



# Wilbraham United Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ  
and the United Methodist Church*

**500 Main Street**

**Wilbraham MA 01095**

Phone: (413)596-2511

[www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org](http://www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org)

[Facebook.com/WilbrahamUnitedChurch](https://Facebook.com/WilbrahamUnitedChurch)

**March 19, 2023**

**4th Sunday in Lent**

**10:00AM**

## **GATHERING MUSIC**

Praise Band

Bells: *Jacob's Ladder*

Spiritual, arr. K. McChesney

## **WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Rae Teed**

One: Come and see what God has done:

**All: Once we were no people, but now we are God's people!**

One: Come and see what God is doing:

**All: As God's own, we gather today as part of Christ's body!**

One: Come and be part of what God will do:

**All: Whether in joy or in sorrow, we will proclaim God's steadfast love!**

**\*GATHERING HYMN # 57 (UMH)**

*O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

## **UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER**

God of promise, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole hearts, nor honored our neighbors as much as our own plans. We have excused ourselves from risk-taking in your name. We have not opened our broken hearts for fear of losing the pieces. Repair the ruined places in our lives with forgiveness and promise. And hear us now as we pray in the words Jesus taught:

**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.**

## **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

One: We are the people of your promise who are offered a chance to praise. We give you thanks that we are forgiven.

**ALL: Thanks be to God, Amen!**

## **RESPONSIVE PSALM (from the Grail Psalter)**

**Psalm #121**

One: I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall come my help?

**ALL: My help shall come from the Lord who made heaven and earth.**

One: May God never allow you to stumble! Let your guard not sleep.

**ALL: Behold, neither sleeping nor slumbering, Israel's guard.**

One: The Lord is your guard and your shade; and stands at your right.

**ALL: By day the sun shall not smite you nor the moon in the night.**

One: The Lord will guard you from all evil, and will guard your soul.

**ALL: The Lord will guard your going and coming both now and forever. AMEN**

**\*SONG OF PRAISE #2029 (FWS)**

*Praise to the Lord, all of you, God's servants.*

*Blessed be the name of our God now and ever.*

*From the rising of the sun*

*May the Lord be praised. Praise to the name of the Lord!*

**\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MOMENTS FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES**

**HEBREW SCRIPTURE**

Numbers 21:4-9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom, but the people became discouraged on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

**GOSPEL READING**

John 3:1-16

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

**SERMON**

*Alternative Medicine*

Rev. Susan Tarantino

**HYMN # 267 (UMH)**

*O Love, How Deep Verses. 1-4*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

**Sung Response**

*Breath of God, Breath of peace, Breath of love, Breath of life,  
Breath of justice, Breath of passion, Breath creating, Breath of healing,  
Breath of singing, Breath of praying, Come upon us, come restore us,  
Come inspire us, Breath of God.*

**OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES**

Invitation to Give

Offertory Chancel Choir: *Way Down Deep in My Soul*

E. Rentz

**\*Doxology #87 vs. 4 (UMH)**

*This gift we now bring, this present, this token,  
These words can convey it, the joy of this day!  
When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,  
This song we now offer in honor and praise!*

\*Prayer of Dedication

**\*PARTING HYMN # 2083 (FWS)**

*My Song Is Love Unknown*

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 666 (UMH)**

*Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.  
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.*

**FOLLOWING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD**

**MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH** Piano: *I Love to Tell the Story* W.G. Fischer, arr. L. Larson

*\*All who are able to stand, may do so.*

*The altar flowers this morning are given to the Glory of God*

**Welcome Visitors!** *Is this your first visit to United Church? Please sign a Pew Card. Immediately after the service, we invite you to continue down the central hallway and join us for Fellowship and Refreshment in our Fellowship Hall.*

### **MINISTERING TO YOU TODAY**

**Preaching Today:** Rev. Susan Tarantino

**Music Director:** Roberta Morkin

**Technical and Artistic Directors:** Deb Trimble and Don Schmidt

**Ushers:** John Colkos and Biff Simpson

**Liturgist:** Rae Teed

**Greeters:** Frias Family



**Please Pray For:** the family of Helene Pickett, Phyllis Walsh, Theresa Munn, Daniel, Catherine, Lynne, Terry, Ray, Theresa, Ann, Jane Godfrey, Shey McAbee, Sharon McAbee, Patti Keiser, Sue Pereira, The victims of violence and their families in our country. Our troops, our country and our world.



