



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

WORSHIP FOR MAY 10, 2026
THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
Christ is risen!

Sam Bierman, Liturgist

Christ is risen indeed!

PRELUDE

“Draw Us to Thee”

Johann Gottfried Walther

CHORAL INTROIT

*CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 66)

Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth;

sing the glory of God’s name;

let the sound of God’s praise be heard,

for God has kept us among the living

and brought us out into a spacious place.

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

*** HYMN 473 “For the Beauty of the Earth” (vs. 1-4)**

**For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the wonder of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower
Sun and moon and stars of light,
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the joy of ear and eye,
For the heart and mind’s delight,
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight,
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above
For all gentle thoughts and mild,
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

In our celebrations and our sorrows, we come to you, O God. You are the One in whom we live and move and have our being. Accompany us in our joy and help us to bear the pain in our grief. As we share this world with our neighbors give us:

**Clear sight to see the gladness and sorrow of others,
Bold speech to call for the well-being of all,
Resolve to work toward human flourishing.**

In these days of opportunity and challenge, raise us into newness of life. Help us to live in the freedom of Christ to do your work of reconciliation; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

**For the good that love inspires, for a world where none exclude
For a faith that never tires, and for every heart renewed
Lord of all to Thee we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise.**

ANTHEM “This Easter Morn” Clark Kimberling

TIME OF PRAYER

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer

The 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 “Come, Let Us Join Our Cheerful Songs” Friedrich Hark

*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

(Children are dismissed to Children’s Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 42:5-9

Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

PSALM 46

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

**Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea;**
though its waters rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.

**The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.**

The nations make much ado, and the realms are shaken;
God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away.

The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come now and look upon the works of the Lord,
what awesome things God has done on earth.

**It is the Lord who makes war to cease in all the world,
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,
and burns the shields with fire.**

“Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted in the earth.”

**The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Acts 17:22-32

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being;’ as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’

“Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, “We will hear you again about this.”

*HYMN (insert) “Your Love, O God, Is Broad Like Beach and Meadow”

**Your love, O God, is broad like beach and meadow,
wide as the wind, and our eternal home.
You leave us free to seek you or reject you,
you give us room to answer "yes" or "no."**

**We long for freedom where our truest being
is given hope and courage to unfold.
We seek in freedom space and scope for dreaming,
and look for ground where trees and plants can grow.**

**But there are walls that keep us all divided;
we fence each other in with hate and war.**

**Fear is the bricks and mortar of our prison,
our pride of self, the prison coat we wear.**

**Judge us, O God, and in your judgment free us,
and set our feet in freedom's open space;
take us as far as your compassion wanders
among the children of the human race.**

SERMON “The Reason We Dare”

*HYMN 261 “God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us”

**God of compassion, in mercy befriend us,
giver of grace for our needs all-availing.
Wisdom and strength for each day do you send us,
patience untiring and courage unfailing.**

**Wandering and lost, you have sought us and found us,
stilled our rude hearts with your word of consoling.
Wrap now your peace, like a mantle, around us,
guarding our thoughts and our passions controlling.**

**How shall we stray, with your hand to direct us,
you who the stars in their courses are guiding?
What shall we fear, with your power to protect us,
we who abide in your greatness confiding?**

*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Maestoso” Johann Kindermann

“Your Love, O God,” Words - ©1974 Hope Publishing Company. Lyrics: Fred Kaan
Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved. Reprinted with
permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

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
Christian Education for all ages	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am

Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall After Worship
Choir Rehearsal 11:30 am

TUESDAY

❖ *Reading Genesis* Group (Oaknoll) 10:00am
Gentle Yoga 11:00 am

THURSDAY

❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am
Christian Education for all ages 9:15 am
Worship Service—Confirmation 10:15 am
Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall After Worship
Choir Rehearsal 11:30 am

WE'RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.

Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR—Nametags help newer members and friends trying to put names and faces together. And—admit it—they help long-timers know who the new people are as well. They are available on the board outside of the sanctuary. Please wear them. And if you'd like one, please contact the church office.

VISITATION COMMITTEE: The Membership Board is forming a group of volunteers who would be willing to occasionally contact/visit church members who are homebound or would enjoy a visit. If you are interested see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: A group of youth and adults from St. Lucas UCC in suburban St. Louis will be traveling to Sheyenne, ND in July. They would like to stay a CUCC overnight on July 18. For insurance purposes, in order to host them we need a couple of members to sleep at the church that evening as well. If you'd like to help in this way, please talk with Bill Lovin.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be held on Monday, May 11 at 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in helping or providing food please see the sign up sheet in Rockwood Hall.

The American Cancer Society Hope Lodge, which opened in 2008, offers 28 guest rooms located near treatment centers in the area. The program provides a free home away from home for cancer patients and their caregivers. More than just a roof over their heads, it's a nurturing community that helps patients access the care they need. Each Hope Lodge community offers a supportive, homelike environment where guests can share a meal, join in the evening's activities, or unwind in their own private room. Patients staying at a Hope Lodge must be in active cancer treatment.

