

The United Church of Christ of Robesonia

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551

610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org

*No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you're welcome here.*



Fourth
SUNDAY
IN
LENT

*Welcome to our
10:15am Worship Service
In-Person & Streaming Online*

† † †

Sunday, March 10, 2024
4th Sunday in Lent
Laetare Sunday

Welcome

*May God's loving presence be very real to you,
and may you receive strength and guidance today
That will enable you to handle life's challenges.*



Children's Bulletins

Crayons and activity bulletins are available in the narthex.
The activities match today's Bible readings and are designed for 3-6 & 7-12 year olds.

Biblias en Español

Biblias Bilingües en Español y Inglés están disponible en el vestíbulo narthex en la mesa de visitantes azul.
(*Bilingual Bibles in Spanish & English are available in the narthex hallway on the blue visitors' table.*)

Nursery

Persons of all ages (including children) are welcome to participate in the entire worship service. For an additional option, we have a supervised nursery for 0-8 year olds, located on the first floor. Please see Nursery Coordinators, Laurie Ostimchuk, Beth Miller & Geri Gammel if you are in need of the nursery.

Junior Worship

On the 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month, following the mini message, the option of "Junior Worship" is offered downstairs for elementary age children to learn more about today's scripture lessons with fellow youth.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located both on the first and second floors to the left of the elevator. The third toilet stall in each of our four restrooms has a high toilet and handrails.

Changing Tables

All four of our restrooms have changing tables. Each restroom has two "child care protection seats" to keep toddlers safe and secure while their parents use the restroom.

Water Fountains

Water fountains are located on both the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

Sunday School & Adult Faith Formation Classes

Classes for all ages are held at 9:00am.

Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship is held at 10:15am.

Youth Group

Our Youth Group, for those in grades 5-12 (or ages 12-20 years old), meets on the 2nd and Last Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:00pm. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

Young Children & Family Ministries

This ministry's focus is on children younger than youth group and their families, and most of the monthly activities are welcoming of children of all ages. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

Prayer and Care

If you would like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list, or request a pastoral call, please call or email the church office. You are welcome to take home with you a copy of *Our Daily Bread* daily devotional booklet, located on a table in the narthex hallway.

Looking for a Church to Call Home

If you are looking for a new church family home, we would be happy for you to consider United Church of Christ of Robesonia. For more information about our church, we invite you to talk with our pastors, an usher, a greeter, or any member of our church.

More Information....

Additional literature about our missions, ministries, and fellowship opportunities is located on the *Blue Visitor Table* in the narthex hallway, or contact us using the contact information on the front page of this bulletin.

Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you or if there is any way in which we can help make your worship experience more meaningful.

*{Symbols used in this bulletin: *= if able please stand; ♪# = Red Hymnal Page; ♪# = Blue Hymnal Page}*

Virtual Worship Service

Online: [Live Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) - Live or Watch & Listen Later on [Our YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/) at <https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/> - Live or Watch & Listen Later
[Phone Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later

If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or Office@sprucc.org



www.sprucc.org



Free WiFi

ORDER FOR WORSHIP

We Gather

*We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God,
and provide for one another our love, support, and care.*

A TIME OF GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*{If you have not already done so,
please sign and pass the pew welcome pad
to the person next to you.}*

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP [®] *(Unison)*

O God, whose truth extends beyond the range of our questions, and whose mercy reaches farther than our gravest sin, hear today the cries of your people. Have compassion on us and meet us here, lest we be led astray by our own schemes and the false gods we create. Reveal to us once more the light you sent in Jesus, that it may illuminate our earthly journey and help us to see and appreciate the life you intend for us. Amen.

PIANO PRELUDE

{Those who are able, please rise}

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

"Lift High the Cross"

*W&R #287
One License #A-728042*

***INVOCATION**

Leader: In the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

***CALL TO WORSHIP** [®]

Leader: Let those whom God has redeemed rejoice!
Let them tell the world of God's good news!

