

March 22, 2026
9:00AM

OUR INVITATION

Because we believe that every person is a beloved child of God, on a journey to God, with God, we welcome ALL people, *without exception*, to participate fully in the life of this church.

OUR MISSION

First United Methodist Church exists to build a community where all people are invited to know God's love and to join God in transforming the world.

OUR VALUES

Justice. Working to eradicate injustice for the excluded and marginalized. *Bridge-Building.* Nurturing multigenerational friendships and community partnerships. *Storytelling.* Sharing our stories of faith and of growth. *Active Learning.* Pursuing knowledge and understanding of God. *Service.* Seeking mutually empowering service opportunities. *Constructive Disruption.* Disrupting systems of power to create positive change.

OUR FAMILIES

We love children in worship. Activity clipboards and other materials for children are available at the back of the Sanctuary. Our Family Room in the balcony offers rockers, books, toys, and a diaper change station for parents with infants and toddlers. Childcare is available from 8:45AM-12:15PM for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in EDU Room 102.



LEARN MORE AT
www.fumcaustin.org

GATHERING AS THE CHURCH

Asterisks () indicate an invitation to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING VOLUNTARY

GREETING

As you prepare for worship, please greet your neighbors and fill out a Connections Card. You can find the printed version in the pew in front of you or you can use the QR code on the front page of the FUMC Weekly. To let our pastors know about a prayer request for you or someone you love, you can use the printed Connections Card that will be placed in the offering basket when it is passed or you can use the QR code found on the front of the FUMC Weekly.

Response: I was glad when they said to me,

“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”

Psalm 122:1

ENTERING THE HOLY

INTROIT

The Call

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life;
such a Way, as gives us breath;
such a Truth as ends all strife;
such a Life as killeth death.

Words: George Herbert

Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Into this world we are born,
into the beauty and sorrow of everyday life.

Into this day we awake,
into possibility and the unknown.

Into this church we are welcomed,
into God's grace and each other's truth.

So let us worship our God this day,
we who are called and loved.

Beth Merrill Neel, *Hold Fast to What is Good*

*** HYMN 57**

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Stanzas 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O Lord,
your Word is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love,
and strength to follow on the path you set before us;
through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE

John 11:1-7, 17-27, 38-44

SERMON

RESPONDING IN FAITH

INVITATION TO THE FAITH JOURNEY

Are you interested in what it means to be a member of First Church? First Steps is an informal gathering where you can meet the pastors and staff, learn about United Methodist beliefs, hear more about our many ministry opportunities, ask questions about this community of faith, and explore whether membership at First Church is your next step in faith. Lunch is provided and childcare is available in EDU Room 102. To sign up, fill out a Connections Card and place it in the offering basket or go online at fumcaustin.org/first-steps.

OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY

Nearer, My God, to Thee

Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee,
even though it be a cross that raiseth me.

Still all my song shall be,
nearer my God to thee.

Age after age to be nearer,
my God to thee!

Words: Sarah F. Adams and Edward H. Bickersteth, Jr.

Music: Lowell Mason; Arr. Dan Forrest

* PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING

Musical notation for the hymn 'Presentation of the Offering'. It consists of two staves of music in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff has the lyrics: 'Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures high and low.' The second staff has the lyrics: 'Praise God, in Je - sus ful - ly known: Cre - a - tor, Word, and Spir - it one.'

Words: Brian Wren © 1989 Hope Publishing Co.

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Music: *Old 100th*; Attr. Louis Bourgeois

FEASTING AT THE TABLE OF GRACE

* THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Musical notation for 'The Great Thanksgiving' in B-flat major and 3/4 time. It features three staves of music with alternating parts for 'Celebrant' and 'All'. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.'

Pastor gives thanks, recalling God's story of abundance.

...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord; God of pow'r and might.

Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - - - - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blest is the One who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Please be seated. Pastor continues leading the prayer, recalling the acts of Christ.

...And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
 we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice,
 in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

