



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 AUGUST 16, 2026
TWELFTH 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

Dianne Atkins, Liturgist

PRELUDE “The Spheres” Ola Gejeilo

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

God calls us to live a life of love.

**We come together to strengthen each other
in this important task.**

[Unison]

**Let us uphold one another
and may God uphold us all.
Let us worship God.**

***HYMN (insert) (vs. 1-3) “Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race”**

**Diverse in culture, nation, race,
We come together by your grace.
God, let us be a meeting ground
Where hope and healing love are found.**

**God, let us be a bridge of care
Connecting people everywhere.
Help us confront all fear and hate
And lust for power that separate.**

**When chasms widen, storms arise,
O Holy Spirit, make us wise.
Let our resolve, like steel, be strong
To stand with those who suffer wrong.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

O God, in the beauty and joy of these summer days, you provide for us and sustain us, even when events overshadow our lives. We give thanks that you have carried us through many difficult days and past many hard obstacles this summer long. Now the year begins to turn

towards a new season when life will be busy and new tasks will be given to us. Holy Spirit, help us to keep in body and mind the energy of this time so we can cope with the transitions and unexpected turns our lives may take. Give us strength and endurance to face whatever challenges we may encounter in the coming days. Keep us open to the needs of others and remind us you call us to be present to the suffering in the world. Continue to be with us and guide us as we seek to live out our faith. Amen.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#335, vs. 3)

**Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
by this we worship, and are freed.**

ANTHEM “Serenity” Ola Gejeilo

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 “Tranquillo” Nicolas Gigault

*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

SCRIPTURE LESSON Romans 12:9-13

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

PSALM 26:1-8

Give judgment for me, O Lord,
for I have walked with integrity;
I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.

**Test me, O Lord, and try me;
examine my heart and my mind.**

For your steadfast love is before my eyes;

I have walked in the way of your faithfulness.

**I have not sat with people who are false,
nor do I consort with the hypocrites.**

I have hated the company of wrongdoers;

I will not sit down with the wicked.

**I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord,
that I may go in procession round your altar,**

singing aloud a song of thanksgiving
and telling all your wonderful deeds.

**Lord, I love the house in which you dwell
and the place where your glory abides.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON John 15:12-16a

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last...”

*HYMN 374 (vs. 1-4) “Lord, Make Us Servants of Your Peace”

**Lord, make us servants of your peace;
where there is hate, may we sow love;
where there is hurt, may we forgive;
where there is strife, may we make one.**

**Where all is doubt, may we sow faith;
where all is gloom, may we sow hope;
where all is night, may we sow light;
where all is tears, may we sow joy.**

**Jesus, our Lord, may we not seek
to be consoled, but to console,
nor look to understanding hearts,
but look for hearts to understand.**

**May we not look for love's return,
but seek to love unselfishly,
for in our giving we receive,
and in forgiving are forgiven.**

SERMON “The Real and the Artificial—Part I: Let Love Be Genuine”

*HYMN (insert) How Can We Name a Love

**How can we name a Love
that wakens heart and mind,**

indwelling all we know
or think or do or seek or find?
Within our daily world,
in every human face,
Love's echoes sound and God is found,
hid in the commonplace.

If we awoke to life
upheld by loving care
that asked no great reward
but firm, assured, was simply there,
we can, with parents' names,
describe, and thus adore,
Love unconfined, our Father kind,
our Mother strong and sure.

When people share a task,
and strength and skills unite
in projects old or new,
to make or do with shared delight,
our Friend and Partner's will
is better understood,
that all should share, create, and care,
and know that life is good.

So in a hundred names,
each day we all can meet
a presence, sensed and shown
at work, at home, or in the street.
Yet names and titles all
shine in a brighter sun:
in Christ alone is full Love grown
and life and hope begun.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Sanctus” Ola Gejeilo

We are happy to welcome our guest instrumentalists this morning: Mark Anderson and Addie Schindler, trumpet, Jessica Wiskus, horn, Nathan Currie and Andy Owens, trombone, Nick Todd, tuba, Cecily Colins, violin.

Cover Art: Reva, Mikhail. Heart of the World, at the Odessa Children's Hospital in Ukraine, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56476> [retrieved February 12, 2025]. Original source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Children_sculpture_by_Mikhail_Reva.jpg.

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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

MONDAY

- ❖ Vacation Bible School 5:00 pm

TUESDAY

- ❖ Gentle Yoga 11:00 am
- ❖ Vacation Bible School 5:00 pm
- ❖ Membership Board 5:30 pm
- ❖ Diaconate 7:00 pm
- ❖ Trustees 7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

- ❖ Vacation Bible School 5:00 pm

THURSDAY

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

NEXT SUNDAY

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

SHARE THE HARVEST: Members and friends are invited to bring produce and flowers from their gardens to sell after worship each Sunday. And members and friends are invited to buy the abundant harvest. All proceeds go to the Food Pantry and CommUnity Crisis Center.

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.

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.

WELCOME STUDENTS ON MONDAY, AUGUST 24: When the UI Fall Semester begins on Monday, August 24, Congregational UCC will welcome the new and returning students. This is a great way to let students know who we are, what we value, and how they might find a spiritual home here while studying at the University. If you or would like to be a part of this, please talk with Bill Lovin.

THE IMMIGRANT WELCOME NETWORK OF JOHNSON COUNTY'S ANNUAL DREAMS WITHOUT BORDERS GALA will be held on Saturday, August 29. If you would like to join with other Congregational UCC members and friends at our table for seven, please call the church office at 319-337-4301.

CHOIR ROUND-UP— WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, AT 7:00 PM: Join us for our first gathering of the new season. We will meet in the sanctuary for rehearsal then adjourn to Rockwood Hall for refreshments as we celebrate this new beginning.

All are invited to our gathering—current members, former members, and those who are interested in joining for the first time! The Congregational UCC choir is a wonderful group of people who are dedicated to making great music and enjoying the community that a choir provides. The choir's first Sunday back will be SEPTEMBER 13. We will meet at 9 AM sharp in the sanctuary and follow that with the 10:15 worship service.

OUR NEXT HOPE LODGE DINNER will be Monday, September 14 at 6:00 p.m. There is a signup sheet in Rockwood Hall for those who would like to participate.

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.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A FALL RETREAT DAY ON GRATITUDE ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH. The retreat day will be based on the book *Grateful: The Transformative Power of Giving Thanks* by Diana Butler Bass. Mark your calendars now for this time of music,

art, time in nature and being together. The retreat day will be from 9-3 at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Coralville. Registration will be in Rockwood Hall on Sundays in September and a \$25 registration fee needs to accompany the registration form. Questions? Contact Marsha Lowe or Rebecca Weathrford. Watch the September newsletter and bulletins for more information.

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.

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.