



**The Congregational Church of Austin, UCC,
an Open and Affirming Congregation**

*Providing a nurturing, safe, and affirming community for all people to flourish
in God's love, justice, and peace!*

408 W. 23rd Street Austin, TX 78705

An Open & Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ
Order of Worship for 12/1/2024

First Sunday of Advent

World Aids Day

On our Way to Bethlehem:

Rome ~ A Place of Longing for God's Justice

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

Words for Centering

Rev. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside, is not a bad picture of Advent.”

Ringling of the Bells

Prelude

Improvisation on "O Loving Founder of the Stars"

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel

If you are visiting for the first time, we are so glad you have joined us! Thank you for leading us in worship with your presence!

***Advent Carol of Celebration**

We're on Our Way

M. McFee, C. Bell

*We're on our way. We're on our way.
Dream of the day when hope holds sway.
With all the earth, in all our hearts.
We're on our way. This is the day.*

***Call to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Candle of Hope**

Rev. Sarah Darter

On this first Sunday of Advent, we journey on our way to the renewal of our world.

Too often, we let fear or complacency prevent us from calling out the injustices of our time.

We light our Advent Candle of Hope to be our companion in our places of longing for God's loving justice to be realized.

May God illuminate our way to a "census of hope" to give us courage for action, even in the midst of our longing. Come, let us worship God.

Reading of the Hebrew Scriptures

Jeremiah 33:14-16 Rev. Sarah Darter

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.

Reading of the Christian Scriptures Luke 3:1-6

Rev. Ginny

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make God's paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

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

***Advent Carol**

Christ Our Health

Please See Insert

A Moment of Recognition and Silence on this World AIDS Day Rev. Ginny

Prayer for God's Beloved Community Rev. Ginny

Anthem We Wait Ruth Elaine Schram

Reflecting in Community Longing for the Path of Hope and Healing
Rev. Ginny

Communion

An Invitation to Everyone

The Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup

A Prayer of Nourishing Love

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 Coventry Carol Arr. J. Southbridge

***Doxology** Tune, Away in a Manger

*Praise God for these gifts that we offer today
And bless them for good in the world this we pray.
Praise Jesus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,
The Spirit, our Keeper, our guide on the way.*

***Prayer of Dedication** Rev. Sarah Darter

God of Hope and Healing, we dedicate these offerings to your work of compassion and renewal as we begin this Advent season and honor World AIDS Day. Bless these gifts, that they may bring comfort, healing, and justice to all who need your love. May they shine as a beacon of hope in a world longing for your peace. Guide us to embody your love, preparing the way for Christ among us. Amen.

***Advent Carol** Hope of the World **NCH46

***Benediction**

Postlude Christians, Be Joyful from "Christmas Oratorio" J. S. Bach
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!

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!

Leading In Today's Service:

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

Victor Cardenas, Custodian

Rev. Sarah Darter, Worship Leader

Jonathan Geer, Piano

Amy Harris, Violin

Roberto Hernández, Usher and Deputy Deacon

Liz Lee, Cello

Laura Martin, Director of Music

Serge Martinez, Director of Online Ministries

** *When we refer to the New Century Hymnal, we use the acronym, NCH. Our Advent theme, Hymn of Celebration, and Doxology lyrics were created by Dr.*

Marcia McFee.

CCLI# is 11086713

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.