



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2021
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“One of the most disturbing things about God’s grace is that it reaches out to other people too. Grace always seems amazing and wonderful when it breaks through the barriers of guilt or fear that keep us locked out of God’s love and acceptance, but it is much more disturbing when it breaks through the barriers that protect us from people we fear and distrust. When God’s grace kicks down those sorts of walls, we can find ourselves shocked, even appalled. Has God got no standards? It shakes us to the core. It may have even shaken Jesus to the core.”

Nathan Nettleton

PRELUDE “Prelude in G Major” Op. 48, No. 2 Josef Renner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of the Creator who has made us,

we celebrate the goodness of our lives.

In the name of the Christ who came to set us free,

we rejoice in our diversity of love and life.

In the name of the Spirit who sustains us,

we challenge ourselves to grow and to dream.

God, in your presence we gather,

be among us now!

HYMN 274 "O God of Earth and Space"

**O God of earth and space
Of sea and fire and air
Your providence surrounds us here
And everywhere
In fruit and grain and tree
In shelter from the cold
In cooling breezes flowing wells
Now as of old**

**Where faithfulness is shown
Where love and truth abound
Where beauty graces human life
There You are found
Inspirer of all thought
Creative force of art
The melody on every tongue
In every heart**

**Wherever freedom reigns
Where sin is overthrown
Where justice fused with mercy rules
There You are known
Give us the courage clear
To make the earth a home
For all to live in harmony
In Christ's shalom**

**Your word commands response
And summons us to life
We follow
Strengthened by Your grace
In calm or strife
Our ever present help
Our challenge and our prod
We praise You
Now and to life's end
Eternal God**

OPENING PRAYER

Creating, Redeeming, and Sustaining God, you gather us in all our diversity and difference and hold us together as one in Christ. We give you thanks that

**when we cannot let go of past wrongs, your grace comes to us new each day;
when we are weary and worried, your Spirit revives us;
when we are in despair about our world or our lives, you renew our hope and point us toward tomorrow.**

Speak gently to us now in our trouble and distraction that we might be still and know that you are God. Keep us aware of your presence with us as we live in love and joy through the days ahead. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

PSALM 67

O God, be merciful to us and bless us;
show us the light of your countenance and come to us.

**Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

**Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

**The earth has brought forth its increase;
may God, our own God, bless us.**

[Unison]

**O God, give us your blessing;
may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of you.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 15:21-28

SERMON “Listen Up”

A TIME OF GRATITUDE

ANTHEM “God Is Faithful” Walter L. Pelz

A TIME OF PRAYER

HYMN 358 “Help Us Accept Each Other”

**Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
We are ourselves accepted, and meant to love and live.**

**Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them, or as they may become.**

**Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness, and laughter's healing art.**

**Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance, for justice, and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

POSTLUDE “Postlude in G Major” Gustav Merkel

Artwork: Rembrandt, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, 17th c.; Public Domain

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Organist:	Bill Crouch
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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.

Thanks to everyone who gave to the TEE OFFERING last Sunday. We received over \$900 to support the Theological Education by Extension College 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. **You can still give—please put “TEE” on your check or envelope.**

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.

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.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR OUR WARM WINTER WEAR DISTRIBUTION!

Location: 340 Southgate Avenue, far east end of The GuideLink Center

Volunteers are needed for three days of sorting and organizing:

-5 volunteers needed for 3 hours on Sunday, October 17 (2 - 5 p.m.)

-5 volunteers needed per 3 hour shift on Monday, October 18, and Tuesday, October 19, at 9 - noon; noon - 3 p.m.; 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Volunteers are also needed for three-and-a-half days of clothing distribution; shopping begins Wednesday, October 20, and ends on Saturday, October 23:

-5 volunteers are needed for all shifts on Wednesday through Saturday

at 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. W-F, 9 - Noon on Sat. (Clean up 12 - 3)

These volunteers will assist shoppers each day, serving as guides. They will also keep the space organized & restock the tables.

You are invited to sign up for multiple volunteer shifts during this event using this SignUp Genius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B49A9AE2FA20-winter2>

Shoppers must have an appointment, with one adult per family allowed to select items for the family. Five shoppers will be admitted each 1/2 hour. They will also sign up via SignUp Genius.

Following health guidelines, we plan to keep the number of people in our space distanced and safe. Shoppers and staff are all required to wear masks.

All donations should be brought to the GuideLink Center on Monday, October 18 between 9 and 6. Limited street parking is available on Southgate.