

# Welcome Sunday



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

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 7, 2025  
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Wait  
I'm not ready  
I'm just packing my gear  
Wait  
My hand's steady  
My mind is still clear  
Paul Simon

*Today is a communion Sunday. If you are joining us online, before the worship service, you are invited to assemble what you will eat and what you will drink. It can be bread and grape juice or wine or as simple as a cracker or rice cake and water for use in our worship.*

PRELUDE    “Partita on the Hymn Tune *Crucifer*”    Charles Callahan  
                 V. Meditation

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cassie Elsberg, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

When our lives are full of laughter,

**God welcomes us.**

When our lives are filled with disappointment and we have been let down,

**God welcomes us.**

When we are tired and need a place of rest,

**God welcomes us.**

Here we meet the God of welcome, whose door is always open,

**Let us worship God.**

**\*HYMN 272            “God of the Sparrow”**

**God of the sparrow**

**God of the whale**

**God of the swirling stars**

**How does the creature say Awe**

**How does the creature say Praise**

**God of the earthquake**

**God of the storm**

**God of the trumpet blast**

**How does the creature cry Woe**

**How does the creature cry Save**

**God of the rainbow**

**God of the cross**

**God of the empty grave**

**How does the creature say Grace**

**How does the creature say Thanks**

**God of the hungry**

**God of the sick**

**God of the prodigal**

**How does the creature say Care**

**How does the creature say Life**

**God of the neighbor**

**God of the foe**

**God of the pruning hook**

**How does the creature say Love**

**How does the creature say Peace**

**God of the ages  
God near at hand  
God of the loving heart  
How do your children say Joy  
How do your children say Home**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**We give you thanks, O God, for bringing us together in community.  
We are grateful for the people who gather with us  
and magnify your presence.**

**Hear the sighs of your people who bring their weariness and distress,  
their hopes and dreams.  
Open a pathway forward.**

**Send us your Spirit.  
Renew our imagination and strength  
to follow in your wonderful and unexpected ways.**

**Let the energy of this time  
stream into the world  
as you send us out to be signs of your love. Amen.**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#483, vs. 4)**

**Thus all my gladsome way along,  
I sing aloud thy praises,  
that all may hear the grateful song  
my voice unwearied raises.  
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart,  
both soul and body bear your part:  
To God all praise and glory!**

**ANTHEM      “Lift High the Cross”                      Hal Hopson**

**SERVICE OF GIVING**

**Invitation  
Offertory      “Fughetta”      Dietrich Buxtehude  
\*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              Isaiah 38:16-20**

PSALM 6

Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger;  
do not punish me in your wrath.

**Have pity on me, Lord, for I am weak;  
heal me, for my bones are racked.**

My spirit shakes with terror;  
how long, O Lord, how long?

**Turn, O Lord , and deliver me;  
save me for your mercy's sake.**

For in death no one remembers you;  
and who will give you thanks in the grave?

**I grow weary because of my groaning;  
every night I drench my bed  
and flood my couch with tears.**

My eyes are wasted with grief  
and worn away because of all my enemies.

**Depart from me, all evildoers,  
for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.**

The Lord has heard my supplication;  
the Lord accepts my prayer.

**All my enemies shall be confounded and quake with fear;  
they shall turn back and suddenly be put to shame.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON      Colossians 1:15-20

[The children are dismissed to Children's Church]

SERMON      Seven Psalms #7: "Psalms for Living"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION

HYMN 508 (vs. 1, 2, & 4)      "For the Bread Which You Have Broken"

**For the bread which You have broken,  
For the wine which You have poured,  
For the words which You have spoken,  
Now we give You thanks, O Lord.**

**By this promise that You love us,  
By Your gift of peace restored,  
By Your call to heaven above us,  
Hallow all our lives, O Lord.**

**In Your service, Lord, defend us;  
In our hearts keep watch and ward;  
In the world to which You send us  
Let Your kingdom come, O Lord.**

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

##### REMEMBERING AND GIVING THANKS

**This morsel of bread becomes the bread of life when we share it together.  
A sip from each cup when we drink together connects us to the living vine.  
May the promise of life made new dwell among us.**

We remember that on the night of his arrest...

##### WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF BREAD AND CUP

(Communion will be served in the pews today. Please receive the bread or cup as they are offered to you by a deacon. Hold it until all have been served, and we will eat and drink together at the minister's guidance. We serve grape juice, not wine. Gluten-free wafers are on the trays with the bread. In the Congregational United Church of Christ, we celebrate the Lord's Supper with openness and welcome. Everyone is invited to the table, regardless of church membership or denominational affiliation.)

##### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**thank you, O God, that you come into our ordinary lives  
We and set a table among us,  
filling our plates with the bread of life  
and our cups with salvation.  
Send us out, O God, with tender hearts and strong spirits  
to share in our everyday world  
the promise of your wholeness. Amen.**

\*HYMN 152 (vs. 1,2, & 4) "Earth's Scattered Isles and Contoured Hills"

**Earth's scattered isles and contoured hills  
Which part the seas and mold the land,  
And vistas newly seen from space  
That show a world awesome and grand,  
All wondrously unite to sing:  
Take heart, take hope, the Lord is King!**

**God's judgment passed on social ills  
That thwart awhile divine intent,  
The flagging dreams of weary folk  
Whose brave new world lies torn and rent,  
In painful form their message bring:  
Take heart, take hope, the Lord is King!**

**The light which shines through noble acts,  
The quest for truth dispelling lies,  
The grace of Christ renewed in us  
So love lives on and discord dies,  
All blend their song, good news to bring:  
Take heart, take hope, the Lord is King!**

**\*BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE “Partita on the Hymn Tune *Crucifer*” Charles Callahan  
II. Chorale-Fanfare

The Call to Worship is adapted from the liturgy of the Iona Community of Scotland.

Prayer after Communion adapted from Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago.

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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
Choir Roundup	After Worship

#### TUESDAY

❖ Gentle Yoga	Noon
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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	After Worship

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

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

**THIS MORNING, BILL LOVIN CONCLUDES HIS SERMON SERIES FROM THE PSALMS**, using Paul Simon's Seven Psalms as a starting point. You are invited to join Bill in Rockwood Hall at 9:50 am to hear the song that inspires today's sermon: "Wait."

**SING OUT!—JOIN THE CHOIR:** Do you enjoy singing? Our volunteer choir begins its season this morning, with a rehearsal at 9:00 a.m. and they will sing during the 10:15 worship service. This year's "Choir Round-up" will take place after worship this morning. From there they meet each Sunday morning at 9 a.m. sharp for a one-hour rehearsal before the 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](mailto: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.

**READY, SET, SHINE! SUNDAY (RALLY DAY) IS THIS MORNING, SEPTEMBER 7!** Christian education will celebrate our "back-to-Sunday School" with a combined breakfast, games and arts and crafts at 9:15. Preschool-high schoolers will meet their teachers and explore their refreshed classrooms!

**GENTLE YOGA RETURNS** Tuesday, September 9 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 is available in Rockwood Hall.

**HOPE LODGE:** Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be 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 on 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](mailto: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](http://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!

Please mark your calendar for our **PROGRESSIVE DINNER** on Saturday, October 4. The registration flier is in this newsletter. 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.

**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](mailto: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/](http://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/](http://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](mailto: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.