



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 14, 2025
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

PRELUDE “Amazing Grace” David Cherwien

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Marsha Lowe, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Let us arise and lift our eyes

Let us arise and lift our hearts

Let us arise and lift our voices.

Let us seek the Spirit of the living God together.

Reach out towards each other,
for our God reaches out towards us!
Let us worship God!

***HYMN (insert) “O God of Earth and Altar
O God of earth and altar,
bow down and hear our cry;
our earthly rulers falter,
our people drift and die;
the walls of gold entomb us,
the swords of scorn divide;
take not your thunder from us,
but take away our pride.**

**From all that terror teaches,
from lies of pen and voice,
from all the easy speeches
that make our hearts rejoice,
from sale and profanation
of honor and the sword,
from sleep and from damnation,
deliver us, good Lord!**

**Awaken us to action
And forge us into one,
Defying sect and faction;
O God, Your will be done!
Oppressive systems snare us;
Our apathies increase.
Great God, in mercy spare us
For justice and for peace!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

**We come to you this day, O God, as we are.
We are disturbed by the news.
We are frustrated by all that is left undone.
We are afraid of what the coming days will bring.
We are worried about people nearby and people far away.
We come into your presence seeking your light, your peace, and your grace. We ask you to
clear our minds so we may think
calm our hearts so we may rest
and refresh our spirits so we may meet the challenges of this coming week.**

**As we worship, grant us a sense of your love and strength that will sustain us this day and
in the days ahead. Amen.**

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#261, vs. 1 & 2)

**God of compassion, in mercy befriend us;
Giver of grace for our needs all availing,
Wisdom and strength for each day you will send us,
Patience untiring and courage unfailing.**

**Wandering and lost, you have sought us and found us,
Stilled our rude hearts with your Word of consoling;
Wrap now your peace, like a mantle, around us,
Guarding our thoughts and our passions controlling.**

ANTHEM “Amazin’ Grace” arr. Wendell Whalum

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory “Amazing Grace” Wilbur Held

*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 Numbers 13:25-14:9

PSALM 31

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

**Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.**

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

**Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me,
O Lord, O God of truth.**

I will rejoice and be glad because of your mercy;
for you have seen my affliction; you know my distress.

**You have not shut me up in the power of the enemy;
you have set my feet in an open place.**

Blessed be the Lord!

for you have shown me the wonders of your love in a besieged city

Yet I said in my alarm,

"I have been cut off from the sight of your eyes."

Nevertheless, you heard the sound of my entreaty

when I cried out to you.

**Be strong and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the Lord.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Mark 8:22-25

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

[The children are dismissed to Children's Church]

SERMON "Seeing Our Way Through"

*HYMN 420 "God of Grace and God of Glory"

**God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient church's story,
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.**

**Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.**

**Cure your children's warring madness;
bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal,
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.**

**Set our feet on lofty places;
Gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christ-like graces,
Pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
That we fail not them nor Thee!
That we fail not them nor Thee!**

**Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;**

**let the gift of your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore**

***BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE “God of Grace” Paul Manz

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Christian Education:	Hope Spragg
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Dr. Chris Nakielski
Children’s Choir Director	Rachel Burchett
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

TODAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education Program Begins	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am
Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall	After Worship

TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga	Noon
Membership Board	5:30 pm
Diaconate	7:00 pm
Trustees	7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

❖ Staff Meeting	11:00 am
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THURSDAY

❖ Women’s Lunch—Big Grove	11:45 am
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SATURDAY

❖ Men’s Breakfast—Waterfront Hy-Vee:	8:00 am
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NEXT SUNDAY

❖ Choir Rehearsal	9:00 am
Christian Education for all ages	9:15 am
Worship Service	10:15 am

Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall
Confirmation Class

After Worship
4:00 pm

WE'RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING.

Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

SING OUT!—JOIN THE CHOIR: Do you enjoy singing? Our volunteer choir rehearses at 9:00 a.m. and sings during the 10:15 worship service. Whether you're a long-time member or the new kid on the block, WE WANT YOU! The Congregational UCC choir is a wonderful group of people who work hard at making great music. You'll be sure to enjoy this experience. Questions? Please get in touch with our choir director Dr. Chris Nakielski at cnakielski@cornellcollege.edu.

CAN YOU SUPPORT OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH BY PROVIDING BREAKFAST ONCE THIS SEMESTER DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL? They love it and parents appreciate one less thing to worry about on a Sunday morning. Instructions: Please provide 12 servings that can be shared or cut into more, if needed. Bring to the kitchen by 9 AM or place in the freezer/refrigerator in advance labeled "CE Sunday School". We ask that you consider no peanut, low (not no) sugar and not individually wrapped options. Sign-up is in Rockwood Hall.

GENTLE YOGA every Tuesday at noon! 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 directly to the Immigrant Welcome Network. More information and sign-up are available in Rockwood Hall.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be tomorrow, Monday, September 15. Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm. If you would like to contribute food, see the signup sheet posted in Rockwood Hall or talk to Sue Dayton.

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.

JOIN US AT THE WINGS OF HOPE GALA! The Mission Board is proud to sponsor the Immigrant Welcome Network Gala – Wings of Hope, taking place this coming Saturday, September 20, from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Society Fellowship Hall. This inspiring evening promises dancing, live music, and delicious food! As a sponsor, our church has reserved seven seats for attendees. If you would like to join us, please contact Jenn Hall at the church office: uccicadmin@uccic.org.

