



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 26, 2026
NINTH 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

Tom Mittman, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Andante” Adolf Hesse

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We may be thirsty and parched
like an unwatered garden.
So we come into God's presence
seeking the spring of life.

**We may be worn out and weary
like an overworked gardener.
So we come into God's presence
Seeking the solace of rest.**

We may be lost and confused
like a wanderer in a maze.
So we come into God's presence
Seeking to discover the path anew.

Let us seek God while God may be found.

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 270 “O God in a Mysterious Way” (Tune: DUNDEE, #269)**

**O God, in a mysterious way
Great wonders You perform;**

**You plant Your footsteps in the sea
And ride upon the storm.**

**Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill
You treasure up Your bright designs,
And work Your sovereign will.**

**O fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.**

**Our unbelief is sure to err
And scan Your work in vain;
You are Your own interpreter,
And You will make it plain.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**We thank You, God of steadfast love,
for Your patience with us,
for growth we do not always see,
for hope that carries us through waiting.
Gracious God, whose power is shown in kindness,
gather us into Your presence.
Still our hurried minds and restless spirits,
that we may learn again Your way of mercy,
and worship You with undivided hearts. Amen.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#269)**

**God's purposes will ripen fast,
unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
but sweet will be the flower.**

**ANTHEM "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"
Joel Worford**

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 “Prelude in G Major,” Op. 48, No. 2 Josef Renner

*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 Deuteronomy 11:13-15

If you will only heed his every commandment that I am commanding you today—loving the Lord your God, and serving him with all your heart and with all your soul— then he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil; and he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you will eat your fill.

PSALM 104:1-2, 10-17

Bless the Lord, O my soul;

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!

you are clothed with majesty and splendor.

**You wrap yourself with light as with a cloak
and spread out the heavens like a curtain.**

You send the springs into the valleys;
they flow between the mountains.

**All the beasts of the field drink their fill from them,
and the wild asses quench their thirst.**

Beside them the birds of the air make their nests
and sing among the branches.

**You water the mountains from your dwelling on high;
the earth is fully satisfied by the fruit of your works.**

You make grass grow for flocks and herds
and plants to serve humankind;

**that they may bring forth food from the earth,
and wine to gladden our hearts,
oil to make a cheerful countenance,
and bread to strengthen the heart.**

The trees of the Lord are full of sap,
the cedars of Lebanon which the Lord planted,

**in which the birds build their nests,
and in whose tops the stork makes its dwelling.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON I Corinthians 3:1-9

And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is

jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

***HYMN 136 (vs. 1 & 2) "Sovereign Lord of All Creation"**

**Sovereign Lord of all creation,
ground of being, life and love;
Height and depth beyond description,
only life in you can prove:
You are mortal life's dependence:
thought, speech, sight are ours by grace;
Yours is every hour's existence,
sovereign Lord of time and space.**

**Jesus Christ, the One for others
we, your people, make our prayer
help us love, as sisters, brothers
all whose burdens we can share
where your name binds us together
you, Lord Christ, will surely be
where no selfishness can sever
there you love the world may see.**

SERMON "Growing Pains"

***HYMN 418 "God, Bless Your Church with Strength"**

**God bless your church with strength!
Wherever we may be,
up build your servants as we work
in common ministry.
Urge us from fledgling faith
to venture and to soar
through open skies to sing the praise
of Christ whom we adore.**

**God bless your church with life!
May all our branches thrive,
unblemished, wholesome, bearing fruit,
abundantly alive.**

**From you, one holy vine,
in freedom may we grow;
sustain us in our mission, Lord,
your love and peace to show.**

**God bless your church with hope!
Despite chaotic days,
may we in chaos shine to light
a pathway through life's maze.
May justice be our aim,
and kindness ours to share;
in humbleness O may we walk,
assured our God is there!**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Sortie” Jacques Lemmens

Cover Photo: Photo by [Markus Spiske](#) on [Unsplash](#). Used with permission.

Call to Worship: Catherine Rolling, *Worship Ways*, adapted

Opening Prayer: *Weekly Worship*, adapted. Church of Scotland, July 19, 2026.

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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

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

TUESDAY

- | | |
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| ❖ Gentle Yoga | 11:00 am |
| ❖ Church Council | 7:00 pm |

THURSDAY

❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

SATURDAY

❖ Bob Ashman Memorial Service 10:00 am

NEXT SUNDAY

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

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BOB ASHMAN will be held in the sanctuary this coming Saturday, August 1, at 10:00 a.m. A reception will follow, giving people a chance to talk with Bob's children and their families.

BILL LOVIN WILL BE ON VACATION FROM AUGUST 2 THROUGH AUGUST 9.

The Rev. Libby Conley will preach on August 2. The Rev. Mary Hubbard will preach on August 9.

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.

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.