



Rockville United Church
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ
1st Sunday of Lent
February 22, 2026 ~ Hybrid Worship

PRELUDE

CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

GATHERING MUSIC

Seven-fold Amen

*CALL TO WORSHIP

The good news of the gospel is:

manna in the desert,

water turned into wine,

love amid loss,

forgiveness after pain.

The good news of the gospel is:

release for the captive,

hope for the hopeless,

mourning turned to dancing,

and strangers turned to friends.

So come, let us gather.

This surprising good news is here for you.

Let us worship God.

*HYMN

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Chancel Hymnal, No. 16

Come thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;

streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.

Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.

Here I raise to thee an altar; hither by thy help I'm come;

and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;

he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

O to grace how great a debt—or daily I'm constrained to be!

Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.

Prone to wander, how I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

INVITATION TO PRAYER

God, your faithfulness to us is steadfast, and your goodness is unyielding.
You invite us deeper into relationship,
deeper into community, and deeper into faith.
Hear us now as we affirm our faith together.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table.
I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
I have seen it alive in the world.
And even when my heart aches,
even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach,
I remember the one who welcomed the children
and led with non-violence.
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.
I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world.
Thanks be to God. Amen.*

MOMENT OF SILENCE

CHORAL RESPONSE

Lead Me Lord

S. Wesley

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 30: 1-3, 11-12

I will extol you, O God, for you have drawn me up
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.
O God, my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
O God, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,
so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.
O God, my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

WORD FOR CHILDREN

Saturday
by Oge Mora

Pastor Jennifer

Following the “Word for Children,” we invite children (ages 3 years—5th grade) to attend a Sunday School class, dismissing to the classroom on the lower level through the front side door of the sanctuary. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany your child(ren) if you choose; please pick up children in their classroom following the worship service. Visitors are welcome.

Nursery care for infants through age 3 is available in the nursery on the lower level.
Our nursery caregiver is Caitlin Vredenburg. Our nursery helper is Donna Lalley.

ANTHEM

Wings for Morning

Parker

SCRIPTURE

John 2: 1-11

The Inclusive Bible

Three days later, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there. Jesus and his disciples had likewise been invited to the celebration. At a certain point, the wine ran out, and Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no wine.” Jesus replied, “Mother, what does that have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” She instructed those waiting on tables, “Do whatever he tells you.” As prescribed for Jewish ceremonial washings, there were six stone water jars on hand, each one holding between fifteen and twenty-five gallons. “Fill those jars with water,” Jesus said, and the servers filled them to the brim. “Now,” said Jesus, “draw some out and take it to the caterer.” They did as they were instructed. The caterer tasted the water—which had been turned into wine—without knowing where it had come from; the only ones who knew were those who were waiting on tables, since they had drawn the water. The caterer called the bride and groom over and remarked, “People usually serve the best wine first; then, when the guests have been drinking a while, a lesser vintage is served. What you’ve done is to keep the best wine until now!” Jesus performed this first of his signs at Cana in Galilee; in this way he revealed his glory, and the disciples believed in him.

Matthew 13:31-32

The Inclusive Bible

Jesus presented another parable to the crowds: “The kingdom of heaven is like the mustard seed which a farmer sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest shrub of all— it becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come to perch in its branches.”

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION *May the Words of My Mouth*

SERMON

“Good News in Surprising Change”

Rev. Jennifer Knutsen

***HYMN**

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts
(verses 1, 4, 5)

Chalice Hymnal, No. 101

Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts, thou fount of life, thou light of light,
greater than pleasure earth imparts, thy love is true and pure delight.

Our restless spirits yearn for thee, where'er our changeful lot is cast:
glad when thy gracious smile we see; blest when our faith can hold thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay; make all our moments calm and bright;
banish the sin of earth we pray; shed o'er the world thy holy light.

MORNING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Refrain: One: Holy One, in your mercy,

All: *Receive our prayers.*

THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TEACHES (unison)

Our Loving God 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 sins

as we forgive those who sin 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.*

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Our generosity is born out of our identity in a God whose love is unending and offered to all. In gratitude and joy, we are invited to share from our resource to spread equity and hope among all people.

Offertory **God We Give You Thanks and Praise**

*God, we give you thanks and praise,
God, we give you thanks and praise,
mercy and love you show us daily,
blessed always be your name.*

***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.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*Each thing we have received, from you it came, O God.
Each thing for which we hope, from your love it will be given.
Kindle in our hearts within a flame of love to our neighbors,
to our foes, to our friends, to our loved ones all,
from the lowliest thing that lives, to the name that is highest of all.
We dedicate ourselves and our offerings to you. Amen.*

Gaelic traditional, adapted from "For the Hands" Wild Goose Publications

***HYMN** **Where Restless Crowds Are Thronging** Chalice Hymnal, No. 672

Where restless crowds are thronging along the city ways,
where pride and greed and turmoil consume the fevered days,
where vain ambitions banish all thoughts of praise and prayer,
the people's spirits waver: but thou, O Christ, art there.

In scenes of want and sorrow and haunts of flagrant wrong,
in homes where kindness falters, and strife and fear are strong,
in busy streets of barter, in lonely thoroughfare,
the people's spirits languish: but thou, O Christ, art there.

O Christ, behold thy people; they press on every hand!
Bring light to all the cities of our beloved land.
May all our bitter striving give way to visions fair
of righteousness and justice: for thou, O Christ, art there.

***BENEDICTION**

As you leave this place, hold fast to what is good; go with the good news in your heart.

The good news of the gospel is love and justice; it is liberation and joy.

Go into the world to share this good news:

When you meet anger, speak with love.

When you meet fear, speak with hope.

When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.

When you meet hate, speak with courage.

We will carry Christ's love and peace into the world.

We will go to share the good news. Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Blessing

K.M. Bart

POSTLUDE

Liturgy adapted from prayers by Rev. Sarah A. Spead | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Cover image:

We Are Small, We Are Numerous, We Are Deep | Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

Thanks to our worship helpers today!

Liturgist: Suzanne Junod

Digital Host: John Junod

Greeters: Ed and Sue Peterson

Welcome Table: Elizabeth Cooper-Martin

Special thanks to Marc Donnelly for sharing his musical talents with us this morning.

Welcome to Rockville United Church!

We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. We trust that you will find RUC to be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a community that honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit our website, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors. I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.

*Blessings,
Rev. Jennifer Knutsen
jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org*

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.



Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.

RUC Staff

*Rev. Jennifer R. Knutsen, Senior Pastor
Rev. Guy S. Johnson, Associate Pastor
Jim Levy, Director of Music
Dalia Marciano, Administrative Coordinator
Lynne Brady, Communications Coordinator
Caitlin Vrendenburg, Nursery Coordinator
Juan Mendez, Sexton*



Rockville United Church

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(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)
Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light