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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
March 1, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Second Sunday in Lent

WELCOME		Claudia Epright, Deacon
PRELUDE	*Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness*	J.S. Bach
INTROIT	*In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful*	Taize

CALL TO WORSHIP
Leader 1: The tempter spoke to Jesus in his hunger,
Leader 2: And we too are often tempted to surrender to our physical and material appetites;
People: But we choose to surrender to the Word of God.
Leader 1: The tempter tried to entice Jesus with great power,
Leader 2: And we too are sometimes enticed by the powers and principalities of our world;
People: But we find our power in God's delicate grace.
Leader 1: The tempter placed all worldly glory at Jesus' feet,
Leader 2: And we too are often lured by prestige and the admiration of others;
People: But reject the world's esteem, and find our peace and security in the humility of Christ.

*HYMN *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

Lord, who throughout these forty days For us didst fast and pray, Teach us with thee to mourn our sins, And close by thee to stay.

As thou with Satan didst contend, And didst the victory win, O give us strength in thee to fight, In thee to conquer sin.

And through these days of penitence, And through thy passiontide, Yea, evermore, in life and death, Jesus! With us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life Of suffering over past, An Easter of unending joy We may attain at last! Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of forgiveness and fresh starts: like Jesus we have been tempted at all levels; unlike him, sometimes we have given in and given up. We need your assurance as much as we need your pardon. Help us to become persons of gratitude. Help us to see you in the fleeting visions of grace that usually slip right by us. Help us to recognize your purpose in the significant. Help us above all to live as the redeemed people we truly are in Jesus Christ, our strength and savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Deuteronomy 8.1-3

This entire commandment that I command you today you must diligently observe, so that you may live and increase, and go in and occupy the land that the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. The Lord humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

ANTHEM *Lenten Prayer* Pergolesi

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Matthew 4.1-11 (p. 881)

SERMON *"If? Since!"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Since you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread…
Since you are the Son of God, throw yourself down…"
(Matthew 4.3, 6)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Lo, My Shepherd's Hand Divine* Haydn
Jennifer Gill and Pat Holloway

*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")*

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

POEM *Jesus in the Wilderness* Malika Booker (1970 -)
1. Temptation

*HYMN *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* 161

O Morning Star, how fair and bright, your beams shine forth in truth and light! Our Sovereign meek and lowly! O Root of Jesse, Promised One, our only Savior, you have won our hearts to serve you solely! You are holy, great and glorious, all victorious, rich in blessing, rule and might o'er all possessing.

Come heavenly Brightness, Light divine, and deep within our hearts now shine; there light a flame undying! In your one body let us be as living branches of a tree, your life our lives supplying. Longing for you does possess us; turn and bless us; here in sadness eye and heart long for your gladness.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig

(* those who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

March 1	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	March 5	8:30 am 6:00 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scouts – Wolf Den **Choir Rehearsal**
March 2	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	March 6	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplace**
March 3	8:30 am 6:00 pm	Yoga Chester Garden Club	March 8	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Un-Birthday Party** 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**.

The Deacon for the month of March is **Claudia Epright.** Chancel flowers were provided by **Sue Germini-Humble** with a reminder to stay strong, Spring will be here in 20 days. You were greeted this morning by **Sue Germini-Humble**. Coffee hour is being hosted by **Diane Lindsay**.

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.