



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 19, 2021  
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“At times, the joy that life attacks me with is unbearable and leads to gasping hysterical laughter. I find myself completely out of control and wonder how could life surprise me again and again and again, so completely. How could a man be a cynic? It is a sin.”

Norm MacDonald

PRELUDE “Prelude” William Lloyd Webber

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

From the rolling hills of the countryside and the tree-lined city streets,

**We gather to bring our hearts, minds, souls, and strength  
to worship God, our Creator.**

Beside the flowing river and beneath the wide sky,

**We gather to praise God who sustains all living things.**

Like trees planted by the water are those who trust in God.

**Like green trees with deep roots are those who are redeemed by God.**

HYMN 134 "Creating God, Your Fingers Trace"

**Creating God, your fingers trace  
the bold designs of farthest space;  
let sun and moon and stars and light  
and what lies hidden praise your might.**

**Sustaining God, your hands uphold  
earth's mysteries known or yet untold;  
let water's fragile blend with air,  
enabling life, proclaim your care.**

**Redeeming God, your arms embrace  
all now despised for creed or race;  
let peace, descending like a dove,  
make known on earth your healing love.**

**Indwelling God, your gospel claims  
one family with a billion names;  
let every life be touched by grace  
until we praise you face to face.**

OPENING PRAYER

**Creating, sustaining, and redeeming God, you are the Ground of our being, the love in which we live and move.**

**May we be aware of your presence which is always with us.**

**May we be grateful for your goodness that surrounds us at all time.**

**May we find life in your grace that accepts us as we are but does not leave us as we are.**

**In our time together, strengthen us with song and prayer, with scripture and proclamation, so that in our time apart we might follow Jesus Christ, who is our Way, our Truth, and our Life. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Ezekiel 18:30-32

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

PSALM 103:1-5, 9-12, 14-15, 17-18

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all the benefits of the Lord,**

who forgives all your sins

and heals all your infirmities;

**who redeems your life from the grave  
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;**

who satisfies you with good things,

and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

**The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,**

**slow to anger and of great kindness.**

The Lord will not always accuse us  
nor remain angry forever.

**The Lord has not dealt with us according to our sins,  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so is the Lord's mercy great upon the God-fearing.

**As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has the Lord removed our sins from us.**

For the Lord knows whereof we are made  
and remembers that we are but dust.

**Our days are like the grass;  
we flourish like a flower of the field.**

But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures forever on the God-fearing,  
and the righteousness of the Lord on children's children;

**on those who keep the holy covenant  
and remember the commandments and do them.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON      John 7:53-8:11

Then each of them went home, while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

SERMON      "Disarming Silence"

A TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM      "Behold the House of God"      Richard Proulx

A TIME OF PRAYER

HYMN 436      "We Are Your People"

**We are your people:  
Lord, by Your grace,  
You dare to make us Christ to our neighbors  
of every nation and race.**

**Called to portray You, help us to live  
Closer than neighbors, open to strangers,  
able to clash and forgive.**

**Glad of tradition, help us to see  
In all life's changing where You are leading,  
Where our best efforts should be.**

**Joined in community, breaking Your bread,  
May we discover gifts in each other,  
willing to lead and be led.**

**Lord, as we minister in different ways,  
May all we're doing show that you're living,  
meeting Your love with our praise.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Postlude” William Lloyd Webber

Artwork: Rembrandt, *Jesus and the Adulteress*, 17th c.; Source: Wikimedia Commons, PD-Old-100.

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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.

**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.



Want to give online? Scan the QR code for our giving app.

**TEE OFFERING Will Be Received This Morning:** Our annual offering to support the Theological Education by Extension College in South Africa (TEE Offering) will be received during worship today. 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](http://www.tee.co.za). Please 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. Or use our Brand Spankin' New Sign-up Genius for Pridefest. Pandemic aside, this is a fun event (and thank goodness) outdoors. There are two ways to help: sign up to bring cookies or sign up for one of two time slots- it's a great way to sign-up with a friend or spend a couple hours with someone new:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A084DA4A923A75-ucciowa>

In the past people have signed up to bring 4 doz. Cookies. This year they should be packaged in plastic bags, 1 or 2 per bag. Thanks again.

**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.

Veterans for Peace, Iowa Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Office of Equity & Human Rights, Peace Iowa, and Johnson County United Nations Association will **mark International Day of Peace with a program at 4:30 p.m., Sept. 21, 2021** at Blackhawk Mini Park, located near the intersection of Dubuque and Washington streets. The United Nations General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

To mark the 40th anniversary of the General Assembly Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, the theme of this year's International Day of Peace is "Recovering Better for a Sustainable & Equitable World." Along with remarks from other guests, the event will feature music from University of Iowa Associate Professor of Music Education Mary Cohen and students. Cohen will also speak on the role of arts in peace-building.

The event will also include the dedication of a new stainless steel peace pole, which will now be a feature of Blackhawk Mini Park. The peace pole was donated to the City of Iowa City by Veterans For Peace #161 and features the "word" peace in several languages on each of its four sides.

The rain location will be Room A at the Iowa City Public Library.

The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by resolution 36/67 of the UN General Assembly to coincide with its opening session, which was held annually on the third Tuesday of September. The first Peace Day was observed in September 1982. In 2001, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 55/282, which established Sept. 21 as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire.

This anniversary offers a unique opportunity to reaffirm the United Nations' commitment to the purposes and principles upon which the organization was founded. The Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace recognizes that the promotion of peace is vital for the full enjoyment of all human rights.

Iowa City Mayor Bruce Teague proclaimed Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021 as International Day of Peace in Iowa City. The full proclamation can be read [here](#).