



FIRST NAME: Evelyn AGE: 6 CONGREGATION: _____

A Future with Hope



UCC.ORG/CLIMATE

*The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

30 N Clinton St.

Iowa City, IA 52245

319-337-4301

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

WORSHIP FOR JUNE 21, 2026
FOURTH 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 politics of Jesus and the politics of God are that people should be fed, that people have access to life, that people should be treated equally and justly.”

Rev. James M. Lawson, Jr.

Quoted in John Fugelsang, “Separation of Church and Hate: A Sane Person’s Guide to Taking Back the Bible from Fundamentalists, Fascists, and Flock-Fleecing Frauds”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Chuck Connerly, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Morning Has Broken” Michael Higgins

*CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 8

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;

What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that care for them?

Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them glory and honor.

O, Lord, our sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**those who are able may stand.*

*HYMN 469 “Morning has Broken”
**Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, Praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word!**

**Sweet the rain’s new fall, sunlit from heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where God’s feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight, Mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God’s recreation of the new day!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Life-giving God, your love and light guide us on the path of courage, compassion, generosity, and grace. Lead us as we seek to follow your transformative love that turns sorrow into joy, and despair into hope. O God, help us embrace your guiding love that calls us to live as your faithful witnesses who reflect your grace and redemptive love. God, open our hearts to receive your gracious love, and strengthen us to carry the Good News of your healing power found in the light, love, and life of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

PIANO SOLO “Carillon” Kaoru Heitzman

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 “O for a World” Paul Bouman

*Response

*Prayer of Dedication

With these gifts, O God, we commit ourselves once again to tending and sharing the light of Christ with our words and deeds of compassion and justice. Empower us, through our giving and sharing, to be leaves for the healing of the nations, the balm of Gilead for the restoration of your people, the cup of cold water for which your people thirst. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 25:31-40, 45-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me... Just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

PSALM 24 and 104

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.

For He has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be shaken.

You cover it with the deep as with a garment.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal.

You cause the grass to grow the cattle, and plants for the people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.

O Lord, how manifold are your works!

In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 22:15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor's.” Then he said

to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

HYMN 386 "O For A World"

**O for a world where everyone
respects each other's ways,
where love is lived and all is done
with justice and with praise.**

**O for a world where goods are shared
and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken, children spared,
equality achieved.**

**We welcome one world family
and struggle with each choice
that opens us to unity
and gives our vision voice.**

**The poor are rich, the weak are strong,
the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn, outcasts belong,
who perishes will rise.**

**O for a world preparing for
God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more,
and all but love will cease.**

SERMON "Render Unto Caesar"

***HYMN 434 "Today We Are Called to Be Disciples"**

**Today we all are called to be
disciples of the Lord,
to help to set the captive free,
make plowshare out of sword,
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst,
make love and peace our fast,
to serve the poor and homeless first,
our ease and comfort last.**

**God made the world and at its birth
ordained our human race
to live as stewards of the earth,
responding to God's grace.
But we are vain and sadly proud;
we sow not peace but strife.**

**Our discord spreads a deadly cloud
that threatens all of life.**

**Pray justice may come rolling down
as in a mighty stream,
with righteousness in field and town
to cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore
an earth where conflicts cease,
a world that was created for
a harmony of peace.**

**May we in service to our God
act out the living word,
and walk the road the saints have trod
till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we
give thanks in one accord
to God who calls us all to be
disciples of the Lord.**

*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “O for a World” Robert A. Hobby

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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

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

TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga	11:00 am
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THURSDAY

❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

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. We welcome the Rev. Bob Molsberry to our pulpit this morning. Bob is a retired UCC minister and a member of our congregation. Bill Lovin is on sabbatical this month and will return in July.

ARTWORK— Evelyn Nakielski is six years old and her art and creativity has been blossoming in our Sunday school classrooms since early childhood. Her artwork was selected as an Honorable Mention in the 2026 Climate Hope Art Contest sponsored by the United Church of Christ, marking her second year participating in the competition. Many artists from our congregation submitted artwork for the contest this year including: Charlotte Nakielski, Finnegan Nakielski, Malia Lewis, Oscar Lewis, and Fielding Woolums

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 signup 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.



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