

## LIGHTING OUR ADVENT CANDLE OF HOPE

Today is the beginning of Advent, the time of year when we prepare for the birth of Jesus. Each week of Advent, we will light an Advent candle. The first candle represents HOPE

*Light of the world, whom darkness cannot overcome,  
may the challenges we face, and the times in which we live,  
not dictate whether or not we speak and act from hope.  
May a fierce and stubborn light of hope burn in our hearts,  
so that we may do the work we're called to do,  
and be the people we're called to be,  
regardless of the challenges, despite the times.*

## \*SINGING LIKE ANGEL

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.  
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;  
new life, new *hope* the Child will bring.  
Listen to the angels sing,  
“Glory, glory, glory,” let the heavens ring!

## READING AND REFLECTING

### READING FROM THE BIBLE

Isaiah 64: 1-4 and Luke 1: 26-38

### REFLECTING

## SHARING OUR LIVES IN PRAYER, SHARING CHRIST'S MEAL

### REFLECTING SILENTLY UPON OUR LIVES

### SHARING FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR LIVES

### LIFTING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS IN PRAYER

### PRAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Insert

### ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST'S BREAD AND CUP

The gifts of God for the people of God.

*Thanks be to God!*

## REMEMBERING JESUS' WORDS AND BLESSING THE MEAL

### SINGING BEFORE SHARING THE MEAL

*Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life*

Black Hymnal 331

### SHARING THE MEAL AND PRAYING AT THE PRAYER NET

All who love Jesus Christ are invited to share in this meal. Please come forward as the trio plays, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and eat it as an act of holy union with Christ and his covenant community. If you would like to tie a prayer tie onto our prayer net, please do so after eating the bread you've dipped in the cup.

Trio *Improvisation on Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

### GIVING THANKS FOR THE MEAL

God who is inseparable from all that lives, whose spirit is the breath of life, we open our hearts to you and pour out our deepest gratitude. From the mystery of your creative spirit come sun and rain, soil and air, grain and grape, and all that sustains our lives. From the mystery of your life and light come Jesus and his self-giving love, and all who gather together seeking new life with him. We give you thanks for the bread and the juice, for Jesus and one another. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

## OFFERING OURSELVES THROUGH OUR GENEROSITY

### OFFERING OUR LIVES AND GIFTS IN SERVICE TO GOD

Trio *Improvisation on The Angel Gabriel*

### \*PRAISING GOD

tune *Old Hundreth*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

### \*DEDICATING OUR LIVES AND POSSESSIONS TO GOD

## DEPARTING TO PRACTICE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

\*SINGING A HYMN *In The Bulb There Is a Flower*

Black Hymnal 433

### \*TAKING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

\*SENDING SONG *Dona Nobis Pacem*

Insert

\*PARTING WITH A SONG *Keep Awake, Be Always Ready*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

In response to the rise of Islamophobia in our nation, our church is participating in the **Interfaith Action for Human Rights** banner project by hanging a banner that says, "We Stand With Our Muslim Neighbors."

The **rainbow stole** on the pulpit is in support of the struggle of all **LGBTQ** people for equity and justice, and for a life that is free from prejudice, intimidation, and violence.

The **Sunday Morning Adult Christian Ed. Group** is reading the book, *The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. All are welcome.

Our **Annual Christmas Candlelight Service and Party** will be held on **Sunday, December 17, 7 pm**, at church.

We will once again celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with our **Christmas Open Door Dinner on Christmas day**. A brief service at 12:00 noon will be followed by a full-course Christmas dinner at 12:30.

If you would like to do **Read from the Bible** during worship, please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall or contact Tom at [revtomv@swbell.net](mailto:revtomv@swbell.net). And if you would like to submit a **liturgy or prayer** for use during worship, please contact Tom.

## UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Deacons, Tue, Dec 5, 7:15 pm, at Joy Penticuff's  
Trustees, Wed, Dec 6, 7:15 pm at Victoria Li's

## PARTICIPATING TODAY

Ushers  
Fellowship Hosts Board of Deacons

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The **Adult Christian Education Group** meets Sundays at 10:00 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

**Middle School and High School Students** remain in the service the first Sunday of each month; other Sundays their Sunday School begins after the Choral Anthem.

**Elementary Sunday School** is held during the 11:00 am service, immediately following "Time with Children." The children will be escorted from the Sanctuary to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Christian Education room, and can be picked up from there after the service.

**Infant and Toddler Care** is available throughout the service in the Nursery. Child care begins at 9:15 am for the parents of children attending choir practice or the Adult Christian Education Group.

Children's bulletins and crayons are available on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.

## THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN, UCC

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Rev. Thomas J VandeStadt	Pastor
Nodie Murphy	Music Director
Rev. Van Herd	Adult Christian Education
Rev. Amelia Fulbright	Labyrinth Student Ministry
Jonathan Geer	Piano
Amy Harris	Violin
Tony Rogers	Cello
Sam Clubb	Nursery Attendant
Amy Rivera	Sunday School Teacher
Kathy Whatley	Office Manager Emerita
Victor Cardenas	Custodian

## THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN

an Open and Affirming Church  
of The United Church of Christ

**December 3, 2017**

**First Sunday of Advent: Hope**



## GATHERING

Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: you don't give up.

Anne Lamott

## WELCOMING ONE ANOTHER

## SHARING OUR ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ACCEPTING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Trio *Panis Angelicus*

Franck

**\*GATHERING WITH SONG** *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* Insert

## \*GATHERING AS CHRIST'S DISCIPLES

Called by Christ to be here,  
we have shown up.

We are people who wait for the dawn  
of a new day, a new way,  
but we wait for it actively,  
filled with stubborn hope,  
doing our work,  
never giving up.

*We show up to wait, not idly, not lazily,  
but with eager expectation, with sleeves rolled up,  
with tenacious hearts.*

*Darkness cannot overcome us; the light of Christ  
shines stubbornly within us! We are a people of hope,  
people of stubborn hope!*

**\*SINGING A HYMN** *Hope of the World*

Black Hymnal 46