

PROCLAIMING THE POWER OF LOVE

I Corinthians 13: 1-13

Eugene Peterson's translation, *The Message*

If I speak with eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I am nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate....If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

*Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut,
doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others,
isn't always "me first," doesn't fly off the handle,
doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
doesn't revel when others grovel,
takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
puts up with anything, trusts God always,
always looks for the best, never looks back,
but keeps going to the end. Love never dies....*

We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing God directly just as God knows us.

But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us to that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of these three is love.

PRAYING FOR OURSELVES, ONE ANOTHER, AND THE WORLD

REFLECTING SILENTLY UPON OUR LIVES

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

LIFTING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS IN PRAYER

PRAYING TOGETHER AS JESUS PRAYED

debts and debtors

RECEIVING OUR CHOIR'S GIFT *Namaste*

Hayes

READING AND REFLECTING

READING FROM THE BIBLE

Micah 6: 6-8 and I Corinthians 13

REFLECTING

What is the alternatives to naïve cynicism? An active response to what arises, a recognition that we often don't know what is going to happen ahead of time, and an acceptance that whatever takes place will usually be a mixture of blessings and curses that will unfold over considerable time. Such an attitude is bolstered by historical memory, by accounts of indirect consequences, unanticipated cataclysms and victories, and long timelines.

This is how epochal change often begins, with efforts that fail in their direct aims but succeed in shifting the conversation and opening space for further action. These campaigns and achievements are far from enough; they need to scale up, and scaling up means drawing in people who recognize that they are indeed opportunities worth seizing.

Rebecca Solnit

OFFERING OURSELVES THROUGH OUR GENEROSITY

OFFERING OUR LIVES AND GIFTS IN SERVICE TO GOD

Trio *Allegro animato*

Gade

*PRAISING GOD

Tune: Lasst Uns Erfreun

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen

*DEDICATING OUR LIVES AND POSSESSIONS TO GOD

DEPARTING TO PRACTICE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

*SINGING A HYMN *I Am the Light of the World*

Black Hymnal 584

*OFFERING WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

*TAKING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG *The Lord's Peace*

Zinter

*PARTING WITH A SONG *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our **adult Christian education class** is meeting at 10:00 am on Sunday mornings to watch "The Great Churches of Christianity" from The Great Courses. The class meets in the adult CE room on the second floor.

Today after worship, **Bill Campbell and Victoria Li** will give a presentation after worship on their trip to **Israel and Palestine** in 2018.

On **Sunday, March 3, Vision Task Force 4**, which is studying the development of our neighborhood, and discerning the possibilities this creates for our church, will host a **Congregational Meeting** after worship to share information, answer questions, and facilitate continued dialogue over our church's vision and future.

On **Sunday, March 3, Waterloo Trio** will perform a concert at CCA. Doors will open at 6pm and the music will start at 7pm. Please bring lots of food and drink to share with everyone in attendance. We look forward to enjoying an evening of music, food and fellowship with you all!

From **March 10 to April 7**, Whit Bodman will lead our **Lenten Program**: "What I Believe, Don't, And Why." The study, reflection, and discussion series will focus on Marcus Borg's, *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*, and will be supplemented by other short readings.

On **Saturday, April 27, George Hetrick, Robin Chapman, and Tom VandeStadt** will once again ride the **Hill Country Ride for AIDS**. This is a fundraiser to raise funds for organizations helping people live with HIV/AIDS. If you would like to support their **fundraising efforts**, please go to <https://hillcountryride.greatfeats.com/> and click the Donate tab, then click the Donate to a Rider tab, then type in the name of George Hetrick, Robin Chapman, or Tom VandeStadt and you'll get to their fundraising page.

After Easter, we will gather folks together to **read and discuss** the book, *Climate Church, Climate World, How People of Faith Must Work for Change*, by Jim Antal, **Forward** by Bill McKibben.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Coord Council, Thur, Feb 28, 7:15 pm, at Whit Bodman's

PARTICIPATING TODAY

Ushers Andy and Faye Dierksen
Nursery Assistant Lynne Lemley

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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

The **Youth Group** meets every Sunday (except the first Sunday of the month) after church with the youth from University Christian and University Baptist, to go out for lunch and enjoy a program. Middle and High Schoolers welcome. If you would like to be on the email list for more details, please see Reuel Nash.

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 2nd 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.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN, UCC

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Rev. Tom VandeStadt Pastor
Nodie Murphy Music Director
Rev. Amelia Fulbright Labyrinth Student Ministry
Jonathan Geer Piano
Amy Harris Violin
Tony Rogers Cello
Amy Kent Sunday School Teacher
Sam Clubb Nursery Attendant
Donna Cravens Office Manager
Victor Cardenas Custodian

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN

An Open and Affirming Church
Of The United Church of Christ

February 24, 2019

The Season of Epiphany

Trust Steadily In God
Hope Unswervingly
Love Extravagantly



GATHERING

ACCEPTING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Trio *Prelude*

Vivaldi/Kreisler

*GATHERING AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Christine Sines
Mustard Seed Associates

God, may we be instruments of your peace today.

*In a world divided by war and strife,
may we be your reconcilers.*

*In a world of hurt and pain,
may we be those who care for our enemies.*

*In a world that kills and maims,
may we be those who heal and restore.*

The blessing of God be upon you.

The blessing of the God of life.

The blessing of Christ be upon you.

The blessing of the Christ of love.

The blessing of the Spirit be upon you.

The blessing of the Spirit of peace.

*SINGING A HYMN *Will You Come and Follow Me*

Red Hymnal 726