



JESUS MAFA: The Good Shepherd

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

WORSHIP FOR MAY 11, 2025  
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Dip your hand in heaven's waters  
God's imagination  
Dip you hand in heaven's waters

All of life's abundance in a  
drop of condensation  
Dip your hand in heaven's waters  
Paul Simon

PRELUDE "Nocturne No. 5" John Field

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS  
Christ is risen!

Ben Copeland, Liturgist

**Christ is risen indeed!**

## CHORAL INTROIT

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Day by day God leads us  
by still waters,  
to lie down in green pastures.

**Day by day Christ calls us  
by our name,  
to share our abundance**

Day by day the Spirit  
brings us energy  
sufficient for what we need.

**Let us rejoice in this day.**

\*HYMN (insert)      “Christ, We Meet You on Our Way”

**Christ, we meet you on our way: Alleluia!  
Coming to redeem the day, Alleluia!  
Rising out of dark despair, Alleluia!  
You would claim a world so fair, Alleluia!**

**Take our lives, our hopes, our dreams, Alleluia!  
Wash them in baptismal streams; Alleluia!  
Now from evil and from death, Alleluia!  
Raise us with renewing breath, Alleluia!**

**Join us in a bond of love, Alleluia!  
With saints here and saints above, Alleluia!  
Children, strangers, ev’ry one, Alleluia!  
You or us the victor’y won, Alleluia!**

**Let your joyful songs be sung, Alleluia!  
In each place, by ev’ry tongue, Alleluia!  
Gentle Sovereign, Risen Friend, Alleluia!  
Living Spirit, without end, Alleluia!**

### \*OPENING PRAYER

**We rejoice in you and all that you are, O God, the Shepherd who watches over your people and seeks their good. You show us how to care for one another and to seek the good of all. Help us to remember all that it means to be your people and the sheep of your pasture.**

**We hear your voice calling us to remember who we are. We struggle to find our way towards it. How can it be that we treat each other so carelessly and forget all that you have asked us to do? We see forces coming at the vulnerable and in our anguish, we scatter in confusion and fear. Somehow, let your voice come through the chaos; direct us towards a place where we are all safe and secure. Give us determination, courage, and endurance as we move through these days.**

**You are the Good Shepherd and by the power of what you desire us to be, you will lead us through. Amen.**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#172, vs. 1)**

**My Shepherd, you supply my need,  
most holy is your name;  
in pastures fresh you make me feed,  
beside the living stream.  
You bring my wand'ring spirit back  
when I forsake your ways;  
you lead me, for your mercy's sake,  
in paths of truth and grace.**

#### **THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

Questions for the Candidates

Question for the Congregation

Prayer

The Baptism of Cassie Elsberg

The Baptism of Julie Wittig

#### **RECEPTION OF A NEW MEMBER**

Introduction: Cassie Elsberg

Owning the Covenant

**We covenant with one another to seek and respond to the Word and will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of Jesus Christ, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our forebears, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the reign of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.**

Welcome of the Congregation

**We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hope and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.**

**ANTHEM      "Sing, Soul of Mine, the Lord Is Risen"      Louita Clothier**

#### **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      “Arietta,” Op. 12, No. 1      Edvard Grieg

\*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

(The children are dismissed to Children’s Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON      Ezekiel 34:11-16

#### PSALM 23

**The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters.  
He restores my soul.  
He leads me in paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I fear no evil; for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON      Luke 15:3-7

SERMON      “Radical Trust and the Challenges of Faith”

\*HYMN      “Faithful Shepherd” (Tune: BEACH SPRING, #422)

**Faithful Shepherd, Lord who names us,  
Praise be yours for springtime green!  
Praise for love in every blossom!  
Make our troubled lives serene.**

**Lead us by the peaceful waters,  
Where we drink from healing springs.  
Give us grace to join the anthem  
Which the whole creation sings!**

**Faithful Shepherd, Lord who lifts us,  
Praise be yours for morning light!  
Praise for sunshine in our rising!  
Turn our blindness into sight.  
Give us vision for tomorrow  
As we seek your holy way.  
Help our children and their children  
Waken to a brighter day.**

**Faithful Shepherd, Lord who loves us,  
Praise be yours for tender care!  
Praise for parents and for neighbors,  
All who grace and kindness share!  
Send us out into the wildness  
Where your lambs forgotten roam,  
Give us strength to bear them gladly  
Till we find our heavenly home.**

**\*BENEDICTION and CHORAL RESPONSE**

**POSTLUDE “Solfeggietto” C.P.E. Bach**

Cover Art: JESUS MAFA. The good shepherd, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48288> [retrieved May 7, 2025]. 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.

