



IMMANUEL CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

1 Hovey Street • Oxford, MI 48371

www.icucc.org • 248-628-1610

July 26, 2026 • 11:00 a.m.



Welcome to worship at Immanuel United Church of Christ!
God is Still Speaking,

Immanuel Open and Affirming Statement:

We welcome and affirm all people in celebrating diversity. We welcome to our faith family people of every race, age, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability and those who have doubts or questions.

Thank You for taking the time to turn off your cell phone during the worship service.

Prelude

*Bringing in the Light of Christ

(* denotes those who are able may stand.)

Ringling of the Bell

Jeff Erno

Welcome

Special Music

Pastor Liz Wilson

Children Message

Marsha Chapman, Liturgist

***Call to Worship**

One: Give thanks to God, for God is good

Many: God's goodness and mercy are sure

One: Sing to the Spirit, for the Spirit is here

Many: The Spirit knows the ache for connection deep within us

One: Praise Christ Jesus, who loves us

Many: With a love that is boundless and true

One: Give thanks to God, and sing God's praise

Many: As we worship together this day.

Jeff Erno

Invocation

Loving God, thank you for calling us to worship today. Thank you for sending your Spirit to speak to and for our spirits, strengthening our weary souls, and empowering us to live and serve. Send your Spirit into our worship today, that we may fully sense your presence and embrace your mysterious wisdom. In your holy name, we pray. Amen

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***Hymn:**

"There Is A Name I Love to Hear"

Jeff Erno

Words of Assurance

My friends, these words are faithful and true, even when we aren't really sure. Nothing, absolutely nothing in all of creation, in all of our histories, in all of our actions, and in all of our world, can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There Is a Name I Love to Hear

(O How I Love Jesus)

Frederick Whitfield, 1855; alt.



1 There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
 2 It tells my Sav - ior's love for all; Christ died to set us free;
 3 It bids me serve a - mid the wrath God's peo - ple face each day,



It sounds like mu - sic to my ear, the sweet - est name on earth.
 What - ev - er prob - lems may be - fall, we'll live in dig - ni - ty.
 And sheds a - long life's trou - bled path bright sun - shine on my way.

Refrain



O how I love Je - sus, O how I love Je - sus,



O how I love Je - sus, whose love has first found me.

Frederick Whitfield was ordained in the Church of England and served several English parishes. This hymn is a combination of Whitfield's stanzas and a refrain by an unknown author, both set to an existing nineteenth-century tune. The text was published in a leaflet in 1855.

Tune: O HOW I LOVE JESUS C.M. with refrain
 United States, 19th century

The Congregation Prays

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Janet Caporale, Liturgist

Congregational Response: "Lord hear our prayers." (Response after each Prayer request)

Silent Meditation

Pastoral Prayer

Jeff Erno

The Lord's Prayer: (use words most comfortable for you)

Marsha Chapman, Liturgist

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Psalm 103:8-18

Romans 8:35-39

John 10:27-28

Marsha Chapman, Liturgist

Page 554 Old Testament

Page 158 New Testament

Page 104 New Testament

Sermon:

"Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love"

Jeff Erno

*Hymn:

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

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Stewardship Message

Announcements

(Be sure to read about up-coming events in the back of the bulletin.)

Offering:

Offertory

***Doxology:** (The tune is found on page 356 of your red hymnal.)

PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW...

PRAISE GOD, ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW...

PRAISE GOD, ABOVE, YOU HEAVENLY HOST...

CREATOR, CHRIST AND HOLY GHOST...AMEN.

Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self

Jeff Erno

Miraculous God, bless these gifts with your miraculous love. Bless our offerings with the mystery of an abundance that expands and grows, so that all may know the truth of your love, a love that cannot be stopped no matter what. Bless us to bring forth your miraculous love in all that we say and do. Amen.

*Hymn: **"God's Eye Is On the Sparrow"**

Insert front & back

*The Light of Christ goes into the world

*Benediction:

Jeff Erno

One: Beloved ones, go now to love

Many: We will grow God's realm

One: Beloved of God, go to proclaim Christ's grace

Many: We will be vessels of mercy

One: Beloved siblings in the Spirit, know that nothing can separate you from God's love

Many: May the Holy Spirit help us to love others as God first loved us.