### **“News for the Pews” for the Week of March 19, 2023**

**Pastoral Coverage:** The WUC Call to Care team will continue with all routine supportive care and outreach to our members and friends in need. For coverage from March 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> please contact Kathy Timpson: 413-535-9184 (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>) or the church office.

**Easter Flower order forms** are available in the Narthex. Flower orders may be dropped in the church office or given to Edna Colcord.

This morning we are accepting offerings for the **One Great Hour of Sharing**. Our donation helps us be responsive to hunger issues, no matter the cause, both locally and globally. Make a world of difference! Please mark your offering as a donation to OGHS.

Following Worship this morning any who are interested in learning about the **Communion** preparation and service are welcome to stay for a brief information session in the Sanctuary.

**Holy Week** will soon be upon us. The Rev. Marisa Brown Ludwig will lead us in worship for all three services. Our worship schedule is as follows:

**April 2** at 10 AM – Palm/Passion Sunday – We will be asking the children and any adults who wish to process throughout the Sanctuary with their palms during our opening hymn. This is a Communion service. There will be no church school, but a special children's activity will be available in the Zeckhausen Room during the worship for those who need an alternative.

**April 6** at 7:30 PM – Maundy Thursday and Tenebrae

**April 9** at 10 AM – Easter Sunday followed by our traditional Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn for our children. There will be no coffee hour.

### **Wilbraham United Church Staff**

<b>Deb Trimble:</b>	Administrator ( <a href="mailto:admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org">admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org</a> ) (413)596-2511 x100
<b>Bobbie Morkin:</b>	Music Director ( <a href="mailto:musicdirector@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org">musicdirector@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org</a> ) (413)596-2511 x106
<b>Eric True:</b>	Custodian ( <a href="mailto:wucbuilding@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org">wucbuilding@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org</a> ) (413)596-2511 x107



Candy items may be dropped off on Sunday in the Christian Ed Office or during the week in the Church Office.

WELCOME TO OUR GUEST PASTOR

## REV. SUSAN TARANTINO

I am a second-career pastor with 3 years of local church leadership and 11 of hospice chaplaincy. Prior to ministry, almost 30 years of experience as a physical therapist in a variety of settings. Between my 2 vocations I have 20 years in home health, where one has to be able to connect quickly and assess needs. I don't mind being called at short notice, but always appreciate opportunity to plan/collaborate

## Pancake Supper And Community Service Project



Join us for an evening of fun and community service assembling Women's Hygiene Kits to support Church World Service.

**Wilbraham United Church  
March 25th 5:00 to 7:00**

*A Wilbraham United Players Production*

## Little Women

THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

BOOK BY ALLAN KNEE

MUSIC BY JASON HOWLAND

LYRICS BY MINDI DICKSTEIN

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY LOUISA MAY ALCOTT



**APRIL 21 - 30, 2023**

FELLOWSHIP HALL STAGE  
WILBRAHAM UNITED CHURCH  
500 MAIN STREET  
WILBRAHAM, MA

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE  
[WWW.WILBRAHAMUNITEDPLAYERS.ORG](http://WWW.WILBRAHAMUNITEDPLAYERS.ORG)

## Women's Hygiene Kit

- 1 gallon Ziploc bags
- Small Ziploc bags
- 2 oz bottle hand sanitizer
- 4 gallon bathroom trash bags
- Wet Ones travel pack
- Regular unscented tampons
- Super Absorbency unscented tampons
- Long super ultra-thin unscented sanitary napkins
- 3oz or larger bath-size bar of soap in the original package (No Ivory or Jergen's soap.)
- Unscented pack of flushable wipes- 42 count
- Laundry detergent sheets

