



March 15, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Meditation

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”
Helen Keller

Prelude

Adagio from Fantasie in C Major by Cesar Franck

Welcome and Announcements

✠ Opening Hymn #551

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,
So the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God’s name.
Not to reach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,
We join hands across the nations, finding neighbors everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble, listening spirit, we would live to God’s delight.

As a green bud in the spring-time is a sign of life renewed,
So may we be signs of oneness’ mid earth’s peoples, many hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
May our lives reflect the radiance of God’s new and glorious dawn.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠ **Call to Worship** (Congregation reads **bold** print)

When the world is dark and full of hate and fear, when we cannot see God
we will turn on the light.

When we cannot find our way back to love and peace
we will turn on the light.

When our vision dims due to the darkness within
we will turn on the light.

Christ opens our eyes with the gift of sight.

The light of the world is Jesus Christ.

Come and worship the one who brings sight to the blind.

Hallelujah! Praise God, the light of the world!

✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

✠ **Prayer of Confession**

Forgiving God, in a world filled with so much pain, we would rather shut our eyes and be blind than see things as they really are. Grant us the courage to face the reality of our world, and give us the strength to bring your light to those who walk in darkness. Help us see others as you see them, and forgive us when we do not trust you enough to open our eyes to the possibilities before us. Heal our self-inflicted blindness, O God, and lead us in the footsteps of the Light of the World, who reveals your glory in his life, his teachings, and his love. In his holy name, we pray.

Silent pause for reflection **Amen.**

✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Christ came to lead us in paths of righteousness and to guide us through our lives. Christ is with us in times of danger and times of peace. The goodness and mercy of God are given to us each and every day of our lives. God forgives us for our failings, upholds us in love, and leads us to the place that Christ has prepared for us. Believe in your heart that God loves you and forgives you.

We believe! God help our unbelief!

Psalm 23

¹ The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters; ³ he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head
with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall
dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

John 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him,
“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus
answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that
God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent
me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the
world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and
spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of
Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is
this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others
were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰ But
they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided.

¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”

²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

Choir Anthem *Bring Back the Springtime* by Kurt Kaiser & John Purifoy

Pastor’s Message *“I Once was Blind...And Maybe I Still Am”* Pastor Jeff

✠The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. *(From the UCC Book of Worship)*

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

✠Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Jeff

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

✠Closing Hymn #422 *Amazing Grace! (Verses 1,2 & 5)*

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we’d first begun.

✠Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠Three-fold Amen

✠Chimes/Meditation

Postlude

Go Now In Peace