

# The United Church of Clinton

## **Warm Birthday wishes go out to:**

**Aggie Feliciano March 2nd**

**Robert Ryan March 6th**

**Michael Hinkley March 10th**

**Tiffany (Sontag) McElroy March 22nd**

**Meghann (Noonan) Pagliarini March 31st**

**Laura Allen March 6th**

**Gabby Turcotte March 7th**

**Jake Poulin March 15th**

**Tim Reilly March 25th**

## **Happy Anniversary wishes go out to:**

**Ron & Sue Oja March 20th**

*The Signs: Service Prayers for Lent 4A was written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema who serves as a free-range facilitator, ritualist, activist, teacher, and writer whose work lives at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and embodied spiritual practices. She is a founding member of the Liberating Lineages Collective.*

*For all joys and concerns mentioned in the Pastor's Tuesday email.  
Remember in your prayers our special members: June and Edie K.*

## **THE UNITED CHURCH OF CLINTON**

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**March 15, 2026**

Lay Leader, Bob Lidstone

Musician, Kate Lyczkowski

Lay Reader, Tim Reilly

**Ministers, The People of God**

## WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday of Lent

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING of the BELL/TIME of CENTER

### \*CALL to WORSHIP

Leader: Some days, it's hard to recognize the signs, when what we have come to know and rely on is ablaze and everything looks like ashes.

**People: Do you not know what the Holy One can do with ashes? Then the Earth-maker knelt down and formed humanity from the dust of the ground, and breath breathed new life.**

(Genesis 2:7)

Leader: Some days, it's difficult to believe the signs, when truths are erased and buried and there is nothing left to witness but the bare dirt. Do you not know what the Holy One can do with dirt?

**People: Then the Pain-bearer spat in the dirt and made mud spreading it on the man's eyes and visions appeared of a new day rising. (Mark 9:6-7)**

Leader: Some days, it feels impossible to embrace the signs, so we come together to pay attention, and seek, and be changed, finding our grounding in the ashes that were once stars in the dirt that holds galaxies in the mud that birthed our bones and breath.

**People: Then the Life-giver who made safe ground in the middle of the sea said: See, I am doing a new thing. Do you not perceive it? and a way was made out of no way toward hope. (Isaiah 43:16-19)**

### \*SONG of PRAISE and SUPPORTING HUMAN JUSTICE

**"Shine, Jesus, Shine" (found in insert)**

\*PRAYER of the DAY (drawn from Open Unto Me, a prayer by Howard Thurman)

**Open unto us, hope for our despair. Open unto us, dreams for our dread. Open unto us, courage for our fear. Open unto us, vision for our skepticism. Open unto us, wisdom for our confusion. Open unto us, love for our hates. Open unto us, Your heart for our hearts.**

**O God, our God, open unto us . Amen.**

\*AFFIRMING and CONNECTING (Passing of the Peace) We sing: "Peace be with You"

Twice.

### \* GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be; world without end. Amen. Amen. (Be seated)**

\*\*\*Go to insert\*\*\*

### INVITATION to GENEROSITY

**Maybe today, you're spent. Maybe it feels like you have nothing to give. Maybe you are emptied out, bent over, barely making it. Maybe you feel like dirt, dust, ashes. Beloved, do you not know what the Holy can do with dust? Even from spit and mud, God creates new dreams and new visions. So let us discover what abundance emerges when whatever we have finds its way into the hands of grace.**

### Passing of the Plate

**DOXOLOGY (Use whatever words are comfortable for you)**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above ye heavenly host. Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost). Amen.**

**PRAYER of THANKSGIVING and DEDICATION**

Leader: Into a world desperate for signs of hope,

**Assembly: let these gifts arrive as beacons.**

Leader: Into communities working for signs of freedom,

**Assembly: let these gifts unlock shackles.**

Leader: Into hearts searching for signs of compassion,

**Assembly: let these gifts offer tenderness.**

Leader: Into each breath yearning for signs of new life,

**Assembly: let these gifts come as a possibility. Amen.**

\*SONG "Open My Eyes That I May See"

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### BENEDICTION

The disciples asked, whose fault is it? This is not a story about sin, Jesus replies. It is a story about what is being revealed. Let this revelation be our blessing. The neighbors asked if it's really him, if it's really possible? This is not a story about blindness, the healed one replies. It is a story about signs and dreams and what the light shines through. Let these signs be our blessing. The leaders asked, he can't be the one, can he? This is not a story about the one we've been waiting for, the healed one replies. It is a story about how all of us are part of the new day rising. Let all of us be our blessing. The teacher asked, do you believe? This is not a story about creeds, the healed one replies. It is a story about testifying to the love you witness. Let this testimony to love be our blessing and we be the witnesses, to the ends of the earth. Amen.

**SUNG "Amen" (feel free to clap along!)**

### Postlude

\* Please stand if you are able.

**Bold-** Words in bold are said in unison.

***Our worship has ended ~ Let our service begin!***

**Moment for All God's Children**

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**\*SONG "As the Deer"**

**(found in insert)**

**SCRIPTURE Ephesians 5: 8-14 (Common English Version)**

**PRAYER of TRANSFORMATION *and* NEW LIFE**

**In our gospel reading for today, when Jesus and the disciples encounter a man who is blind, the disciples ask Jesus, "who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" And Jesus replied, this is not a story about sin. Our Christian tradition, our churches, and our world are rife with stories where difference is mistaken for deficiency, inferiority, even sin, with dire consequences. These stories and histories of ableism, of racism, and so many other isms are testing us, challenging us to open toward new understanding and acknowledge with vulnerability where we have caused hurt and harm. So in this moment, let us open our hearts, minds and spirits to this call to turn around. Amen. (Time of silent reflection)**

**WORDS OF GRACE AND ASSURANCE**

**Leader: Let your soul receive this rest\*\*: There is no story we can't unlearn, and no way of loving we can't learn anew.**

**Assembly: Praise God, who forgives us and frees us, always inviting us to change and become a new creation from the ground up.**

**Prayer Concerns and Joys Lifted Up**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**SCRIPTURE John 9: 1-41 (Common English Version)**

**Meditation - Bob Lidstone**

**Musical Meditation**

**\*\*\*Please continue inside main bulletin\*\*\***

***“Shine, Jesus, Shine”***

***Refrain***

***Shine, Jesus, Shine***

***fill this land with the Father’s glory,***

***blaze, Spirit, blaze,***

***set our hearts on fire;***

***flow, river, flow,***

***flood the nations with grace and mercy,***

***send forth our word, Lord,***

***and let there be light.***

***1. Lord, the light of your love is shining  
in the midst of the darkness shining;***

***Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth you now bring us.***

***Shine on me, shine on me.***

***Refrain***

***2. Lord, I come to your awesome presence  
from the shadows into your radiance;***

***by the blood I may enter your brightness,  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness.***

***Shine on me, shine on me.***

***Refrain***

***3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness,  
so our faces display your likeness;***

***ever changing from glory to glory,  
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.***

***Shine on me, shine on me.***

***Refrain***

***“As the Deer”***

***1. As the deer pants for the water,  
so my soul longs after you.***

***You alone are my heart’s desire,  
and I long to worship you.***

***Refrain***

***You alone are my strength, my shield;  
to you alone may my spirit yield.***

***You alone are my heart’s desire,  
and I long to worship You.***

***2. You’re my friend and you are my brother,  
even though you are a King.***

***I love you more than any other;  
so much more than anything.***

***Refrain***

***3. I want you more than gold or silver;  
only you can satisfy.***

***You alone are the real joy giver,  
and the apple of my eye.***

***Refrain***













