



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 12, 2021
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“In the Christian tradition, it is so very clear to me that God accompanies us in our suffering. God so loved the world that God became one of us and accompanies us. God accompanies us not just in our life, and in the challenges of growth, but in the sorrow, in the suffering, in the confronting of illness and death and tragedy that are part of the fabric of our lives. We can’t see those moments as provocation for us to say, ‘If God were really on the job we would be shielded from those times.’ God is present right in the midst of those times. That is the power of the Christian story.”

Diana Eck

PRELUDE Prelude in C Major, BWV 553 J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 147)

How good it is to sing praises to our God!

How pleasant it is to honor the Sovereign God with praise!

**God rebuilds Jerusalem
and gathers the exiles of Israel.**

God heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.

**God lifts up the lowly,
and takes pleasure in those who wait for God’s love.**

HYMN 218 “New Songs of Celebration Render”

**New songs of celebration render
To God who has great wonders done;
Love sits enthroned in ageless splendor;
Come and adore the Mighty One.
God has made known the great salvation
Which all his friends with joy confess.
God has revealed to every nation
Truth and unending righteousness.**

**Joyfully, heartily resounding,
Let every instrument and voice
Peal out the praise of grace abounding,
Calling the whole world to rejoice.
Trumpets and organs, set in motion
Such sounds as make the heavens ring;
All things that live in earth and ocean,
Sound forth the song, your praises bring.**

**Rivers and seas and torrents roaring,
Honor the Lord with wild acclaim;
Mountains and stones look up adoring,
And find a voice to praise God's name.
Righteous, commanding, ever glorious,
Praises be sung that never cease;
Just is our God, whose truth victorious
Establishes the world in peace.**

OPENING PRAYER

Creator of our lives, source and destiny of all that is, we come to you in partial awareness of the hallowed nature of each human life, and in need of your reviving Spirit for comfort and grace. In the beauty of this day that you have made, in the solemn reverence of time set apart to hear your Word, in the strength of mutual care, in the silence and in the songs which attend your redeeming power, we come to worship and to wait for you.

May every bitter thought and each nagging worry about what we have done and what we have failed to do be washed out into the ebbing sea of your boundless mercy. Let every noble thought and every impulse of love be stirred anew by the breath of your Spirit. So lead us by your gentle inspiration to sense in each moment eternal depths, immeasurable goodness and the possibilities of tomorrow. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?

**My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

The Lord will not let your foot be moved,
and the One who watches over you will not fall asleep.

**Behold, the One who keeps watch over Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep;**

it is the Lord who watches over you;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
**so that the sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil;
the Lord shall keep you safe.

**The Lord shall watch over your going out and your
coming in, from this time forth forevermore.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON I Corinthians 1:18-19

SERMON “Is It Over?”

A TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “Awake, Awake, to Love and Work” Paul Bouman

A TIME OF PRAYER

HYMN “By Gracious Powers”

**By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered,
and confidently waiting, come what may,
we know that God is with us night and morning
and never fails to greet us each new day.**

**Yet is this heart by its old foe tormented,
still evil days bring burdens hard to bear;
O give our frightened souls the sure salvation
for which, O Lord, you taught us to prepare.**

**And when this cup you give is filled to brimming
with bitter suffering, hard to understand,
we take it thankfully and without trembling,
out of so good and so beloved a hand.**

**Yet when again in this same world you give us
the joy we had, the brightness of your sun,
we shall remember all the days we lived through,
and our whole life shall then be yours alone.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Fugue in C Major, BWV 553 J.S. Bach

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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

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING. We are putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first. Masks are required for all people in all parts of the building. We will keep social distance in the pews. The choir will sing, but there will be no congregational singing. There will be no coffee hour, although you are encouraged to talk with one another outside after worship.

THANKS TO PATTE HENDERSON for providing the flowers for this morning’s worship service.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted on Sunday afternoon 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. We expect to be livestreaming the worship service in a few weeks.

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES—If you would like to contribute flowers for the worship services on upcoming Sundays please call the office to let Jenn know or sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall.

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.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP WITH PRIDE FEST 2021: The Iowa City Pride Fest will take place on Friday and Saturday, October 1 & 2. Congregational UCC will have a booth on the Ped Mall during the afternoon. We have several opportunities for members to organize our participation and be involved this year. If you’d like to be a part of this great tradition, please call the church office—337-4301.

The Consultation of Religious Communities is delighted to announce that they are able to once again host the warm winterwear distribution. It will be held in the new winter shelter at the far east end of the Guide Link Center at 340 Southgate Ave, Iowa City.

They are looking for donations of new or gently used outerwear for children and adults. You can begin collecting clean items and keep them at home until further notice. Their highest priority is: winter coats & jackets of all sizes, and other outerwear (snow pants, hats, gloves / mittens, winter scarves, warm socks & winter boots). They will also gladly accept sweaters, sweatshirts & sweatpants. PLEASE carefully presort donated items, to remove items not listed here. Also, consider donating a box or two of large, strong trash bags (e.g., 33 gallon, with ties) that will hold several coats for the shoppers.

More information will be available by mid-September. But for now, please begin collecting needed items. And save the week of October 18 - 23 for volunteer opportunities.