

St. John United Church of Christ
“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”

March 1, 2026

Second Sunday in Lent (A)

Rev. Karla Frost, Pastor

David R. Ekstrand, Dir. of Music

9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship

9:30 Sunday School for Children

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Large print bulletins are available from the Ushers.

Bold italic denotes congregation reads or sings.

*Denotes all who are able, please stand.

WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH A SMILE AND WAVE

*RESPONSE¹ ***“Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights”***

Throughout these Lenten days and nights

Vs. 1 #250

we turn to walk the inward way,

where, meeting Christ, our guide and light,

we live in hope till Easter Day.

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

Genesis 12:1-4a

Now the Lord said to Abram...”I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.”

Statement of Faith Prepared by our Confirmand, Brayden Fischer

I believe that God is the Creator of all that is good.

I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

I believe that the Holy Spirit guides us to do what is right, and not what is wrong.

I believe that the Sacrament of Baptism makes us part of the family of God, and that in the Sacrament of Communion we share Jesus’ last meal as family.

I believe that the universal Christian Church includes all God’s family everywhere and always.

I believe that as a child of God I am called to follow Jesus and help others.

And I believe my faith will grow in life.

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

I Love You Lord

Sharon Fox

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER²

God calls us to set out in faith.

The love of God leads us home.

Christ blesses us that we might bless others.

The blessings of Christ heal our world.

The Holy Spirit strengthens us for the journey.

The power of the Spirit sustains and supports us.

The One who made heaven and earth meets us here as we worship and pray together...

Maker of heaven and earth, when we face times of trial, lift our eyes to the hills to find help. For you meet us in our need, and you lift us from the cares and toils that weaken our spirits and sap our strength. Call us this day as you called your followers of old, for we long to experience your awesome power and respond with faithful hearts and willing spirits. Bless us each day, that we might share the promise of your blessings with a world struggling to find its way. Amen.

*HYMN AND NOISY OFFERING

“To God Be the Glory”

#66

*LENTEN INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Jeremiah 29:11-13

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart.

LENTEN PRAYER OF CONFESSION³

Forgive us, God, for seeking to limit your truth to what we think we understand. Forgive us for chasing after gods of our own making. We are so busy with them that we forget to open ourselves to you. We cut the connecting and caring that Jesus showed to the bare minimum. Goodness is crucified by our chosen prejudices, and our doubts plunge us into despair. Be to us a refuge in the darkness, O Lord, granting us courage to face what haunts us and leading us to deeper understanding and faithfulness. Amen.

LENTEN ASSURANCE OF PARDON

John 3:17

Believe the good news! God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE LESSON	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	pg. 145
ANTHEM	<i>Stubborn Love</i>	Sharon Fox
GOSPEL LESSON	John 3:1-17	pg. 88

MEDITATION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN ***"Let Us Break Bread Together"*** #699

PASTORAL PRAYER & UNISON LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *Fairest Lord Jesus* Sharon Fox

*RESPONSE⁴ ***"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"*** Vs. 3 #273
***Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.
These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love,
all these are neighbors to us and you.
Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.***

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION²

Gracious God, just as you blessed the saints of old when they ventured forth in faith, so now bless us in our living and in our giving. Transform our gifts and offerings into blessings for a weak and weary world, that all may know of your great love. Amen.

INVITATION

COMMUNION PRAYER

PREPARING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

All are invited to the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The inner circle of cups contain white grape juice. The outer circles contain wine. Please hold each element when served in the pews so all may partake together, remembering that in the upper room last supper Jesus said, "take this and divide it among yourselves." (Luke 22:17b)

Music for Reflection

Jesus Is All the World to Me/What a Friend We Have in Jesus Sharon Fox

*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

In this Holy meal we have met you, O Lord, and have received your promise of a new and right spirit within us. Thus, we go out to live as beloved children eager to share your love with all the world. For we believe as Scripture declares: God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." Amen.

*HYMN *"I Love to Tell the Story"* #560

*POSTLUDE *I Exalt Thee* Sharon Fox

¹"Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" Words: James Germerian (1947-)

Music: William H. Havergal (1793-1870).

²Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026*. Copyright © 2025 by Abingdon Press.

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⁴"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love" Words: Tom Colvin (1925-2000) Music: Ghana folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin (1925-2000) arr. Charles H. Webb (1993-).

We thank George Cochran for serving as liturgist, and Justin Gibson for serving as greeter.

Don't forget to pick up your copy of the March Herald in the Narthex.