

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



FIRST SUNDAY
OF
LENT

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

Meditation

“What you have made me see; answered the Lady, is as plain as the sky, but I never saw it before. Yet it has happened every day. One goes into the forest to pick food and already the thought of one fruit rather than another has grown up in one’s mind. Then, may it be, one finds a different fruit and not the fruit one thought of. One joy was expected and another is given. But this I had never noticed before—that the very moment of the finding there is in the mind a kind of thrusting back, or setting aside. The picture of the fruit you have not found is still, for a moment, before you. And if you wished—if it were possible to wish—you could keep it there. You could send your soul after the good you had expected, instead of turning it to the good you had got. You could refuse the real good; you could make the real fruit taste insipid by thinking of the other.”

— C.S. Lewis

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Melinda Veatch

PRELUDE

Instrumental

Katy Kristoffersen

CALL TO WORSHIP

Angela Todd

Leader: We do not know what the week will bring.

People: But we trust in the One who walks beside us.

Leader: We are not promised certainty.

People: But we are promised presence.

Leader: So we gather in hope.

People: And we worship the God who holds tomorrow.

OPENING PRAYER

Angela Todd

WELCOMING SONG*

Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights
(James Gertmenian, words; *Musikalisches Handbuch*, 1690)

Congregation

Hymn No. 250

Verses 1-4

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM**I Choose Love***(Mark A. Miller)*

UCSJ Choir

Mike Kristoffersen, string bass

*In the midst of pain, I choose love.
In the midst of pain, sorrow falling down like rain,
I await the sun again, I choose love.*

*In the midst of war, I choose peace.
In the midst of war, hate and anger keeping score,
I will seek the good once more, I choose peace.*

*When my world falls down, I will rise.
When my world falls down, explanations can't be found,
I will climb to holy ground, I will rise.*

*In the midst of pain, I choose love.
In the midst of pain, sorrow falling down like rain, I await the sun again, I choose love.
I choose love.*

SCRIPTURE READING**Matthew 4:1-11**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON**Beyond Expectation**

Pastor Melinda Veatch

RESPONSIVE SONG**Be Thou My Vision**

Congregation

*(Irish hymn, 8th c.)***Hymn No. 502****All Verses****RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS***Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.*

Pastor Melinda Veatch

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Pastor Melinda Veatch

DOXOLOGY*

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Angela Todd and Pastor Melinda Veatch

The 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 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.

CLOSING SONG***In the Cross of Christ I Glory**

Congregation

*(Carl P. Daw Jr., words; Leavitt's The Christian Lyre, 1830)***Hymn No. 264****All Verses****CLOSING PRAYER**

Angela Todd

POSTLUDE**Instrumental**

Katy Kristoffersen

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Pastor Melinda Veatch

OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.

WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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