***Requiem* PREVIEW—MAY 20:** Please join CUCC member and musicologist, Roberta Marvin, on Wednesday, May 20, at 7:00 p.m. for an illustrated talk on Zoom about the *Requiem* by

Gabriel Fauré, which the choir will perform on Sunday, May 31. Roberta will discuss the composer, French culture and traditions at the time the work was composed, the music, and the work's performance history. Talk with Bill Lovin or contact the church office and we'll send you the Zoom invitation.

THE UNITED ACTION FOR YOUTH'S FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS—MAY 21

The Mission Board is a presenting sponsor for the United Action for Youth's Festival of Flowers, which provides us with a table for 8. This event, May 21, at the Graduate Hotel at 5 PM is the single fundraiser for UAY. Hors d'oeuvres and wine will be served. The show will feature over 100 floral arrangements from community members and professional florists, available to purchase in a silent auction. Dinner parties, travel packages and more will be featured in a live auction.

UAY's mission is to nurture the potential for all youth to create, grow and succeed. They provide crisis and mediation programs, counseling, health education, music programs, LGBTQ+ programs, homeless youth services, and a young parent program. UAY supports three Mission Board priorities for 2025: Medical/Mental Health, Children/Youth, and LGBTQ+. If you would like to attend, please let Nancy LeaVesseur (uccicadmin@uccic.org or 319-337-4301) know.

WEAR RED ON PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 24. This day completes the long arc from Ash Wednesday through Easter resurrection to the coming of the Holy Spirit to the followers of Christ—a journey “from ashes to fire.” Pentecost marks God's gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church and our morning will be a spirited time together. The traditional color for Pentecost is red. We invite everyone to please consider wearing “flame colors”—red, orange, yellow—to worship on Sunday, May 24.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING WILL BE RECEIVED ON PENTECOST SUNDAY—MAY 24. Each year we receive a special offering that helps the church's love to grow and thrive. The “Strengthen the Church” offering grows the United Church of Christ's future by supporting new and renewing churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership development—especially among women and people of color. It also funds the “Stillspeaking” Ministry, spreading the message of God's extravagant welcome, reaching out especially to those who have felt there is no room for them within Christianity and the church. On Sunday, May 24—Pentecost Sunday—we will receive this offering. Your generous gift will help the UCC create vibrant church communities of extravagant welcome.

REQUIEM—SUNDAY, MAY 31: Please join us in worship on Sunday, May 31, for what promises to be a memorable performance of Faure's *Requiem Mass*, featuring the Congregational UCC Choir, conducted by Dr. Christopher Nakielski and accompanied by organist William Crouch. Additionally, this performance will feature an orchestra comprising area professionals, in addition to vocal soloists Marie Von Behren (soprano) and Dr. Benjamin Laur (baritone). You won't want to miss this timeless classic!

THE MEMBERSHIP BOARD IS HOSTING A SPRING BRUNCH in Rockwood Hall after our worship that morning on May 31, our spring Special Music Sunday. During this time, we will recognize members who joined the church this past year. The brunch will be catered, so, no need to bring anything. To help us plan, we would like to get an approximate count of how many

people will attend. Please indicate on the sign-up sheets in Rockwood Hall if you plan to attend and how many may be coming with you. We are looking forward to this time to celebrate spring and enjoy beautiful music.

A STRAWBERRY FIELD: Early in our church history, it was recorded that women [sic] of the church often made strawberry desserts for celebrations or fundraisers held in the spring, when local strawberries were in season. We invite anyone who wishes to bring a strawberry dessert to the May 31 brunch which will follow the Special Music Sunday service. The Membership Board provides the main meal.

We will set up a special table called “Strawberry Field” for desserts, or strawberry salads. This might become a spring tradition.

If you have questions, please contact anyone on the Membership Board: Sue Dayton, Martha Ann Crawford, Randee Fieselmann, Marcy Kuechenmeister, Dean Logan, Marsha Lowe, Sheilah McKenna, Joyce Myer, or Pam Willard.

P.S. When the Beatles wrote their famous song “Strawberry Fields Forever,” they were familiar with a Salvation Army children’s home in Liverpool, UK, named “Strawberry Field.”

THE IOWA CITY PRIDE FESTIVAL AND PARADE IS SATURDAY, JUNE 20 IN DOWNTOWN IOWA CITY. Our church family will again participate in the noon parade and host a booth from 1 to 4 p.m. Sign-up sheets are now posted in Rockwood Hall for parade participants, booth volunteers, and setup/takedown crews. Mission Board members invite you to join in the Pride festivities as we honor, celebrate, and support our LGBTQ+ community. More announcements are coming soon.

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.