

**A Warm Welcome to
Solomon's United Church of Christ**

Sunday, March 1, 2026 9:00 am

Rev. Julia L. Brown, Pastor

Church Website: www.mysolomonsucc.org

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE & SILENT MEDITATION

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: First, the water was deep chaos and the beginning, and the Holy witnessed its goodness.

Many: I am here in the heart of God. God is here in the heart of me. Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave. I am here in the heart of God.

One: Then, the water was flooding destruction and the end, and the Holy vowed, never again.

Many: Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave. I am here in the heart of God.

One: And then, the water was a saving path and freedom, and the Holy brought forth liberation.

Many: Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave. I am here in the heart of God.

One: Then, the water was a sacred sign and grace and the Holy said, beloved.

Many: Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave. I am here in the heart of God.

One: And then, the water was a new way and birth, and the Holy promised, this is how the kingdom comes.

Many: Like the wave in the water and the water in the wave. I am here in the heart of God. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

“Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”

Black # 459

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)**

Let this prayer be a womb, nurturing us in water until the time comes. Let this prayer be a river, making a way out of no way until we reach the place that holds us all, together. Let this prayer be a tear, spilling over with love which is grief which is love until we cannot tell the difference between a prayer, and a river, and a womb. Let this prayer be the Spirit, drenching us in new life, until the kingdom comes. Amen.

MOMENT of QUIET PRAYER and PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

I wonder if when Jesus said to Nicodemus, “...no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit,” what he was trying to say was, the river runs through the middle of our body or all water is a part of all water everywhere or water is life. This Lent, how might our lives be tested, new understandings opened, and vulnerabilities recognized if we knew ourselves as water and the kingdom of God as a watershed?

One: For the water in our faucets and the water in our cells, we pray:

Many: God, have mercy.

One: For the still polluted water in Flint, Pittsburgh, Newark... and all the bodies poisoned by racist policies and practices, we pray:

Many: Christ, have mercy.

One: For the water frozen in tear-gas encrusted snow in Minnesota and the waters melting in precious glaciers in Antarctica, we pray:

Many: God, have mercy.

One: Keep us accountable to all the waters that bring forth life;

Many: Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

Let your soul receive this rest: justice will roll down like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Thanks be to God who forgives us and frees us inviting us to embrace the grace that goes on and on like water, an unending cycle of new life.

PRAYER RESPONSE

Black #775

*And God will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand.*

CHILDREN'S TIME

OLD TESTAMENT READING **Genesis 12:1-4a**
EPISTLE READING **Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

HYMN **“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”** **Black # 224**

GOSPEL READING **John 3:1-17**

SERMON

PASTORAL PRAYER & OUR LORD’S PRAYER (unison)

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. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

The season of Lent invites us to consider what it means for us to live life sacrificially, to lean into Jesus’ call to costly discipleship. How might God be calling you to a new way of sharing your resources to build care and equity in our communities and world? Let us offer whatever gifts we have to love the world like God did in giving God’s Son.

***PRESENTATION & OFFERING RESPONSE** **Black # 785**

*We give you but your own / Whate’er the gift may be
All that we have is yours alone / We give it gratefully*

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (unison)**

Bless, O God, for the loving of the world, these gifts. For the flowing of the water, these hearts. For the coming of the kingdom, these lives. May it be so. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** **“Be Still, My Soul”** **Black # 488**

BENEDICTION

One: As you go out from this wilderness into another, hold close to your heart this promise: there will be wellsprings to quench and cleanse and lead you to new life. You are already born of water and the Spirit. Beloved and blessed. Like the river that always finds its way to the sea, there is a way to be made toward the kingdom that we can only make together. So may God’s blessings flow in, among and through us.

May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the encouragement of the Holy Spirit be with you and go with you always. Our Worship Service is ended,

Many: May our service never end. Amen.

Prelude and Hymn accompaniments by Sarah Bereza, @ sarah-bereza.com

Liturgies adapted from UCC Worship Ways. Originally written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema.