



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

WORSHIP FOR AUGUST 22, 2021
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees
Takes off his shoes –
The rest sit around it and pluck blackberries.
– *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

PRELUDE Meditation on "How Great Thou Art" Setting by John Carter

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come with hope and expectation.

We bring our heart's desire!

Come with longing in your soul.

We bring our hunger for life!

Come and seek God's wisdom.

We bring our confidence and our doubt.

As the community of faith gathered and the Body of Christ called;

All: Come let us worship God and share the love of Christ with everyone!

HYMN “You Are Salt for the Earth, O People” HAUGEN

**You are salt for the earth, O people:
salt for the reign of God!
Share the flavor of life, O people:
life in the City of God!**

**Bring forth the reign of mercy,
bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
bring forth the City of God!**

**You are a light on the hill, O people:
light for the City of God!
Shine so holy and bright, O people:
shine for the City of God!**

**Bring forth the reign of mercy,
bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
bring forth the City of God!**

**You are a seed of the Word, O people:
bring forth the reign of God!
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,
grow in the City of God!**

**Bring forth the reign of mercy,
bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
bring forth the City of God!**

**You are a blessed and a pilgrim people:
bound for the reign of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland:
love is the City of God!**

**Bring forth the reign of mercy,
bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
bring forth the City of God!**

OPENING PRAYER

**O God, holy wisdom, we open the windows of our hearts to you and the life you give us.
Help us to breathe in deeply of your Spirit. Feed us with your bread of heaven; inspire us
with your awesome presence so that we might more fully become the people you have called
us to be. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Exodus 3.1-7

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

PSALM 84

The Joy of Worship in Your Temple

**How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.
Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion.
O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!
Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed.
For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.
For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.
O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 6.48-69

I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

SERMON "Consuming God"

VIDEO "Everything is Holy Now" Peter Mayer

TIME OF GRATITUDE

WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE "How Great Thou Art"
Sarah Fairfield, Gwen Senio, Rebecca Weatherford,
Sue McCracken

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN "Take My Life"

**Take my life and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.**

**Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in endless praise,
let them flow in endless praise.**

**Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.**

**Take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee,
swift and beautiful for thee.**

**Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King.**

**Take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee,
filled with messages from thee.**

**Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.**

**Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose,
every power as thou shalt choose.**

**Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.**

**Take my heart it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne,
it shall be thy royal throne.**

**Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee,
ever, only, all for thee.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “How Great Thou Art” Setting by Wilbur Held

We welcome the Rev. Ann Molsberry to our pulpit this morning. Ann is our Director of Children’s Programs. Bill Lovin is on vacation this coming week. He will be preaching next Sunday, August 29.

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www.petermayer.net

Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children’s Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Chris Nakielski
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

Thanks to Sarah Fairfield, Gwen Senio, Rebecca Weatherford, and Sue McCracken for singing this morning.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted by 10:15 on Sunday morning at <https://vimeo.com/channels/1547852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.

REOPENING NEWS:

The Church Council met in early August and considered the recommendations of the Reopening Committee for resuming in-person worship on Sunday mornings. As many of you know, our plans for in-person worship on August 1 were changed because of electrical problems that affected the air conditioning and ventilation in the building and the lights in the sanctuary. These electrical problems continued into the week of August 8. As we were recording Bill’s sermon on August 7, the power went out! Concerns about the increase of the Covid Delta variant were also taken into account by the Council.

In early August, the Iowa UCC Conference strongly suggested that congregations who are still meeting and worshipping online only continue to do so until the conditions improve.

Putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first, **we have decided to set Sunday, September 12, the first Sunday after Labor Day, as the date to resume in-person worship.** This will allow us to accomplish several things in the coming weeks:

1. Fix any outstanding electrical problems.
2. Monitor Covid cases to make sure they are at a safe level. This is especially important as students begin to arrive from across the state, nation, and world in the coming weeks.
3. Finish preparations for live-streaming worship services so that those who are unable to attend in person can still participate.

Our worship schedule will be as follows;

- **August 22—Online only, Ann Molsberry preaching**
- August 29—Online only, Bill Lovin preaching
- September 5—Online only, Bill Lovin preaching
- September 12—In-person worship in the sanctuary, 10:15 a.m.

This was a difficult decision and we understand the disappointment that some might feel. Everyone wants to get back to worshipping together as soon as possible. A few more weeks away during the summer will prepare us for coming together once more at the time when our program year traditionally begins.

TEE OFFERING Will Be Received on September 19: Our annual offering to support the Theological Education by Extension College in South Africa (TEE Offering) will be received during worship on Sunday, September 19. This offering has been a tradition in our congregation for several decades. It was initially started when the brother of our then minister, the Rev. Ed Heininger, worked for TEE in South Africa. TEE is a private, nonprofit, distance learning institution serving five south African countries. The mission of the college is to equip men and women for Christian ministry. Students come from 28 denominations across southern Africa including the UCC of South Africa. For more information about this amazing program, please visit their website at www.tee.co.za. Please plan to give generously—our support makes a difference.

The Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC) is hosting two October candidate forums at the Kingdom Center: Oct. 2 for the School Board and Oct. 16 for City Council. We are planning to have translators and sack lunches for attendees to take when they leave. Various JCIC congregations have been hit hard by COVID, so we are requesting special donations from individuals within our JCIC churches to assist with the forum expenses. We are hoping you can assist us in making these October events a success by contributing \$50 or \$25. More would be wonderful, and any amount would be helpful. If you are able to assist, send a check to:

Johnson County Interfaith Coalition

Bea Hicks, Treasurer

PO Box 966

Iowa City, IA 52240

Put “2021 Candidate Forums” in the Memo Line.

FAN CLUB UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY CRISIS CENTER: We set out to distribute 700 box fans to local households this summer through the CommUnity Fan Club. Box fans help keep our neighbors cool and reduce the cost of utilities during the hot summer months. Thanks to the support of individuals and the Congregational United Church of Christ's matching gift, we **distributed fans to a total of 750 households! Thank you for your support!**

