

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
First Sunday in Lent  
March 9, 2025

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS+

**\*Call to Worship** (read responsively)

One: Jesus began his ministry to the world, led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

**Many: As we begin our Lenten journey, let us be led by the Spirit, even into the uncomfortable places.**

One: In those forty days, and in that place, Jesus was faced with hunger, doubt, and temptation.

**Many: As we seek to follow Jesus, we would be led, even into the uncomfortable choices.**

One: Jesus left the wilderness, faithful and obedient to God, rejoicing in the One in whom he trusted.

**Many: As we continue on our path to faithfulness, we will be led by Jesus, rejoicing in our God.**

**\*Opening Song:** “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” #71

**\*OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

Merciful God, your ways lead to life; your light shines in our darkness. The promises you made to our ancestors continue to this day. We too share the bounty of your blessings, and the grace of eternal life in your name. May we be worthy of our calling and help others find their way. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We meet you here, God of faithfulness, our hands and lives full of all our foolish ways. Your people, we treat the strangers who walk among us with fear and doubt. We afflict our anger on those who care about us the most. We impose hard words on those who need to hear hope and grace in their lives.

So now we bring our hearts to you, Generous God, setting them down before you in hopes that you will mend them. As you hear our faltering words, we pray you would answer us with your forgiving love. And as you forgive us, may we go forth to be generous with our lives towards others, even as the one who is Lord of all, Jesus Christ, has been so generous to us.

## A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: As you have confessed, do you so believe? The good news is that there is nothing we do that can conquer us, for we are sheltered in God’s gracious mercy and hope.

**Many: This is the truth we believe. The Word is in our hearts, and on our lips, as we give thanks to God who is our shelter and our lives. Amen.**

**SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING:** Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** (read together)

**I believe in the power of love to overcome the darkness, and that Sin is that which stands in opposition to love of God, love of others, and love of self.**

**I believe that love overcomes the power of Sin. Treating others as they wish to be treated, loving my enemy, praying for those who persecute others, and non-violent resistance are the Way toward the Kingdom of God.**

**I believe that Sin crucified Jesus for loving those who were unloved, for feeding those who were unfed, and healing those who were in dis-ease. The Cross was the greatest display of the power of Sin, but was overcome by his power of love.**

**This Lenten season, I believe that by the grace of God I can turn away from the Sin of the world and toward the love of Jesus, and that I can embrace the Cross and not fear it.**

**I believe the grace of Christ empowers us all to eternal life. Amen.**

**\* GLORIA PATRI:** “Glory Be to the Father” #734

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.**

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE:** Luke 4:1-13 read from *The Message*

**MESSAGE:** “It’s Only Temporary?” Pastor Chris

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER** (with debts/debtors)

## PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

**\* DOXOLOGY:** "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" #34  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION**  
God of abundance, we offer these gifts along with our praise and thanksgiving. Bless the offerings that we return to you now, that they may bring abundant love and sustenance to many in need of your blessing. With grateful hearts, we pray. Amen.

**\* CLOSING SONG:** "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" #252

**\*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

**POSTLUDE**

**\*Indicates all who are able please stand**

The Call to Worship (adapted), Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer Is by B.J. Beu. The Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) is by Mary Scifres. Both are from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2025* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession, is by the Rev. Ruth Garwood, a transitional pastor in the Heartland Conference, a certified facilitator of Sacred Conversations to End Racism, and a certified InterPlay leader. *The Affirmation of Faith* is (adapted) from *The Fat Pastor-Love God, Live Well, Do Good website.*

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Organist:	Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader:	David Burrow
Pastor:	Rev. Chris Burtnett
March Radio Sponsor:	Scott and Sandy Buchanan

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**Birthdays:** 9: Sam Grindberg; 10: Brendan Burtnett; 15 Geoff Buchanan

**Sunday, March 9:** 10:30am – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee  
Mission & Memorial Meeting after Worship

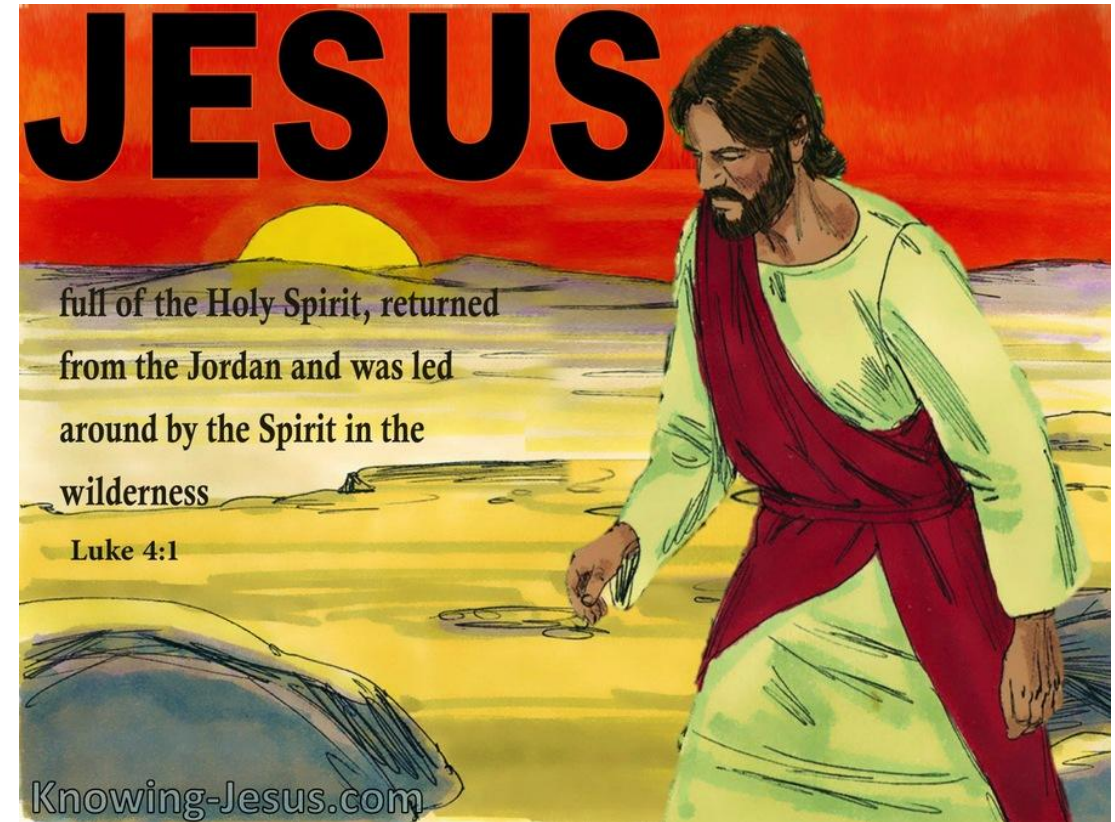
**Tuesday, March 11:** 9:30am.-Pastor at Feed Mill  
6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

**Wednesday, March 12:** Board Meeting

**Thursday, March 13:** 6:00 - 7:30 pm.-CCC English Class in Room E

**Sunday, March 16:** 10:30am – Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee

**Our Daily Bread** March/April/May 2025 issue may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.



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