

March 16, 2025

10:00am

Second Sunday of Lent

United Christian Church of Austin

– GATHERING –

PRELUDE

Julie Stiles, Accompanist

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Janet Maykus, Pastor

(See pages 11-12 for printed announcements.)

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Walt Case, Liturgist

One: Children of God, when you are surrounded on every side by shadows that frighten and voices that deride and confuse, what do you say?

All: **God is our light and our salvation! Whom shall we fear?**

One: When threats bombard you from every corner, stealing the security and peace you long for, what do you say?

All: **God is the stronghold of our lives! Of whom shall we be afraid?**

One: When anxiety and loneliness overwhelm you and you do not know who or what to trust any more, what do you say?

All: **Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!**

One: Because God knows our suffering. God makes a home among us, welcoming us to come home to God and one another.

All: **Come! Let us worship God who hides us in the day of trouble and conceals us together under the tent of Love.**

***OPENING HYMN**

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

Chalice Hymnal #67, vv. 1, 2, 3, 6

**1 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home!**

**2 Under the shadow of thy throne
still may we dwell secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defense is sure.**

**3 Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received its frame,
from everlasting thou art God,
to endless years the same.**

**6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while life shall last,
and our eternal home.**

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt. Music: ST. ANNE, attr. William Croft, 1708;
descant Donald P. Hustad, 1989. (desc. © 1990 Hope Publishing Co.). © 1995 *Chalice Hymnal*

**Asterisk signifies the people are invited to rise in body or Spirit.*

Bolded text indicates spoken or sung by the congregation.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Walt Case, *Liturgist*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have elevated the things of this world above you. We have made idols of possessions and people and used your name for causes that are not consistent with you and your purposes. We have not always honored those who guided us in life. We have participated in systems that take life instead of give it. We have been unfaithful in our covenant relationships. We have yearned for, and sometimes taken, that which is not ours, and we have misrepresented others' intentions.

Forgive us, O God, for the many ways we fall short of your glory.

Help us to learn to live together according to your ways through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

The people are invited to share a sign of God's peace with one another, such as a greeting, handshake, etc.

One: Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

– THE WORD –

OUTREACH COLLECTION “Jesus’ Hands Were Kind Hands”

Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands



Je - sus' hands were kind hands, do - ing good to all,
Take my hands, Lord Je - sus, let them work for you;
Work-ing for your kin - dom's all I want to do;



heal - ing pain and sick - ness, bles - sing chil - dren small,
make them strong and gen - tle, kind in all I do;
heav'n on earth we strive for, on ac - count of you.



wa - shing tired feet, and lift - ing those who fall;
let me watch you, Je - sus, till I'm gen - tle too,
follow-ing your ex - am - ple, may we hon - or you.



Je - sus' hands were kind hands, do - ing good to all.
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.
Let our hands be kind hands, lov - ing work to do.

Words: vv. 1-2, Margaret Cropper © 1979, Stainer & Bell, Ltd. (Admin Hope Publishing Company),
v3, J. Stiles © 2023

Music: Au Clair De Lune, Traditional French Melody

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TIME FOR CHILDREN

Emily Jamison Guerrero
Director of Children's Ministries

CHILDREN'S SENDING SONG

“May the Blessing of God”
Chalice Hymnal #448

**May the blessing of God go before you.
May her grace and peace abound.
May her Spirit live within you.
May her love wrap you 'round.
May her blessing remain with you always.
May you walk on holy ground.**

Words and Music, Miriam Therese Winter, 1987 © 1987 Medical Mission Sisters. © 1995 *Chalice Hymnal*

SCRIPTURE READING

John 3:1-17

Walt Case, *Liturgist*

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

One: May we be granted wisdom and courage for interpretation.

All: Amen.

SERMON

“Divine Empathy”

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

HYMN OF RESPONSE

“Who Would Ever Have Believed It?”

Chalice Hymnal #213

**1 Who would ever have believed it?
Who could ever have conceived it?
Who dared trace God’s hand behind it
When a servant came among us?**

**2 We despised him, we disowned him,
Though he clearly hurt and suffered:
We, believing he was worthless,
Never looked on him with favor.**

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3 Though our sins let him be wounded,
Though our cruelty left him beaten,
Yet, through how and why he suffered,
God revealed our hope of healing.

4 We, like sheep, despite our wisdom,
All had wandered from God's purpose;
And our due in pain and anger
God let fall on one among us.

