

The Bridge

You are encouraged to join us for 11:00 a.m. church services.

No Sunday School programs and no childcare.

The playroom is clean and open for parents who wish to use it.

August 3: "5 Important Songs I Love to Sing" – Jimmy Merritt –

Jimmy will explore 5 of the most important songs he has ever played.

August 10: "Summer Hymn Sing" – Facilitator Ann Malpass –

Please let Ann or Jimmy know if you have a favorite hymn you would like included in this service. The hymn does not have to be in our hymnal. We will try to find it.

August 17: "Courage: It's a Matter of Heart" – Reverend Brian

Clougherty – The secret to happiness is the opposite of what our culture says. Our culture sells "illusions" of power and control. It promises control over whatever or however you feel vulnerable. Happiness lies not in such control, but in the courage to be vulnerable.

August 24: "How Truth Sets You Free" – Reverend Brian

Clougherty – Secrets isolate and divide. Inclusion in a secret seems to imply that we are "special people," in-the-know people. But "special people" are lonely people. What truth frees people and how? When is a secret appropriate? Let's take a look at truth and secrets.

August 31: "Willing Spirit, Weak Flesh" – Reverend Chuck Yancey

– Martin Luther King, Jr. said that he hoped the United States would "live up to its creed, that all people are created equal." Far from being radical, the spirit of liberal religion and belief has a long history of striving against fear and hate to fulfill the highest stated ideals of our belief in God's unlimited love, our nation and of humanity.



Dates to Remember

August 10: Covered-dish lunch and Board meeting following services.

August 14: AUW Meeting. Meet at the church to go to Johnny's Seafood for lunch. Meeting at the church at 1:00 p.m.



“My Friends Have So Many Issues”
“The Healing Power of Being Needed”

Andrea Gibson

June 05, 2025

Meg and I have an incredible local community. Fiercely loving people who have supported us through our biggest trials. For several years, that support came from a distance: researching medications, hunting down clinical trials, spending whole hours on the phone arguing with my insurance company. The day-to-day realities of illness, though, were something Meg and I largely handled alone. But when my symptoms started to worsen, we realized we needed more hands on deck. So, we sent out an SOS. Every day after that, a friend showed up at our door in the form of a smile, ready to help however they could. Before they came, friends texted Meg to ask what they could bring. “For the love of God, please bring Andrea your problems,” Meg texted back. “Andrea thrives when they’re helping other people.”

I didn’t know she’d said that. So, I was quite confused when every friend who arrived at my bedside came carrying a heartbreak, a crisis or a question they needed help answering.

“I’m still obsessed with my ex. Can you talk me down?”

“I’ve developed an anxious tic. What should I do?”

“I’m losing my mind as a parent. Will it ever get better?”

After about a week of this, I caught on. “Did you do this?” I asked Meg, side-eyeing her. She smiled like someone who had absolutely done this. “I just know you thrive when you’re being of service,” she said.

When I was in my mid-twenties, I wrote: *The hardest thing about having nothing is having nothing to give*. It was still true. It wasn’t just the pain that made my days so challenging. It was the feeling that I had nothing to offer. That’s something not everyone understands about being sick. People see how much you need, but not how much you *need* to be needed. Before Meg gave her little secret instruction, most friends assumed their problems were too petty to bring into a room with cancer. That instinct made sense. They didn’t want to add weight to an already heavy load. But what a relief it was to finally feel like I could *reciprocate*. That I could support them while they were supporting me. Being the one who always needs help but isn’t asked to give it started to make me feel like a ghost in my own life.

I didn’t want to be just a patient. I wanted to be a person. A person who reminded my friends of their wholeness, who made them realize how capable they were of facing their own pain. Every time a friend left lighter than they came, I felt lighter, too. Meg knew what I hadn’t yet been able to say: that care went both ways. That being medicine for others is medicine to me. Of course there were days I didn’t have it in me. Days when I was simply too sick to have a conversation. In those moments I asked a friend who once lived with an illness even rougher than mine, “How do I feel like I have anything to give when I can barely get out of bed?” She said, “Give love, Andrea. Then give more love. There is nothing in this life more powerful to give than that.” Hearing her words, I felt my pulse shift. I was wrong in my twenties, when I believed in the idea of having nothing to give. Love. We always have love to give.

Love, Andrea

(Andrea Gibson: Queer American Poet & Activist: August 13, 1975-July 14, 2025)