



The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

30 N Clinton St.
Iowa City, IA 52245
319-337-4301

CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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IOWA CITY, IA 52245
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WORSHIP FOR JULY 12, 2026
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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 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.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Andy Bertolatus, Liturgist

PRELUDE “It Is Well with My Soul”
Elizabeth Taylor

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

In the middle of this summer of great beauty

God calls us to appreciate this day and embrace the days ahead.

[Unison]

Let us meet here together and worship God.

***HYMN “The Summer Days Are Come Again” Samuel Longfellow**

**The summer days are come again;
Once more the glad earth yields
Its golden wealth of ripening grain,
And breath of clover fields,
And deepening shade of summer woods,
And glow of summer air,
And winging thoughts, and happy moods
Of love and joy and prayer.**

**The summer days are come again;
The birds are on the wing;
God’s praises, in their loving strain,
Unconsciously they sing.
We know God gives us all the good
That does our cup o’erbrim;
For summer joy in field and wood
We lift our joyful hymn.**

the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle,
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

PSALM HYMN 250 “When Morning Lights the Eastern Skies” (Psalm 143)

**When morning lights the eastern skies,
O Lord, Thy mercy show;
On Thee alone my hope relies,
Let me Thy kindness know.**

**Teach me the way that I should go;
I lift my soul to Thee;
For refuge from my cruel foe
To Thee, O Lord, I flee.**

**Thou art my God, to Thee I pray:
Teach me Thy will to heed;
And in the right and perfect way
May Thy good Spirit lead.**

**For Thy Name’s sake, O gracious Lord,
Revive my soul and bless,
And in Thy faithfulness and love
Redeem me from distress.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 13:1-9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

SERMON “The Growing Season”

THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 516

“Lord, We Have Come at Your Own Invitation”

**Lord, we have come at your own invitation,
chosen by you, to be counted as friends:
yours is the strength that sustains our vocation,
ours a commitment we know never ends.**

**Here, at your table, confirm our intention
ever to cherish the gifts you provide;
teach us to serve without pride or pretension,
led by your Spirit, defender and guide.**

**When, at your table, each time of returning,
vows are renewed, and our courage restored:
may we increasingly glory in learning
all that it means to accept you as Lord.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

THANKSGIVING

**We thank you, O Christ,
that scattered though we are, with different needs and hopes
you call us together at this meal and unite us as one body.**

**Let us rejoice in the things of this world.
We receive with joy the elements of life—
sprouting grain and flowing water—
you give us to nourish our bodies and our spirits.**

**We thank you for this bread and cup set before us.
May they speak to us
of the everyday made holy,
of life made new,
of hope for your realm among us.**

We remember that on the night of his arrest...

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

God of abundance, we give thanks for the gifts that sustain us: for water and food, for growth and renewal, for the quiet work of Your Spirit in our lives. We give thanks for signs of hope, for unexpected beginnings, for moments of change and possibility. Receive our thanks, and deepen our awareness of Your presence among us. Amen.

*HYMN 475 “O That I Had a Thousand Voices”

**O that I had a thousand voices
To praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices,
Would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be,
What great things God has done for me.**

**O all you powers that God implanted,
Arise, keep silence now no more;
Put forth the strength that God has granted!
Your noblest work is to adore.
O soul and body, join to raise
With heartfelt joy our Maker’s praise.**

**You forest leaves so green and tender
That dance for joy in summer air,
You meadow grasses, bright and slender,
You flowers so fragrant and so fair,
You live to show God’s praise alone.
Join me to make God’s glory known.**

**All creatures that have breath and motion,
That throng the earth, the sea, the sky,
Come, share with me my heart's devotion,
Help me to sing God's praises high.
My utmost powers can never quite
Declare the wonders of God’s might.**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Sonata IV” Felix Mendelssohn
Andante religioso

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Prayer after Communion: Church of Scotland

Minister:

The Rev. Bill Lovin

Director of Christian Education: Hope Spragg
Organist: Bill Crouch
Choir Director: David Puderbaugh
Children's Choir Director: Rachel Burchett
Office Manager: Nancy LeaVesseur

WE'RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.

Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

TODAY

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

MONDAY

- ❖ Serving at Hope Lodge 6:00 pm

TUESDAY

- ❖ Gentle Yoga 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY

- ❖ Staff Meeting 11:00 am

THURSDAY

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

FRIDAY

- ❖ Wedding Rehearsal 5:00 pm

SATURDAY

- ❖ Men's Breakfast (Waterfront Hy-Vee) 8:00 am
- ❖ Neems/Murphy Wedding 11:00 am
- ❖ St. Lucas Mission Trip Overnight 8:00 pm

NEXT SUNDAY

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

SUMMER GENTLE YOGA every Tuesday at 11 AM! This 45-minute class is appropriate for beginners, experienced or anyone wishing to focus on body awareness, increased mobility, and relaxation. Guest instructor and congregant Elizabeth Taylor will teach on 7/14. The \$10 suggested donation goes entirely to the Immigrant Welcome Network. We are pleased to

announce we sent this year's first six month of donations totaling \$1045! Thank you to all who participate. If you'd like to join us, call the office to register.

HOPE LODGE DINNER—Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be tomorrow, 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.

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.

SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS! Vacation Bible School is happening August 17–19, 5:00–7:30 PM! Join us for "*All Are Welcome*," a joyful, creative VBS where we'll discover God's call to radical inclusivity through art, play, and music. Open to all children preschool–high school. It's free, dinner is included, and friends are encouraged. Call the office to register.

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.

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.