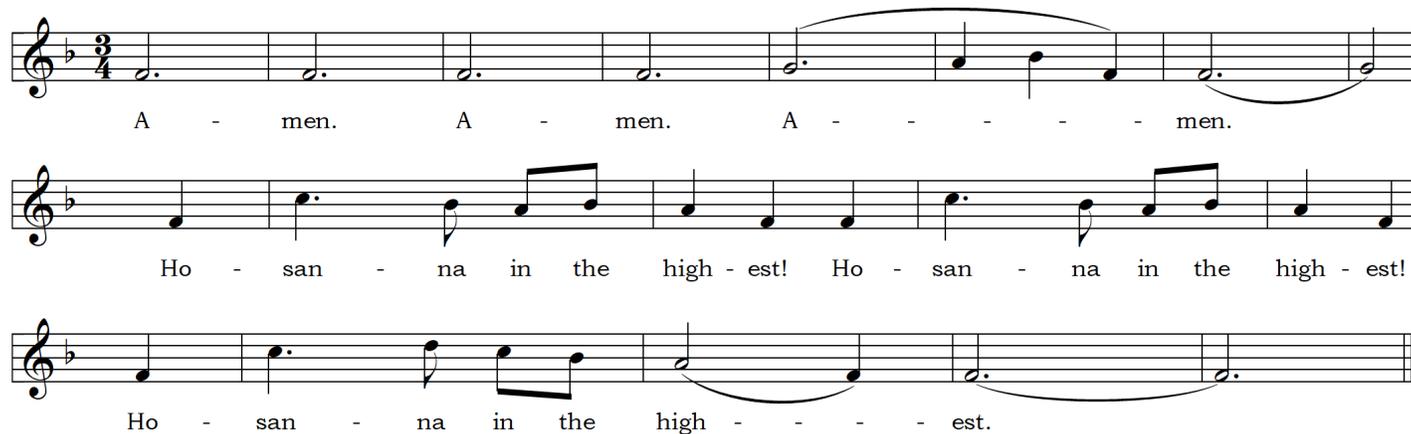
Christ has died, Christ is ris - en, Christ will come a - gain.

Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Ho - san - na in the high - - - - est!

Pastor continues leading the prayer, asking God to pour out God's Holy Spirit on us and this meal.

...Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory are yours, almighty God, now and forever.



A - men. A - men. A - - - - - men.
Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!
Ho - san - na in the high - - - - - est.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our God in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory, forever.
Amen.

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

Hymn

I Am the Bread of Life



1. I am the Bread of life. You who come to me shall not
2. I am the Res - ur - rec - tion, I am the
3. Yes, Lord, we be - lieve that you are the



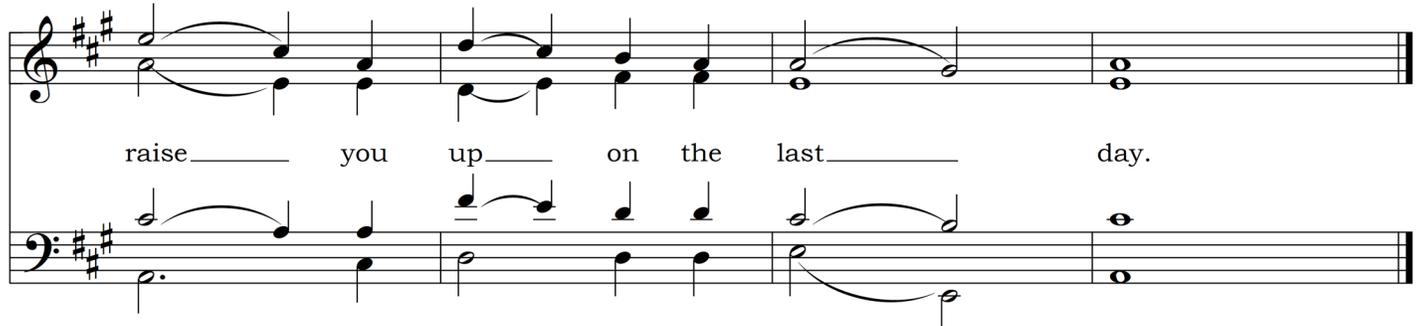
hun - ger; and who be - lieve in me shall not thirst.
life. If you be - lieve in me,
Christ, the Son of God,



No one can come to me un - less God beck-ons. And I will
ev - en though you die, you shall live for ev - er.
Who has come in - to the world.



raise you up, and I will raise you up, and I will



raise you up on the last day.

Words and Music: John 6 and 11, adapt. S. Suzanne Toolan; Arr. Betty Pulkingham

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PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

In gratitude, in deep gratitude
for this moment,
this meal,
these people,
we give ourselves to you.

Send us out to live as changed people
because we have shared the Living Bread
and cannot remain the same.

Ask much of us,
expect much from us,
enable much by us,
encourage many through us.

So, Lord, may we live to your glory,
both as inhabitants of earth
and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.

Amen.

GOING OUT TO SERVE

BIRTHDAY BLESSING

Let us pray:

God, our gracious Creator,
we give you thanks for the gift of life
to these who celebrate their birthdays in March.

Grant that they may make this new year in their lives
an offering that will enrich your world and give you glory.

