

**Peace United Church of Christ
March 1, 2026
Second Sunday in Lent
10:30am**



Dark Grapes on a Vine, Cécile F

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**Merciful God soften our hearts
Open us up to your Will
Wash us in Your Love, show us the Way
Humbly to serve You still.**

**Mother, Daughter, Sister God
Please help us follow Your Way
Give us direction, vision to see
In Your Holy Name we pray.**

Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bells

*Call to Worship

In this season of Lent, we remember who and whose we are:

We turn away from scarcity. We turn away from fear. We are born anew.

We have no need to make ourselves great, for we are children of God.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, we long to bear good fruit.

Together, we gather as fireseeds of possibility:

Communal, blessed sparks, we shower the world with light.

Let us worship God!

*Song

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

#282, New Century Hymnal

Refrain:

Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Yes, every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Upon the mountain my God spoke, out of God's mouth came fire and smoke.

Looked all around me; looked so fine; I asked my God if all were mine.

Refrain:

Oh, Jordan river, chilly and cold, it chills the body, not the soul.

There's only one train on this track; it runs to heaven, then right back.

Refrain:

*Prayer of Confession

God who sees us and calls us beloved, who baptizes us with water and with fire, we know we need your Spirit. You call us to repentance: to turn away from all that separates us from You and one another, and to turn toward humility, compassion, and love. Creating Breath, fill us with your vision and courage. Rushing Wind, fierce and holy, fill us with your justice. Fiery Spirit, rest upon each of us, that we may speak your truth and receive your wisdom. Make us your people. Amen.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

Beloved, no matter what we do or leave undone, God meets us. God loves us. God calls us to transformation. Through Christ we are forgiven, renewed, and filled with hope. **Thanks be to God!**

*Passing of the Peace

Story for All Ages

Amanda McElray Hunter

Sending the Children

Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,

Gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Scripture Reading

Matthew 3:7-12

Darlene Leafgren, reader

But when John the Baptist saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Choir Anthem

Abide with Me, Moses Hogan

Scripture Reading

Mark 12:1-12

Then Jesus began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went away. When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. But they seized him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But those tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this scripture:

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes?’”

When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

Song

O Grant Us Light

#469, *New Century Hymnal*

***O grant us light, that we may know wisdom that you alone can give,
That truth may guide us as we go, and virtue bless the lives we live.***

***O grant us light that we may find where error lurks in human lore,
And turn to you our seeking minds, and love your holy Word the more.***

***O grant us light, that we may learn how dead is life from you apart,
How sure is joy for all who turn to you an undivided heart.***

***O grant us light, when soon or late, all earthly scenes shall pass away,
In you to find the open gate, to deathless home and endless day.***

Community Prayers and Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sung Amen

Offertory

Love and Mercy, Brian Wilson

*Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen!**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

God be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to God.

And also with you.

We lift them up to God.

It is a joy to give God thanks and praise.

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Bread and Cup

(In the United Church of Christ all are welcome to participate in Communion. Gluten free crackers are on the tray and we use non-alcoholic grape juice.)

Prayer after Communion

Bountiful God, we give thanks for all we have received at this table through the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world with courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Song

Somewhere to Begin, T. R. Ritchie

**People say to me, "Oh, you gotta be crazy!
How can you sing in times like these?
Don't you read the news? Don't you know the score?
How can you sing when so many others grieve?"
People say to me, "What kind of fool believes
That a song will make a difference in the end?"**

**By way of a reply, I say a fool such as I
Who sees a song as somewhere to begin
A song is somewhere to begin
The search for something worth believing in
If changes are to come there are things that must be done
And a song is somewhere to begin**

Verse 2) Dream...

Verse 3) Love...

*Benediction

*Postlude

Give Yourself to Love, Kate Wolf

Assisting in Today's Service:
Phyllis Cook, Carrie Plamann, Rolf Hagberg, Ushers