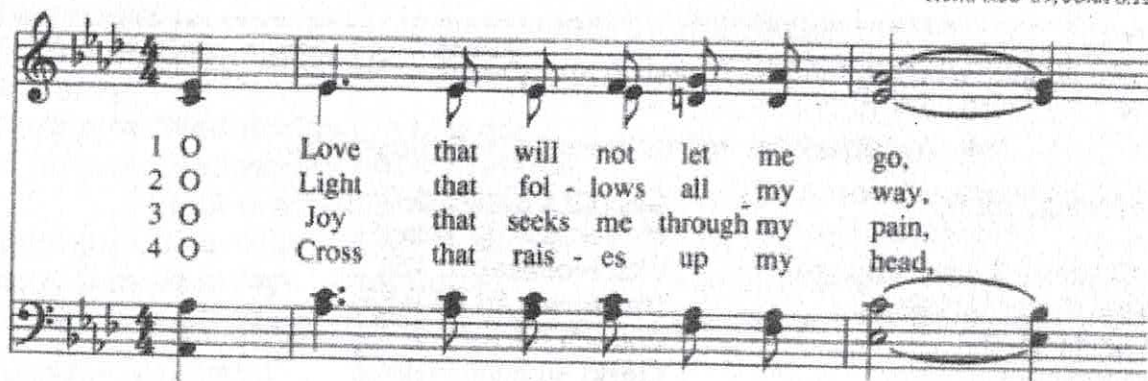
ALL: AMEN

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go

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George Matheson, 1882; alt.

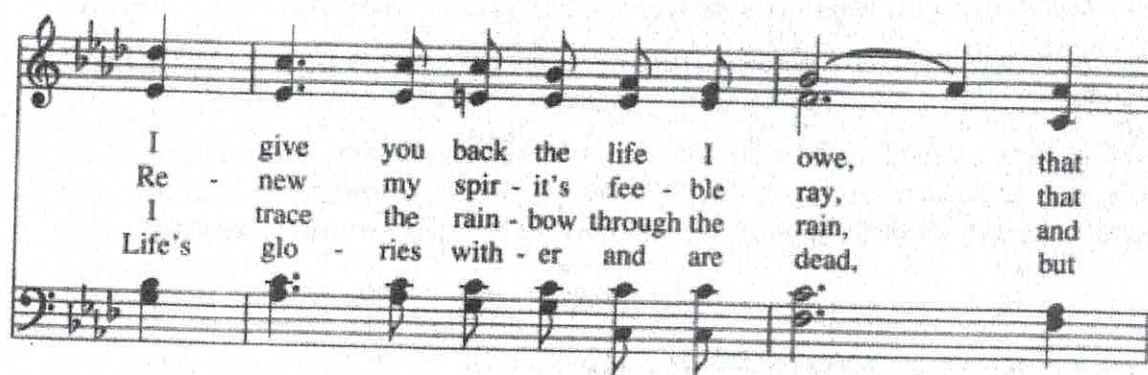
Rom. 8:38-39; John 8:12



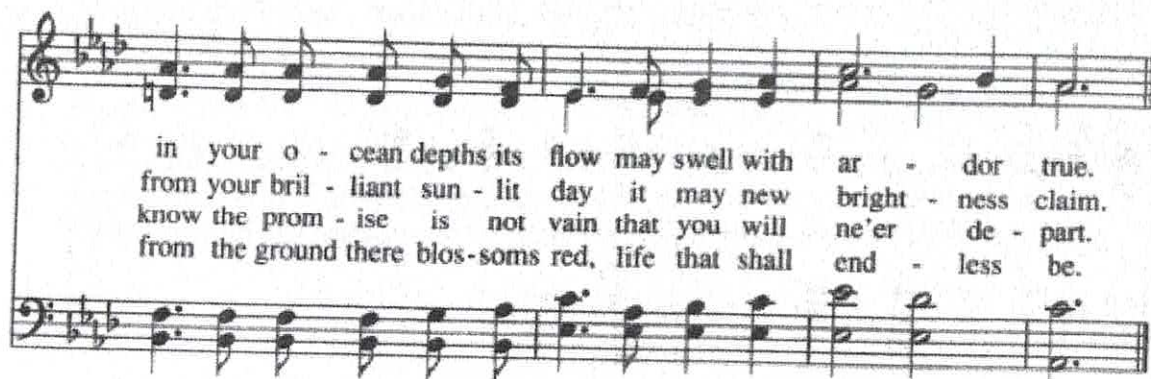
1 O Love that will not let me go,
 2 O Light that fol - lows all my way,
 3 O Joy that seeks me through my pain,
 4 O Cross that rais - es up my head,



