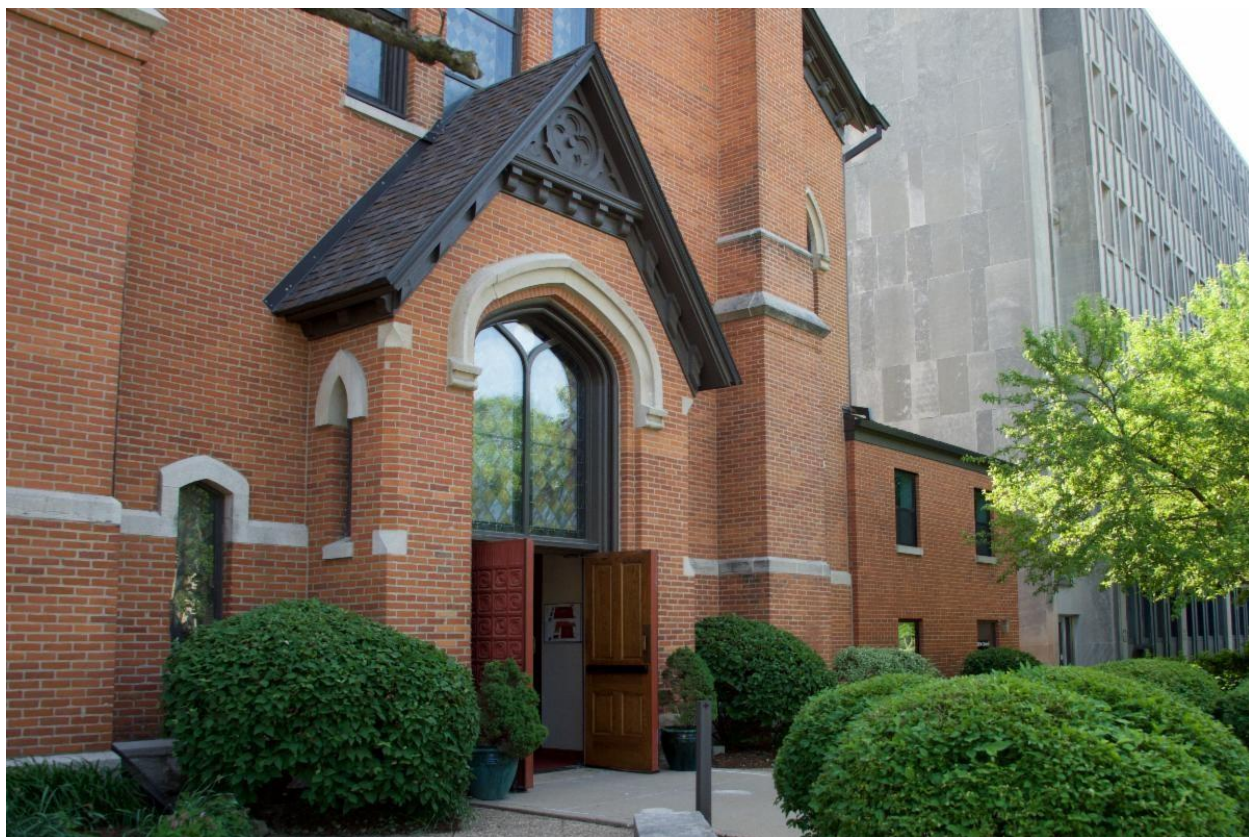




The Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

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 23, 2026
THIRTEENTH 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

Virginia Simone, Liturgist

PRELUDE “Offertorium” Franz Wilhelm Abt

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We come to ask, to wonder,
and to seek the deeper meaning of life.

**We come to sing and to pray
and to draw near to God.**

We come together

**bringing all that we are
and all that we can be.**

[Unison]

Let us worship God.

***HYMN 458 “Earth and All Stars”**

**Earth and all stars, Loud rushing planets
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Hail, wind, and rain, Loud blowing snowstorm
Sing to the Lord a new song!**

**God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!**

**Steel and machines, Loud pounding hammers
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Limestone and beams, Loud building workers
Sing to the Lord a new song!**

**God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!**

**Classrooms and labs, Loud boiling test tubes
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Athlete and band, Loud cheering people
Sing to the Lord a new song!**

**God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!**

**Knowledge and truth, Loud sounding wisdom
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Daughter and son, Loud praying members
Sing to the Lord a new song!**

**God has done marvelous things.
We will sing praises with a new song!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

We greet you, O God and give you thanks for your steadfast love. We take heart that as we turn to you, you reach out to embrace us. As we step out onto new paths and take on new ventures, we ask you to be with us and to care for us in the midst of what we do.

Give us clear sight to see the way ahead and courage to take the steps that lead us forward. Help us to make good use even of our hesitations and missteps. Transform our efforts into your desired ends.

