

UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church Of Christ



Loving God. Loving Neighbor. Building Community.

March 1, 2026 Second Sunday of Lent
"The Way"

*Please rise in body or spirit.
You are invited to join in the liturgy **in bold type**.

*Childcare is available on the first floor
of this building for children ages 0-4.
Children K-5th grade are invited to
attend Sunday School after the
Message for All Ages.*

*Please wear a name tag so we can
greet one another by name
(There are blank name tags in the
back of the sanctuary).*

PRELUDE – Poor Wayfaring Stranger

arr. Mark R. Lewis

Linda Indian, Genie Temmler, & Jeremy Whitener

***GATHERING SONG – A Wilderness Wandering People**

Words & Music: Jim Strathdee

We are a wil-der-ness wand-ling peo-ple on a jour-ney of the soul. May we
6 find our des - ti - na - tion in our long-ing to be whole. Our Ho-ly God is call - ing
11 to us. With Je - sus by our side may com - pas - sion be our com - pass; may the
16 Spi - rit be our guide, on The Way, on the Way, on the Way!

WELCOME

Rev. Katrina Forman

***PRAYER FOR THE PATH (unison)**

Rev. Leah McCullough

God of Grace, We know you are with us on The Way. Yet we need sustenance to make the journey. As we come seeking a seat at the table, we find that you were expecting us and have already set us a place. Nourished by your hospitality, help us to follow Jesus by setting tables of abundance for all who travel this journey of life. Amen.

LENTEN TESTIMONY

Armando and Sara Tamargo

***PASSING THE PEACE**

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Rev. Leah McCullough

SCRIPTURE READINGS – Isaiah 55:1-9, Luke 5:27-32

Della Smith

THE WORD IN MUSIC – Life Is a Journey

Joseph M. Martin

Oh, who will come and go with me?

I am bound for the promised land.

*O life is a journey, a long winding road,
A path paved with promise and teardrops of hope.
Sometimes there are mountains, the way hard as stone.
But in all of our wandering, we are never alone.*

*Remember the sorrows, the shadows, and strife,
The winter and summer, the seasons of life.
Rejoice in the laughter, and learn from the tears,
And walk every day with the ones you hold dear.*

*Family and friendship, the blessings of faith;
These are the treasures God spreads on our way.
Come all who are seeking for purpose and place.
Come walk, with the faithful, this journey of grace!*

*All thanks to the Shepherd who stays by our side.
The Spirit of wisdom, our Teacher and Guide.
Walk humbly, walk worthy, hold firm to God's hand.
Each step brings you closer to God's promised land.*

Sanctuary Choir

SERMON

Rev. Katrina Forman

***HYMN #547 – Amazing Grace**

Words: John Newton

(see next page for music)

NEW BRITAIN

Music: Edwin O. Excell

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

547

St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779; alt.

St. 5, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1799

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to

now am found, was blind but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

John Newton's autobiographical hymns reflect his conversion from his earlier existence as a slave trader. While serving as curate in the English village of Olney, Newton met William Cowper, and together they published Olney Hymns, which included this hymn.

Tune: AMAZING GRACE C.M.
 (NEW BRITAIN)
 Columbia Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829
 Arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1900

PRAYERS FOR GETTING OUT OF OUR OWN WAY

Rev. Leah McCullough

(unison) O God, you so love the world that you give without measure – the generous gift of life itself, freedom of choice, each sunrise and sunset, and every surprise in between. Forgive us when busyness crowds out gratitude, when weariness numbs our sense of wonder, and when daily demands distract us from how richly we are blessed. Free us to move with the rhythm of the Spirit, walking each day with intention and attention, ever grateful for the gifts and grace in every season. Amen.

Sung Response:



Meet me in the still-ness, Lord, be the
air I breathe; meet me in the still-ness,
Lord, free me to re-ceive.

