



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 1/26/2025

3rd Sunday After Epiphany ~ Health and Human Service Sunday

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

Words for Centering

Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Mujerista Theologian

As the years have gone by, I have accepted that for me to strive to live to the fullest by struggling against injustice is to draw nearer and nearer to the divine.

Ringling of the Bells

Prelude

Improvisation on "Community of Christ"

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel

If you are visiting for the first time, we are so glad you have joined us!

***Hymn of Celebration**

Morningstar

verses 3 & 4

***Call to Worship**

Charlie Bernacchio

On this Health and Human Service Sunday in the United Church of Christ, what is our prayer as the Body of Christ?

O God of All Bodies, of those made of flesh and those made of stars, of those with fins, fur, or feathers, and those of minerals and weather. We come as part of you, present and ready.

As the inhale rises and the exhale releases, we come as one full breath with some of us coming up for air for the first time this week, this month, this year.

Some of us laying down a weight, a moment, a grief, a fear, trusting that you will gather us all in the essence of your being.

Just as the universe expands and contracts, we gather here with all our comings and goings, to worship the One of Cosmic Circulation and Spirals,

May you leave Your mark in galaxies, in fingerprints, in a snail shell sitting on a billion-year-old rock and in us this morning. Come let us worship God. Amen.

Reading of the Hebrew Scriptures Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Rev. Ginny

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Reading of the Christian Scriptures 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27-31

Charlie Bernacchio

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts.

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

***Hymn of Reflection**

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

**NCH4

Prayers for God's Beloved Community Rev. Ginny

Anthem Here in This Place Haugen

Reflecting in Community The State of the Church! Rev. Ginny

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 Cavatina J. Raff

***Doxology** Tune, All Creatures of Our God & King
*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** Charlie Bernacchio

We offer up to you these gifts of time, energy, resources, skills, and connections. We lovingly place the power of showing up before you and trust that you will multiply it into a profound sense of your presence moving within, around, and beyond us. Guide us in right-relationship with these offerings that we may use them for a just world for all. Amen.

***Sending Song** Renew Your Church NCH311

***Benediction** Rev. Ginny

Postlude Tango M. Elman

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:

Charlie Bernacchio, Worship Leader
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

The Call to Worship and Prayer of Dedication were written by the Council of Health and Human Services of the UCC for Health and Human Services Sunday.

*** 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.