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

# BE OUR guest

## 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.
¡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**
Staci Shupe

*The Steadfast Love of the Lord*

**Shepherd's Prayer**
Chris Shupe

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

**Isaiah 49:1-7**
Marcia Moore

**Children's Church**

*As the Deer Thirsts*

**Matthew 3:13-17**
**Today's Message**

*Revelation Song*
*Fairest Lord Jesus*

**Communion & Offering**
**Luke 24:28-32**
Mark Tate

*Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*

*Only a Holy God*

**Benediction**

Worship Leader: Jeremy Meeks

Today's Message
**"From the Water"**
Matthew 3:13-17
Bradley Steele

January 18, 2026

## Children's Ministry (Birth–5th Grade)

**Save the Date:** Vacation Bible School will be on May 28-30. Vacation Bible School is for children four years old through fifth grade.

## Youth Ministry (6th–12th Grade)

**Huddles** continue this Wednesday from 7-8 p.m. in the Youth Center.

## Campus Ministry (Students & Non-Students)

**Sunday Lunch:** Join us right after worship for a free lunch just for college students in the MAC (Gym). Come enjoy good food, connect with friends, and meet some new faces.

## Bilingual Ministry (Open to All)

The Bilingual Ministry meets at 9 a.m. on Sunday morning for class in room 109, and worship at 10 a.m. in the Chapel.

# News & Notes

**Church Office Closure**— The Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 19.

**Ladies' Bible Class** — Ladies' Bible Class meets on Wednesday at 10 a.m. in the Family Room. Ellen Presley will be this week's teacher.

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

**Manna Needs** — The next Manna Pantry will be held on January 26. The following items can be left at the Manna desk in the Welcome Center. Pasta & sauces, canned soup, chicken & beef broth, spice packets, peanut butter & jelly, lunch snacks.

**LIFT Birthday Party** — What better way to start the new year than with a big birthday party! On Tuesday, January 27 from 6-8 p.m. in the Family Room, we will be celebrating ALL the 2026 birthdays! It will be an exciting time of birthday fun including ice cream and cake. So, if you have a birthday sometime in 2026, please join us! (and bring a friend or two as well!)

**Marriage Seminar:** Registration is open for a one-day marriage seminar for couples in the Abilene and Big Country area. Hosted by University Church of Christ. Heidi Morris will be the speaker for this seminar hosted at the DoubleTree. The seminar will be held on January 31 from 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. The price is $60 per couple. Register at: uccabilene.org/marriageworkshop

## Shepherds

**Mac Ice**
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**Jason Morris**
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**Chris Shupe**
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**Kris Southward**
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**James Thompson**
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### 2026 Elder Chair

**Alan Caffey**
alanrcaffey@att.net
(325) 513-5785

## Ministers

**Bradley Steele**
*Lead Minister*
bradley@uccabilene.org

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

**Michael Santiago**
*Youth Minister*
michael@uccabilene.org

**Jason Craddock**
*Campus Minister*
jason@uccabilene.org

## 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.*

- **Graduate Student Bible Study -** MAC 501 (starts at 5)
- **Conversations** - MAC 501 - UCC Missions
- **Wednesday Recharge** - MAC 502 – Currently watching videos by Ray Sander Laan on the book of Exodus.
- **Campus Ministry** - MAC 503 (starts at 6:30)
- **The Bridge** - MAC 504 (resumes February 4)
- **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 233

# Daily Readings

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

**Monday, January 19**
*Psalm 40:6-17; Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28; Acts 8:26-40*

**Tuesday, January 20**
*Psalm 40:6-17; Isaiah 53:1-12; Hebrews 10:1-4;*

**Wednesday, January 21**
*Psalm 40:6-17; Isaiah 48:12-21; Matthew 9:14-17*

**Thursday, January 22**
*Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 1:1-20; Galatians 1:11-24*

**Friday, January 23**
*Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 9:27-10:8; Galatians 2:1-10*

**Saturday, January 24**
*Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Luke 5:27-32*

## Lift Up In Prayer

Don Baber
Shirley Baber
Vicki Blair
Lucy Hatch
Marshal Kellar
Eddie Mahanay
Peggy Marler
Imogene McAnulty
Ed McCorkle
Tom Milholland
Mike Nance
Kelly Roberts

## Prayer Prompts

Pray for joy in God's delight in God's people. Isa. 62:1-5

Pray for life shaped by God's light. Ps. 36:8-10

Pray for faithful use of our spiritual gifts. 1 Cr. 12:4-7

Pray for wisdom to honor diverse gifts. 1 Cr. 12:11

Pray for joyful witness to God's glory. Jn. 2:11

*"When joy is gone and hearts are sick, O God, you give us Christ as our healing balm. He came in human flesh that he might give himself as a ransom for our salvation and anoint us with the Spirit of consolation and joy. Hear the cry of your people, that we may rejoice in the richness of your love and be faithful stewards of your many gifts. Amen."*

Reproduced from *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers*