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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
February 22, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
First Sunday in Lent

WELCOME		Diane Lindsay, Deacon
PRELUDE	*Sarabande*	Grieg
INTROIT	*Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*	H. Lemmel

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather this morning to worship our God, whose words and ways challenge us: God invites us to lose our selfishness to find ourselves.

God calls us to be known as fools to the world to demonstrate the wisdom of Christ.

God urges us to empty ourselves to discover life's fulness.

God calls us to be obedient to a divine will so we might know true freedom.

We come to worship our Creator, seeking to have our faith challenged into growth.

We root our faith in worship, seeking to find nourishment for our spirits in this growing season of Lent. Amen.

*HYMN	*Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*	12

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes, most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might; thy justice like mountains high soaring above thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small; in all life thou livest, the true life of all; we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree, and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Thou reignest in glory, thou dwellest in light, thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight; all praise we would render; O help us to see 'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we know that you love us and that you call us to fullness of life, but around us and within us we see the brokenness of the world and of our ways. Our successes leave us empty; our progress does not satisfy. Our prosperous land is not the promised land of our longing. Forgive our willful neglect of your word, our insensitivity to the needs of others, and our failure to fee the spirit that is within us; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Exodus 13.17-22 (p. 59)

ANTHEM *Shines the Light* L. Dengler

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Mark 2.18-20

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."

SERMON *"Polycurious"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"So God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea."
(Exodus 13.18)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *I Will Remember Thee* D. Peninger

*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 AND LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM *One Many-Named One* author unknown

*HYMN *Bring Many Names* 6

Bring many names, beautiful and good, celebrate, in parable and story, holiness in glory, living, loving God. Hail and Hosanna! Bring many names!

Strong mother God, working night and day, planning all the wonders of creation, setting each equation, genius at play: Hail and Hosanna! Strong Mother God!

Warm father God, hugging every child, feeling all the strains of human living, caring and forgiving till we're reconciled: Hail and Hosanna! Warm father God!

Old, aching God, gray with endless care, calmly piercing evil's new disguises, glad of good surprises, wiser than despair: Hail and Hosanna! Old aching God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move, saying no to falsehood and unkindness, crying out for justice, giving all you have: Hail and Hosanna! Young, growing God!

Great, living God, never fully known, joyful darkness far beyond our seeing, closer yet breathing, everlasting home: Hail and Hosanna! Great, living God.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig

(* those who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

February 22	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Pastoral Relations Mtg.** Soup Kitchen	February 26	8:30 am **7:00 pm** 7:00 pm	Yoga **Choir Rehearsal** Dem WIA lecture
February 23	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	February 27	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
February 24	8:30 am 6:00 pm	Yoga Chester Garden Club	March 1	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen
February 25	6:00 pm	Chester Garden Club			

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 February is **Diane Lindsay.** Chancel flowers were provided by **Marie Ready** in dedication to George Washington, Founding Father and first president of the United States. You were greeted this morning by a smiling face. Coffee hour is being hosted by **Elaine Gaudette** and **Bill Lostocco**.

Un-Birthday Party – March 8th

Get ready for our annual Un-Birthday Party on Sunday, March 8th. Please join us as we share the Birthday song and the Birthday Prayer plus there will be cake! There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall if you would like to provide a cake. Thank you!

Children's Service – March 15th

Families with young children (2-5) are invited to a Sunday school springtime celebration on March 15th (10-11 am). After a welcome from Pastor Alan and an interactive song with Karli and the choir, we will go to fellowship hall for hands-on activities and surprises. Join us and bring friends!

Irish Dance Program – March 15th
Casey Krane from Krane Irish Dance will host a short program of Irish Dancing following the worship service at 11:15am. Please join us in this special program.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday – Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm or by appointment

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