Reverend W. Alan Froggatt, Minister
Karli Gilbertson, Music Director and Organist
Post Office Box 383, Chester, Connecticut 06412 860-526-2697
E-mail: unitedchester@uccchester.org web site: www.uccchester.org

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
March 8, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Third Sunday in Lent

WELCOME		Claudia Epright, Deacon
PRELUDE	*Aria*	Takacs
INTROIT	*Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*	H. Lemmel

CALL TO WORSHIP

In times of worry and distress, we look up to God for relief and hope;
"Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
In times of war and conflict, we look up to God for peace and understanding;
"Peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give you the peace that passes all understanding."
In times when faith wavers and wills falter, we look up to God for strength and encouragement.
"Wait for the Lord; be strong, and take courage, and wait for the Lord." Amen.

*HYMN	*All Things Bright and Beautiful*	63

Refrain: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings, God made their glowing colors, and made their tiny wings.

Refrain

The purple headed mountain, the river running by, the sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky.

Refrain

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun, the ripe fruits in the garden, God made them everyone.

Refrain

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus Christ, God with us, you came that we may have life, and have it more abundantly, but we have not always lived up to your expectations and hopes for us. We confess that too often we are:

*** impoverished of spirit. Grant us the fullness of your grace.**
*** wrapped up in ourselves. Open us to others.**
*** slow to learn. Teach us of your ever-expanding truth.**
*** proud over little. Whet our hunger and thirst for justice.**
*** scattered like grains of the field. Gather us into a single loaf.**
*** distracted of mind. Direct us to what is most important: your love for us, your will for our lives, and your sustaining presence in every circumstance. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Numbers 21.4-9 (p. 138)

ANTHEM *My Song Is Love Unknown* M. Ijames

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON JOHN 3.11-17

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that the only Son was given to the world, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

SERMON *"Snakes on a Plain"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made."
(Genesis 3.1)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Sanctuary* Thompson/Scruggs

*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 *A narrow Fellow in the Grass* (986)
Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886)

*HYMN *As Moses Raised the Serpent Up* (insert)

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig

(* those who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

March 8	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Un-Birthday Party** Soup Kitchen	March 12	8:30 am 6:00 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scouts – Wolf Den **Choir Rehearsal**
March 9	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	March 13	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
March 10	8:30 am 6:00 pm	Yoga Chester Garden Club	March 15	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Irish Dance Program** 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 **Diane Lindsay** in celebration of all our birthdays! You were greeted this morning by **Diane Lindsay**. Coffee hour is being hosted by the Outreach Committee as we celebrate the Un-Birthday Party.

Un-Birthday Party – Today
Please join us following the worship service as we share the Birthday song and the Birthday Prayer plus there will be cake! Everyone who has a birthday is Welcome!

Children's Service – March 15th
Families with children of any age 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.