



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 December 24, 2024  
Christmas Eve Worship Service ~ Playing Dress-Up at the Manger!**

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

**Prelude**

**Let's Build the Christmas Nativity Together!**  
*Starting with Bethlehem*

**Welcoming Children of All Ages!**

Rev. Ginny

**\*Call to Worship**

Rev. Ginny, Xitali and Sebastian

On this Christmas Eve, we gather to journey once more to Bethlehem, a humble stable where the baby Jesus was born.

**We come like Xitali and Sebastian, excited to see the gifts God has in store for us in unexpected places— in the crowded inn, in the fields with shepherds, in the quiet corners of our hearts.**

Woohoo!

**We come like God's children everywhere, using our creativity to imagine the places and people who welcomed baby Jesus to be born.**

Woohoo!

**As we begin with the bare manger and add angels, shepherds, animals, parents, and a little baby Jesus, we will celebrate the ways God's love is born in us every day.**

Woohoo!

**So come, let us play dress-up, sing familiar carols, and celebrate God's love born within baby Jesus and all of God's children today! Woohoo!**

**Lighting the Advent Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love**

Lynn Chavarria

**\*Christmas Carol of Celebration**

*O Little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth,  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.*

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

O Little Town of Bethlehem and We're On Our Way

*O holy child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our fear and draw us near;  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel.*

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

## Mary and Joseph

### Telling the Christmas Story Together

Rev. Ginny

#### Reading of the Nativity Story Luke 2:1-5

Lynn Chavarria

*In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.*

#### Choral Anthem

#### Away in a Manger

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.*

## Angels and Stars

### Telling the Christmas Story Together

Rev. Ginny

#### Reading of the Nativity Story Luke 2:9-14

Lynn Chavarria

*Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"*

#### Christmas Carol

#### Go Tell It On the Mountain

*Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills, and ev'rywhere;  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born.*

*2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
When lo, above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus  
That hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]*

*1 While shepherds kept their watching  
O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold, throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light. [Refrain]*

*3 Down in a lowly manger  
The humble Christ was born,  
And God sent us salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]*

## Shepherds and Sheep

### Telling the Christmas Story Together

Rev. Ginny

#### Reading of the Nativity Story Luke 2:15-16a

Lynn Chavarria

*When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste.*

**Carol**

The First Noell

*The first Nowell the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
Born in a manger, Emmanuel.*

*They look-ed above and saw a star  
Shining in the east, beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
Born in a manger, Emmanuel.*

**A Christmas Prayer**

Rev. Ginny

*The Gift of the Innkeeper***Telling the Christmas Story Together**

Rev. Ginny

**Reading of the Nativity Story**

Luke 2:6-7

Lynn Chavarria

*While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*

**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.*

**Choral Anthem**

Walk in the Light

**\* 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**

Lynn Chavarria

Loving God, on this night of wonder, we dedicate our gifts to you, trusting they will bring light and love just as the innkeeper's generous offering made space for Christ. Bless all that we give, that it may share your hope and joy with the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

*The Birth of Baby Jesus***Telling the Christmas Story Together**

Rev. Ginny

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

Rev. Ginny

**\*Carol**

Joy to the World!

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
Let earth its praises bring;  
Let every heart prepare Christ room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and heaven and nature sing.*

*Christ rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of God's righteousness  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders, wonders of God's love.*

**\*Postlude**

*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*

*Lynn Chavarria, Worship Leader*

*Jonathan Geer, Piano*

*Roberto Hernández, Usher and Deputy Deacon*

*Laura Martin, Director of Music*

*Serge Martinez, Director of Online Ministries*

*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.*

*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.*