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	Jenn Harden

**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
Bible Study	11:30 am
TUESDAY	
❖ Yoga	10:00 am
WEDNESDAY	
❖ UI Rainbow Graduation	4-6:30 pm
THURSDAY	
❖ Women's Lunch, Kava House, Swisher	11:45 am
SATURDAY	
❖ Men's Breakfast—Waterfront Hy-Vee	8:00 am
NEXT SUNDAY	
❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education	9:15 am
Worship Service-Spring Music Sunday	10:15 am
Brunch in Rockwood Hall	After Worship

**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 WRAPS UP WITH THE LAST SUPPER:** This morning, John and Randee Fieselmann will lead discussions on the meanings of the Last Supper, with slides and commentary about depictions of the Last Supper across the ages, ending with Leonardo's most famous fresco. Join us in Rockwood Hall at 9:15 a.m.

**AFTER WORSHIP BIBLE STUDY:** The Rev. Ann Molsberry's Bible Study concludes this morning.

**BAKE SALE:** This morning, Alex Butler and Peter Spragg are selling incredibly delicious homemade baked goods. All proceeds will support their adventure to Camp Stronghold in June.

**THE PRIDE ALLIANCE CENTER RAINBOW GRADUATION** will be held at our church this Wednesday, May 14, from 4-6:30 p.m. The Rainbow Graduation Celebration recognizes the achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students, as well as their advocates. This annual event honors both undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who graduate in the fall or spring semester. The Rainbow Graduation Celebration features UI faculty, staff, students, and community members, and is followed by a reception. If you can help provide refreshments, please sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall. The Oaknoll LGBTQ+ committee and allies have generously supported this event with volunteer time and funds. Everyone is welcome to attend and support the organizing students who are unable to use university spaces, funds or staff as they have in previous years.

**SPRING SPECIAL MUSIC SUNDAY—MAY 18:** Please join us on May 18th as the Congregational UCC Choir offers Jake Runestad's "The Hope of Loving," a multimovement work for chorus, string orchestra, and soloists, featuring our own members as soloists, Marie Von Behren (soprano) and Colin Wilson (tenor), along with guest soloist Brian Banion (bass). The "Hope of Loving" uses a selection of writings inspired by spiritual mystics throughout history to explore the idea of love and its manifestation in our lives.

**THE MEMBERSHIP BOARD IS HOSTING A SPRING BRUNCH** in Rockwood Hall after our worship on May 18, 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.

**CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL** will be held through June 8. Mark your calendar, we will celebrate that Sunday morning with a Pancake Party! We will make the pancakes during Sunday School, children are encouraged to bring their favorite pancake topping/side to share.

**JOIN US FOR GENTLE YOGA LED BY HOPE SPRAGG EVERY TUESDAY** in May at 10:00 AM in Rockwood Hall. This 45-minute session is appropriate for beginner to anyone wishing to focusing on body awareness, increased mobility and relaxation. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a yoga mat if you have one. Suggested donation: \$10 (cash, check, or online). Please note "IWN" in the memo line for online or check donations. All proceeds will support the Immigrant Welcome Network. Come move, breathe, and support a great cause with your church family!

**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 22, 2025 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. In 2024, the counseling services provided 3146 sessions for 314 families, safe and stable housing for 46 youth, and support to 65 families including 102 children. UAY supports three of the six MB priorities for 2025: Medical/Mental Health, Children/Youth, and LGTBQ+. If you would like to attend, please let Jenn Harden ([uccicadmin@uccic.org](mailto:uccicadmin@uccic.org)) know.

**IOWA CITY PRIDE FESTIVAL** is Saturday, June 21—less than two months away—and the Mission Board members invite you to participate in the parade and/or the booth. Last year more than 40 members of the congregation including friends and family enjoyed the celebration. In 2025 we welcome everyone to join us as we proudly show love and support for the LGBTQ+

community and celebrate the historic inclusive commitment of our denomination and congregation where all are welcome. For more information or to share your willingness to help contact any member of the subcommittee: Dianne Atkins, Martha Ann Crawford, Linda Muston, Hope Spragg, Rebecca Weatherford or Julie Wittig.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** on August 18-20, Mon-Wed, 8AM-11AM. All children pre-k-high school are encouraged to attend as campers or helpers! Silver cord hours are available for high school volunteers. This is a great opportunity to bring a friend! Sign-up in Rockwood Hall!

**HELP WITH MEALS FOR MEMBERS:** Occasionally, members of our congregation who are injured or ill can use a meal prepared for them. Our Membership Board wants to be ready when the need arises. If you can help provide an occasional meal, please sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall. Thanks!

**HELP WITH SLEEPING MATS STILL NEEDED:** With our winter weather just around the corner, the need for more sleeping mats for the homeless is growing! By contributing your plastic bags from your purchases we can help the homeless! Bring your clean, unneeded, plastic grocery bags, or similar plastic bags from your purchases here, to Rockwood Hall. We will see to it that they are delivered.

**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.