



Matthew 4:1-11 • illustratedministry.com

St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, PA
February 22, 2026

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT: ROOTED RESISTANCE

*Please stand in body or in spirit

GATHERING SONG

"This is the Day"

UNISON WELCOME

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

from The Work of Imagination

Come into God's presence, you who imagine and you who seek, you who disrupt and you who repair.

By the Spirit, we gather in hope.

Come into God's presence, you who live in this wide and wild world, navigating beauty and uncertainty, temptation and trial.

In Christ, we gather as children of God.

Come into God's presence, singing for joy and for justice; bringing prayer and worship, your most faithful acts of resistance.

To God be the glory! We gather to praise!

***HYMN #418**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

CALL TO CONFESSION

from The Work of Imagination

Siblings in Christ, let us confess our sins to God, for God knows our weaknesses and choices, and yet imagines for us a life of wholeness and peace.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

from The Work of Imagination

Loving God, we confess that when the wilderness feels too chaotic, and the earth beneath our feet seems to shift with change, we fall easily into despair. **We forget to hope. We neglect to dream. We imagine paths of doom instead of journeys to glory. We panic, even as your Spirit holds steady within and around us. Help us to trust, to hope, to dream, and to walk forward in faith. And when the fears set in, help us to find support in the strength of community. Amen.**

KYRIE

Hymnal Companion C-4

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

from The Work of Imagination

Beloved, God knows our anxiety, our aversion to discomfort, and our fears about the future. God equips us with hope to carry us through. Receive this free gift of grace and be at peace. Amen.

***GLORY BE TO THE FATHER #704**

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

As we walk through the wild wilderness of Lent, we imagine a world where all creation is at peace. We imagine a world without war, where creation flourishes and children are safe. Let these dreams of peace begin here as we share the peace of Christ with one another. May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 29:1-9; Matthew 4:1-11

RESPONSIVE READING

"Lord, Lord, Open Unto Me" by Howard Thurman

Open unto me – light for my darkness.

Open unto me – courage for my fear.

Open unto me – hope for my despair.

Open unto me – peace for my turmoil.

Open unto me – joy for my sorrow.

Open unto me – strength for my weakness.

Open unto me – wisdom for my confusion.

Open unto me – forgiveness for my sins.

Open unto me – tenderness for my toughness.

Open unto me – love for my hates.

Open unto me – Thy self for my self.

Lord, Lord, open unto me!

ANTHEM

"Amazing Grace"
Marcella Diehl - oboe

setting by John Leavitt, Jr.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Roxanne Davenport

Children's Corner will be offered following the Children's Message

STEP SHOW PRESENTATION

NETWork Ministries Step Teams

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

INVITATION TO GIVING

OFFERTORY

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" v. 4

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

from The Work of Imagination

Generous God, we bring our gifts before you and your church like tiny seeds from a

dandelion. Send out these gifts on the mighty wind of your Spirit, bringing growth, bearing fruit, and nourishing both our faith community and our neighbors. May each gift of every size bloom with your holy imagination. Amen.

***HYMN #677**

"When We Are Tested"

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

from The Work of Imagination

Let us affirm our faith as we participate in the holy work of imagination.

We believe no wilderness is so dense that the Good Shepherd cannot find us.

We believe no ocean is so vast that we cannot be saved from its depths.

We believe no enemy is so strong that we cannot be rescued from its grasp.

We believe no shame is so great that our liberator cannot free us.

We believe no law is so rigid that it keeps us from grace.

We believe no person is so powerful that they can rob us of our dignity.

We believe no situation is so dire that we cannot find hope together, in community.

We believe we are wholly loved, worthy of care, and safe in the palm of God's hand.

***CHARGE & BENEDICTION**

from The Work of Imagination

POSTLUDE (seated)

The "Nursery Nook in the Narthex" quiet area and infant/toddler space in the Parlor are available for children and families to use during worship. Age-appropriate activity bags are also available.

Birthdays this week: 2/23 Harold St. Clair; 2/27 Allen Frantz and Sophie Hoger.

Worship Participants:	
Pastor	Rev. Caroline E. Saxton
Lay Leader	Jerry Thomason
Organist	Barbara Motichka
Choir Director	Gary Crum
Deacon in Charge	Mike Blumberg
Lector	Diana Kongkeattikul
Children's Corner	Step Team
Media Coordinators	Calvin Frantz & Muneath Ham
Bulletin cover	"Jesus" © 2026 Illustrated Ministry

The Flowers at the Foot of the Cross are given to the Glory of God.

Worship Resources: Poem from "Meditations of the Heart" by Howard Thurman
"The Work of Imagination" Lenten liturgy & commentary © 2026 Illustrated Ministry

418 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1. A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul-wark nev - er fail - ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con-fide, our striv-ing would be los - ing,
 3. And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat-en to un - do us,
 4. That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a - bid - eth;

our help-er He, a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choos - ing.
 we will not fear, for God has willed His truth to tri-umph through us.
 the Spir - it and the gifts are ours through Him who with us sid - eth.

For still our an - cient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He; Lord Sab - ba - oth, His
 The Prince of Dark-ness grim, we trem-ble not for him; his rage we can en -
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor-tal life al - so; the bod - y they may

great, and, armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
 name, from age to age the same, and He must win the bat - tle.
 dure, for lo, his doom is sure; one lit - tle word shall fell him.
 kill: God's truth a - bid-eth still, His king-dom is for - ev - er.

