



United Methodist Church  
of Westport and Weston

March 23, 2025  
Third Sunday in Lent

Hybrid Worship – 10:00am



*Our Vision is to Know, to Live  
and to Share the Love of Jesus Christ.*

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CENTERING PRAYER

*Creator God, Your Word is like soil, something we can root ourselves in. Your Word is like the sun, big enough to touch everything with its warmth. And your Word is like a gardener, a love that prunes and encourages, waters and delights, seeds and tends.*

*So as we gather to worship today, warm our bones, tend to our broken pieces, and show us how to grow and be fruitful. With hope we pray, Amen.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Heather

PRELUDE

*Prelude (Part 1) from Suite No. 3 for Cello, BWV 1007*  
John Hoddinott, guitar

J. S. Bach

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship is a place to rest.

**We breathe deeply here.**

We still our aching bones.

**We sit in the quiet.**

We surround ourselves with music.

**Worship is a place to rest.**

Worship is a place to grow.

**We listen for God's word.**

We invite it to challenge us.

**We lean in with curiosity.**

We ask questions.

**Worship is a place to grow.**

So come into this space.

Come rest and grow here.

**For where two or more are gathered,**

**God is always there.**

**Let us worship our gracious God.**

\*HYMN

*All Creatures of Our God and King*

UMH 62, vv. 1-5

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Friends, we carve out time for confession in worship because it is not enough to hear about God's grace once. We need that reminder again, and again, and again. So join me in speaking the truth of our lives, and join me in receiving God's grace again.*

*(continues with **Response...**)*

**Holy God, there are days when we fail to rest.  
We stretch ourselves too thin. We say “yes” to every invitation.  
We run a million miles a minute. We ignore your command to rest.  
There are also days when we fail to act.  
We wait for someone else. We take the easy road.  
We find excuses and justify our inaction.  
God, forgive our imbalance.  
Remind us that birds rest, and they also fly.  
Show us how to do the same. Amen.**

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Siblings in Christ, there is good news! Our God does not keep score. Our God does not hold grudges. Our God does not assume the worst about us. No, our God offers grace, and endless second chances, and boundless love. So join me in proclaiming the good news of the gospel:  
**God’s grace is deeper than the ocean. God’s love is wider than the sky.  
We are seen. We are claimed. We are forgiven.  
May this realization change and inspire us.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 13:6-9

Eva Toft

*“If [the fig tree] bears fruit next year, well and good,  
but if not, you can cut it down.” – Luke 13:9*

This is the Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“growth & rest”

Rev. Heather A. M. Sinclair

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe in a God who loves and tends to us like a gardener.  
We believe that like the trees,  
some seasons are for growth,  
and some seasons are for rest.  
Some days require pruning,  
and some require planting.  
Fortunately, we believe that our green-thumbed God  
sees us and cultivates the sweetest fruit.  
So may we plant roots,  
reach for the sky,  
grow where we can,  
and rest when we need,  
for we believe there is holiness in the pruning  
and in the planting. And we do not grow alone.  
Thanks be to God, Amen.**

OFFERING OUR PRAYERS & GIFTS

*Through our baptism and membership in the church, we covenant to give of our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Financial gifts, tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of this congregation and the connectional church. Online giving is available at [WestportUMC.org](http://WestportUMC.org).  
Prayer cards may be placed in the offering plates to be lifted up during the Prayers of the People and/or added to the weekly Prayer List.*

MUSIC OFFERING

*My Faith Looks Up to Thee*  
Chancel Choir

L. Mason,  
R. Palmer

\*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

UMH 95

OFFERING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*You are invited to pray in the version and language of your heart.*)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*My Hope Is Built*

UMH 368

BENEDICTION

As you leave this place,  
may you find God in every messy middle.  
May you know that the world is bigger than two sides.  
May you trust that you are made in the image of God,  
and therefore, you contain multitudes.  
So may you move through this world with an open heart,  
with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone.  
God is with you in the mountains,  
in the valleys, and everywhere in between.  
Believe that good news, and go in peace.

SUNG BENEDICTION

*Peace I Leave With You*  
Chancel Choir

G. Weigle

POSTLUDE

*Nothing Between*  
Ahyoung Son, organ

C. Tindley  
arr. F. A. Clark



*Portions of the Order of Worship are adapted from:  
The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship, and The Faith We Sing,  
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Narrative Lectionary 2024-25, WorkingPreaching.org  
Prayers by Rev. Sarah A. Speed, Sanctified Art LLC, sanctifiedart.org,  
Everything in Between, Words for Worship  
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## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WESTPORT AND WESTON

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OUR MINISTERS

EVERY PARTICIPANT IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

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