Time for Quiet Contemplation

Sung Response

PRAYING FOR OTHERS ALONG THE WAY

Joys and Concerns

Beth Pugh

Young Mo Koh, father of Seo Hee Koh

Louise Ulman, mother of Patricia Devine Harms

Those recovering from surgery

Lord's Prayer

Our {name for God}, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

COMMUNION

Invitation

The Great Thanksgiving

Sung Response - Come to Us

Rory Cooney

Section Leaders, Jeremy Carlisle

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

...

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

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

...

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

All: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again!

Sharing the Bread and Cup

We use gluten free bread and grape juice. An usher will invite you forward, or you can let them know you'd like to be served in your seat. We practice communion by intinction – please take a piece of bread and dip it in the juice. ALL are welcome at God's table, we mean it.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Music for Meditation – Forty Days and Forty Nights

Jeremy Carlisle

Rev. Katrina Forman

M. Herbst

***Response of Thanksgiving NCH #778 – Doxology**

OLD 100TH

Words: Thomas Ken, adapt. William B. Abernathy

Music: Louis Bourgeois

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ, and Spirit one.

***Prayer of Dedication**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***HYMN (insert) – Lead With Love**

Melanie DeMore

***You gotta put one foot in front of the other and lead with love.
Put one foot in front of the other and lead with love.***

***Don't give up hope. You're not alone.
Don't you give up. Keep movin' on.***

***Lift up your eyes. Don't you despair.
Look up ahead. The path is there.***

***I know you're scared and I'm scared too.
But here I am, right next to you.***

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Katrina Forman

***MUSICAL BENEDICTION NCH #331 – Come, My Way vs. 1**

THE CALL

Words: George Herbert

Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams

***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 conquers death.***

POSTLUDE – Be Thou My Vision

Jeremy Carlisle

THANK YOU for joining us for worship this morning. Please sign a welcome card if you are visiting and put it in the offering plate. Please stay for coffee hour in the Assembly Room immediately following the service.

THANK YOU to the Sunday Welcome Team, the Communion Servers, and the Sanctuary Choir.

THANKS to Della Smith for the ceremonial loaf, and Michele Sionas for the gluten free/nut free bread.

Sound Operator: Joe Cristiani

Livestream Video: Nkenge Jones

Sunday, March 1: A Second Hour After Worship With Wyatt Foster

Join us after worship to support and learn from youth member, Wyatt Foster, who will share about the Watchung History Board he created and installed for his Eagle Scout Service Project.

A Youth Parent Meeting Will Take Place In The Guild Room After The Second Hour

Please join Rev. Leah (after Wyatt's Second Hour presentation) to learn more about the Summer High School Youth Trip (July 19-25). Leah will share more about location, lodging and food, transportation, service and learning, costs, and expectations before the trip. Let's take the next step on this journey we will make together.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday, March 3

12:30pm Daytime Bible Study is meeting in the Guild Room, reading and discussing "Who Stole My Bible? Reclaiming Scripture as a Handbook for Resisting Tyranny."

7pm-8:30pm "Holy Hangout," A Family-Friendly Evening Bible Study. All are welcome. Email BJ Carter (bjcarter@unioncong.org) for location and details.

Wednesday, March 4

10:30am Gentle Yoga alternates taking place in person and on Zoom. Reach out to the church office to confirm the location.

Noon Union Sages will take place in the Guild Room.

Wednesday, March 4, at 7pm-8:30pm: A Special Union Cong Labyrinth Walk at First Congregational Church (40 S. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair)

Labyrinths are an awesome tool that allow us to connect our spirituality with our physicality. Dating from the Middle Ages, when pilgrimages to Jerusalem for Holy Week became unattainable for more people, labyrinths developed as a form of pilgrimage that one could do close to home. Whether you love labyrinths or have never done one, we invite you to join us at First Congregational Church. At 7pm, we will offer a little background, context, and suggestions/instructions for how you might approach labyrinth walking, and then have plenty of time for folks to experience it for themselves. If you just want to come and walk the labyrinth, feel free to arrive anytime. And remember that FCC's labyrinth is open to the public every Wednesday from 11am-1pm. (Parking info: There is ample parking around the building. There is a lot behind the church (*enter from The Crescent*). When that is full, there is street parking, a municipal lot and a multi-level parking deck up the street.)

