



# THORNS

Finding God in Pain

January 28, 2018

University Church of Christ exists by the grace of God to be a loving fellowship praising God by living and telling the good news of Jesus.

## WORSHIP

**Welcome/Family News** Bradley Steele

**121** *Come, Let Us All Unite to Sing*

**488** *Into the Heart of Jesus*

**Thorns** Brent Isbell

**266** *Majesty*

**116** *God Will Make a Way/Sendas Dios hará*

**314** *Confio yo en Cristo/  
Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

**Communion/Comunión** Nathan Gibbs

**John 17:17-24**

**Bread/El Pan**

**62** *Enaltecido Tú eres/I Exalt Thee*

**Cup/La Copa**

**64** *I Worship You, Almighty God/  
Te adoro, poderoso Dios*

**Offering/Ofrenda**

**Call to Ministry/Llamamiento al Ministerio**

Vini Montesdeoca, Mark Hamilton

*We Are One in the Spirit/  
Somos uno en el Padre*

**Benediction/Bendición: 1 Thess. 5:16-24**

**Worship Leader** Steve Austin

*If you would like to have someone pray with you, or for you, please make your way to Room 101 at the end of service where there are UCC members waiting just for you.*

*Our Sunday morning service is broadcast live at [www.uccabilene.org](http://www.uccabilene.org).*

## REFLECTIONS

**Brent Isbell**, Preaching Minister  
[brent@uccabilene.org](mailto:brent@uccabilene.org)

**Welcome!** If you are visiting University Church today, thank you for joining us. Please fill out one of our **Connections Cards** (found in the seats). Use these to share information, request prayers, or let us know you want to be a UCC member. Drop your card in the offering plate or go online to [uccabilene.org/card](http://uccabilene.org/card). Please come back again soon!

Today we begin an extended sermon series called **Thorns: Finding God in Pain and Suffering**. We will start in 2 Cor. 12:7-10, where Paul tells us about his "thorn in the flesh." Do you have any thorns? I would almost bet you do. To be human is to have thorns. Pain and trouble are pretty universal. In coming weeks, we will talk about what it means to live as a person of faith in the face of pain and suffering. I hope this series will be helpful to some of us. Our worship leader today is **Steve Austin**.

**Welcome, Vini!** In the last part of our service today, our bilingual brothers and sisters will come in and share Communion with us. Together we will welcome and bless our new bilingual minister, **Vinico (Vini) Montesdeoca**. Vini and wife, **Rachel**, and their children—**Lucas** and **Karen**—come to us from Leander, Texas. Vini will be working as a full staff member with all parts of our UCC family. We are all very excited about bringing the Montesdeoca family on board at UCC!

**Adult Education Minute:** Today **all 9 a.m. adult classes** will combine in the Auditorium, where **James Thompson** is introducing our spring curriculum series overviewing the **New Testament**. Next Sunday, Feb. 4, all our classes will resume as usual in assigned rooms with their own teachers. Thank you for being so accommodating these past three weeks with our altered scheduling.

**Wednesday night.** This week, on **Wednesday, Jan. 31**, everyone from children up through adults will be in the MAC for a **CONNECT** inter-generational activity night. These are always great! We will have some fun and games, do some singing, and learn a little about each other. Big thanks to our coordinators, **Andrew Huddleston** and **Laura Ice**! On Wed., Feb. 7, new classes will begin in both the Family Room and Conversations.

## ELDER SELECTION PROCESS

Current UCC members have the chance to nominate men whom they believe would serve effectively as elders. Deadline for nominations is **February 7**. There is a box in the Welcome Center to insert your ballot.

The process committee will tally the ballots and give the list of men to the elders by **February 11**. The elders will discuss the list and talk to potential candidates. On **February 25**, the candidates who have accepted being considered will be presented to the church. The church will have that week to notify the elders of any possible scriptural objection. On **March 4**, the new elders will be added during the morning worship service.

### CLASS TIMES:

Sunday - 9 a.m.  
Wednesday - 7 p.m.

### WORSHIP TIMES:

Sunday - 10 a.m., 5 p.m.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

733 E. N. 16th Street  
Abilene, TX 79601

**PHONE:** (325) 673-6497  
[www.uccabilene.org](http://www.uccabilene.org)

### NURSERY FACILITIES

For your convenience, nursery facilities are available during worship in the Early Childhood Center.

