

St. Vincent UCC Worship Service
First Sunday in Lent – February 22, 2026
Pastor – Rev. Susan Hanson
Church Musician – Deb Rick

Musical Interlude
Ringling of the Bell

Pastor's Welcome

Prelude Music

*** Call To Worship:**

Pastor: Today we begin the Season of Lent – 40 days when we explore the wilderness of life and seek to discover what really matters for us as the disciples of Jesus. Let us prepare our hearts and minds for this journey.

People: We are ready to make this journey of Lent together.

Pastor: Whatever may come, let us remember that God is here with us – let us put our trust in God as we now join our voices in saying our Affirmation of Faith ...

*** Affirmation of Faith:**

With all Christians everywhere, we believe in one God, who made everything. The Father sent his Son, Jesus, to live among us and teach us his ways. He died on the cross, but rose again as Lord of all, that we might live forever with him.

God sent his Holy Spirit to live inside each of us, that we might grow to become more like Jesus. And so that we can affirm for our own hearts and minds that always and forever, God will love us and be with us in all things – no matter what. Amen.

Now, let us sing together our first hymn.

*** Hymn: # 211, "Lord Jesus, Who Through Forty Days"**

Let us Pause for a Time of Prayer

Call to Prayer:

God intends that we should be happy and whole people. But he can't make that happen without our cooperation. We need to remember that God is always near and ready to guide us in being his heart and hands and voices in this world. Let us pray together about that ...

Unison Prayer:



Loving God, it makes us happy to know you and trust that you will be with us in all things. When we are tempted to try and do things all on our own, help us to remember that you are the source of all that we need. May we depend on you for the strength and guidance we need in life. Amen.

Assurance:

Those who turn from God will end up unhappy, but those who trust in God will be filled with joy. Be glad then - for this is the grace that comes to us even in the wilderness times of our lives. Now, let's sing our response ...

Sung Response: # 772, "Nothing Can Trouble" (Praise Book)

**Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten - those who seek God shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten - God alone fills us.**

Scripture Reading:

Liturgist: Kathy Strahan

Liturgist: We now turn our hearts and minds to the reading of God's Holy Scripture. Our lesson today comes from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 4, verses 1-11, where Jesus goes into the wilderness after being baptized by John in the River Jordan.

Let us pray: Holy God, we know that you are always with us and especially when we need you the most. Help us to put our trust in you to hear your message in today's scripture story so that we can follow you more fully in Jesus' name. Amen.

Read Scripture Lesson (found on page 3 of the NT in Pew Bible)

Following his baptism in the Jordan River, Jesus was then led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted there for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.

The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, 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." Jesus said to him, "But it is also written, Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Then the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." So, the devil left him, then. And soon after, angels came to wait on him and attend to his needs.

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of God's Holy Scripture. May God bless us with understanding and may we show our understanding in the way we live our lives. Amen.

Now, let's sing our hymn, # 547, "Amazing Grace" and we are singing verses 1, 3, & 5.

Hymn: # 547, "Amazing Grace" (verses 1, 3, 5)

Message: "Grace Found in the Wilderness"

Sung Response: # 2152, "Change My Heart O God"

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Offering Invitation: As we enter into this season of self-examination and reflection, we ask that God might help us to know ourselves better and thus, love him better. Let us begin that journey now as we present to God, with joy, our morning offering.

Offertory / * Response: # 780 Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessing flow. Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God above, you heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*** Prayer of Dedication:** Gracious God, we present to you these gifts of our hands and hearts. We dedicate them in the name of Jesus and ask you to bless them to your use – so that they may become a blessing to our church and those whom we serve. Amen.

*** Hymn: # 205, "Forty Days and Forty Nights"**

*** Benediction:** Let us go forth to be the children of God's light and love in a dark and hurting world – and may we become a blessing to one another along the way in the days yet to come. Amen.

*** Response: # 78, "Part in Peace"** (verse 3)

Part in peace! Our voices raising – in God's presence always be. This the worship and the praising – bringing peace to you and me.

*** Postlude Music**