

# Longswamp United Church of Christ

March 1, 2026 ~ 10:15 am

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Rev. Kimberly Berenotto, Pastor

Ministry Partners: Head Usher, Greeter- Charlene Rachor

Reader- Amy Riovo

## *2nd Sunday in Lent*

*\*Indicates to rise as you are able in body and spirit.*

### MUSIC PREPARES US FOR WORSHIP

### RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Gracious and glorious Lord, we come with questions on our hearts and in our minds.

**People: We come this day hoping to encounter Christ.**

Leader: We come with burdens; things only Jesus knows.

**People: We come seeking answers and healing.**

Leader: Through our worship today, may we open our hearts to all the ways God speaks.

**People: May our lives be strengthened for service.**

Leader: May we find openness and healing in our presence with one another.

**People: And may we rejoice together in the love of the Lord who created heaven and earth. Amen.**

#### \*HYMN

*To God Be the Glory*

#72

### CALL TO CONFESSION

#### CONFESSION

**All: God of the Journey, too often we are stubborn people. We want to know all the answers. We find it hard to place our trust even in your Son. When Jesus proclaims that we can have new life, we struggle to believe it's possible. We hold on too tightly to what no longer serves us, failing to open ourselves to a fresh start. How can we get rid of old burdens and hardships to discover new life?**

**Forgive us when we misunderstand Jesus' teachings. Forgive us when we don't believe new life is possible. Help us place our trust in God so we can believe in God's care and calling for us. For we ask this in Jesus' Name, Amen.**

### MOMENT OF SILENCE

#### LENTEN SUNG CONFESSIONAL RESPONSE

TUNE #486

***Unexpected and mysterious, is the gentle word of grace.***

***Everloving and sustaining, is the peace of God's embrace.***

***If we falter in our courage, and we doubt what we have known,***

***God is faithful to console us, as a mother tends her own.***

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: When we least expect it, new life is given to each of us!

**People: We place our trust in God and follow God's ways. Amen.**

#### \*PASSING THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

#### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

All children are welcome to come forward for the Children's Message. Afterwards, kids of all ages can follow our Children's Church leaders to our Sunday School program in the Education Building for stories, games, crafts, and more. We also welcome families to remain in worship if that is what works best for you!

#### HYMN

*I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

#506

#### RESPONSIVE READING (INSPIRED BY PSALM 4)

Leader: Answer me when I call to you, God.

**People: Give me relief from my distress; have mercy and hear my prayers.**

Leader: I know the Lord sets apart his faithful servants, and hears when they call.

**People: So I will search my heart, listen, and turn from sin.**

Leader: I will offer sacrifices and trust in the Lord.

**People: I will let the light of God's face shine on me.**

Leader: Fill my heart with joy, Holy One!

**People: In peace I will lie down and sleep.**

Leader: You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

**People: You alone are my God. Amen.**

#### SCRIPTURE READING

John 3:1-17

#### SPECIAL MUSIC

*"Blessed Assurance"*  
Glenn Fisher, flute

Knapp, arr. Gary Lanier

**PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE & 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 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.

**CALL TO OFFERING**

**OFFERING & MISSION MOMENT**

**\*DOXOLOGY #809**  
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God above, you heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**\*OFFERING PRAYER OF DEDICATION**  
**All:** Generous God, we dedicate our gifts in your holy name. May our offerings today bring light to the dark places of our world. May our giving bring newness of life to all those who feel stuck and alone. May all the ways we serve you show our commitment to seeking Christ in unexpected ways, unexpected places, and unexpected people. Amen.

**\*HYMN Praise Him! Praise Him! #96**

**\*BENEDICTION**

**CLOSING MUSIC Revive Us Again John J. Husband**

*Worship inspired by this week's liturgy on Ministry Matters by Nancy C. Townley. Confession sung response lyrics by Charles Ghose.*



## WELCOME TO LONGSWAMP UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST!

This is our Weekly Beacon- March 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Welcome to Lent at Longswamp UCC, where we will find ourselves face-to-face with the unexpected. You may have been surprised or even uncomfortable with the UFO on this season's bulletin - which is the point! Much of Jesus' preaching and teaching was absolutely shocking to the ancient community. Have we become too complacent and comfortable with our scriptures? Do we allow Jesus's words to move and change us? Each Sunday in Lent, Jesus will encounter people on the journey in unexpected ways, and so will we!

