If you're new to UCC, or to Churches of Christ, welcome! We want you to feel at home here during worship.

Worship Practices

Why do we sing a cappella? Churches of Christ have a rich tradition of singing without musical instruments. This enables us to focus on the words of the songs and enjoy the harmony of our voices. Some sing various musical parts (as projected on the side screens). If this seems confusing, just follow along with the song leader (words projected in the middle).

Why do we stand when reading scripture? We do this as a sign of respect to distinguish the Word of God from any other words that are spoken during worship. For the Lord's Supper reading, we sit to signify sitting at the table with Jesus.

What is the Lord's Supper, and who takes it? The Lord's Supper (communion) originated when Jesus ate with his disciples before his crucifixion. During that meal, Jesus took bread and broke it for his disciples to eat. He also took cup of wine and shared it with them. Jesus said to them, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." When the communion trays are passed, you will have the opportunity to eat the bread and drink the wine (grape juice), just as Jesus and his disciples did. We welcome all who wish to remember and celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to participate.

Do I need to give during the offering? The offering is collected from UCC members to support the ministry of the church. Some give when the plates are passed. Many others give online. Anyone is welcome to give, but visitors should feel no obligation to do so.

Guest Information

What is Children's Church? Listening to a sermon can be difficult for young children. Most weeks, we have an optional Children's Church service for children ages 3 through 2nd grade. An announcement will be made when it is time for Jennifer Welch, our Children's Minister, to lead the children to the place they gather for worship. She will return them to the Sanctuary before the end of service.

What if my child is crying or needs to move around? We love the sound of babies! If your baby or toddler becomes restless, we have a toddler's area in the back of the Sanctuary to allow children to move around. A moms-only sitting room in the rear foyer provides a comfortable space for nursing or feeding your baby. A staffed nursery is also available in the Early Childhood Center.

Servicio Bilingüe en la Capilla – Si deseas adorar a Dios en español, te invitamos a unirte a nuestro servicio especial en la capilla at 10 a.m. Nuestro ministro bilingüe, Alejandro Ezquerra, dirige este tiempo de alabanza y enseñanza. ¡Todos son bienvenidos!

Next Steps

What are the Guest Connection Cards? These cards on the back of the pew in front of you provide a way for us to reach out to you and pray for you if you would find that helpful. Please complete the card and drop it in the collection plate when it is passed.

Who can I talk to if I have a spiritual, physical or emotional need? Our Lead Minister, Bradley Steele, would love to meet with you after service. Or feel free to call the church office if you'd rather come by at another time.

Campus Map
Scan this code for a map of our facilities.
uccabilene.org/map

Connection Card
Scan this code to fill out your connection card online.
uccabilene.org/card

WEEKLY focus

A GUIDE FOR WORSHIP & LIFE TOGETHER

Welcome to UCC!

We're so glad you've joined us for worship this morning. This guide is here to help you engage fully in today's service and to support your spiritual practices throughout the week. Inside, you'll find today's songs, Scripture readings, and the names of those participating in worship.

If you're a guest, the back page explains some of our worship practices—things that might be new or different to you. We hope these notes make you feel more at home as we worship and live life together here at UCC.

In the center pages, you'll discover family news, upcoming events, Bible classes, small group opportunities, and a list of our church family members who need prayer. You'll also find Scripture readings for the week to nurture your spirit, plus contact information for our ministers and shepherds.

We invite you to explore these pages, pray over the sick, rejoice with those celebrating milestones, lift up our ministers, shepherds and staff, and walk with us through the week's daily readings.

May this guide help you connect more deeply with God and with our church family.

Worship Slides
Scan this code with your phone camera for worship slides.

UCC UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Worship

Doxology

Welcome & Call to Worship
Jason Craddock and Lily Stout

Only a Holy God

Shepherd's Prayer
James Thompson

As the Deer Thirsts

Jeremiah 2:4-13
Aquilla Edward

Children's Church

My Worth Is Not in What I Own

Luke 14:1,7-14
Today's Message

Listen to Our Hearts
How Deep the Father's Love

Communion & Offering
Luke 24:28-32
Cole Bennett

O Sacred Head

Build Your Kingdom Here

Benediction

Worship Leader: Eric Lemmons

Today's Message

"Repayment"

Luke 14:1,7-14

Bradley Steele

August 31, 2025

Children's Ministry (Birth–5th Grade)

Parents, with the start of a new semester, please take a moment to thank your child's Bible class teachers for their time and dedication to teaching this semester. We appreciate your efforts in bringing your child to Bible class. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

Youth Ministry (6th–12th Grade)

Sunday Night Devotional: The youth group will not meet tonight for their Sunday night devotional.

Wednesday Night Supper: The youth group will be serving Wednesday Night Supper this week. If you're able to help, please come to the MAC at 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday.

Huddles continue this Wednesday from 7-8 p.m. in the Youth Center. Middle schoolers will be taught by Jacob & Marisol Groves. High schoolers will be taught by Michael & Whitney Santiago.

Campus Ministry (Students & Non-Students)

F·R·I·E·N·D·S in High Places Small Group: Join us Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. for a relaxed time of scripture, prayer and discussion.