**People: We will thank God for wonderful works.
We will rejoice in God's love for all humankind.**

Leader: By God's word, we are delivered from destruction.
By God's mercy, we are healed and made whole.

**People: Our voices will join in songs of joy.
Our lives will offer sacrifices of thanksgiving.**

We Repent

This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace, hear the assurance of our forgiveness, and then give God our thanks and praise.

*CALL TO CONFESSION [®] (Leader)

Our time of penitence before God gives us the opportunity to rid ourselves of the weights we carry, the lingering sense that we have not lived up to our full potential, that we have cheated others, that we are disoriented and mired down in troubles of our own making. Let our individual confessions be gathered up in the confessions of the church.

*CONFESSION OF SIN [®] (Unison)

Healing God, we are sick through our sinful ways. We are impatient, complaining, and troubled. We love the night because it hides the evil we have done and the doubt that shows on our faces. By our self-indulgent habits, we are destroying ourselves and depriving others. As a church, we seem content to be dead in our trespasses, for we are afraid to embrace the changes that come with the new life you offer. We cry out to you in our trouble. Save us from our distress. Amen.

*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}

*SUNG PRAYER FOR MERCY

"Kyrie"

NCH #750

Leader (*spoken*): Lord, have mercy upon us.
People (*sung*): Lord, have mercy upon us.
Leader (*spoken*): Christ, have mercy upon us.
People (*sung*): Christ, have mercy upon us.
Leader (*spoken*): Lord, have mercy upon us.
People (*sung*): Lord, have mercy upon us.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON [®] (Leader)

God loved the world so much that Jesus Christ was sent to show us the way to eternal life. We are not condemned, but offered saving grace. Come to the light. Let its warmth melt away our resistance to God's truth. We are re-created in Jesus Christ that we may do the good that God intends and make that goodness our way of life. Praise God!
Amen.

*LENTEN VERSES *adapted from Psalm 107*

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good.
People: God's mercy endures forever.

*LENTEN SUNG RESPONSE

"And I Will Raise You Up"

NCH #775
Michael Joncas

**And God will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of God's hand.**

{please be seated}

We Hear the Word of God

We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings. We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God." Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.

PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

Old Testament Lesson from the Torah (1 of the 5 books of Law): [Numbers 21:4-9](#)

New Testament Letter from the Apostle Paul: [Ephesians 2:1-10](#)

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Gospel (Good News) Lesson: [John 3:14-21](#)

Leader: This is the gospel of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN

"What Wondrous Love Is This"

W&R #257
One License #A-728042

MINI-MESSAGE

CHILDREN'S SONG

"Jesus Loves Me"

NCH #327
William B. Bradbury

**Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.**

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

SERMON

We Respond with Thanks

*We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped,
we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have learned more
about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by
re-affirming our faith in God,
praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world, and giving of
ourselves for the sake of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.*

{Those who are able, please rise}

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison) "Apostles' Creed"

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended to the dead;
on the third day he rose again,
ascended into heaven,
and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
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.**

{Please be seated}

CALL TO PRAYER ③

Leader: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

{silent prayer}

Leader: Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love. Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Abiding God, your love saves. Those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life. Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

Leader: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts. We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us when we pray to say...

LORD'S PRAYER *(Unison)*

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.**

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE

"Hear our Prayer, O Lord"

♪ *Red #501*

George Whelpton; Public Domain

**Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord;
Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace. Amen.**

{Ushers, please assemble at rear of Sanctuary}

OFFERTORY INVITATION ^②

Leader: In joyous thanksgiving, we offer sacrifices of time and resources to announce God's healing grace to the world.

People: It is our privilege to participate in God's wonderful works to humankind, to share the steadfast love that is saving us, and to offer life to those who are perishing.

RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

Online Giving

{Today, we will be passing the offering plate in person. You may also offer your tithe and offering to God through our secure [Online Giving](#) option on our website at sprucc.org ([Click Here](#)), or you may mail your offering to United Church of Christ of Robesonia; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551}.

PIANO OFFERTORY

{Those who are able, please rise}

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

"Doxology"

♪ *Red #551*

George Bourgeois; Public Domain

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER ^② *(Leader)*

Gracious God, for life-sustaining gifts that we so often take for granted—for shelter, food, and meaningful tasks to do; for your steadfast love that awakens us and raises us from our sinful ways; for your word that guides and heals us—we give you thanks. As we invest a part of all you entrust to us to further the ministries of the church, may we show to others the immeasurable riches of your grace in Jesus Christ. Make this church a beacon of hope for the world. **Amen.**

We Are Sent Out

*In response to God's love and grace,
we go out into the world to share God's Good News
through our words and actions.*

*COMMISSION ^②

Leader: God sent Jesus that the world may believe.
God sends us into the world to share that good news.

**People: In Christ, we are not condemned to perish.
Christ came to offer us abundant life.**

Leader: Let everyone see the light you have received.
Live openly as people enjoying the love of God.

**People: By grace, we have been saved through faith.
We will live in the light and thus share good news.**

ALL: Amen.

*BENEDICTION

*THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN

♪ *Red #558*
Public Domain

*SENDING HYMN

"Amazing Grace"

W&R #422
Public Domain

*{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us,
as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}*

POSTLUDE

Join Us For Fellowship and Food in Miller Fellowship Hall
Free WiFi: StPaulsUCC-Guest & StPaulsUCC-5G-Guest
Password (for both): iamheretoserve



The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

- (1) God welcomes us and invites us
- (2) We respond to God's call by worshipping Him
- (3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace
- (4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace
- (5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon
- (6) We grow closer to God and one another through prayer
- (7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure
- (8) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others



Worship Service Resource Credits

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 - ① United Church of Christ Neighbors in Need (NIN) 2023 Resources.
 - ② *Led By Love* by Lavon Baylor. (1996). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.
 - ② *Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).
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 - ⑦ Edmonds, Robert Lee (Editor). (2008). *In Our Own Way; Living a Scouting Life Through Faith; A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion*. Dallas, TX: Red Honor Press
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Staff & Leadership

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Treasurer: Terry Pastor

Financial Secretary (Interim): Terry Pastor

Consistory President: George McLain

Consistory Vice President: Kirk Aulenbach

Consistory Secretary: Geri Gammel

About Today

Church Season: Lent - 40 days and six Sundays before Easter; a season of penitence as we reflect upon our personal sins, which led to the need for the sacrifice of Jesus' life for us upon the cross. The root word of "Lent" means "to lengthen", referring to the lengthening of days as we anticipate spring and the new life granted through the resurrection - moving from darkness to light.

Color of the Paraments (cloths on the altar and pulpit):

Purple - Symbolizing the passion (suffering) of Christ our King that led to his crucifixion.

Laetare Sunday - is the mid-point in Lent, and means "rejoice." This is also known as "Refreshment Sunday," as penitential observances can be relaxed, including the use of rose-pink colored paraments (the color of joy) instead of purple.

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year B**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Mark.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church).

This Sunday, March 10, 2024, Lectionary Reading for the Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

Numbers

The book of Numbers (OT) is the fourth book in the Pentateuch (first five books of the OT, or Torah, or one of the five most central books in Judaism). The title of the book in Greek is *Arithmoi*, referring to the many census "numbers" found in chapters 1 and 2. The book's title in Hebrew is *Bemidbar*, which means "in the wilderness", as this book begins with the Israelite nation in the wilderness of Sinai after fleeing Egyptian slavery, spans the 40 years of wanderings in the wilderness - struggling with a lack of faith, and ends as they are about to enter the land of Canaan.

Psalm 107

This OT song gives thanks to God for steadfast love, redemption, and rescue from four situations of distress: desert, darkness, illness, and sea.