About the Immigrant Welcome Network (IWN) Founded in 2024 by immigrants, refugees, and passionate Iowans, the Immigrant Welcome Network of Johnson County is dedicated to empowerment and solidarity. Their services include: Temporary housing, Employment

assistance, Permanent housing support, Help navigating new environments, ESL courses, Mentorship programs, Advocacy. Learn more at www.iwnjc.org.

UI HOMECOMING PARADE—Friday, September 26: The Homecoming Parade is early this year. Join your friends here at the church for the best viewing in town. The Mission Board will sell cookies and, depending on the weather, cold or warm drinks during the parade. We are asking for donations of one dozen homemade cookies or bars that are \$1 (larger) size. Items do not need to be individually wrapped but please bring a display card labeling what type and if they contain peanuts or tree nuts. Baked goods may be dropped off in the kitchen between 9-1 or 5-5:45 the day of the parade. We also need volunteers to sell the cookies and drinks. There will be a sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall or you can sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054BA9AA2DA7FAC07-58238112-homecoming#/>

THE MISSION BOARD IS SPONSORING A DIAPER AND TP DRIVE during September and October. Items received will go to the CommUnity Crisis Center or the North Liberty Food Pantry. Please drop off diapers and training pullups, as well as toilet paper in the box in Rockwood Hall. Large boxes are acceptable, as the pantries will divide them into smaller packets. If you want to contribute cash to this effort, the Mission Board will do the shopping—just put “Diaper Drive” on your envelope or check. Let’s all get “behind” the effort and delight others with our generosity!

OUR PROGRESSIVE DINNER will be on Saturday, October 4. Please make plans to join us. This is a great way to meet new people and make new friends. We’ll start the evening with appetizers at Oaknoll from 5-6. After that, we’ll break into small groups and go to host homes for the main course from 6:15-7:45. The evening will end with dessert at Steve and Sue Wolken’s home from 8:-9:30. A registration sheet is included in this bulletin.

BOUNCE INTO YOUTH GROUP SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 FROM 4-6PM! 5th–12th graders are welcome to bring a friend for dinner, Bible study & human bubble balls! Sign-up in Rockwood Hall!

AFTER WORSHIP ENCOUNTER (AWE) will meet after worship starting on Sunday, October 12. We will gather on the Sundays that the choir meets after worship to rehearse for the Christmas Music Sunday on December 7. We will be using *Living the Questions-The Wisdom of Progressive Christianity*. In this study we will be meeting progressive theologians such as: Borg, Crossen, Spong, Pagels. This is a beginning class that will introduce you to Progressive Christianity. Rev. Ann Molsberry will be leading the discussions. Please purchase your own book and read the first chapter for our first session. See you on Sunday, October 12 in the library.

CHURCH PHOTO DIRECTORY: Our Membership Board is pursuing plans to create an “in house” photo directory to help everyone put names and faces together. If you have a photo that you would like us to use, please email it to Jenn Harden at uccicadmin@uccic.org. This fall we will have opportunities for photos to be taken at the church if you would prefer that option. Please watch for more information.

CARBON OFFSET HELPS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY: Have you ever wanted to compensate for CO2 emissions from a flight or other carbon intensive activity? Carbon offsets are a recognized way to make an activity carbon neutral. Carbon offsets are also often viewed with skepticism due to concerns about whether the money given is truly decreasing carbon emissions and whether the action would have happened without the donation.

Those concerns can be assuaged with a donation to put solar arrays on Habitat for Humanity homes. The homeowners do not have the resources to make an upfront investment in a solar array and once installed the system is likely to stay in place for the lifetime of the panels. In addition to reducing CO2 emissions the donor would be helping a low income Iowa family with their energy bills.

With our energy mix in Iowa, the cost of a solar array, and production from solar panels over 25 years; the cost per kilogram CO2 reduced for solar panels is 22 cents per kilogram CO2. (Based on Iowa's current energy mix.) This means a single seat flight from New York to Los Angeles could be offset for a 68 dollar contribution to the Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity solar fund (307 kg CO2 emitted).

To estimate your flight emissions and send an offset to Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity go to www.habitatsolar.org/. Please contact Jamie McCoy or see the bulletin board in Rockwood Hall for more information.

SHELTER HOUSE'S ANNUAL BBQ BASH!--An evening filled with delicious food and live music, all in support of Shelter House's life-saving work in our community. They're partnering with Pop's BBQ again, who will be cooking up their incredible BBQ for attendees. Grab your tickets, load your plate with delicious food, and enjoy refreshing drinks from Big Grove Brewery at the Johnson County Fairgrounds on Friday, September 26 from 4:00-7:00 pm. Tickets are on sale now at www.shelterhouseiowa.org/bbq-bash/ (\$50 for adults and \$17.50 for youth).

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OPEN HEARTLAND ELVES NAVIDAD EVENT: Each year, families with children under 18 create a Navidad Wish List, sharing two gift wishes for every family member. Community members make those wishes come true by purchasing those gifts. This year, they are expecting over 400 immigrant families to participate. You can be a Navidad Elf by emailing openheartlandholiday@gmail.com. You will be matched with a local family by Oct 15, giving you plenty of time to purchase and deliver the gifts before the holiday party in early December. While the gifts themselves are much appreciated, what touches the immigrants the most is the love, care, and solidarity behind the tradition, reminding them that they are seen and valued.

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.

WE LIVE STREAM OUR WORSHIP SERVICES AT 10:15 ON SUNDAY MORNING.

You can join us online in real time at <https://vimeo.com/event/1424751>. This streaming address is the same each week.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted after worship on Sunday 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.