

Prelude – “A Prayer of Faith” Smith

Greeting

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Opening Hymn – “In Christ Alone”

Call to Worship

Where there is weakness,

God brings the power of love.

Where there seems to be no life,

God breathes new life.

Where hope feels distant,

God opens new possibilities.

Let us turn our hearts to God in this Lenten season and worship our Savior,

who makes all things new.

Choral Introit – “Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross” Doane

Opening Prayer

Come, Spirit of God. We wait for your presence. We trust in your abiding promises. Breathe the breath of your power into us this day, that we may experience the freedom of your forgiveness and the blessing of community. Amen.

Passing of Peace

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Call to Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

Children’s Message

Offertory Reflection

Offertory Anthem – “Christian! Dost Thou See Them?” Pfautsch

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Spirit of God, you breathe new life into the dead and stuck places of our daily living. We are so grateful for the power of your transforming love. We bring these gifts, hoping that they will breathe new life into barren places of our world. We bring our lives, filled with new life, ready to serve all your creation. Amen.

First Gospel Reading – Luke 8:1-3**

Hymn – “Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

Second Gospel Reading – Luke 23:44-49

Sermon – “Passion and Power: Mary Magdalene”

Closing Hymn - “Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)”

Announcements

Benediction

Go forth in the power of God’s grace.

Trust that the God who meets us in weakness also gives us strength for the journey.

May God bless you and keep you, now and always.

And God’s people say: **Amen.**

Benediction Response – “The Power of the Cross” Getty/Townend

Postlude – “Fantasia” Telemann/arr. Smith

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\*\*After the scripture readings, please respond, "Thanks be to God."

We extend a warm welcome to all who are attending our worship service this morning in person, on Zoom, or watching later via a video link.

**The Flowers on the altar** this morning are given to the Glory of God by Nancy Bissell with prayers that 2026 will be a wonderful, wonderful year!

**Today** – Senior Choir

Acolyte – Geila Machuca

Lay Reader – Kathy Ha

Minister of Music – Karen Leonard

Pastor – Rev. Geisa Matos

## THIS WEEK AT WEST CHELMSFORD UMC

### **Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent**

**9:30 AM, Worship Service In-person and via Zoom**

**10:00 AM, Sunday School in the Education Wing**

**10:30 AM, Coffee Hour in the Vestry**

**11:00 AM, Simon Peter Book Study in the Library**

1:30 PM, MVR Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

2:00 PM, Cub Scout Pack 70 Tiger Den Mtg. in the Education Wing,  
Classroom 1

3:00 PM, Westford Girl Scout Troop 70533 Mtg in the Education  
Wing, Classroom 1

Monday – 6:45 PM, Cub Scout Pack 70 Bear Den Mtg. in the Education  
Wing, Classroom 1

**7:30 PM, Jubilee Ringers Rehearsal in the Sanctuary**

Tuesday – **7:00 PM, Christian Ed Committee Meeting via Zoom**

Wednesday – **6:30 PM, Simon Peter Book Study via Zoom**

**7:30 PM, Festival Ringers Rehearsal in the Sanctuary**

Thursday – **7:30 PM, Senior Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Room**

Friday – 7:30 PM, Cub Scout Pack 70 Webelos Den Mtg, in the  
Education Wing, Classroom 1

### **Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday, Cantata**

**9:30 AM, Worship Service In-person and via Zoom**

Liturgical resources Scifres, Mary; Beu, B.J. Abingdon Worship Annual  
2026

Sermon: Based on Samuel Wells' *Power & Passion: Six Characters in  
Search of Resurrection*

### **Ongoing Prayer Requests**

- World peace and social justice for all God's children, independently of race, gender, or socioeconomic background.
- All who are sick, mourning, and/or lonely.

## **Article Submission Due Dates**

- Articles for the **mid-week email** are due in the church office by **9:00 AM on Monday.**
- Articles for the **church bulletin insert** are due in the church office by **9:00 AM on Tuesday.**

**Altar Visual:** As we journey through Lent, the altar will reflect five characters from the four Gospel accounts of the week leading to Easter.

Today, on the fourth Sunday of Lent, we encounter Peter, who appears in the Gospels more than any other character. Jesus gives Simon a new and descriptive name, Peter, the rock. **Matthew 16: 18** *“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven...”* On the altar is a **rock** and a **key** on fragile **lace**. Jesus knows Peter promises more than he delivers, but founds the church on him, this seemingly frail rock. If Jesus has a significant role for Peter, who is fragile and unreliable, he certainly has a role for each of us. The **navy-blue cloth on the cross** symbolizes trust, loyalty, and responsibility.

