

March 30, 2025

10:00 am

Fourth Sunday of Lent

United Christian Church of Austin

– GATHERING –

PRELUDE

Mitch Stevens, Accompanist

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(See pages 11-12 for printed announcements.)

Carl Schwartz-King, Pastor

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Chris McCubbin, Liturgist

One: Happy are those who are honest with God.

All: Happy are those whose sin is forgiven.

One: Therefore, let all who are faithful offer prayer to the Lord in times of distress.

All: For God is our refuge and protects us in times of trouble.

One: Be glad in the Lord and rejoice!

All: Let us shout for joy! Let us worship God!

*OPENING HYMN

“How Great Thou Art”

Chalice Hymnal #33

**1 O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed.**

Refrain:

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee;
how great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee;
how great thou art, how great thou art!**

**2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *[Refrain]***

**3 And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin; *[Refrain]***

**4 When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art! *[Refrain]***

Words and Music: O STORE GUD, Stuart K. Hine, 1953, based on a Swedish folk melody and a poem by Carl Gustav Boberg, 1885. © 1954, renewed 1981 Manna Music Inc.. © 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

Chris McCubbin, *Liturgist*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: 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

Carl Schwartz-King, *Pastor*

PASSING OF THE PEACE

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



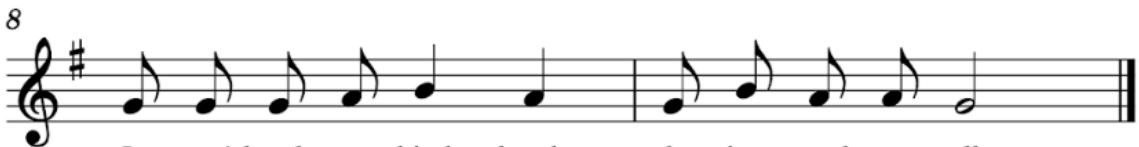
Je - sus' hands were kind hands, do - ing good to all,
Take my hands, Lord Je - sus, let them work for you;
Work-ing for your kin - dom's all I want to do;



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

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
Chris McCubbin, *Liturgist*

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.' So he divided his assets between them.

A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything.

But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father.

But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him.

Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe — the best one — and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.'

Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!'

Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

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

All: **Amen.**

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SERMON

“Always-Open Arms”

Carl Schwartz-King, *Pastor*

HYMN OF RESPONSE

“Softly and Tenderly”

Chalice Hymnal #340

**1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
calling for you and for me;
patient and loving, he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.**

[Refrain:]

**Come home, (Come home,) come home, (come home,
ye who are weary, come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, "O sinner, come home!"**

**2 Why should we linger when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we wait, then, and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me? [Refrain]**

**3 O for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me;
tho' we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me. [Refrain]**

Words: Will L. Thompson, 1880. Music: THOMPSON; Will L. Thompson, 1880. ©1995 *Chalice Hymnal*

– PRAYER TIME –

PASTORAL PRAYER

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

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 webpages.

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

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***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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

TABLE BLESSING

Lisa Deane, *Deacon*

CALL TO THE TABLE

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**

– WE GO OUT TO SERVE –

*SENDING HYMN

“My Song Is Love Unknown”

The New Century Hymnal #222, vv. 1, 2, 5

1 My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be.

O who am I, that for my sake
my God should take frail flesh and die?
My God should take frail flesh and die?

2 God left the richest throne salvation to bestow;
But Christ as flesh and bone the world refused to know.
But, O my Friend, my Friend indeed,
who at my need did life expend;
who at my need did life expend.

5 I sing my plain belief, one song my heart out-pours:
Never was pain nor grief, never was love like yours.
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise
I all my days could gladly spend;
I all my days could gladly spend.

Words: Samuel Crossman (1664, alt.) Music: RHOSYMEDRE, John D. Edwards (c. 1840). © 1995 *The New Century Hymnal*

*BENEDICTION/SENDING

Carl Schwartz-King, *Pastor*

One: As our Sunday worship ends,

All: Let our service begin!

POSTLUDE

Mitch Stevens, *Accompanist*

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Welcoming a New Member *(optional)*

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.

– ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Sunday, March 30

- 10am: Hybrid Worship Service
- 11:30am-1:30pm: Godly Play Workshop and Lunch
- After worship: Young-ish Adults Brown Bag at the Goudeaus' home
- 4pm: Confirmation Class
- 5:30pm: Youth Group
- 5:30pm: Sunday Evening Small Group at the church building

Monday, March 31

- 6:30pm: UCC Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday, April 1

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

— ANNOUNCEMENTS *(continued)* —

Wednesday, April 2

- **9:30am:** Wednesday Morning Small Group at the Bakers' home
- **6:30pm:** Lenten Discussion Group

Thursday, April 3

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

Sunday, April 6

- **10am:** Hybrid Worship Service
- **11:15am:** Adult Discussion Class
- **4pm:** Confirmation Class
- **5:30pm:** Youth Group

Monday, April 7

- **6:30pm:** UCC Chancel Choir Practice
- **7pm:** Caring Elders Team Meeting

Tuesday, April 8

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

Wednesday, April 9

- **6:30pm:** Last meeting of the Lenten Discussion Group

Thursday, April 10

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

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