I rest my wea - ry soul in you;
 to you I yield my flick - ering flame;
 to you I can - not close my heart;
 from you I dare not seek to flee;



I give you back the life I owe, that
 Re - new my spir - it's fee - ble ray, that
 I trace the rain - bow through the rain, and
 Life's glo - ries with - er and are dead, but



in your o - cean depths its flow may swell with ar - dor true.
 from your bril - liant sun - lit day it may new bright - ness claim.
 know the prom - ise is not vain that you will ne'er de - part.
 from the ground there blos - soms red, life that shall end - less be.

Although he was nearly blind, George Matheson studied for the Church of Scotland ministry, assisted by his sisters, who learned Latin, Greek, and Hebrew to help him. Matheson wrote this hymn in five minutes on June 6, 1882, at his parsonage.

Tune: ST. MARGARET 8.8.8.8.6.
 Albert L. Peace, 1885

God's Eye Is on the Sparrow

Matt. 10:26-30; Luke 12:4-7

Civilla D. Martin, c. 1905; alt.

Stanzas, in unison

1 Why should I feel dis-cour-aged, why should the shad-ows come,
 2 "Let not your heart be trou-bled," Christ's ten-der word I hear,
 3 When-ev-er I am tempt-ed, when-ev-er clouds a-rise,

Why should my heart be lone-ly and long for heaven and
 And rest-ing on God's good-ness, I lose my doubts and
 When song gives place to sigh-ing, when hope with-in me

home, When God is ev-er my por-tion? My
 fears; Though by the path... God leads me but
 dies, I then draw close to my Sav-ior, from

con-stant friend will be: God's eye is on the spar-row, and I
 one step I may see: God's eye is on the spar-row, and I
 care I am set free: God's eye is on the spar-row, and I

Civilla Martin, a native of Nova Scotia, assisted her husband in his evangelistic campaigns. Charles Gabriel was editor for Rodeheaver Publishing Company, Chicago, and one of the most popular gospel songwriters of the early 1900s.

Tune: SPARROW Irr.
 Charles H. Gabriel, 1905

COMFORT AND ASSURANCE

know God watch-es me; God's eye is on the spar-row, and I
 know God watch-es me; God's eye is on the spar-row, and I
 know God watch-es me; God's eye is on the spar-row, and I

Refrain, in harmony

know God watch-es me. I sing be-cause I'm here

hap - py, I sing be - cause I'm free, God's
I'm hap - py, I'm free,

eye is on the spar-row, and I know God watch-es me.

Please wait to exit unit after the recessional.

Grace for fellowship hour

Jeff Erno

*Postlude

*We scatter to serve******

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Join together for refreshments in Fellowship

In Worship and Service Today

Sermon: Jeff Erno

Liturgist: Marsha Chapman & Janet Caporale

Children's Message: Pastor Liz Wilson

Choir Director: Ken Martin

Accompanist: Ann McKinley

Our Tech team: Tammy & Ken Martin

Floral Arrangements: A gift created by Amy Wilson

Ministers: All the Immanuel Church faith community

Sunday School: Amy Wilson, Liz Wilson, Susanne Waldrep

Church Officers & Staff

Moderator: Ken Martin

Vice Moderator: TBA

Treasurer: Art Nagasaki

Council Secretary: Susanne Waldrep

Clerk: Susanne Waldrep

Church Secretary: Sue Molczyk

Building & Grounds Team Leader: TBA

Calendar at a Glance

Weekly Events

11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship & Fellowship

5:30 p.m. Community Meal every Tuesday

5:00 p.m. Wednesday Free Meals

7:00 p.m. Wednesday Choir practice (last practice until Sept.)