**MYF Ice Cream Social** – This morning after Sunday School, the MYF will have an ice cream social and load Easter Eggs with candy for the Easter Egg Hunt. I will also bring some good old-fashioned board games for the kids to play after. If your child has a family-friendly board game they would like to play, please bring it.

Harry Johnson

## **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/EVENTS**

**The sign-up sheet for the St. Paul's Meal** is now online. To volunteer, please click on the link below. The St. Paul's Meal will be served on **Wednesday, March 25, 2026**. Thank you for your support of this important mission.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040448A8AB28AAFF2-62548257-march>

**Book Study - Simon Peter: The Flawed but Faithful Disciple** - The next Wednesday night session is on **March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM** via Zoom. [Click here](#) to join the session, or visit the church webpage. The link is on the home page.

Please get in touch with Lorraine Macpherson with questions.

**Easter Concert** – Central Congregational Church is presenting an Easter Concert on **Sunday, March 29, 2026**, at 3:00 PM, “When Love Comes Down”. This concert features their SonLight Band, Bell Choir, Children’s Choir, and Adult Choir. Central Congregational Church is located at 1 Worthen St., Chelmsford, MA. [www.cccchelmsford.org](http://www.cccchelmsford.org)

**Massachusetts Spring Ring 2026!** - Handbell ringers and directors from across MA, NH, and beyond will gather on **Saturday, April 11, 2026**, at Tewksbury Memorial High School to rehearse and perform together for the annual Massachusetts Spring Ring. This will be the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual MA Spring Ring. The clinician and conductor for the day will be Kimberlee Strepka. Formerly known as the Merrimack Valley English Handbell Festival, this event brings together handbell enthusiasts to ring several delightful pieces that have been rehearsed in advance. There will also be a few solo selections that have been prepared by some of the participating choirs. The day’s activities will culminate in a 3:00 PM concert that is free and open to the public, followed by some light refreshments provided by the ringers. **Join the Festival Ringers and Jubilee Ringers at Tewksbury Memorial High School, 320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA, on Saturday, April 11, 2026, at 3:00 PM for the Massachusetts Spring Ring!**

Karen E. Leonard  
Minister of Music

**Ian MacPherson Scholarship** - The WCUMC Ian MacPherson Scholarship was established for those students graduating from high school who have been active in Sunday School, MYF, youth mission work, youth choirs, or the church program in general. **The application will be available online as of April 1<sup>st</sup>** at this link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pXWSsMZMkt-KzxTfyRWdBZvVb7ptOx\\_UCo6tJmhoPYs/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1pXWSsMZMkt-KzxTfyRWdBZvVb7ptOx_UCo6tJmhoPYs/edit)

The deadline for submission is **April 30<sup>th</sup>** by midnight.

**Open Pantry Donations** - Storage space is limited at the Greater Lowell Open Pantry, but that doesn’t mean that we cannot help families in need. We can make monetary donations directly to the Open Pantry at <https://theopenpantry.org/donate/>. In addition, small-denomination Gift Cards for local grocery stores, like \$10 and \$15, can be shared with families whenever their supplies run low.

And speaking of Gift Cards... Do you have random gift cards sitting in a desk drawer with a few bucks left on them? Or did you perhaps receive a holiday gift card to an establishment that is not quite your cup of tea? How about donating those gift cards to the Missions Committee? We can check the existing value online and then receive a portion of the balance, after paying a processing fee. It may not be a lot of money, but with a little effort, we may have enough to buy another grocery store gift card!

Gift Cards can be put in the Collection Plate or left in the Office, and the Missions Committee will deliver them to the Open Pantry. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Missions Committee.

“Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.”

~Sir James M. Barrie.

**2026 Summer Camp** - Summer is just around the corner. If you are looking for a summer camp experience for your child, the following camps are accepting registrations.

- **Aldersgate** – For information and Camp Registration, [click here](#).
- **Mechuwana** – For information and Camp Registration, [click here](#).
- **Wanakee** – For information and Camp Registration, [click here](#).

**Lost and Found** – If you are missing a pair of gloves, a single glove, or a toy dinosaur, please pick them up in the church office. Your items miss you.