



CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 N. CLINTON ST.
IOWA CITY, IA 52245
319-337-4301
WORSHIP FOR JUNE 14, 2026
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Welcome to Congregational UCC. We ask that you silence your cell phone as you enter the sanctuary. Please use the time during the prelude to quietly prepare for worship.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE. PLEASE ASK AN USHER.

“The first duty of love is to listen.” - Paul Tillich

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Chuck Connerly, Liturgist

PRELUDE “God of Grace and God of Glory” Donald Rotermund

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Bread of the Journey)

We are gathered to give witness to the enduring realities of life.

We have come to affirm that life is a gift, that the gift is good, and that it comes from God.

We are gathered to renew our hope in Jesus Christ, as we travel life's long journey.

We find God in the paths of our present and our past, but we also trust in God's love in our future.

The same God guides us all the way, every day of our lives, and beyond life.

Let us praise God with our whole hearts, and entrust our lives to God's hands.

Amen.

*HYMN 420 "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.**

**Set our feet on lofty places;
Gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christ-like graces,
Pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
That we fail not them nor Thee!
That we fail not them nor Thee!**

**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**

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Although we praise you as God of all the earth, we confess that we sometimes forget that you are the creator of all the people everywhere, and that you care about people of every culture, every color, every tongue, and every political persuasion. Open our eyes to the times when we ridicule, when we exploit others who are different from us. Forgive us where we have failed to love others as ourselves, and grant us the grace to follow the welcoming and loving example of Jesus Christ.

*WORDS OF FORGIVENESS “The Shaking of the Foundations” Paul Tillich

Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness and it is as though a voice were saying: ‘You are accepted. You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know.

Do not ask to do anything now; perhaps you will find it later.

Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much.

Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything.

Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!’

If that happens to us, we experience grace.

After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before.

But everything is transformed.

In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement.

And nothing is demanded of this experience,

No religious or moral intellectual presuppositions,

Nothing but acceptance.

*HYMN 579 “Gloria Patri”

WOMEN’S ENSEMBLE “All Things New” Elaine Hagenberg
(Marie Von Behren, Linda Svalstad, Sarah Fairfield, Erin Brown, Barb Sisley, Cheryl Weatherford, and Rebecca Weatherford)

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.

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “God of Grace and God of Glory” Ralph C. Shultz

*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

We are able to give, O God,

Because you first gave to us.

May these gifts and their givers

**Be used in ways that are pleasing to you and helpful to others. In the name
of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE LESSON Romans 8:31-32, 35, 37-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—

where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord,

the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—

he who watches over you will not slumber;

indeed, he who watches over Israel

will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord watches over you—

the Lord is your shade at your right hand;

the sun will not harm you by day,

nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all harm—

he will watch over your life;

the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 15:11-32

Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

*HYMN 263 “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.
Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.
Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!**

SERMON “Acceptance and Forgiveness: A Combo Even Better than Burger with Fries”

*HYMN 262 “God of the Ages”

**God of the ages, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.**

**Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast;
Be Thou our ruler, guardian, guide and stay;
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.**

**From war’s alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase;
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.**

**Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way,
Lead us from night to never-ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” J. Bert Carlson

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

- ❖ Worship Service 10:15 am
Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall After Worship

TUESDAY

- ❖ Gentle Yoga 11:00 am

THURSDAY

- ❖ Women's Lunch 11:45 am
Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

FRIDAY

- ❖ Juneteenth Observed Church Office Closed

SATURDAY

- ❖ Men's Breakfast 8:00 am
Pride Parade Noon

NEXT SUNDAY

- ❖ Worship Service 10:15 am
Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall After Worship

WE'RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING. Our guest preacher this morning is the Rev. Bruce D. Williams. A UCC clergyperson, he has spent most of his ministry working as a pastoral counselor, including 46 years with the Community Pastoral Counseling Service (CPCS). CPCS was begun in 1971 and has been housed in our building.

JOIN US TODAY IN ROCKWOOD HALL AFTER WORSHIP AS WE CELEBRATE AND PREPARE FOR THE IOWA CITY PRIDE FESTIVAL NEXT SATURDAY, JUNE 20. Enjoy colorful Pride-themed refreshments as you preview the festival signs, flags, t-shirts and giveaways we'll use in the parade and at our booth downtown. Sign up to join the fun in the parade, volunteer for a shift at our special Congregational UCC booth, or assist with setup and takedown. Last year, more than 40 members of the congregation, including friends and family, enjoyed participating in the festival. We welcome everyone to join us as we proudly show love and support for our LGBTQ+ community and celebrate the historic inclusive commitment of our denomination and congregation where all are welcome. For more information, reach out to any member of the Mission Board LGBTQ+ Subcommittee: Dianne Atkins, Martha Ann Crawford, Carson Fixmer, Dean Logan, Linda Muston, Hope Spragg, Rebecca Weatherford or Julie Wittig. Don't forget your sun hat, water bottle and sunscreen for Pride!

ALL CHURCH PICNIC—SUNDAY, JUNE 28: Summer is here and it's time for the Church Picnic. Bring your family, bring your friends, and join us on Sunday, June 28, at **Shelter 6** in Lower City Park from 4-7 p.m. This is a different shelter than we have used in recent years. It is near the entrance to lower City Park, just past the Riverside Stage. Restrooms and parking are near the shelter. Our Membership Board will provide drinks and dessert. Please bring a dish to

share and your own plates and tableware. You're welcome to bring games and play equipment, musical instruments, lawn chairs, and anything else that will make for a happy gathering. And if you have a UCC Pride T-shirt, the Membership Board invites you to wear it!

HOPE LODGE DINNER—Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be on Monday, July 13. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. If you would like to contribute food for the dinner, please see the sign-up sheet posted in Rockwood Hall.

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.

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE AT THE BIKE LIBRARY offers free e-assisted bike rides originating from the Ashton House and looping through City Park. If you or someone you know would benefit from this "ride through the park" as a passenger, see the sign-up in Rockwood Hall or talk to Hope Spragg to arrange a ride. More info available at: <https://icbikelibrary.org/cycling-without-age!>

SENDING USED MEDICINE BOTTLES TO AFRICA FOR REUSE IN CLINICS—IMPORTANT REQUEST:

1. Please donate only **orange** bottles; other colors should be recycled. Caps can be any color.
2. Bottles must have labels and all adhesive removed. Sticky bottles or bottles with residue should be recycled. I can't use them. If this is difficult for you, consider finding a partner who can help you prep the bottles.
3. Bottles should be washed in warm, soapy water. We don't want to inflict harm on individuals who could come into contact with foreign medicine.

100 Grannies, a local environmental activist group, is sending used plastic medicine bottles to Africa to assist clinics in distributing medication. Donna Hirst is in charge of this project and would be pleased to have participation from members of our congregation. For more information contact donna-hirst@uiowa.edu. She will pick up bottles on Sundays. Thank you for your assistance.

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.