



Earth from Artemis II

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

WORSHIP FOR MAY 3, 2026  
THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Today is a communion Sunday. If you are joining us online, you are invited to get whatever you eat and whatever you drink before the beginning of worship. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

John Fieselmann, Liturgist

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

PRELUDE

“Fughetta in G Major”

Robert Lind

CHORAL INTROIT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 24)

The earth is God’s and all that is in it,  
**the world, and those who live in it.**

[Unison]

**Let us worship God.**

**\*HYMN (insert)      “Heaven and Earth and Sea and Air”**

**Heaven and earth and sea and air  
all their Maker’s praise declare.  
Wake, my soul, awake and sing,  
with creation praises bring!**

**See, at dawn, the rising sun,  
show the wonders God has done!  
Moon and stars, with silvery light  
praise God through the silent night.**

**Look around this earthly ball,  
God has richly dressed it all,  
urban lights and canyons deep,  
forest, fields, with cows and sheep.**

**Waters surge and windstorms blow,  
thunder, lightning, hail, and snow;  
through their frenzy, even these,  
God would praise and God would please.**

**All these things with curious force,  
find them drawn to praise their source:  
Wake, my soul, awake and sing,  
to your Maker praises bring.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER (a prayer of Walter Rauschenbusch)**

**O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;  
for the wide sky and the blessed sun,  
for the salt sea and the running water,  
for the everlasting hills and the never-resting winds,  
for trees and the common grass underfoot.  
We thank you for our senses by which we hear the songs of birds,  
and see the splendor of the summer fields,  
and taste of the autumn fruits,  
and rejoice in the feel of the snow,  
and smell the breath of the spring.  
Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;  
and save our souls from being so blind  
that we pass unseeing when even the common thornbush  
is aflame with your glory,  
O God our creator,  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**We cannot own the sunlit sky, the moon, the wild-flowers growing,  
For we are part of all that is within life's river flowing.  
With open hands receive and share the gifts of God's creation,  
That all may have abundant life in every earthly nation.**

ANTHEM "Cornerstone" Shawn Kirchner

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "Interlude" Starling Goodwin

\*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 are dismissed to Children's Church)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Genesis 2:4b-9

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

PSALM 104:24-35

O Lord, how manifold are your works!

in wisdom you have made them all;

the earth is full of your creatures.

**Yonder is the great and wide sea  
with its living things too many to number,  
creatures both small and great.**

There move the ships,  
and there is that Leviathan,  
which you have made for the sport of it.

**All of them look to you  
to give them their food in due season.**

You give it to them; they gather it;  
you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

**You hide your face, and they are terrified;**

**you take away their breath,  
and they die and return to their dust.**

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created;  
and so you renew the face of the earth.

**May your glory, O Lord, endure forever;  
may you rejoice in all your works.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON      Colossians 3:1-4, 12-15

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

SERMON      "The World Is to Dig"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 514      "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

**Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy.  
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.**

**Refrain:**

**Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again;  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!**

**Christ is able to make us one.  
At the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express. [Refrain]**

**Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share.  
God (Emmanuel) everywhere! [Refrain]**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND REMEMBERING

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest...

Let us join in the words of remembering...

**We remember Christ when we eat and drink together.  
Christ is as close as the bread we eat, the cup we drink.  
In this sharing, we practice the love Christ preaches.**

### SHARING OF BREAD AND CUP

(Communion elements are served in the pews. Please receive the bread or cup as they are offered to you by a deacon. Hold it until all have been served, and we will eat and drink together at the minister's guidance. We serve grape juice, not wine. Gluten-free wafers are on the trays with the bread. In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we celebrate the Lord's Supper with openness and welcome. Everyone is invited to the table, regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation.)

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Let us go from this place, O God, sustained by your good gifts found in this meal. In communion with you and with one another, may we live our lives with compassion and care. May we go out seeking the goodness you find in creation. Amen.**

\*HYMN 274 "O God of Earth and Space"

**O God of earth and space,  
Of sea and fire and air,  
Your providence surrounds us here  
And everywhere.  
In fruit and grain and tree,  
In shelter from the cold,  
In cooling breezes, flowing wells,  
Now as of old.**

**Where faithfulness is shown,  
Where love and truth abound,  
Where beauty graces human life,  
There You are found.  
Inspirer of all thought!  
Creative force of art!  
The melody on every tongue,  
In every heart!**

**Wherever freedom reigns,  
Where sin is overthrown,  
Where justice fused with mercy rules,**

**There You are known.  
Give us the courage clear  
To make the earth a home  
For all to live in harmony  
In Christ's shalom.**

**Your word commands response  
And summons us to life.  
We follow, strengthened by Your grace,  
In calm or strife.  
Our ever-present help,  
Our challenge and our prod,  
We praise You now and to life's end  
Eternal God.**

\*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Voluntary” Robert Lind

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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
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
AWE	11:30 am
Confirmation Class	4:00 pm

TUESDAY

- ❖ *Reading Genesis* Group (Oaknoll) 10:00am
- Gentle Yoga 11:00 am
- Church Council 7:00 pm
- Board of Christian Education 6:00 pm
- Mission Board 7:00 pm
- Stewardship Board (Zoom) 7:00 pm,

THURSDAY

- ❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

SATURDAY

- ❖ Women's Reading Group 10:00 am

NEXT SUNDAY

- ❖ 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
- AWE 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.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH** who participated in annual national UCC Climate Hope Art Contest! Each student was encouraged to use symbols that reflect love, care and stewardship of our Earth. All entries are on display 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.

**ADULT EDUCATION FOR MAY 3:** The Adult Education Subcommittee and the Stewardship Board is sponsoring a talk on "Planned Giving" by Paul Morf, a prominent attorney from Cedar Rapids, in Rockwood Hall. During his presentation, he welcomes questions from participants. The presentation will be taped so that members of the choir or others unable to attend will be able to observe the presentation.

**AFTER WORSHIP ENCOUNTER (AWE) MEETS THIS MORNING** and on the Sundays that the choir meets after worship to rehearse for their Special Music Sunday on May 31. Rev. Ann Molsberry is leading the discussions—join them in the library.

**WE ARE CONTINUING OUR DISCUSSION OF MARILYNNE ROBINSON'S *READING GENESIS*** that we began last fall. We'll meet at Oaknoll from 10:00-11:30 on Tuesday morning, May 5 & 12. If you would like to be a part of this group, talk with Bill Lovin or Chuck Dayton or sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall.

**WOMEN'S READING GROUP—MAY 9:** The Women's Reading Group is reading and discussing *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor. They meet from 10-11a.m. in Rockwood Hall the second Saturday of each month through June. If you're interested, contact Marsha Lowe or Rebecca Weatherford or sign-up in Rockwood Hall.

**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.

**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.