May 9, 2021 10:00 a.m.

**Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Prelude**

**Introductory Remarks**
- If you can have multiple tabs or windows open on your device, you can pull up the bulletin for this service by going to urbucc.org. Words to The Prayer of Jesus and Closing Hymn will be on your screen as we go through the service.
- If you want to take a moment to set up your space for whatever helps you pray, meditate, or be mindful of God’s presence, please do that. A candle or cross or Bible or whatever helps you. Also, minimize distractions, like phones or alarms.
- We will be asking you to jot some things down, which you may be able to do on the device you are using or find a pad and pen/pencil. Bring your prayer list into reach if you use one.
- Later in the service we will read from the *Gospel of John*, Chapter 15, so if you have a Bible handy you might want to get it and turn to that passage. We will be reading from the Inclusive Bible, so you can compare it with your translation.

**Greeting**
- “If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy, if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice, for your soul is alive.”  
  *Eleonora Duse, Italian Actress*

**Calling Our Attention to the Presence of God**
- What brings joy to your life? Certain places? Certain people? Activities or work that you enjoy? Are there times when joy breaks in on your life in ways that are hard to predict or explain? Likewise, have you experienced the joy draining out of your spirit for no discernable reason? If God’s intention for us is that we en-joy life, are we not under some obligation to seek it out, to foster attitudes and conditions that lead to it, to position ourselves in the world so that we can perceive and receive it? Ought not this time, set aside for the worship of God, be a time of joy? I think so. Take a few moments now to tap into the joy in your faith and in your life.

**Song of Hope**
- “My Heart Ever Faithful”  
  *J.S. Bach*

**Taking Stock of Our Blessings and Resources**
- “Donate” tab at urbucc.org, The United Church of Christ provides Disaster Relief funds to areas hard-hit by the storms, fires, and other natural and human-caused disasters. To contribute to the Disaster Relief fund, go to [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).
- The Strengthen the Church Offering will be received in 2 weeks.
- Jot down what you have that you can share with others - a sign in a window or yard, a card or letter, phone call or e-mail to someone who is having a hard time. Assistance to someone who needs to get the vaccine, errands run for those who are not able to get out.
- Remember that homeless shelters and food pantries are still being used and need our contributions.
- Think about how you can help to unify God’s flock by being generous with what God has entrusted to you.
RECOGNITION OF GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

**High School Graduate:** Keenan McCann (shawl made by Carol Looney)

**Blessing:** As you start your new journey, may you be blessed by this shawl.

It is a symbol of God’s love and our love
and we pray that it will comfort you as you make this transition.

May you be blessed with all good things--finding new friends along the way.
You will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

**PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:**

Holy and Loving God, we give you thanks for the many joys that sweep through our lives: milestones to celebrate, accomplishments to savor, unexpected gifts and undeserved blessings. We thank you that we can share our joys in communities of faith, in families of love and support, in circles of friends, neighbors, coworkers and colleagues. Help us to see the value of our joys. Remind us of the importance of seeking out those occasions and situations that bring us joy. Free us from any guilt or fear attached to the enjoyment of your gift of life and give us the wisdom to act in ways that maximize the joys in other people’s lives. And if we become too selfish with our lives, too wrapped up in ourselves, or too busy to seek joy, give us a burst of your Spirit, so that we may know that the joy that you impart to us is the very thing we need to keep our hearts from becoming too hard. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE**

John 15:9-17 (The Inclusive Bible)

9 “As my Abba has loved me, so have I loved you. Live on in my love.
10 And you will live on in my love if you keep my commandments.
just as I live on in Abba God’s love and have kept God’s commandments.
11 I tell you all this that my joy may be yours, and your joy may be complete.
12 This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.
13 There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.
14 And you are my friends, if you do what I command you.
15 I no longer speak of you as subordinates, because a subordinate doesn’t know a superior’s business.
Instead I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learned from Abba God.
16 It was not you who chose me; it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit.
Your fruit must endure, so that whatever you ask of Abba God in my name God will give you.
17 This command I give you: that you love one another.”