### ATTENDANCE:

Worship - **302**  
Bilingual - **72**  
Coronado - **53**

### January 21, 2018

Northern Oaks - **30**  
Chisholm Place - **N/A**  
Silver Springs - **N/A**

### OFFERING:

**January 21 \$10,386.02**

## FROM THE ELDERS

- by *Gustavo Villanueva, 2018 elder chair*

The UCC elders held their monthly meeting with ministry staff on January 21, 2018. Numerous items were discussed and prayed over, among them:

- Prayed, by name, for those who are in the hospital/skilled nursing, for those battling cancer and dementia, for the families of **Mary Anderson, Dewby Ray** and **Jo Watson** who passed from this life to their heavenly reward recently; rejoiced with **Lytic** and **Ben Bailey** on the birth of **James Crockett Bailey**; prayed for **David/Jenna Sprott** who are expecting their next little one in the next few weeks, for **Vini** and **Rachel Montesdeoca** (and **Luke** and **Karen!**) as they begin their ministry with our bilingual brothers and sisters, for the elder selection process, and for many others;
- Grateful for those who participated in the construction of the neighborhood playground the previous weekend and for the ladies in the bilingual ministry who prepared wonderful lunches for the workers on Saturday and Sunday. Especially grateful for the leader of the construction project, **Blake Williams**, and for the help by UCC staff members: **Joey Roberts, Barry Young** and **Jason Craddock**. A few items still need to be addressed, but we hope the playground will be dedicated in the next few weeks;
- Grateful for **Lance Tolar** and **Brandon Lemley**, and others, who have made needed audio/visual upgrades in the chapel;
- Accepted the 2018 budget from the Finance Committee as presented to us by **Jill Bailey**. The budget calls for weekly giving of approximately \$14,900. Jill informed us that in 2017 our expenses exceeded our income by \$7,235, which we feel would have been made up if we had been able to have service on December 31. The elders and Finance Committee are exceedingly thankful for your generosity in helping us erase a large deficit coming into December;
- Accepted a report from an ad hoc committee asked to look at Sunday morning worship. Our worship is central to the building up of our UCC faith community and thus important to continually emphasize and assess. Thanks to committee members: **Cheryl Bacon, Jason Craddock, Mark Hamilton, Jennifer Huddleston, Jeanette Lipford, Judy Siburt, Kris Southward** and **Bradley Steele**;
- Continued discussion on the **5 p.m. chapel service** and how we can encourage and emphasize this important meeting time;
- Agreed to help sponsor a fund-raising concert at the N. 10th and Treadaway Church of Christ to benefit **Heritage Christian College** in Ghana;
- Agreed to be a host church of the **2019 International Women's Conference** that is expected to bring in 600+ women from many different countries;
- Discussed those from our eldership and ministry staff who can attend the **ElderLink** workshop in March;
- Set next meeting date for **February 11**.

As always, the UCC elders are grateful for each of you and covet your continued prayers, just as we remember you in our prayers. If you have any questions, comments or concerns about what was discussed in this elders' meeting, or on any other UCC/spiritual matter, please contact me...we would appreciate the opportunity to visit with you.

*\*A list of UCC elders can be found on page four*

## NEWS AND NOTES

**The Jo Watson Family:** "Thank you so much for the many acts of kindness as we dealt with the passing of Jo Watson. The luncheon for the family before the service was wonderful and very much appreciated! The nice plant in memory of mom will long remind us of her and our church family."

**Michael and Andie Wearden:** "From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for all the prayers, calls, messages and encouragement while our sweet baby Tula was in the hospital. We are blessed to be a part of this congregation that shows so much of God's love."

**Sandra Shirey:** "To the Conversations Class, Thanks again for allowing me to speak on behalf of CASA during your Wednesday evening class. I enjoyed speaking with many of you individually and pray that some of you will join us as we advocate for children in Taylor County. I appreciate, too, the contribution, which has been given to Big Country CASA on your behalf."

