



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 12/8/2024

Second Sunday of Advent
On our Way to Bethlehem:
Jerusalem ~ A Place of Waiting

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

Words for Centering

Mark Nepo

Beneath what I try to see is all I need.

Ringing of the Bells

Prelude

Improvisation on "Mary, Woman of the Promise"

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 peace 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 Peace** Michael Ross

On this second 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 Peace to be our companion in our places of waiting for God's loving justice to be realized.

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

Reading of the Hebrew Scriptures Malachi 3:1-4 Michael Ross

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Reading of the Christian Scriptures Luke 1:5-17 Rev. Ginny

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him.

But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'

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

***Advent Carol** Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart **NCH290

Prayers for God's Beloved Community Rev. Ginny

Anthem

A Waiting Prayer

Dengler

Reflecting in Community Waiting for Church to Catch Up with God

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

Andante Pastorale

J.S. Bach

***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**

Michael Ross

God of the journey, we dedicate these gifts as signs of our trust in your faithful presence. In this season of waiting, may they be used to bring peace, healing, and hope to a world longing for your love. Bless them to prepare the way for your coming, as we open our hearts to your promise. With every step, may we walk closer to your light. Amen.

***Advent Carol**

Comfort, Comfort O My People

NCH101

***Benediction**

Rev. Ginny

Postlude

Pastoral Symphony from The Messiah

G. F. Händel

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.

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
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
Michael Ross, Worship Leader

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