



Wednesday, March 18, 2026
St. Mark's United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist
Landin Wakefield and Peter Grunwald, Readers

Our Mission is to help others deepen their relationship with God, become faithful followers of Christ, and to share the message of Christ's love with others.

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

In the Beauty of Holiness

Call to Worship:

Some of us come to worship tonight, weary and worn, heavy with all the circumstances that are too much to bear alone.

We gather to travel God's redemption road together.

Some of us come to worship today, dry and thirsty, longing for relief and peace from the troubles that surround us.

We gather in Christ's name that we might draw closer to God through him.

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Some of us come to worship today with stories to tell of little resurrections, moments of new life that sprang up when we least expected them.

May we be filled with the Holy Spirit even as it fills this sacred space and holy ground.

Beloved of God, whatever we bring with us to worship today, we are welcomed and called together as we travel God's redemption road together.

We gather to know God more deeply and to become the disciples he would have us be, truth-tellers and life-bringers as we travel God's redemption road together. Amen.

♪ Hymn: (#486)

Have Thine Own Way Lord

[Please be seated]

Prayer:

God of mercy, we come to you humbled and broken, seeking your breath of life and your gift of healing. Lead us to the place where our hopes lie buried and renew us in new life. Call forth our faith that, like Mary and Martha, we may know you to be the resurrection and the life, in this world and the world to come. **Amen.**

First Reading:

John 15:1-5 ESV, Landin Wakefield

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

UCC Statement of Faith:

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist

the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen

Second Reading:

John 5:1-16 ESV, Peter Grunwald

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.” But he answered them, “The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk.’” They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’” Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

Message: *The Bubbling Disturbance of Jesus’ Healing* Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

♪ **Hymn:** (#636)

Heal Me, Hands of Jesus

People’s Prayer:

Eternal God, in these moments of quiet we thank you for your presence in our lives. We thank you for all of the testimonies of your profound love for your children. We especially thank you this day for the holy one Jesus. We thank you for his humility. We thank you that rather than elevating himself above us he instead would lift us up and as with his disciples call us “friends.” We thank you for his many reminders that we are to love one another...

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as 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.

Offering:

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Savior, Thy Dying Love

Doxology: (#34) ~ *The offering is brought to the altar during the singing ~*

*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.*

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

God of joy, we offer our gifts this day, as we reflect on the wisdom of your Word. Jesus urges us to hold onto him, to stay connected to his example, presence, and the fulfillment he brings. He reveals that our joy finds completeness when it is woven into his divine joy. Help us abide in him through love, obeying his commandment to love one another. In acts of service, healing, and selfless generosity, may our joy be sustained, a shared and everlasting gift from the source of all joy. In Jesus' name, we pray. *Amen.*

♪ **Hymn of Sending:** (#390)

We're Marching to Zion

Benediction:

Go now, and bear fruit for God, fruit that will last.
As Christ has loved you, so love one another, and abide always in God is love,
that your joy may be complete.

And may God give you all you ask for in Christ's name;
May Christ Jesus reveal to you God's ways and call you his friends;
And may the Holy Spirit confirm the truth within you and make your joy complete.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, in all that you are, all that you do, and all that you will be. *God bless you!*

Postlude:

Postlude in E flat Major

COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS!

St. James UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School at St. James 9-10am every Sunday.

St. Mark's UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays..... 9:00 a.m.

2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays..... 10:30 a.m.

Lenten Worship:

Wed., March 25th, 7pm St. James

Palm Sunday, March 29th

(see box to the left for times)

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd,

7pm at St. James - Communion

Good Friday, April 3rd, 7pm at

St. Mark's ~ Communion

Easter Sunday, April 5th-Communion

(see box to left for times)