Bilingual Ministry (Open to All)

Wednesday Night Book Study: Join us at 7 p.m. in Room 109 for a study over *Life Lessons* by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler.

News & Notes

Church Office Closure — The Church Office will be closed on Monday.

Ladies' Bible Class — All ladies are invited to Ladies Bible Class beginning this Wednesday at 10 a.m. in the Family Room. Gary McCaleb will the speaker and there will be a potluck to follow.

Wednesday Night Supper — Join us for Wednesday Night Supper at 5:45 p.m. in the MAC. This week we will serve pizza.

UCC Ministry Fair — Make plans to attend our Ministry Fair immediately following worship on Sunday, September 7. This is a great opportunity to get plugged in to one of our ministries!

Birthday Cards Needed —Joe Marshall is turning 100 on September 12. His family would love for UCC members to send him a card to help him celebrate. Their goal is to get 100 cards for Joe. You can mail your birthday card to: Joe Marshall, 1250 EN 10th #203, Abilene, TX 79601.

Shepherds

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Ted Presley
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James Thompson
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2025 Elder Chair

Chris Shupe
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Ministers

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Bilingual Minister
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Jennifer Welch
Children's Minister
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Michael Santiago
Youth Minister
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Jason Craddock
Campus Minister
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Online Giving

uccabilene.org/give

Nurseries Available

A nursing room is located in the foyer at the back of the Sanctuary. An attended nursery is available during worship in the Early Childhood Center for your convenience.

Wednesday Bible Class Offerings

All classes begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

- **Conversations** - MAC 501 – Six-week series with Myles Werntz: "God's Peace in a Violent World: War, Peace, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer." We'll explore Christian reflection on war and peace from the early church, consider how believers have reasoned about violence, and read Bonhoeffer's "Life Together" to understand the church's role in pursuing peace.
- **Wednesday Recharge** - MAC 502 – Currently watching Season 5 of "The Chosen" as a group. This is open to all.
- **Campus Ministry** - MAC 503 (starts at 6:30)
- **20s & 30s** - Main Building, Room 101
- **Bilingual Ministry** - Main Building, Room 109
- **Youth Ministry** - Main Building, Youth Center
- **3-18 Months** - Early Childhood Center, Room 302
- **18-24 Months** - Early Childhood Center, Room 305
- **Two-Four Year Olds** - Early Childhood Center, Room 309
- **Kindergarten-Fifth Grade** - Main Building, Room 231

Sacred Rhythms for Life

Spiritual disciplines are practices that deepen our relationship with God. Through prayer, Scripture, and worship, we create space to hear His voice and align our wills with His own. These habits are not empty rituals but means of grace that shape us into the image of Christ. By practicing them regularly, we nurture our faith, stay rooted in God's truth, and equip ourselves to live in faithful obedience and serve others with love.

Our Readings for this week from the *Revised Common Lectionary*

Monday, September 1
Semi-continuous: Psalm 58; Jeremiah 2:23-37; Hebrews 13:7-21
Complementary: Psalm 119:65-72; 2 Chronicles 12:1-12; Hebrews 13:7-21

Tuesday, September 2
Semi-continuous: Psalm 58; Jeremiah 3:1-14; Titus 1:1-9
Complementary: Psalm 119:65-72; Isaiah 2:12-17; Titus 1:1-9

Wednesday, September 3
Semi-continuous: Psalm 58; Jeremiah 3:15-25; Luke 14:15-24
Complementary: Psalm 119:65-72; Isaiah 57:14-21; Luke 14:15-24

Thursday, September 4
Semi-continuous: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; Jeremiah 15:10-21; Philippians 2:25-30
Complementary: Psalm 1; Genesis 39:1-23; Philippians 2:25-30

Friday, September 5
Semi-continuous: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; Jeremiah 16:14-17:4; Colossians 4:7-17
Complementary: Psalm 1; Deuteronomy 7:12-26; Colossians 4:7-17

Saturday, September 6
Semi-continuous: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; Jeremiah 17:14-27; Matthew 10:34-42
Complementary: Psalm 1; Deuteronomy 29:2-20; Matthew 10:34-42

Lift Up In Prayer

Don Baber
Shirley Baber
Johnny Estes
Troy Franklin
Phyllis Gilbreth
Lucy Hatch
Marshal Kellar
Eddie Mahanay
Imogene McAnulty
Tom Milholland

Prayer Prompts

Pray for renewed desire to choose what is life-giving over the empty things. Jer. 2:4-13

Pray for generosity and integrity to reflect God's justice. Ps. 112

Pray for calm trust in crises, rooted in God's steadfast love. Ps. 112

Pray for humility in relationships, giving up status for grace. Luke 14:1,7-14

Pray for a deeper awareness of God's presence and activity in daily life.

"God of power and justice, like Jeremiah you weep over those who wander from you, turn aside to other gods, and enter into chaos and destruction.

By your tears and through your mercy, teach us your ways and write them on our hearts so that we may follow faithfully the path you show us. Amen."

Reproduced from *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers*