

*The United Methodist Church
12 Commerce Street
Clinton, CT*



February 22, 2026

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

*Please stand in body, and/or spirit

Welcome, Acknowledgements of first-time visitors and announcements

Words to Ponder:

"Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart."

Introit

"Jesus' Hands are Kind Hands"

Chancel Choir

*Call to Worship (Responsively)

Today, we follow Jesus into a wilderness full of isolation, fatigue, hunger, thirst, and temptation.

We follow, trusting in God's mercy.

We witness Jesus resist the siren calls of sensationalism, notoriety, and misuse of power for selfish gain.

We recognize God's mercy at work in the face of temptation.

We notice the angels who tend Jesus, messengers of care in a harsh and lonely place.

We pay attention to God's merciful presence that did not abandon Jesus and does not abandon us now.

We come to the wilderness together, clinging to the truth that we are not alone—God is with us.

We gather to worship God, whose unfailing mercy journeys with us into the wildernesses of our lives. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

No. 269

Opening Prayer (Unison)

Holy God, by the grace of Jesus Christ, you know the tests and trials we face.

Journey with us through this wilderness. Come to us with ministers of healing and visit us with messengers of hope, so that we may return to you in faith, believing the good news of the gospel; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Prayer of Yearning (Unison)

Just as Jesus faced temptations in the wilderness, we too struggle with desires for power, glory, or riches. Teach us to turn from these temptations and to turn toward the power of scripture and prayer. Center us in our faith. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Brief moment of silent reflection

Words of Assurance

Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

1st Scripture Reading (Old Testament)

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Leader: This is the Word of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

“All Things New” - Hagenberg

Chancel Choir

Children’s Moment

Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

*2nd Scripture Reading (Gospel)

Matthew 4:1-11

Leader: This is the Word of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Hymn

“Jesus, Tempted in the Desert”

No. 2105

Sermon

‘Know Who You Are’

Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Offertory

*Doxology

#95

*Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Surprising God of Mercy, you meet us in wilderness places and walk beside us through trial and temptation. Even when we feel alone, your grace is never far, your presence never absent. In this moment of giving, we offer not just our resources, but our trust that you are already at work, shaping us through challenge, strengthening us through sacrifice, and surrounding us with unseen angels. Use these gifts to bring hope where there is hunger, healing where there is pain, and light where there is despair. May what we give reflect our desire to walk more closely with you, even in the hard places. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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

“Amazing Grace”

No. 378

Benediction/Going Forth

Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

*Response

“Bless Us Now”

Frank Milnes

Bless us now as we depart, watch o'er us, God, while we're apart; Give strength to conquer daily strain, and bring us to Thy house again. Amen

Postlude

Flowers are from Deb Anderson "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". John 3:16

SUNDAY, FEB 22

9:00 Sunday School

10:00 Worship

11:00 Fellowship/Missions Meeting

MONDAY, FEB 23

2:30 Book Club

TUESDAY, FEB 24

10:00 Clever Crafters

7:00 Lenten Study Online

WEDNESDAY, FEB 25

9:30 TOPS

5:00 Community Supper

THURSDAY, FEB 26

10:00 Lenten Study

7:30 Choir

FRIDAY, FEB 27

5:30 AA meeting

February 22nd

Camera Operator: Banks Babjak

Video Coordinator: Dan Attanasio

Worship Leader: Michael Babjak

Lectionary scriptures: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7, Psalm 32 (UM766), Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Fellowship Hosts: Hales

Counters: Jackie Blomberg and Sally Maxwell

Music/Choir Director: Bob Hale

Organist: Patty Hurlburt

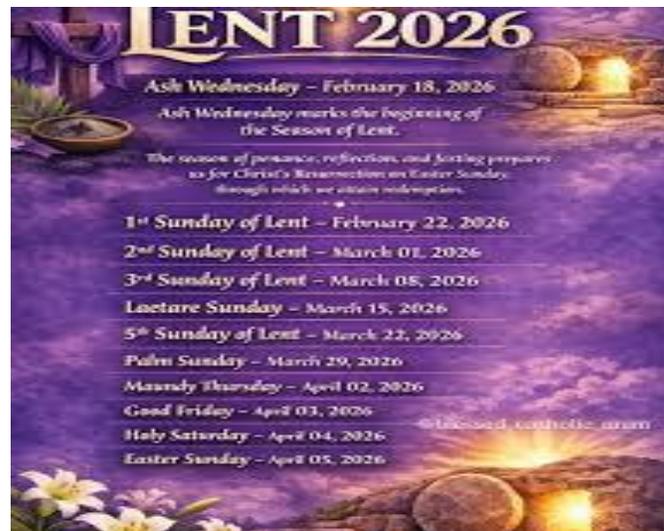
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Call to Worship - Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2025.

Opening Prayer - Adapted from the Presbyterian Church USA website, <https://pcusa.org/>. Re-posted <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/02/prayer-for-lent-1-b.html>.

Prayer of Confession & Words of Assurance - https://ministrymatters.com/2025-11-03_february_22_2026_first_sunday_in_lent/