When we are tempted to be foolhardy, give us wisdom in our choices. When we are guarded, give us confidence in our actions. Let us be mindful of others, how our choices affect them and how we may live in harmony with them. Grant us each day a sense of your presence and let it carry, protect, and encourage us; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#285)**

**God, Your word is still creating, Calling us to life made new.
Now reveal to us fresh vistas Where there's work to dare and do.
We, created in Your image, Would a true reflection be
Of Your justice, grace, and mercy And the truth that makes us free.**

**ANTHEM "*Sonntag*"
Andrew Knapp**

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 "*Allegretto*" Josef Renner

*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 Deuteronomy 30:19-20

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

PSALM 16

Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;
I have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord,
my good above all other."

**O Lord, you are my portion and my cup;
it is you who uphold my lot.**

My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.

**I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me, night after night.**

I have set the Lord always before me;
because you are at my right hand I shall not fall.

**My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.**

For you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor let your holy one see the pit.

**You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON I Timothy 6:17-19

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

*HYMN (insert) "All My Hope on God Is Founded"

**All my hope on God is founded,
who else can my hope renew?
Still through change and chance God guides me,
only good and only true.
God unknown, grace alone,
calls my heart to be his own.**

**Well does the almighty Giver
bounteous gifts on us bestow!
With delight our souls are nourished;
pleasure leads us where we go.
At God's hand does love stand;
joy waits each new command.**

**In glad hymns to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done;
high above all praises praising
for the love in Christ made known.
Hear Christ's call, one and all –
those who follow shall not fall.**

SERMON “The Real and the Artificial—Part II: Take Hold of Real Life”

*HYMN 369 “I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”

**I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

**I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

**I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

**I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “Choral Song” Samuel Sebastian Wesley

“Earth and All Stars,” Contributors: Herbert F Brokering, David N. Johnson. Tune: © 1968, Augsburg Fortress Text: © 1968, Augsburg Fortress. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

“God You Spin the Whirling Planets” Words: Jane Parker Huber © 1978, Presbyterian Publishing/Westminster John Knox/Geneva Press. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

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

- ❖ Student Welcome 11:00 a.m.

TUESDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

- ❖ Staff Meeting 11:00 a.m.

THURSDAY

- ❖ Prairie Piffari Rehearsal 6:30 pm

SATURDAY

- ❖ Religious Studies Walking Tour Visit 1:30 pm

NEXT SUNDAY

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

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.

READY, SET, SHINE! SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 13! Christian education will celebrate our "back-to-Sunday School" with a combined breakfast, games and arts and crafts at 9:15. All pre-school-high school students are welcome. Kindergarten-8th graders will meet their Sunday School teachers. *High schoolers are encouraged to attend adult ed or inquire about helping with the younger classrooms.

WEEKLY YOUTH GROUP for grades 6-12 begins September 13 from 5-6:30! Join us for food, fellowship and fun. Dinner is provided and youth are encouraged to bring a friend!

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.

READING GENESIS: Our group that has been reading and discussing Marilynne Robinson's *Reading Genesis* will resume in September for four final sessions. We'll meet at Oaknoll in room 4 B, 735 George St., from 10:00-11:30 on four Tuesday mornings, September 15, 22, 29 & October 6. The first session will cover pages 121 to 147. If you would like to be a part of this group, talk with Bill Lovin or Chuck Dayton or call the church office—319-337-4301.

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.

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.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO AND ATTENDED VBS THIS YEAR! We had three fabulous evenings together that included wonderful food, music, service, art, breadmaking, games and lessons in belonging. A special thank you to our VBS village who cooked, cleaned and led with love: Rebecca Weatherford, Margo Green, Sally Strang, Bea Hicks, Betsy Henson, Donna Hirst, Darcie Hutzell, Rachel Burchett, Patte Henderson, Tom Mittman, Chuck and Sue Dayton, Virginia Simone and Bill Lovin.

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.

TIME TO THINK WINTER: The annual Consultation of Religious Congregations Warm Weather Clothing Distribution will be held in October. Your new or gently used/clean items will benefit our neighbors who are in need of **warm** winter wear. The following items are needed in infant, child, youth & adult sizes: Coats, snowpants, hats, gloves & mittens, scarves, boots / winter shoes, warm socks, sweatpants, sweatshirts, vests & sweaters, long underwear & warm pants/jeans. Donations can be dropped off at The River Community Church, 3001 Muscatine Ave, Iowa City at 1-4 pm on Sunday 10/11, 9 am-6 pm on Monday 10/12, & 9 am-6 pm on Tuesday 10/13. Please use the marked driveway on Muscatine Ave. & enter by the Gymnasium door on the southeast side of the building.

**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.