Remember the **UCC Community Playground** is not finished and will not be completed for a few more weeks. Because of the continued construction, parents, please make sure your children stay off of the structure until we are completely done with the project. When the time comes, we will have a dedication ceremony as well as a grand opening.

## UCC FAMILY LIBRARY

Check out **Abilene Stories - From Then to Now** to learn more than 100 stories that will allow you to become better acquainted with our home town through the events and people which helped to shape Abilene. The book was edited by Glenn Dromgoole, Jay Moore and Joe W. Specht.

Also, check out the book **Abilene: History in Plain Sight** by Moore for a guide to the people, places and events that define Abilene.

Another book teaching about the things Abilene has to offer is **Abilene A to Z** by Dromgoole and Moore.

Check out these books and more at the UCC Family Library.

## TRANSITIONS

**Joey Roberts**, Communications Minister  
[joey@uccabilene.org](mailto:joey@uccabilene.org)

**Tonight:** The teal group will meet at the Gibbs' (901 Washington Blvd.) and the purple group will be at the Barcrofts' (758 Alison's Way).

**Small Groups:** We will be changing the groups at the end of January, so be on the lookout for the new groups this week. We need hosts this month, so sign up on the link via Facebook.

Check out **Facebook** for more activities and info.

## YOUTH MINISTRY

**Jason Craddock**, Youth Minister  
[jason.craddock@uccabilene.org](mailto:jason.craddock@uccabilene.org)  
[facebook.com/groups/uymteens](https://facebook.com/groups/uymteens)

**MAC Attack Tonight:** Today from 5-7:30 p.m., we will meet in the MAC. While we should be eating McDonald's in the MAC with Mac Ice leading a REEL Faith on *MacGyver* being played off of his MacBook, we will focus on volleyball, basketball and a Nerf war instead. We will be eating hot dogs and mac-n-cheese, so bring \$3 to help cover the cost of food. Invite a friend and join us for some fun and food!

**Groundhog Day REEL Faith:** We will have a special Groundhog Day REEL Faith on Friday, Feb. 2 from 7-9:30 p.m. in the Youth Center, where we will be watching the classic movie *Citizen Kane*. Just kidding, we will be watching *Groundhog Day* (PG and edited for content). I want to pack our theater and give everybody something to do on a Friday night, so make plans early, invite your friends and join us. We will not have dinner, but we will have popcorn, candy and drinks.

**Super Bowl Party - Feb. 4:** Our annual Super Bowl party will be next Sunday, Feb. 4 from 5-9 p.m. (or as soon as the game ends) for some food, games and football. As always, we will have the football game in the theater and games in the other rooms with the game playing in the background. We will have lots of pizza and snacks so invite a friend(s) to join us. We will also give out prizes during halftime for the best snacks so plan to bring something awesome. Please let Jason know what you plan to bring so that we can buy the right amount of extra food.

**Camp Blue Haven Registration:** Registration for *returning* CBH campers has moved up a couple of weeks this year, with registration needing to be completed by **January 31** to claim your spot. So make sure to go online and register as soon as you can.

**Huddles Continue Wednesday:** Our small-group Huddles will continue Wednesday from 7-8 p.m. The **HS Huddle** will meet at the **Scudder** home (658 E N 22nd St.). The **MS Huddle** will meet in the **Youth Center**.

**Sign up for a CRADtalk:** CRADtalks are our "conversations worth having" with Jason and/or Karla Craddock.

**Activity Schedules:** If you or your kids have any activities (school or otherwise) coming up, please let Jason know so we can plan to make it out and support them.

## NEWS

**Ladies Bible Class** continues in the Family Room on Wednesdays at 10 a.m.

**Ministry of MOMs** will have its annual couples dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 6 at the Christian Service Center (3185 N. 10th Street). Tours of the facility will take place from 6-6:25 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Please RSVP if you need childcare (which you can drop off at the ECC beginning at 5:50 p.m.). The speakers are **Jim Clark** (CSC Director) and **Roberta Brown** (CSC Volunteer Coordinator).

**Common Life Two** will have a luncheon on Sunday, Feb. 11 in the Family Room after worship. The meat (pork loin) will be provided, but we are asking people to bring food by your last name: A-G (dessert), H-O (salad) and P-Z (vegetable).