The same Greek root is the basis for words that correspond to the English words “grace,” “gift” and “joy.”
This is perhaps understandable since all of these words evoke images of happy times and fulfillment in life. In the Farewell Discourse of Jesus, we may find it odd that Jesus speaks of such things as he faces his own torture and death, but as John conveys the Gospel message to his earliest readers/hearers, this may be exactly what they need to hear as the church begins to face persecution and martyrdom. When in your life do you need to be reminded of joy?

**MEDITATION**

“Complete Joy!”
Pastor David Sickelka

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Take a moment now to check your own prayer list. Add the names that need to go on it, review the names of those for whom you have been praying. Has an answer or resolution come? If so, make gratitude known to others.

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**CLOSING HYMN**

“I Come with Joy”
Verses 1, 4 & 5
Hymnal 349

**BLESSING**

Go now into the world as conduits of God’s gift of joy! Offer your life as an example of the ways in which God brings hope and new life into the world’s warped values. Do your best to live as those who know the Source and purpose of their blessings, for when you do, you will point others to the wellspring of life. Be prepared at all times to lay down your lives, not as martyrs, but as people who know the transforming ways of the Spirit of God. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**
THE PRAYER OF JESUS

O God, our heavenly Father and Mother,
may your name be sacred to us.
May your realm become a reality for us.
May your desires be fulfilled among us
as they are in your courts.
Give us today what we need for life.
And forgive us for our wrongs
as we forgive those who wrong us.
Guide us in tempting situations,
and protect us from the power of evil.
For the realm that is coming,
the power that is growing, and the glory
that is building, all belong to you forever.
Amen.
I come with joy, a child of God,  
forgiven, loved, and free,  
The life of Jesus to recall,  
in love laid down for me,  
in love laid down for me.

And thus we meet, and better know  
the Presence, ever near,  
And join our hearts and sing with joy  
that Christ is risen here,  
that Christ is risen here.

Together met, together bound  
in friendship we will stay,  
And go with joy to love the world  
and live the way we pray,  
and live the way we pray.
This Week at UUCC

**Sunday, May 9**
10:00 am Worship
10:30 am Fellowship Hour

**Thursday, May 13**
7:00 pm Leadership Team

**Saturday, May 15**
9:30 am UUCC Women

Upcoming Sundays

**Sunday, May 16**
10:00 am Worship
10:30 am Fellowship Hour

**Sunday, May 23**
10:00 am Worship
10:30 am Fellowship Hour
11:00 am Annual Congregational Meeting

**Congratutations Riley Minard!**
Riley Minard graduated on Saturday, May 8th from UNI with a degree in Graphic Design. He plans to move to St. Louis this summer to pursue his career. If you would like to send him a message, his email is rileycjminard@outlook.com. If you want to see some of his work, you can view his portfolio at rileyminard.des. Riley and his moms are grateful for the support you have shown him over the years. He has a strong foundation of faith because of all of you.

**Little Free Pantry**
We need your help to restock the pantry. You are also invited to use it, and let people know about it. Please DO NOT leave donations of food or clothing outside the building when no one is present. Call or email the church office to arrange a drop off time.

**UCAN Clothing Closet**
Donation Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9am-1pm
Drop off location: 75th St & Douglas Ave (old Palmers Deli)

The Clothing Closet is in need of children’s clothing, new packages of medium size men’s briefs and Size 5 diapers.
URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
3530 70th Street, Urbandale, IA 50322       Phone: 515-276-0625 • Fax: 515-276-2451
www.urbucc.org       www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC

“We welcome into this community of faith, and affirm the participation in all aspects of church life, persons of every age, race, gender identity and expression, nationality, ability, and sexual orientation. We will continue our efforts toward inclusiveness, and stand against all forms of discrimination. We will empower ourselves, our children, and one another to be fully present in the world, living in Christ’s image and striving for justice and peace.”

Staff
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Ministry Leaders

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At Large Members: Kathy Marean, Jennifer Gardner, Wesley Keeler

Other Contacts:
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Social Media Team ........................................ Sandy Gahn ................................. social.media@urbucc.org

For pastoral care, please contact Pastor Dave at 276-0625 (church office), 720-6389 (cell) or david.sickelka@urbucc.org. Pastor Dave is off on Mondays but will still respond to emergencies if you call or text.