WORDS: Martin Luther, ca. 1529; tr. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853 (Ps. 46)
 MUSIC: Martin Luther, ca. 1529

EIN' FESTE BURG
 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.6.7

When We Are Tested

677

Unison

1. When we are test - ed and wres - tle a - lone,
 2. When in the des - ert we cry for re - lief,
 3. When we are tempt - ed to bar - ter our souls,
 4. When we have strug - gled and searched through the night,

fam - ished for bread when the world of - fers stone,
 plead - ing for paths marked by cer - tain be - lief,
 trad - ing the truth for the power to con - trol,
 sort - ing and sift - ing the wrong from the right,

nour - ish us, God, by Your word and Your way,
 lift us to love You be - yond sign and test,
 teach us to wor - ship and praise on - ly You,
 Sav - ior, sur - round us with cir - cles of care,

food that sus - tains us by night and by day.
 trust - ing Your pres - ence, by our on - ly true rest.
 seek - ing Your will in the work that we do.
 an - gels of heal - ing, of hope, and of prayer.

WORDS: Ruth Duck, 1996

MUSIC: Trad. Irish melody; arr. David Allen, 1986

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SLANE

10.10.10.10

NEWS IN THE PEWS February 22, 2026

The Rev. Caroline E. Saxton, pastor@sjucc1811.org (641) 260-1868 (cell)
Tonya Schwartz, Office Administrator, manager@sjucc1811.org (717) 263-8593 (office)
Gary Crum, Music Director | Barbara Motichka, Organist
Roxanne Davenport, Director of Children & Youth
The Rev. Stephen W. Hoffman, Pastor Emeritus

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

TODAY: NETwork Ministries Step Teams perform in worship
No Bible Study with Pastor Caroline –**resumes on 3/1 – Chapter 2**

Monday, February 23

10:00 am Chi Gong/Zazen silent body energy and soulful meditation – Parlor Room 104
1:30 pm Monday Afternoon Book Study – **No book study; resumes on 03/02 - Chapter 3**
7:00 pm Boy Scouts – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, February 24

5:30 pm Yoga – Room 202
6:00 pm Ladies' Bible Study– Zoom
6:30 pm Cub Scouts – Fellowship Hall/then break into smaller groups

Wednesday, February 25

7:00 pm – CMC Lenten Service – Calvary UMC (150 Norlo Drive, Fayetteville, PA 17222)

Thursday, February 26

11:00 am NETwork Ministries Meal Prep – Kitchen
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice – Bell Room 117
6:15 pm Girl Scouts – Room 116
6:30 pm Council Meeting – Conference Room 111
7:15 pm Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room 103

Sunday, March 1

8:45 am Godly Play Class – Room 119
8:45 am SPARK! Elementary Church School Class – Room 115
8:45 am Teen Discussion Class – Room 206
8:45 am Combined Adult Church School Classes/Sunday Morning Caffeine – Fellowship Hall
10:00 am Sunday Worship – Sanctuary

Pastoral Coverage Pastor Caroline will be away February 22-25 and 27-28. Rev. Julia Brown of Solomon's UCC in Chambersburg is "on call." If a pastoral emergency arises, please contact the church office and they will get your message to Pastor Julia. Pastor Caroline will return to lead worship on Sunday, March 1.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make our Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner such a success!

Camp Sticky Bun Sale Camp volunteers will be making and selling cinnamon sticky buns for \$12/dozen and \$7/half dozen! Orders and payment will be taken before and after church on Sundays, March 8 and 15. Pick up your "ready to bake" sticky buns on Sunday morning, March 22. Freshly baked sticky buns will also be on sale, after church, on March 22 for \$2 each. Help support St. John's Camp and enjoy a tasty treat! All proceeds support the Camp Fund.

"Sunday Morning Caffeine" An additional church school class will be offered this spring. All three adult classes will meet together on Sunday, March 1, 8:45-9:45 am in Fellowship Hall for a continental breakfast and discussion on "when Jesus erases the lines we draw." Subsequent classes will meet in the Parlor (Room 104) on Sunday mornings at 8:45 am. Questions? Please contact Pastor Caroline, Harold Collier, or Mark Shoap.

Blueberry Bliss Spring Tea Tickets will be held on Saturday, April 25, 1:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. Make sure you're on the VIP list to secure your ticket(s) when they go on sale on March 18! Tickets are \$35, cash or check.

Nursery School Smith's Chicken Sale is Saturday, March 28, here at SJUCC. Save the date and look for more information and tickets soon!

St. John's Craft Night Monday, March 30, 6 pm, room 202, \$15. Get ready for spring and encourage new life by painting/decorating your own gourd birdhouse! Sign up by 3/23.

2025-year End Giving Statements are now available by request. Please call the church office if you would like to receive yours and indicate if you would prefer this to be mailed or emailed.

Monday Afternoon Book Study We will read chapter 3 of Norman Wirzba's book "Love's Braided Dance: Hope in a Time of Crisis" for our discussion on Monday, March 2nd, 1:30 pm in Conference Room 111. Come and join the conversation!

Winter Weather If worship is canceled due to winter weather; a special e-blast will be sent out. M-F activities follow the CASD school district. Safety first!

Bible and a Beer is an opportunity to talk about our faith in public. Join us on the 3rd Monday of the month at the Trojan Diner at 6:30 pm. Our next gathering will be March 16th.

Little Free Pantry Donations of nonperishable food items can be dropped off at the church office or placed in the grocery cart in the back lobby. Thank you for your support of this project!

March/April Upper Room devotionals are currently available at the Welcome Center. We suggest a donation of \$1 for small print/\$2 for large print copies. If you would like to have a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

February First Fruits will support organizations designated as part of the Lenten Projects. This year's recipients are African Mission Healthcare, the Peru School Project, and the United Church of Christ Disaster Emergency Fund. Via these offerings, we will support medical care in Africa, education in Peru, and support in situations where individuals have suffered great loss in multiple locations via flooding, fire, earthquake, etc.