

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 17, 2025

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: The One who commands the clouds calls us to be poured out for others.
Many: We can, by faith, be the waters of peace which quench the fires of hatred.
One: The One who creates mercy and hope, longs for a world of fair play and grace.
Many: We can, by faith, let righteousness and justice be our constant companions.
One: The One who is with us in every moment composes a love-song for our hearts.
Many: We can, by faith, teach this song to everyone we meet.

*Opening Song: “Praise To the Lord, the Almighty” #71

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

We recognize the spark that you bring into our gathering, Energizing God. Let it ignite within us as we worship you in the company of siblings. We honor your power and remain in awe of your glory. Let it fall again as Spirit dwells among us. May the warmth of your presence give us courage for these days and the clarity of your light give us discernment toward a future with hope. Be pleased by our worship, Eternal God, and be glorified in our praise. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

What more can we say, Expectant God, that you don't know already? You long for justice for all people, but it is washed away by the flood of violence in our world. You hope that righteousness will walk with us, but you hear the clear cries of those we mistreat. You ask us to speak up for those in need, but we shut our mouths and turn away.
Forgive us, Righteous God. Have mercy when we do not bear the fruit we could. Even though we have not lived our faith to the fullest, may we receive the promises of hope and grace you have given us in Jesus, our Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Beloved, we may be assured of God’s power to break down in order to build back up. The brokenness we experience in life does not have the final word.
Many: The redemptive love of God makes all things new and the healing grace of God restores and repairs. New life in Christ awaits us all this day and every day. Thanks be to God!

SACREMENT of BAPTISM: Soraya Kaye Burtnett

BAPTISM SONMG “Child of Blessing, Child of Promise” #677 verses 1 & 4

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 23:25-28

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH inside back cover of hymnal (read together)

*GLORIA PATRI #734
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8 read from *The Message*

MESSAGE: “Statistics” Pastor Chris

Communion Song: “As We Gather at Your Table” #695

GATHERING AT CHRIST’S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord’s Prayer (debts/debtors), Sharing the Bread and Cup

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

We thank you, God, for inviting us to your table where we have been refreshed by this bread and cup, we have experienced the presence of Christ and received all of his gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us out into the world with courage and in peace to be the church, your servant people, disciples of our Savior Jesus. Amen.

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY** #34
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**
Holy God, we offer these gifts to you in gratitude and hope. May they extend beyond the walls of our sanctuaries so that your name will be known through us. May they spark hope and joy to dispel despair and despondency. May needs be met and lives changed through our giving and our living. Receive these gifts as our tangible prayer that your kindom come and will be done. Amen.

LITURGY OF RELEASE AND FAREWELL

***Closing Song:** “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” #712
***Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

POSTLUDE

***Indicates all who are able please stand**
The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, and Prayer of Confession (adapted) from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer (adapted), Words of Assurance (adapted), and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. The Affirmation of Faith is a version of our United of Christ Statement of Faith. The Baptism liturgy and Liturgy for Release and Farewell are from the United Church of Christ Book of Worship.

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Organist/Pianist:	Alicia Miller
Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
August Radio Sponsor	Becky Bibler

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Birthdays: August 18-Andrew Schlievert; 19-Henry Reynolds; 20-Adeline Reynolds; 22-Larry Person; 30-Laurie Zook
Sunday, August 17: - 10:30am-Worship with Communion, Baptism, and Service of Release Coffee
Associate Conference Minister Kendy Miller will be present
Potluck following service at Christian and Ashley Grindberg residence
Sunday, August 24: 10:30am – Worship / Coffee
Sunday, August 31: 10:30am – Worship / Coffee
Sunday, September 21: 4pm. Service of Peace
We celebrate with to Christine and Chad Wile on the Baptism of Soraya Kaye Burtnett.
Our Daily Bread Sept./Oct./Nov. 2025 issue may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
167 Years*
315 Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511
515-295-2845

ENDING AN AUTHORIZED MINISTRY

RECOGNITION OF THE END

LEADER: On September 1, 2014, this local church called Rev. Christopher Burtneitrtt o serve as Pastor.

AUTHORIZED MINISTER: I thank Algona 1st Congregational United Church of Christ, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last eleven years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

PEOPLE: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

AUTHORIZED MINISTER: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

VOWS OF RELEASE

All who are able may stand

LEADER: Do you, the members and friends of Algona 1st Congregational United Church of Christ release Pastor Chris from the duties of Pastor?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

LEADER: Do you offer your encouragement for his ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

LEADER: Do you, Pastor Chris, release this local church from turning to you and depending on you?

AUTHORIZED MINISTER: I do, with the help of God.

LEADER: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here.

AUTHORIZED MINISTER: I do, with the help of God.

WITNESS OF THE ASSOCIATION/ CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Northwestern Association, Iowa Conference and the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and

release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

PRAYER

LEADER: Let us pray.

ALL: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

LEADER

Go now, surrounded by our love and led by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Amen.