

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

WORSHIP FOR MAY 17, 2020
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

“Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.”

Henry David Thoreau

PRELUDE Adagio, Op. 39, No. 1 - Alexandre Guilmant

EASTER GREETING AND WELCOME

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 27)

God is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

**God is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.

**Wait for the Lord,
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!**

HYMN “For the Beauty of the Earth”

**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 beauty 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.**

**For each perfect gift of Thine
Unto us so freely given,
Graces human and divine
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

OPENING PRAYER

We hold seeds of hope in our hands, O God, help us to know what to do with them.

Our hopes are furled like tender shoots in hard shells.

Yet still they are here in these tender shoots of dreams, desires, and longings we have for the return of our lives, the recovery of the future, and a world made new.

We hope for so many things—let us say them to you and to ourselves. (*Please take a moment to give voice to what you hope for. . .*)

Receive all that we hope for and let it contribute to the good.

When our hope appears dormant remind us it is a living thing.

Help us to work alongside you to prepare the ground in which it may grow. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE LESSON Ezekiel 17:22-24

PSALM 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of this people,
it seemed to us like a dream.

**Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongues uttered shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”

**Great things indeed the Lord has done for us,
and therefore we are glad.**

Restore again our fortunes, O Lord,
as when the streams refresh the southern dry-lands.

**Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy.**

[Unison]

**Those who go out weeping with seed for sowing
shall come back in gladness,
bringing their sheaves with them.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Mark 4:26-34

SERMON “Seeds of Hope”

A TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “If Ye Love Me” Thomas Tallis
 Kristin and Josh Ramseyer

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

HYMN “God of Grace and God of Glory”

**God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient church's story,
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

**Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.**

**Cure your children's warring madness;
bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.**

**Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Postlude in C Major, Op. 28, No. 8 - Christian Cappelen

Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children's Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director/Soloist:	Kristin Ramseyer

WE WANT TO SEE YOU! We'd like to have members and friends be a part of the greeting time during our online worship. Please send us a brief—10-30 second—video of you or your family waving, saying “Hi,” singing, or whatever you would like. We'll start including a few of these in the worship video each week as a way to strengthen our connections with each other. Send your greeting videos to https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UcrZ4ya9xFir39cG_lx-SCO6dVPBbV0B?usp=sharing

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

Congregational UCC will serve at the Free Lunch Program (FLP) on Monday, July 29 (our usual date on the fifth Monday of the month). If you would like to help, please contact Vicki Thomae or call the church office at 337-4301. FLP is serving all meals take out style through the side door in the kitchen. Guests are not allowed in the building. They are strictly limiting the number of volunteers (4- 6 people) to adhere to social distancing guidelines. They have gloves available as always, but no other PPE. If you would like to wear a mask or other protective “gear,” you will have to bring your own.

Free Lunch is open and considered an essential service! Due to the COVID 19 outbreak, many of the usual volunteers are unable to help, which means there are a few days each week with no

volunteers scheduled. They are building an email list of people who might be willing/able to help on those open days. Food will be provided, they just need some helping hands!

If you're willing/interested to be added to this list of occasional helpers, please follow the link below to sign up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E084EADAE2FA0FA7-covid>

The May 30 NAMI WALK will be virtual. For more information, follow the link:

<https://www.namiwalks.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=900>

UCC Webinar on Environmental Justice & Health Justice Featuring Senator Cory Booker

Statistics and studies have demonstrated the link between COVID-19 death rates and environmental injustice. This May 20th webinar will address this link from three perspectives: scientific research, front line experience, and government response. Senator Cory Booker will be joined by Harvard researcher Francesca Dominici and one of the front line leaders of St. John the Baptist Parish in Louisiana. [Register now!](#)

Stay in Place, Stay Alive, ORGANIZE: A Call for Moral Non-Cooperation.

The Mass Poor People's Assembly & Moral March on Washington is going digital! On **June 20th**, the Poor People's Campaign will hold the largest digital and social media gathering of poor and low-wealth people, moral and religious leaders, advocates, and people of conscience in this nation's history. A global pandemic is exposing even more the already existing crisis of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. [RSVP for June 20th here.](#)

