

Welcome to the Congregational Church of Austin, UCC!

If you are visiting for the first time, we are so glad you have joined us! We invite you to join us after worship for a time of fellowship so that we can learn more about you and share more about our church with you!

Thank you for leading us in worship with your presence!

Leading In Today's Service:

Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel, Interim Pastor and Teacher

Jonathan Geer, Piano

Amy Harris, Violin

Roberto Hernández, Usher and Deputy Deacon

Liz Lee, Cello

Andrea Low, Worship Leader

Laura Martin, Director of Music

Reuel Nash, Sound and Worship Streaming

** When we refer to the New Century Hymnal, we use the acronym, NCH.



Invitation to Baptismal Bowl and Prayer Net During Offertory

You are invited to bring your offering forward and place in the offering plate. You are also invited to the table near the prayer net. Our baptismal bowl is there for you to dip your fingers in God's Living Water as a baptismal reminder that you are created in God's image and loved wholly just as you are! You are also invited to take a prayer ribbon (symbolizing the prayers you bring with you today) and tie it to the prayer net to remind us that God holds the collective prayers of creation together in God's love for all of creation.

If you would rather remain seated and participate, simply lift your hand and an usher will bring you an offering plate and prayer ribbon. Please participate as much or as little as you choose.



**Congregational Church of Austin,
United Church of Christ**
An Open and Affirming Congregation

An Open & Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ

Order of Worship for 4/21/2024

Fourth Sunday After Easter

** Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit.*

Words for Centering

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

*Just trust yourself,
Then you will know how to live.*

Ringing of the Bells

Prelude

Improvisation on "Such Perfect Love My Shepherd Shows"

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel

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***Hymn of Celebration**

New Life

UCC Sing! Prayer and Praise #156

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 23

Andrea Low

Paraphrase written by Nan C. Merrill

O my Beloved, you are my shepherd, I shall not want;

You bring me to green pastures for rest

And lead me beside still waters renewing my spirit,

You restore my soul.

You lead me in the path of goodness to follow Love's way.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow and of death, I am not afraid;

For You are ever with me;

Your rod and your staff they guide me,

They give me strength and comfort.

You prepare a table before me

In the presence of all my fears;

You bless me with oil, my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the heart of the Beloved forever.

Reading of the Christian Scriptures John 10:11-18 Andrea Low

‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Divine Parent knows me and I know the Divine Parent. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason, the Divine Parent loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Divine Parent.’

This is the spirit of God’s love. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn of Reflection** My Shepherd is the Living God *NCH247**

Prayers for God’s Beloved Community Rev. Ginny

Anthem For the Beauty of the Earth Alonso

Reflecting in Community Rev. Ginny

Silence

Invitation to Generosity Rev. Ginny

You are invited to financially give so that we can continue to serve our neighbors in Austin and throughout the world. Your generosity can be with cash, a check, or scanning the QR code to give online (see the back of this bulletin). Thank you for your generosity.

Offertory Music Pastoral Symphony from the "Messiah" G. F. Handel

***Doxology** Tune - Lasst Uns Erfreuen

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.

***Prayer of Dedication** Andrea Low

Thank you, God, for the opportunity to share in your creative and restorative work among people. Because we are created in your image, we have much to give. Bless these gifts as expressions of your liberating love and transformative peace in our world. Amen.

***Sending Song** Now the Peace of Easter
Tune -Nouvelet/ Words – Rev. Maren Tirabassi

Now our words are spoken, now our trust is born.

Energies are rising – we prepare to learn.

*We pass our peace and share our neighbors’ need
and the holy Gardener gives us shoot and seed.*

*Green comes up in churches – care for earth and air,
stewardship of resource -- renewal and repair.*

*Damage is done that makes creation weep --
Easter opens graves of all that is buried deep.*

*Now the peace of Easter rests on each one here,
rising like the morning, falling like the tear.*

*Raised from the dead – Christ love for us is seen –
Easter comes again like wheat arising green.*

***Benediction**

Postlude The Rejoicing from the "Messiah" G. F. Handel

You are invited to be seated and listen to the postlude as our gift to you from the Divine.

After the postlude, we will have a time of joys and concerns and prayer.

If you are visiting with us, you are invited to stay for as much or as little as you choose.

We are grateful for your presence with us today!