THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
February 26, 10:00 a.m.
First Sunday in Lent

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Jennifer Gill, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Simple Gifts* — Diane Adams

INTROIT — *Rejoice in the Lord Always* — E. Tarner

CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessings in the name of God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter. Today is the first Sunday in Lent, a special period for fasting, reflection, and repentance.

God asks us to now to return with all our heart.

With fasting, weeping and mourning, says the prophet Joel, rend your hearts, and not your clothing;

Let us return to God, our compassionate Creator, who is gracious and merciful.

For God is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love -

Let us therefore worship, now, the God of our every hope. Amen.

*HYMN — *I Danced in the Morning* — 206

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Slow me down, Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of the ever-lasting hills. Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magical, restoring power of rest; teach me the act of minute vacations - of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow toward the stars of my greater destiny. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

FIRST GOSPEL LESSON — Mark 8.27-30; 9.9-10

ANTHEM — *I Have a Dream* — ABBA
Jordan Adams Sack, soloist

SECOND GOSPEL LESSON — Mark 4.35-41

On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to the disciples, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

SERMON — *"Oh, the Humanity"* — Rev. W. Alan Froggatt
(The Gospel of Mark)
"A certain young mas was following Jesus, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked."
(Mark 14.51-52)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY — *When Jesus Wept* — William Billings

DOXOLOGY

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. Amen

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM — *Ash Wednesday* — Timothy Haut

*HYMN — *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley* — 191

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE — *Farewell Dear Friends* — (Israeli folk tune)

LOOKING AHEAD

February 26	11:00 am	Un-Birthday Party	March 2	10:00 am	Back Pack Program
	5:00 pm	Soup Kitchen		6:30 pm	Scouts – Wolf Den
				7:00 pm	**Choir Rehearsal**
February 27	5:30 pm	Irish Dance Group	March 3	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplace**
February 28	6:30 pm	Scouts – Arrows of Light	March 4	9:00 am	Craft Day
March 1	6:00 pm	Scouts – Bear Den	March 5	**10:00 am**	**Worship**
				5:00 pm	Soup Kitchen

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the United Church of Chester, an Open and Affirming Church and a member of the United Church of Christ. **The United Church of Chester is centered in Christ's love, embracing, nurturing, serving all, and committed to justice and peace**.

Lenten Devotionals are available in the narthex.

The deacon for the month of February is **Jennifer Gill.** The greeter this morning is **Diane Lindsay**. Flowers for the altar were provided by **Barbara-Jan Wilson** and **Tim Napier** for the joy of March Madness. Go Huskies. Coffee Hour is being hosted by the **Un-Birthday Party**!

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday-Friday 8:30 am-12:30 pm, other times by appointment

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm.

The United Church of Chester

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Church

February 26, 2023

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I Danced in the Morning

I danced in the morning when the world was begun, and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth; at Bethlehem I had my birth.

Refrain

Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee, but they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me; I danced for the fishermen, for James and John, they came with me and the Dance went on.

Refrain

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame, the holy people said it was a shame; they whipped and they stripped and they hung me on high, and left me there on a cross to die.

Refrain

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black, it's hard to dance with the devil on your back; they buried my body and they thought I'd gone, but I am the Dance and I still go on.

Refrain

They cut me down and I leapt up high; I am the life that'll never, never die; I'll live in you if you'll live in me; I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Refrain

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

Jesus walked this lonesome valley, he had to walk it by himself; O, nobody else could walk it for him, he had to walk it by himself.

We must walk this lonesome valley, we have to walk it by ourselves; O, nobody else can walk it for us, we have to walk it by ourselves.

You must go and stand your trial, you have to stand it by yourself, O, nobody else can stand it for you, you have to stand it by yourself.