**Wednesday Night Supper** continues this week at 5:45 p.m. The meal is free, but if you can donate \$5 per adult plate, that would be helpful to cover the cost of the ministry.

If you are interested in going on a **short-term mission trip** this year, you need to fill out the form located at <https://tinyurl.com/UCC2018interest>. This does not commit you going on a trip nor guarantee a spot, but it will allow trip leaders to know who may be interested in participating.

Need a place to volunteer? See **Jim Holmans** (safety team), **Bradley Steele** (Impressions) or **Joey Roberts** (media).

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Jennifer Welch, Children's Minister  
jenniferw@uccabilene.org

### Children's Church:

Jan. 28: No Children's Church

Feb. 4: M and J Groves, M. Trammell

**Wednesday Night:** Kindergarten and older will join their families in the MAC for **Connect**. The four and five year old Bible class will meet in the Big Room in the ECC and preschool classes will be in their normal locations.

**Free Babysitting:** On Friday, Feb. 9, the children's ministry will host a free night of babysitting from 6-8:30 p.m. Supper will be provided, but if your child does not like pizza or has a food allergy to pizza, please plan to bring their supper. You will need to RSVP by email to jenniferw@uccabilene.org by Monday, Feb. 5 at noon.

**VBS Save the Date:** Vacation Bible School will be June 4-6. I am excited to share that all of UCC will be involved this year in VBS. The ages for VBS will be four years old through fifth grade. Babysitting will be provided for UCC kids whose parents are helping with VBS.

## CAMPUS MINISTRY

Andrea Archer, Pablo Sanabria, Michael Kennedy  
campus@uccabilene.org

**Welcome:** We would like to welcome any college students with us today.

**Class:** Our Sunday morning class will meet in the MAC 503 at 9 a.m. Our Wednesday night class meets at 7 p.m. in MAC 503.

**Dwelling Place,** a time of fellowship, discussion and worship, meets Sundays at 6 p.m. (MAC 503).

## GATHERINGS

Bradley Steele, Young Adults Minister  
bradley@uccabilene.org

**Tonight** we will meet at the **Browns'** house (1450 Yeoman's, Apt. 1101) at 5 p.m. for small group. Hope to see you there!

**Wednesday** we will meet at 7 p.m. for coffee, dessert and Bible study in MAC 504.

Don't forget to join us for class on **Sunday mornings** at 9 a.m. in MAC 504

**Facebook Page:** Make sure to check our Facebook group for more information.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR - January 28-February 7

<b>JAN. 28</b>	8:30 a.m. - Coffee, Juice and Donuts, Welcome Center 9 a.m. - Bible Classes (combined adult class in the auditorium) 10 a.m. - Worship, Brent Isbell - speaker, Steve Austin - worship leader 5 p.m. Chapel Service - James Thompson - speaker, Eric Lemons - song leader 8 p.m. - Sanctuary Worship Service, Chapel
<b>JAN. 31</b>	10 a.m. - Ladies' Bible Class, Family Room 5:45 p.m. -Wednesday Night Supper, MAC (pizza) 7 p.m. - Bible Classes
<b>FEB. 4</b>	8:30 a.m. - Coffee, Juice and Donuts, MAC 9 a.m. - Bible Classes 10 a.m. - Worship, Brent Isbell - speaker, Eric Lemmons - worship leader 5 p.m. Chapel Service - Steve Austin - speaker 8 p.m. - Sanctuary Worship Service, Chapel
<b>FEB. 6</b>	6 p.m. - Ministry of MOMs Couples Dinner, Christian Service Center
<b>FEB. 7</b>	<b>DEADLINE FOR ELDER SELECTION BALLOTS</b> 10 a.m. - Ladies' Bible Class, Family Room 5:45 p.m. -Wednesday Night Supper, MAC (Mexican food) 7 p.m. - Bible Classes

## PRAYER LIST

### UCC ELDERS

Steve Austin  
Richard Cox  
Mark Hamilton  
Eddie Mahanay  
Paul Rotenberry  
Kris Southward, chair  
Mark Tate  
James Thompson  
Gustavo Villanueva

Submit your bulletin items to Joey Roberts before noon on Wednesday.