5 Who would ever have believed it?
Who could ever have conceived it?
Who dared trace God's hand behind it
When a servant came among us?

Words: Iona Community, 1988. John Bell, © 1988 Iona Community; used by permission of GIA Publications, Inc.
Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish melody. © 1995, *Chalice Hymnal*

– PRAYER TIME –

PASTORAL PRAYER

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

As petitions conclude, each will end with:

One: O God,

All: hear our prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father/Creator who is in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom/kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom/kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

– OFFERTORY –

INVITATION TO GIVING

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

OFFERTORY

*We invite you to partner with us in mission and ministries.
Offering plates will be passed around the Sanctuary at this time.*

*Alternatively, you may give online at uccaustin.org/give
or scan the QR codes in the pew to be connected to giving websites.*

*It is through your generosity that this exceptional community
of friendship, faith, and service is possible.*

*DOXOLOGY “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674, alt.; Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1551. © 1995 Chalice Hymnal

– COMMUNION –

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

TABLE BLESSING

Diane Baker, *Deacon*

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CALL TO THE TABLE

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

All are now invited to come forward down the center aisle for communion.

You may open your hands for a piece of bread from the common loaf.

The deacons hold split chalices that have both RED wine and WHITE grape juice in them. Please use what is right for you.

Alternatively, single-serve communion kits with gluten-free wafers and juice are available in the tray that I will be holding, if that works best for you.

Please return to your seats by the side aisles.

A deacon will come around to serve any who remain seated.

You may also use the time to light a candle of prayer.

Come now, for the table is ready.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

– WE GO OUT TO SERVE –

*SENDING HYMN

“How Long, O God, How Long?”

Chalice Hymnal #642

**1 How long, O God, how long? The ancient cry is ours.
We wait in grief and ask how long before we feel your powers.**

**2 And why, O God, and why? We ask with every age
And throw against your distant sky the force of grief and rage.**

**3 The cross, O God, the cross! We think about your Son:
You know the weight and edge of loss, your tears and ours are one.**

**4. Your hand, O God, your hand! We need your hand to hold,
To walk this dark uncharted land where solid meanings fold.**

**5 We trust, O God, we trust in time our grief shall mend.
Transformed by love that shaped our dust, your love that knows no end.**

Words: Thomas H. Troeger, 1991, © 1991 Oxford University Press.
Music: TAFT STREET, Brent Stratten, 1993, © 1995 Chalice Press. © 1995 *Chalice Hymnal*

***BENEDICTION/SENDING**

Janet Maykus, *Pastor*

One: As our Sunday worship ends,

All: Let our service begin!

POSTLUDE

Julie Stiles, *Accompanist*

Welcoming a New Member

Chalice Hymnal #341

**Reaffirming our own faith in Jesus the Christ,
we gladly welcome you into this community of faith,
enfolding you with our love
and committing ourselves to your care.**

**In the power of God's Spirit,
let us mutually encourage each other to trust God
and strengthen one another to serve others,
that Christ's church may in all things stand faithful.**

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– ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Sunday, March 16

- **10am:** Hybrid Worship Service
- **11:15am:** Adult Discussion Class
- **5:30pm:** Sunday Evening Small Group at the church building

Tuesday, March 18

- **8am:** Breakfast Fellowship at Jim's on 183
- **1pm:** Tuesday Book Group (*Zoom link in Friday newsletter*)

Wednesday, March 19

- **6:30pm:** Lenten Discussion Group
- **7pm:** UCC Chancel Choir Practice

Thursday, March 20

- **6:30pm:** Handbell Choir

Saturday, March 22

- **8am-2pm:** UCC Property Work Day (*food and music provided!*)

Sunday, March 23

- **10am:** Hybrid Worship Service

Tuesday, March 25

- **8am:** Breakfast Fellowship
- **1pm:** Tuesday Book Group (*Zoom link in Friday newsletter*)
- **6:30pm:** Tuesday Evening Small Group at the Myricks' home
- **7pm:** Full Council Meeting in person at the church building

– ANNOUNCEMENTS *(continued)* –

Wednesday, March 26

- **9:30am:** Wednesday Morning Small Group at the Bakers' home
- **6:30pm:** Lenten Discussion Group
- **6:30pm:** Wednesday Evening Book Group (*Zoom link in Friday newsletter*)
- **7pm:** UCC Chancel Choir Practice

Thursday, March 27

- **6:30pm:** Handbell Choir

Friday, March 28

- **7-9pm:** Friday Game Night at the church building

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