Cause them to grow in wisdom and grace
and strengthen their trust in your goodness
all the days of their lives;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

* BENEDICTION

* HYMN 534

Be Still, My Soul

Stanza 1

VOLUNTARY

+ + +

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The flowers are placed on the chancel by Doug and Janet Camp in celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary today.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Preacher: Reverend Taylor Fuerst

Liturgist: Reverend John Hathaway

Cantors: Kelton Bloxham, Scott Davis, and Sarah Urías

GREAT THANKSGIVING MUSICAL RESPONSES

Words: Mark A. Miller © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

Music: Mark A. Miller © 2000 Abingdon Press

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GIFTS MAKE TRANSFORMATION POSSIBLE

Cash or checks will be received during the offertory. We also have three convenient ways to give online: (1) use your smartphone to scan the QR code provided on the front page of the FUMC Weekly and follow the prompts; (2) use the FUMC App on your smart phone; and/or (3) make an online donation at fumcaustin.org/giving.

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00-10:45AM

ADULTS

Our classes offer adults a wide selection of age groups, study topics, and learning styles. Many classes are meeting in person and online. Visit fumcaustin.org/sundayschool.

YOUTH

Sunday School for 6th through 12th grade begins in the Great Hall of the Family Life Center. Learn more at fumcaustin.org/youth.

CHILDREN

Sunday School for preschool through 5th grade is located on the first floor of the Sanctuary Building. Learn more at fumcaustin.org/children.



ORDER DEADLINE: MARCH 30

A traditional symbol of Easter, the lily is a flower that seemingly dies away, then returns with new life each year.

You are invited to place lilies in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday to the glory of God and in honor of or in memory of loved ones. Plants cost \$20 each and are florist quality and great for replanting so you can enjoy them long after Easter. You may order lilies by filling in the form below and placing it in basket during the offering or mailing it to the church office; by contacting Tami Kellberg at tami@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 226); or by using the QR code. If paying by check, please write "Easter Lily" on the memo line of your check.



Orders must be received by 10:00AM on Monday, March 30. Plants may be picked up after the 11:00AM worship service on Easter Sunday, April 5.

Name of donor

Phone number (in case of questions)

Amount enclosed (make check payable to FUMC)

The lily is in honor of _____

The lily is in memory of _____



LOVE BOLDLY. LEAD COURAGEOUSLY.

Give the gift of leadership to faith communities around the world.

Dear Church,

I have never been to seminary, but my life and faith have been formed by my parents, my sister, and so many dear friends who were shaped by theological education. In seminary, the pastors I know and love had their certainty stretched. As they became more deeply connected to the story of God, the answers they thought they had often gave way to questions and doubts—and eventually to wisdom and wonder. Their study and preparation transformed them into pastoral leaders who impact not only their own faith, but mine, yours, and everyone else's in the communities they serve.

Their guidance became a gift shared with all of us—and it's a gift I continue to receive.

When the Council of Bishops asked churches across the United Methodist connection to take a special offering for theological education outside the United States, **I felt that call acutely.** For twelve years, I had the privilege of serving on the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. During that time, I visited theological schools and met leaders in Mozambique, Liberia, Zimbabwe, and Uganda. **I witnessed firsthand the vitality of the worldwide church—and the challenges pastors face when they long to study more deeply but lack the resources to do so.**

Many of us in the United States may not realize the disparity: while U.S. seminaries benefit from significant endowments and denominational support, most theological schools outside the U.S. have little or no financial foundation. **Fewer than five percent of United Methodist clergy abroad have access to a theological master's degree,** even though hundreds of pastors are ready and eager to pursue one.

Our worldwide church also carries a complicated history shaped by colonialism and marked by deep divisions in recent years, including over the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ siblings. **These are real wounds. They are also a call to act. Supporting theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines is one way we can begin to address long-standing disparities and form leaders who embody reconciliation, justice, and hope.**

I believe education transforms leaders—and that well-formed leaders strengthen communities. My hope is that this initiative will raise up leaders who love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously. **If this vision resonates with you, I hope you will support this work. Together, we can help nurture leaders whose wisdom, courage, and compassion will bless the church and the communities they serve for generations to come—and become the same kind of gift that faithful pastors have been in each of our lives.**

With gratitude and resurrection joy,

*Rachel Wright,
FUMC Austin Senior Director of Strategy*



Gifts, marked "Easter Offering" may be placed in the offering basket, mailed to or brought by the church office, made online at fumcaustin.org/giving, or by using the QR code provided and following the step-by-step instructions. Be sure to select "Easter Offering" from the drop-down menu.

