Reverend W. Alan Froggatt, Minister
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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
March 10, 2024 10:00 a.m.
Fourth Sunday in Lent

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Cheryl Archer, Deacon

PRELUDE

INTROIT — *When Jesus Wept* — arr K. Gilbertson

CALL TO WORSHIP (Resources for Worship by Miriam Tirabassi)

We lift up our eyes to the hills seeking help'
The God of mountains, the World -carver , is our help.
God our Pathmaker, does not let us stumble into wrong ways.
God, our Watcher, does not sleep in times of trial.
God our Father , shields us , from scorching sun by day.
God, our Mother, sits by our bedsides in moonlight hours.
Strong God keeps us from evil, from doing and suffering evil.
Gentle God sustains our life day by ordinary day.
Holy God keeps our going out and our coming in-
In this time of worship and all the days of our lives.

*HYMN — *I to the Hills Will Lift Mine Eyes* — 92

I to the hills will lift my eyes; from whence shall come my aid? My help is from the Lord alone, who heaven and earth has made.

God will not let your foot be moved, your Guardian never sleeps; God's watchful and unslumbering care protects and safely keeps.

Your faithful keeper is the Lord, your shelter and your shade; 'neath sun or moon, by day or night, you shall not be afraid.

From evil God will keep you safe, provide for all you need; your going out, your coming in, God will forever lead.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (UNISON)

Christ Jesus you hear our repentance. You do not hold our sin against us and you grant us peace that passes our understanding, so that we know the grace of God and are a forgiven people. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Some were sick through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities endured affliction; they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress; he sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

ANTHEM *O Holy Jesus* D. McCullough

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON John 3:1-17 (p. 970)

SERMON Rev. Toni Smith

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *O Love* E. Hagenburg

*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

*HYMN *Lavish Love, Abundant Beauty* 58

Lavish love, abundant beauty, gracious gifts for heart and hand, life that fills the soul and the senses, all burst forth at your command. Lord, our God, Eternal Presence, Great Creator, God and Friend; boundless pow'r gave full expression to your love which knows no end.

Who am I that you should love me, meet my ev'ry need from birth? Why invest yourself so fully in a creature made of earth? In your loving heart you planned me, fashioned me with greatest care; through my soul you breathed your Spirit, planted your own image there.

I am yours, Eternal Presence, all my body, mind and heart. Take and use me to your glory, form yourself in ev'ry part. Lord, your love brings joy and gladness flowing forth within my soul. May my very breath and being rise to you, their source and goal.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *God be With You* R. Young

LOOKING AHEAD

March 10	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	March 14	5:30 pm 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Scouts – Wolf Den Scouts – Bear Den **Choir Rehearsal**
March 11	6:30 pm	Irish Dance	March 15	**8:15 am**	**No Coffice Hours**
March 12	8:30 am 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Yoga Scouts – L&T Chester Garden Club	March 17	**10:00 am** **11:30** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Irish Dance Recital** Soup Kitchen
March 13	6:30 pm	Scouts - Webelos			

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**.

The deacon for the month of March is **Cheryl Archer.** The greeter this morning is **Diane Lindsay.** Flowers on the altar were provided by **Diane Lindsay** in memory of **David Lindsay**, whose birthday we will celebrate today. Coffee Hour is being hosted by **Jennifer Gill** and **Ruth Mowry**.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Alan is on sabbatical. Please contact Eileen Sypher for pastoral care. Eileen can be contacted via phone 860 391-1860 (cell) or esypher@ comcast.net (email).

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