith still receives the cup as from your hand.**

**One body we, one body who partake,
one church united in communion blessed;
one name we bear, one bread of life we break,
with all your saints on earth and saints at rest.**

**One with each other, Lord, and one in you,
who are one Savior and one living head;
open our eyes to see with vision true;
be known to us in breaking of the bread.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE SUPPER TOGETHER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (Psalm 103: 1-2)

Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits. Amen.

*HYMN 83 "O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High"

**O love, how deep, how broad, how high,
How passing thought and fantasy,
That God, the Son of God, should take
Our mortal form for mortals' sake!**

**For us baptized, for us He bore
His holy fast and hungered sore;
For us temptations sharp He knew,
For us the tempter overthrew.**

**For us to evil power betrayed,
Scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed,
He bore the shameful cross and death,
For us gave up His dying breath.**

**For us He rose from death again;
For us He went on high to reign;
For us He sent His Spirit here,
To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.**

**All glory to our Lord and God
For love so deep, so high, so broad:**

**The Trinity whom we adore
Forever and forevermore.**

TENEBRAE: THE SERVICE OF SHADOWS

“When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matthew 26:30)

THE SHADOW OF BETRAYAL Matthew 26:20-25 Vicky Henderson

THE SHADOW OF DESERTION Matthew 26:31-35 Rebecca Weatherford

HYMN 97 (vs. 1) “Go to Dark Gethsemane”

**Go to dark Gethsemane,
All that feel the tempter’s power;
Your Redeemer’s conflict see,
Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away,
Learn from Jesus Christ to pray**

THE UNSHARED VIGIL Mark 14:37-41 Bryan Clemons

THE ARREST IN THE GARDEN John 18:2-5 Kris Bode

HYMN 86 (vs. 1 & 2) “When We Are Tempted to Deny Your Son”

**“When we are tempted to deny your Son; because we fear the anger of the world,
And we are few who hear the insults hurled, your will, O God, be done.**

**When we are tempted to betray your Son, because he leads us in a harder way,
And makes demands we do not want to pay, your will, O God, be done.**

THE DENIAL OF PETER Matthew 26:69-75 Craig Henderson

IN THE JUDGMENT HALL Matthew 27:11-14, 26b Laurie Stunz

HYMN 85 (vs. 1) “What Wondrous Love Is This”

**What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, That caused the Lord of bliss,
To bear the heavy cross,
For my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul.**

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS Mark 15:16-20 Barb Sisley

THE TOLLING OF THE BELL

Sunrise Service Led by the Confirmation Class 7:30
Easter Breakfast Rockwood Hall, beginning at 8:00
Festival Easter Service with Brass and Choir 10:15 a.m.