

First United Methodist Church
of Shelton, Connecticut
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



March 1, 2026 | 2nd Sunday in Lent

Revised Common Lectionary Texts

Genesis 12:1-4a | Psalm 121 | Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 | John 3:1-17

Prelude: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

Scriven/Converse

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Prayer

***Call to Worship**

UMC Discipleship Ministries Resource

Leader: Children of God, in Lent we remember that our salvation is an unearned gift, that new life is a matter of faith, not of works.

People: We gather to lay down the burden of trying to earn our salvation.

L: Like Nicodemus, who met Jesus in the dark of night, we struggle to accept that new life is not just possible but given as a free gift of grace.

P: We gather to bring our struggles into the light and embrace God's grace with open arms.

L: Like Paul writing to the Romans, we remember God's promise of new life has always rested on grace.

P: We gather to receive the promise of salvation by grace through faith.

L: Like the many who have followed, questioned, and grown in the faith, we submit ourselves to be formed by grace as we work out our salvation day by day.

P: We gather as people guided by the promise of new life, a promise fulfilled by Christ, whose path we follow. Amen.

***Opening Hymn:** "To God be the Glory"

UMH 98

The Psalm: Psalm 121

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

New Testament Lesson: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message: "One for All"

Children's Hymn: "Jesus Loves Me"

UMH 191

***Gospel Lesson:** John 3:1-17

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection: "Take it on Faith"

Anthem: "What a Savior"

Hill

Prayers of the People/ Pastoral Prayer

Passing of the Peace

Recognition of Lay Persons' Service: Pat Fitzsimmons, Bob & Ann Singletary, Bob Wood

Invitation To Offer Our Gifts

Offertory: "Nearer the Cross"

L. Shackley

***Presenting Our Gifts:** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow." UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

UMC Discipleship Ministries

Faithful God of New Beginnings, you call us, as you called Abraham, to trust in what we cannot yet see, to follow where you lead, even when the road is unclear. In the shadows of our questions and the uncertainty of our understanding, you meet us with grace, not

condemnation. As Nicodemus discovered, your love is not earned but freely given. Receive now these gifts we offer—not as payment or proof, but as signs of our belief, our hope, and our gratitude. Use them to share your transforming love with a world still searching in the dark. In the name of your Son, given in love, we pray. Amen.

Hymn of Preparation: "Eat this Bread" (x2)

UMH 628

Holy Communion

UMH Page 13

Invitation by the Pastor

Confession (Unison)

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

Silent Confessional Prayer & Words of Assurance

Leader: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. That proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

ALL: Glory to God. AMEN.

Preparing the Bread and Cup

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*The pastor gives thanks appropriate to the occasion and concludes:
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled. The pastor concludes:

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit concluding:

All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking the Bread / Giving the Bread and Cup

Thanksgiving Prayer following Holy Communion

***Sending Hymn:** "Lift High the Cross"

UMH 159

Benediction

Postlude: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Watts/Miller

*Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lent (and Easter) Community Activities - - Please Join

Thanks to all who helped and participated in our community dinner Thursday evening. There are more activities for Lent to come. All are ecumenical community events with Huntington UMC and Huntington Congregational Church UCC. **Theme: "Lessons in the Wilderness"**

Wednesday, March 11 at 6:00 PM: Community Dinner at Huntington Congregational Church (19 Church Street) followed by a brief devotional.

Wednesday, March 25 at 7:00 PM: Community devotional and dessert at Wesley Heights at Masonicare (580 Long Hill Ave.)

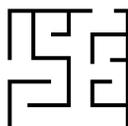
Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 AM at Jones Farm

Liturgists Needed

We have plenty of open slots for liturgists on our calendar starting in April. If you have been waiting for your chance, here it is! Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex. All ages are welcome to take a turn as liturgist. Thank you for taking this opportunity to serve. **Thanks to all** who responded to fill our March worship services.

Missions Support

Gardner Heights – Puzzle Books: This is an ongoing effort. All donations are welcome. Crosswords, word search, Sudoku, and mixed books are great and so appreciated by Gardner Heights residents.



The Coming Weeks:

Thursday, March 5: Leadership Board meeting in the Giffin Room at 7 PM.

Sunday, March 8: Sunday worship at 10:00 AM. The 3rd Sunday in Lent. Daylight Saving Time begins (spring forward).

Saturday, March 14: Messy Church starting at 4:30. ALL are welcome.

Messy Church

We continue to grow and refine Messy Church. If you would like to help, please see Pastor Bill and Elaine Wood for more information. Messy Church meets on the second Saturday of each month.

Food Pantry Needs:

We are almost empty of all food other than the Outreach Program items that are our foundation. Anything you can add to our Blessing Box will be more than appreciated. It will be a blessing to others! We can always use the following:

- pasta & rice
- hot & cold cereal
- packaged/canned milk
- fruit/vegetable juice
- canned/packaged protein (tuna, chicken)
- beans (black bean, chickpeas)
- canned/packaged soup
- canned packaged fruit
- pasta sauce
- peanut butter & jams/jellies/preserves
- canned chili
- canned pasta

Thank you for all your donations!

TO REACH PASTOR BILL

Please call or text 475-282-2800. He may also be reached via email: pastor@umcshelton.org. His office hours at the church office are Mondays and Fridays from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm (but may vary).

WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

An email newsletter is sent out each Wednesday. Please have any items for submission to the church office by Wednesday at 9 am.

SERVING TODAY:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Lynn Scully, Music Director
Joe McWilliams, Pianist Organist
Hector Aguilan, Liturgist
Sal Iorfino, Video & Sound Tech

CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Lynn Scully, Music Director
Leadership Board: Chris Craft, Kim Dumschott, Suzena James, Linda Loglisci,
Ken Miller, Jorge Varas, Raechel Vargas, Elaine Wood, Bob Yamnicky

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship and our church community. We are so glad you are here. We invite you to participate in the service as much as you feel comfortable and to sit out parts of the service you might not yet feel comfortable with. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, you are welcome here. As our "Welcoming Statement" says, "We welcome **all** to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church."

(see below for complete "Welcome" and "Mission" statements)

**SUNDAY WORSHIP // 10:00 also live-streamed & recorded
Fellowship 11:00 am**

Welcoming Church Statement

A welcoming family of God committed to becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

We affirm and respect each individual as a child of God. We celebrate the uniqueness of each person and welcome people of every age, ethnicity, and race, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, socio-economic situation, and physical/mental ability.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to create a community of faith that reflects Christ's message of love and justice. We invite all to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church in Christ.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SHELTON

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To God Be the Glory UMH 98

To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!
Oh, come to the Father, thru Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done!

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing thru Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Jesus Loves Me UMH 191

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

Refrain:

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

Jesus loves me! This I know,
as he loved so long ago,
taking children on his knee,
saying, "Let them come to me."

Jesus loves me still today,
walking with me on my way,
wanting as a friend to give
light and love to all who live.

Eat this Bread (x2) UMH 628

Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst.

Lift High the Cross UMH 159

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

Come, Christians, follow this triumphant sign.
The hosts of God in unity combine.

Each newborn servant of the Crucified
bears on the brow the seal of him who died.

O Lord, once lifted on this glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw the world to thee.

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory.