

# First Sunday in Lent

9:30AM, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

Liturgist: Gail Lingerman

Asterisk (\*) indicates standing, as able. Bold/colored type indicates text spoken in unison.

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP      Responsive

Today, we follow Jesus into a wilderness full of isolation, fatigue, hunger, thirst, and temptation.

**We follow, trusting in God's mercy.**

We witness Jesus resist the siren calls of sensationalism, notoriety, and misuse of power for selfish gain.

**We recognize God's mercy at work in the face of temptation.**

We notice the angels who tend Jesus, messengers of care in a harsh and lonely place.

**We pay attention to God's merciful presence that did not abandon Jesus and does not abandon us now.**

\*HYMN                      "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"                      **UMH # 269**

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH                      Apostles' Creed                      **UMH # 881**

### OPENING PRAYER      Unison

**Holy God, by the grace of Jesus Christ, you know the tests and trials we face. Journey with us through this wilderness. Come to us with ministers of healing and visit us with messengers of hope, so that we may return to you in faith, believing the good news of the gospel; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON      Unison

**Gracious and merciful God, we confess to you our reluctance to enter the wilderness places where we are confronted with our true selves. The places where we are tempted to put worldly values before our desire for you, and when our hunger for power and wealth is greater than our hunger for seeking and doing your will: Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you. When we are tempted to use the gifts you give us to**

**benefit ourselves at the expense of serving others: Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you. When we are tempted to use sensational means to increase people's faith, rather than being guided by the humility of Christ: Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you. When we are tempted to use bribery to influence and control people: Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you. When we are tempted to manipulate you, O God, to satisfy our own needs: Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you. (A time of silence for personal confession) Merciful God, save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. Forgive us our sins and fill us with the joy and peace of your salvation. So strengthen us with your Spirit during this Lenten season that we put our whole trust in you as confidently as Jesus did. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

As the apostle Paul wrote: "...if you confess with your lips that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9) These words contain the good news that in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

## JOYS, CONCERNS AND PASTORAL PRAYER

### SCRIPTURE READING

**Matthew 4:1-11 (NRSV)**

- 1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil.
- 2 He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished.
- 3 The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."
- 4 But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
- 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,
- 6 saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"
- 7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

- 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory,
- 9 and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."
- 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"
- 11 Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

**MESSAGE** "Experiencing Mercy in the Wilderness" Rev. Dongkue Jee

**RESPOND TO THE WORD**

\* HYMN "Just As I Am, Without One Plea" **UMH # 357**

THE LORD'S PRAYER **UMH # 895**

**OFFERING**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

\*DOXOLOGY "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" **UMH # 95**

\*PRAYER OF OFFERING Unison

**Surprising God of Mercy, you meet us in wilderness places and walk beside us through trial and temptation. Even when we feel alone, your grace is never far, your presence never absent. In this moment of giving, we offer not just our resources, but our trust that you are already at work, shaping us through challenge, strengthening us through sacrifice, and surrounding us with unseen angels. Use these gifts to bring hope where there is hunger, healing where there is pain, and light where there is despair. May what we give reflect our desire to walk more closely with you, even in the hard places. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

**SENDING FORTH**

\*HYMN "Trust and Obey" **UMH # 467**

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

\* The offering plate is located at the entrance of the sanctuary. Please feel free to participate.

\* Fellowship follows the worship service. Please join us for refreshments and fellowship in the Parlor.



*Welcome to*  
**Mendham United Methodist Church**

[www.mendhamumc.org](http://www.mendhamumc.org)

10 East Main Street, Mendham, NJ 07945

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**Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**



Lenten Labyrinth, 2012, Moyers, Mike, Painting, United States

**Rev. Dongkue Jee, Pastor**

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