Join us next Sunday for Unexpected Encounters: Jesus heals the man born blind. Pastor Kim will be away so we will welcome Sue Lishman as our guest preacher. The Choir will be singing.

### Sharing Our Faith

**We will continue our Lent Bible Study, "Encountering God For Ourselves,"** on Wednesdays until April 1<sup>st</sup>. We have two times available—10:30am in the sanctuary or 7pm in Fegely Hall. Anyone is welcome to join us! See below for the topics each week! Please note, we will not have a Bible Study on March 11<sup>th</sup> due to Pastor Kim being away.

March 4 – Lectio Divina: Prayer as Discipline

March 11 – NO MEETING

March 18 – Meditation, Silence, & Standing on Pillars

March 25 – Fasting: Self Denial or Fad Diet

April 1 – A Modern Approach to Spiritual Practices

**Join us on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, from 12-2pm in Fegely Hall for the rescheduled Art Workshop with Board & Brush!** If you had signed up for the Folk Art Workshop that was scheduled for 1/25 but was cancelled due to the snow, your registration was automatically transferred over to our new date. There are many different projects available now and if you'd like to choose a different project, please email Pastor Kim. To sign up if you have NOT already signed up previously, please visit the "Upcoming Events" page of our website. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Kim or Maggie.

**Save the date for our annual Community Egg Hunt!** We always have our egg hunt on Palm Sunday, which is March 29<sup>th</sup> this year. Starting at 12pm, all are welcome to participate, from ages 0 to 100+!

### Teaching What We Believe

**Our Sunday School program, Children's Church,** runs weekly during the church service. After the Children's Message, kids are welcome to follow their teachers to the Preschool Room for a Bible lesson, crafts, games, and more. Children are also welcome to stay in worship with their families if that's what you prefer! Kids of all ages can also enjoy our Prayground in the front left of the sanctuary, which is a quiet play area for kids to fully engage in worship.

### Acting on Jesus' Teachings

**Our March local mission is the Community Easter Egg Hunt!** Our egg hunt is on March 29<sup>th</sup> this year and we need your help to make it happen! There are a few ways that you can use your time, talent, and treasure to make the Egg Hunt a success! We always need volunteers to help pack eggs. Bags of eggs are available in the narthex and can be taken home and filled. Please do NOT fill loose candy in the eggs, all candy must be wrapped in original packaging. We also need volunteers to help before, during, and after the egg hunt. We have jobs like hiding eggs prior to the egg hunt, setting up the tables and chairs, cooking hotdogs, delivering hot dogs, and cleaning up after the egg hunt that we'll need help with. If you're interested in any of these, please contact Pastor Kim or Maggie. Lastly, we always can use monetary donations to help offset the costs of food and supplies. If you have any questions, please contact the church office!

Looking ahead, we will once again be supporting **Church World Service** (hygiene kits, school kits, welcome backpacks, and blankets) by helping them fill Kids Kits. Our April 2026 mission will involve filling as many **Kids Kits** as possible with the required school supplies and then sending/delivering them to a Church World Service depot. More info about that will be available in the April newsletter. Currently, we are in need of a few members to help sew canvas tote bags [we'll give you specific instructions and fabric if needed]. Please contact Pastor Kim or Jill Shade ([jill.shade@longswampucc.org](mailto:jill.shade@longswampucc.org); 484-894-0636) no later than Sunday, March 22, 2026 if you're interested in helping in this way.

### Longswamp UCC Business

**The March edition of LUCC's monthly newsletter, The Beacon, is available in the narthex.** Make sure you grab your copy to see what's going on at LUCC and to look out for upcoming events!