## ***This Week at Wilbraham United Church***

### **Sunday, March 19, 2023**

**10:00 a.m. - Worship**

**11:00 a.m. – Fellowship**

**11:30 a.m. – Communion Training (Sanc.)**

**12:00 p.m. - Church Without Walls**

**1:00 p.m. – WUP (FH)**

**5:00 p.m. - Al- Anon (YR)**

### **Monday, March 20, 2023**

*Church Office open 8:30 - 1:30*

**10:00 a.m. – Piecemakers**

**7:00 p.m. – WUP (FH)**

**7:00 p.m. – Church Council (Zeck)**

**7:00 p.m. – PTO Meeting**

### **Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

*Church Office open 8:30 – 1:30*

**7:00 p.m. – WUP (FH)**

### **Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

*Church Office open 12:00 – 5:00*

**6:00 p.m. - Al-Anon (YR)**

**6:30 p.m. - Boy Scouts – (SS Rooms)**

**7:00 p.m. – WUP (FH)**

### **Thursday, March 23, 2023**

*Church Office open 8:30 – 1:30*

**6:30 p.m. - Al-Anon (YR)**

**7:00 p.m. - Bell Choir (Sanc.)**

**8:00 p.m. - Chancel Choir (CR)**

### **Saturday, March 25, 2023**

**9:00 a.m. – WUP (FH)**

**10:00 a.m. – Jr. Choir (CR)**

**5:00 p.m. – Family Pancake Event (FH)**

## READ IT

This week's Bible story is  
**Pool of Siloam**  
from John 9:1-41.



### Jesus opens our eyes and brings us light.

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Mud
- Pharisees
- Blind
- Light
- Sin

Blindness was common in Bible times. One cause was a sickness that hurt people's eyes. The dry, sandy air in the place where they lived made this eye condition worse. Most people don't have this sickness today, but we have a long name for it—ophthalmic conjunctivitis. Try saying that three times fast!

### Read the whole story together in the Bible!

*Spark Story Bible* pages 432-435

*Spark Bible* pages 1183-1185

### Family Prayer

Jesus, thank you for our sight,  
Jesus, love us day and night,  
We live our life by your great light.  
Amen.

## TALK ABOUT IT



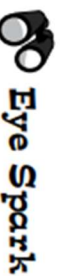
### Family Conversations

1 What's something you have a hard time understanding? Who might help you to understand better?

2 Have you ever tried to tell someone about Jesus who didn't want to hear? What did you do when they wouldn't listen?

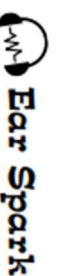
3 If you were blind, what part of God's world would you miss seeing most?

4 Find a nice place in a yard or a park and lay down in the grass. Look up at the clouds and try to find cloud pictures that remind you of Jesus or stories Jesus told in the Bible.



### Eye Spark

When you see a pond, lake, or river, remember the blind man at the pool. Move your hands over your eyes, as if you are washing them. Say, "Jesus, help me to see you better."



### Ear Spark

When you hear water running in your house, think about how the blind man washed the mud away. How can you wash away something Jesus wouldn't like in your life?

## LIVE IT

### For families to do together

On a warm day, use a hose to create mud in your yard. Finger paint with mud, drawing designs on each others' arms, faces, and legs. Take turns rinsing each other off with a hose.

### For younger kids

Make mud pie eye snacks for your family. Ask an adult to help you gather ingredients. Put chocolate sandwich cookies in a sandwich bag and smash with plastic cup. Mix cookies and cream cheese in a bowl. Smash small balls of the mix into small pies and place on a plate. Put a gum drop or other colorful candy in the center of each pie to create an eye. Share your eye snacks with your family.

### For older kids

Find a version of Amazing Grace online that you enjoy. Download and share with your family. Listen carefully for lyrics about being blind.

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