The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians

The Epistle (letter) to the Gentile church in Ephesus is attributed to the Apostle Paul, written in the first century A.D. This is an open letter to many churches in response for the life-changing radical transformation in our personal and social life as we become a part of Christ's family. Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and leader in the Christian church, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. He wrote more of the NT than any other person. The title of this letter "Hebrews" presumably refers to the original audience of this letter as primarily Jewish-Christian.

The Gospel According to John

John is the latest of the four Gospels, written around 80-90 A.D. probably in Ephesus, and attributed to John the son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple of Jesus. This Gospel was "written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and through believing you may have life in his name" (20:31).

Next Sunday, March 17, 2024, Lectionary Reading for the Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 *or* Psalm 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

Lift High the Cross

Refrain (Unison)

C C Dm7 G7 F G C C D7 Gsus G G7
 E A B C G F# B

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro-claim till

C G7 C Dm7 Em F G F Em Dm Dm7 G7 Csus C
 D E F G A B A G F

all the world a-dore his sa-cred name.

Verse (parts)

Em F#dim Am D G Bm C B Em Am B
 A C B C C

1 Come, Chris-tians, fol-low where our Sav-ior trod,
 2 All new-born ser-vants of the Cru-ci-fied
 3 O Lord, once lift-ed on the glo-rious tree,
 4 So shall our song of tri-umph ev-er be:

to Refrain

Em Am Bm D G Bm C Dsus D G F Dm Em
 D C B G G G

our King vic-to-ri-ous, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.
 your death has brought us life e-ter-nal-ly.
 praise to the Cru-ci-fied for vic-to-ry.

WORDS: George W. Kitchin (1827-1912); rev. Michael R. Newbolt (1874-1956), alt.
 MUSIC: Sydney H. Nicholson (1875-1947)

CRUCIFER
 10.10.10.10.

Words and Music © 1974 Hope Publishing Company

257 What Wondrous Love Is This

Dm Am $\frac{C}{G}$ $\frac{Em}{G}$ $\frac{Dm}{F}$ C Dm C F

1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what
 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
 3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to
 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and

$\frac{C}{E}$ $\frac{G}{D}$ $\frac{Am}{C}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ Am $\frac{G}{B}$ C Dm $\frac{C}{E}$ F $\frac{C}{G}$ F $\frac{C}{E}$

won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is
 I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down; when I was sink - ing
 God and to the Lamb I will sing! To God and to the
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! And when from death I'm

Dm $\frac{C}{E}$ $\frac{Am}{C}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ C Dm Am $\frac{Em}{G}$ $\frac{Dm}{F}$ C

this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my
 down be - neath God's right-eous frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my
 Lamb, who is the great "I AM," while mil-lions join the theme, I will
 free, I'll sing and joy - ful be, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing

Dm C F $\frac{C}{E}$ $\frac{G}{D}$ $\frac{Am}{C}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ Am $\frac{G}{B}$ C Dm

soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul!
 soul, for my soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul!
 sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!
 on, I'll sing on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing - on!

WORDS: Appalachian folk hymn
 MUSIC: *Southern Harmony*, 1835

WONDROUS LOVE
 12.9.12.12.9.

Amazing Grace!

422

G G D7 Em C G G D G

1 A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears re-lieved;
 3 The Lord has prom-ised good to me, his word my hope se-cures;
 4 Through man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I have al - read - y come;
 5 When we've been there ten thou-sand years, bright shin - ing as the sun,

G G C G G Em G D7 G

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.
 how pre - cious did that grace ap - pear the hour I first be-lieved!
 he will my shield and por - tion be as long as life en-dures.
 'tis grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

WORDS: John Newton (1725-1807), alt.; vs. 5, anonymous
 MUSIC: Virginia Harmony, 1831; adapt. Edwin O. Excell (1851-1921)

NEW BRITAIN
 C.M.