



Wilbraham United Church
"I am the vine, you are the branches."

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

Facebook.com/WilbrahamUnitedChurch

March 30, 2025

4th Sunday in Lent

10:00AM

We ask that everyone wear nametags so that we can be welcoming to all. There are listening devices available for those that may need them. An usher will be happy to assist you. Following the service, everyone is invited to our time of refreshments and friendship in our Zeckhausen Room which is immediately across from the sanctuary.

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Piano: Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

arr. L. Shackley

Bells: Give me Jesus

arr. L. Larson

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST WELCOME

***GATHERING HYMN #451 (UMH)**

Be Thou My Vision

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Mantler

Liturgist: We come here this day to wait upon the Lord, sharing the joy and goodness of discipleship. We journey forward with honesty and alertness, so that we do not fall down along the way.

People: We gather to worship and to give thanks to the One who provides our spiritual nourishment. We ask the Lord's help as we strive to be true to our Christian faith, and as we move to share that faith with those whom we meet. Thanks be to God

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Holy God, As we journey further into this Lenten season, may we find the wisdom and strength to equip ourselves well, with a firm hand and a sturdy trust in You. Although we may be uncertain at times, your steadfast love for us and our continual faith in you binds us together, bears us up and makes us glad. Please continue to draw us out from our doubt and difficult times, and in our worship let us know that you dwell with us for Always. Amen

*** SONG OF PRAISE #2013 (TFWS)**

*Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord my soul who leads me into life.*

***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

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Joshua 5: 9-12

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal, they kept the Passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and roasted grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

2 Corinthians: 5: 16-21

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we no longer know him in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Sung Response #2200 (TFWS)

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come, and listen to me.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 1-3, 11-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ ’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Unexpected Grace

Rev. Janet

*HYMN see insert

How Deep the Silence of the Soul

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

Invitation to Give

Offertory

A Lenten Consecration
Chancel Choir

M.K. Beall

***Doxology #87 (UMH) vs. 1**

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

*Prayer of Dedication

***PARTING HYMN #465 (UMH)**

Holy Spirit, Truth Divine

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

***BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #664 (UMH)**

*Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.
The service is ended, O now be extended
the fruits of our worship in all who believe.*

MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH

Organ: Recessional on "To God Be the Glory"

arr. D.E. Wagner

Welcome Visitors! *Is this your first visit to United Church? If you wish to be contacted by a member of the church or our pastor, please leave your contact information with one of the ushers or place a visitor card in the collection plate. We invite you to join us in our time of Fellowship after the service. Our ushers or a member of the ministry team will be happy to accompany you and help you find your way!*

*UMH – The "red" United Methodist Hymnal
TFWS – The "small black" book Faith We Sing Hymnal*

MINISTERING TO YOU TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Janet Sandquist-Skagerlind

Music Director: Roberta Morkin

Technical and Artistic Director: Deb Trimble

Ushers: Ralph & Sherrie Ridgeway

Liturgist: Bob Mantler

Greeter: Sandy Harris



The altar flowers this morning are given in loving memory Bob and Eleanor Welch from the Lyman and Ryan families.



Please Pray For: Susan Pereira, Catherine Tucker, Connie Law, Shey McAbee, Michelle McBride, Sharon McAbee, Jim Trimble, Bill McCullough, Catherine Gardner, Larry Harris, David Pierangelo, The victims of violence and their families in our country. Our troops, our country and our world.

If you are in need of Pastoral Care, please contact Rev. Janet or the Church Office. After office hours, Rev. Janet can be reached at (978)350-3463.

Wilbraham United Church Staff

Rev. Janet Sandquist- Skagerlind: Pastor (pastor@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x 103
Deb Trimble: Administrator (admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x100
Bobbie Morkin: Music Director (musicdirector@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x106

“News for the Pews” for the Week of March 30, 2025

The Discipleship Team is accepting donations of individually wrapped candy to stuff the eggs for our **Annual Easter Egg Hunt**. Donations can be dropped off in the church office or given to a member of the Discipleship Team.

The next meeting for **Work of the Interim** will be held after church this morning in the Zeckhausen Room. We invite everyone to partake in the discussion that will help lead us forward in our next steps as a church.

This morning we receive the **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**. Envelopes are available in the pews if you wish to make a donation.

A WILBRAHAM UNITED PLAYERS PRODUCTION

CABARET

BOOK BY JOE MASTEROFF
BASED ON THE PLAY BY JOHN VAN DRUTEN AND
STORIES BY CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD
MUSIC BY JOHN KANDER LYRICS BY FRED EBB

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

MARCH 28, 29 AND APRIL 4, 5 AT 7:30
MARCH 30 AND APRIL 6 AT 2:30
2025

TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED AT WWW.WILBRAHAMUNITEDPLAYERS.ORG/BUY-TICKETS

CABARET IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS ON BEHALF OF TAMS-WITHMARK LLC.
WWW.CONCORDTHEATRICALS.COM

How Deep the Silence of the Soul

509

Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1989

1 How deep the si - lence of the soul that lives with-in your grace.
2 Like un - seen chimes on mov-ing air, like warm and morn-ing sun,

How full the grat - i - tude of heart in your a - bid - ing place.
Like glad-dening, green - ing, grow-ing things, like trees with blooms be - gun.

What rich se - ren - i - ty is found, what cour - age and re - lease
Such is your pres - ence in our lives, you touch with-out a trace,

when wis - dom teach - es us to seek the gen-tle path to peace.
un - til we turn and find our-selves held fast in your em - brace.

This hymn by Sylvia Dunstan, entitled "Morning Meditation," recounts the Canadian writer's experience one February when she left cold, snowy Toronto to visit her mother in California. There she enjoyed meditating in the garden that was abloom with camellias.

Tune: TALLIS' THIRD TUNE C.M.D.
Thomas Tallis, c. 1557
For another key, see 178

This Week at Wilbraham United Church

Sunday, March 30, 2025

- 10:00 a.m. – Worship
11:15 a.m. – Junior Choir (CR)
11:15 a.m. – Fellowship Time (ZR)
11:15 a.m. – Work of the Interim (ZR)
2:30 p.m. – WUP Performance

5:00 p.m. – Al-Anon (YR)

Monday, March 31, 2025

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

- 10:00 a.m. – Piece Makers
12:30 p.m. – Fellowship Comm. (ZR)

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

2:00 p.m. – Bible Study (ZR)

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

- 11:00 a.m. – Staff Meeting
6:00 p.m. – Boy Scouts (TS, SSR)
7:00 p.m. – WUP (FH)
7:00 p.m. – Praise Band (Sanc)

Thursday, April 3, 2025

- Church Office 8:30 – 1:30*
6:30 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)
7:00 p.m. – Bell Choir (Sanc)
8:00 p.m. – Chancel Choir (Sanc)

Friday, April 4, 2025

Church Office closed

7:30 p.m. – WUP Performance

Saturday, April 5, 2025

Church Office closed

7:30 p.m. – WUP Performance

Sunday, April 6, 2025

- 10:00 a.m. – Worship
11:15 a.m. – Junior Choir (CR)
11:15 a.m. – Fellowship Time (ZR)
2:30 p.m. – WUP Performance
5:00 p.m. – Al-Anon (YR)



Roof Repair Fund

In a brief meeting after worship on March 23rd, our Moderator updated the congregation with the information that the Church Council has recommended the church's roof undergo a badly needed replacement.

This project is estimated to cost slightly over \$78,000 which will be mostly funded by a bequest from the estate of Herb Vieira. In addition, the budgeted Endowment allotment for Building Maintenance of \$10,000 will be applied to the cost. The remaining approximately \$17,000 will need to be raised by donations and other fund-raising efforts. We're hoping that individual members will donate to the project cost. If you would like to help with the cost, you can either make out a check to the church and notate it for the **Roof Repair Fund**, or donate online on the church's website giving page.

Our current donation total for this project is already \$1075! Only \$16,000 to go!

READ IT

This week's Bible story is
The Prodigal Son

from Luke 15:1-3, 11-32.



Lent 4

God loves everyone, always and no matter what!

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Father
- Older son
- Younger son
- Pigs
- Party

The story of the Prodigal Son is told in Chapter 15 of Luke. Every story in Chapter 15 is about lost things — a lost sheep, a lost coin, a lost son! In each of the stories, the “lost one” is searched for or waited for, even when that searching or waiting seemed like a waste of time. This is how God loves us — searching for us with longing and determination, loving us no matter what.

Read the whole story together in the Bible!

Spark Story Bible pages 378-383

Spark Bible pages 1153-1154

Family Prayer

Say this prayer with everyone wearing a party hat.

Thank you, God, for searching for us and waiting for us. Thank you for finding us and loving us always and no matter what! AMEN.

TALK ABOUT IT



Family Conversations

1 How do you know when somebody loves you? How do you show someone you love them?

2 How would you feel if you were the younger brother in this story? The older brother?

3 How is the father in this story like God?

4 Have fun retelling this story in the car. Have one person start “Jesus told a story about a man who had two sons. The younger one said...” Then have the next person continue the story. Add in descriptions of the story’s characters, the parties, and the pigsty. Ask questions of each other like “What do you think he looked like?” “What do you think they ate?” Make the story as imaginative as you can.



Eye Spark

Whenever you see a heart, remember that God loves everyone — always and no matter what!



Ear Spark

When you hear noises from a big joyful gathering of people (at church, the playground, a party, etc.), remember this story’s party for the son who was lost and then found.

LIVE IT

For families to do together

Have a Lost and Found party! Play Hide and Seek, eat party food, and dance. Make party favors that say “God loves you always and no matter what!” and then use them to surprise someone.

For younger kids

Play a lost and found game! Take turns hiding something from the story, like a ring, a stuffed pig, or fancy party clothes. Then have everyone look for it. When you find it, put on some lively music and dance to celebrate!

For older kids

Put together a picture scavenger or treasure hunt. Take photos or draw pictures of things in your home or neighborhood. Invite friends and family go for a hunt to find what is in the photos or pictures. Each one can lead to another clue, or certain things can be found and put together to solve a puzzle. Have fun with it!