6:00 p.m. Thursday Prayer Meeting

4:00 p.m. Mondays "True Colorz" LGBTQ+ Support Group

Sunday, August 3

7:00 p.m. Council Meeting

Sunday, August 16

Scriptures at Scriptor Park

Service, Baptism, and potluck picnic (bring a dish to pass & your chair)

Birthdays and Anniversaries for the month of July:

Birthdays

July 3: Connie Habermehl

July 3: Justin Willcock

July 7: Garrett Wilson

July 15: Aaron Douglas

July 19: Terry Sutton

July 29: Mary Beth Wiechert

July 30: Art Nagasaki

- **Please be sure to visit Immanuel's website at www.icucc.org**
- **Please join us for Sunday Service via Virtual Worship. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/oxfordimmanuelucc> You do not have to join facebook, it will ask if you want to join. If not click no and it will still get you to the service.**
- **Treasurer's Note:** Our offerings for July 12 was \$935 and July 19 TBA. We need to collect \$1,675 each week to fund our approved budget. **Remember to honor your pledge commitments and tithes, especially when you miss any Sundays!** Art Nagasaki, Treasurer
- REMINDER to bring in flexible plastic Kroger packaging for recycling. Call Peggy with questions. The sock program has been discontinued.
- Please continue to collect and donate your pop can tabs. There's a container in Fellowship Hall. Pop can tabs help support the Ronald McDonald Houses where parents can stay when their child is hospitalized. Tammy will be sending our donation later in May to the Ronald McDonald House in Ann Arbor.
- Knitters, crocheters and crafters: If you need yarn for projects, we have a wide variety of colors and types in our craft room downstairs. Just let Tammy or Ken know
- "What Is the Bible?" book study, Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in church lounge, every Sunday through July 19.
- Please remember to sign the black attendance book at the end of each pew.
- Our annual "Scripture at Scriptor" summer picnic is coming up in August. We will be having a baptismal service after the picnic. If you are interested in being baptized or re-professing your faith through the sacrament of Holy Baptism, please speak to Pastor Jeff.

July 26, 2026

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Weaving the Future

I have been on a quest to understand better the days of old by learning how to master 18th-century living skills long forgotten. My most recent adventure was a class on how to grow flax, spin it into thread, and then weave it into cloth.

It was there at the loom that I found my weaving became a prayerful act, and with each pass of the shuttle, I thought of the series of "The Kingdom of God is like" parables that Jesus shared so along ago.

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed — the smallest of seeds that grows so great it becomes a haven where birds make their nests among the branches. The Kingdom of God is like yeast that rises into a pillowy loaf of warm bread.

The Kingdom of God is like ...

I mused that if Jesus was at the loom with me, he would begin teaching how the Kingdom of God is like a weaver creating a tapestry with various colors of threads.

The effectiveness of Jesus' many teachings have always been that he was able to take what was right in front of him and make it a teachable God moment. It was a gift that made God's Kingdom more accessible to others. There was no secret handshake or password to gain entry. Rather, the Kingdom was and is all around in ways we are often blind to.

Take a look where you are right now. What is a Kingdom of God parable Jesus would speak of?

Chances are you are sitting in a pew, and you think there is no sign of the Kingdom. Look again.

Could it be that the Kingdom of God is like the threadbare cushion you might sitting on? Its patted down stuffing testifying to the generational stories of faith that need to be heard and the ones that still need to be told. Or perhaps the Kingdom of God is like a cracked vase that is holding the flowers on the chancel. Once shattered but not discarded. Rather, lovingly restored by hands who still saw its beauty and worth.

The Kingdom of God is like...

It's now your turn to see with eyes of faith and make a new parable for today.

Story-telling God, may our voice speak of the parables still needing to be told. May everything we see and savor, touch and taste, remind us of the goodness of Your kingdom that is here on Earth all around us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)

