



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 JULY 19, 2026

EIGHTH 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.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kevin Koepnick, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Prelude in C Major”

David N. Johnson

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Let us bring our songs and our sighs.

Let us find peace, renewal, and steady hearts.

**With mind and soul, body and spirit
we will seek God while God may be found
and call upon God, who is near.**

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 288 “I Sing the Mighty Power of God”**

I sing the mighty power of God

That made the mountains rise;

That spread the flowing seas abroad

And built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained

The sun to rule the day;

The moon shines full at God’s command,

And all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord

That filled the earth with food;

God formed the creatures with a word

And then pronounced them good.

Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed,

Where’er I turn my eyes;

If I survey the ground I tread,

Or gaze upon the skies!

**There's not a plant or flower below
But makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from Thy throne;
While all that borrows life from Thee
Is ever in Thy care,
And everywhere that we can be,
Thou, God, art present there.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Glorious God, we give thanks for all the gifts of this summer: for long days filled with light, for closer contact with other living creatures, for fair temperatures and warm breezes. We are grateful that during this season, time can slow and we can stretch ourselves out into the fullness of our being. In this time of expansiveness, let us find room as well to spread out the worries and anxieties and all that we have kept tightly wrapped inside of us. In the beauty and the light of your presence, let us take time to unwind our cares and worries. Let us find, with your grace, how to see all these things in perspective. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Tune: ELLACOMBE, #288)**

**I to the hills will lift my eyes;
From whence shall come my aid?
My help is from the Lord alone,
Who heaven and earth has made.
Your faithful keeper is the Lord,
You shelter and your shade;
'Neath sun or moon, by day or night,
You shall not be afraid.**

**ANTHEM "Bind Us Together" Wardell, Bluett, Zach, Chambers, and Jordan
Mary Bryant and Rachell Burchett**

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 "Intermezzo" Flor Peeters

*Response

**Praise God, from whom all blessing flow,
Praise Christ, all creatures here below,
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;**

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Ezekiel 17:24-32

Thus says the Lord God:

I myself will take a sprig

from the lofty top of a cedar;

I will set it out.

I will break off a tender one

from the topmost of its young twigs;

I myself will plant it

on a high and lofty mountain.

On the mountain height of Israel

I will plant it,

in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit,

and become a noble cedar.

Under it every kind of bird will live;

in the shade of its branches will nest

winged creatures of every kind.

All the trees of the field shall know

that I am the Lord.

I bring low the high tree,

I make high the low tree;

I dry up the green tree

and make the dry tree flourish.

I the Lord have spoken;

I will accomplish it.

PSALM 92

It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord,

and to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

to tell of your loving-kindness early in the morning

and of your faithfulness in the night season.

For you have made me glad by your acts, O Lord;

and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.

Lord, how great are your works!

your thoughts are very deep.

For lo, your enemies, O Lord,

lo, your enemies shall perish,

and all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

But my horn you have exalted like the horns of wild bulls;

I am anointed with fresh oil.

My eyes also gloat over my enemies,

and my ears rejoice to hear the doom of the wicked

who rise up against me.

The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,

and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

Those who are planted in the house of the Lord
shall flourish in the courts of our God;

they shall still bear fruit in old age;

they shall be green and succulent;

[Unison]

that they may show how upright the Lord is,

my Rock, in whom there is no fault.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Mark 4:26-32

He also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.'

He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'

HYMN (insert) "Your Love, O God, Is Broad Like Beach and Meadow"

Your love, O God, is broad like beach and meadow,

wide as the wind, and our eternal home.

You leave us free to seek you or reject you,

you give us room to answer "yes" or "no."

We long for freedom where our truest being

is given hope and courage to unfold.

We seek in freedom space and scope for dreaming,

and look for ground where trees and plants can grow.

But there are walls that keep us all divided;

we fence each other in with hate and war.

Fear is the bricks and mortar of our prison,

our pride of self, the prison coat we wear.

Judge us, O God, and in your judgment free us,

and set our feet in freedom's open space;

take us as far as your compassion wanders

among the children of the human race.

SERMON "Faith in a Seed"

*HYMN 376 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Love divine, all loves excelling,

Joy of heaven to earth come down,

Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,

**All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.**

**Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest;
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.**

**Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.**

**Finish, then, Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE “Maestoso” David N. Johnson

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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

TUESDAY

- ❖ Gentle Yoga 11:00 am
- ❖ Board of Christian Education 6:00 pm
- ❖ Trustees 7:00 pm

THURSDAY

- ❖ Finance Committee 9:30 am
- ❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 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. 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.

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.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE HOPE LODGE DINNER ON JULY 13: Jane Kinney, Marsha Lowe, Diane Dahl-McCoy, Rebecca Weatherford, Sally Strang, Julie Wittig, Dianne Atkins and Andy Bertolatus, Shelagh Hayreh, Bryan and Ginny Clemons, Linda and Ray Muston, Stephanie Frazee, and Chuck and Sue Dayton. The next Hope Lodge dinner will be September 14.

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.