7pm UCC Ringers Handbell Choir will rehearse in the Sanctuary.

Saturday, March 7 (Saturdays In Lent Through March 28)

1pm "Street Wisdom WalkShops" Offered on Zoom

These Zoom WalkShops are facilitated by Dr. McFee as a "way of wandering, meandering, and keeping our eyes open for clues to help us reflect and discern about next steps." Take part outside on a walk or from the comfort of your home. For more information: worshipdesignstudio.com/walkshops

Next Sunday, March 8

Second Hour After Worship With Pierce Switzer

Join us after worship to support and learn from youth member, Pierce Switzer, who will show and talk about his documentary, *Passaic*, an award winning documentary looking at the toxic pollution on the Passaic River.

Next Sunday At 1pm, March 8

Begin Weekly Lenape Walks With The Creation Justice Team

Did you know that all of what we know as New Jersey was formerly known as Lenapehoking by the people who lived here before European settlers arrived and caused their demise and displacement? Lenapehoking means "Homelands of the Lenape" in the language of the Lenni Lenape. Lenni means "real" or "original" and Lenape means "people." Any grammar school student in Montclair probably knows that people indigenous to this land lived here before us. In Essex County, we have the Lenape Trail. It is not as old, long, well-known or as crowded as the Camino de Santiago in Spain. It doesn't even follow an exact route that the Lenape may have used. What the 36-mile Lenape Trail does is pass through 11 towns and 18 parks in Essex County, on land that was historically part of Lenapehoking. The Lenape Trail was established in 1982 and was conceived by Al Kent, a former park commissioner. Parts of the trail are in Montclair and Bloomfield: Mills Reservation, the Iris Gardens, Tuers Park, Brookdale Park and Clark's Pond. Walks will continue on Sundays March 15 and March 29.

Coming Soon: Women's Breakfast: Visit The Historic Lambert Castle

The Women of Union will be taking a tour of the amazing, newly restored Lambert Castle located at 3 Valley Road in Paterson. The tour will take place on Saturday, March 21 at 10am at the Lambert Castle. "The Castle," a well-known landmark in Northern New Jersey, is located on Garret Mountain overlooking the City of Paterson. Once a private residence, the building is fashioned after an English castle. Catholina Lambert, an English immigrant who made his fortune in the silk industry, built the Castle in 1892-93. He named it "Belle Vista." We will travel to a diner for lunch after the tour. We will meet at church at 9:15 am to carpool to the castle. (This will take place of the monthly Women's Breakfast.) Please email Karen Ermler at karen.ermler@gmail.com so we can let the tour guide know how many will be attending.

From The Banner Ministry:

A Little Lenten Mystery...

Have you noticed the beautiful needlepoint Lenten cross now by the pulpit? It was a delightful surprise uncovered during a second-floor East Wing closet clean-out by Albert Fenske-Williams, our Operations and Space-Use Manager. We're not sure when it last saw the light of day—or who lovingly stitched it. One square is signed with the initials "JH." Do you recognize it, or know its story? We'd love to learn more! Please reach out to Sara Tamargo at sgtamargo@gmail.com.

ABOUT OUR THEME THIS LENT: "THE WAY"

"I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."
- Isaiah 43:19

Inspired by passages in the Judeo-Christian scriptures that talk about journeys, roads, and pathways of life, we will make our way together through this season. Lent is a time of reflection, and there is nothing like a pilgrimage to conjure that up. The popular and poignant movie, "The Way," about a father's pilgrimage in honor of his late son on the famed Camino de Santiago in France and Spain, accompanies us this Lent as our modern-day inspiration to live the life we've been given to the fullest.

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Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
An LGBTQ+ Open and Affirming Congregation

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