

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

Sunday, March 22, 2026 9:00 am

Rev. Julia L. Brown, Pastor

Church Website: [www.mysolomonsucc.org](http://www.mysolomonsucc.org)

**WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE & SILENT MEDITATION**

**\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: This is not the time for platitudes, for simple answers and tired clichés. This is the time for breaking hearts and weary spirits.

*Many: Let our worship be arms that can hold all that grieves us.*

One: This is not the place for blame, for pointing fingers and second guessing. This is the time for angry tears and aching wails.

*Many: Let our worship be a witness to journey alongside us as we break.*

One: When we are standing at the edge of the tomb staring into the truth of the death-dealing forces of our world, when there is nothing left to do but to go and weep,

*Many: Let our worship be the song calling us forth from the grave to the community that can unbind us and set us free. Amen.*

**OPENING HYMN**

**“Just as I Am”**

**Black # 207**

**\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)**

*In this hour, as we look death in the face, stay with us, Weeping Jesus, stay with us. In this hour, as we try to hold on, try to believe, try to hope, stay with us, Tender Love, stay with us. In this hour, as we risk the vulnerability of love, the possibility of joy, the dream of freedom, stay with us, Sweet Spirit, stay with us. Amen.*

**MOMENT of QUIET PRAYER and PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION**

One: The story of Lazarus rising from the dead, our gospel reading for today, feels like it has grief written under every line. Under Lazarus' illness and Jesus' absence. Under the disciples' questions and the danger of returning to Judea. Under Martha's believing and Mary's weeping. Under the stone and the stench of death. And it is through this grieving that transformation becomes possible. So, today, let us seek transformation and new life, not through confession or accountability, but through our grieving of the death-dealing forces in our world, for all that binds us to the death machine. Let our love for what death will touch open us to vulnerability, open us to these rites of grief.

One: For the violence that brings death and death-dealing that brings violence, we grieve,

*Many: God, have mercy.*

One: For the blood in the streets and the blood on our hands, we grieve,

*Many: Christ, have mercy.*

One: For heartbreaking loss and the loss of hearts soft enough to break, we grieve,

*Many: God, have mercy.*

One: From all that binds us and steals our breaths,

*Many: Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.*

**WORDS OF GRACE**

Let your soul receive this rest: on this road, there will be comfort, in this grief, there will be companions, when death seems to have the last word, there is still, Jesus. Thanks be to God, who weeps with us, and calls us by name back into life, and into the community that unbinds and frees us.

**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**      Ezekiel 37:1-14

**EPISTLE READING**                Romans 8:6-11

**HYMN**                                “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart”

**Black # 290**

**GOSPEL READING**                John 11:1-45

**SERMON**                            “Getting Ready to Go on Stage”                Mr. Tim Bremmer

**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**

Resurrected life takes community. It takes all of us together to unbind ourselves from the ways of death and move toward the ways of life. How are you being called to awaken to, rise into an ethic of sharing rather than scarcity so that we all might have life and have it abundantly? What do our relationships and commitments to collective liberation ask of us and our resources so that we can experience freedom together? Let us offer our gifts in ways that unbind us all.

**\*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)**

*From these offerings, Holy One, create freedom. From these hearts, Holy One, raise up love. From these hands, Holy One, bring life. From every one of our gifts, in the sharing of our resources, may we be unbound, and called forth into a new day together. Amen.*

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

**“We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness”**

**Black #179**

**BENEDICTION**

One: May your grief be a blessing of opening to vulnerability; of loving what death will touch. And in the weeping always know, you are not alone. May you hear the voice of the Holy One calling you by name, singing you into life, where there will be companions waiting to bless you, unbind you, and set you free.

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.*

**ORGAN POSTLUDE & CHIMES**

*\*Please stand as you’re comfortable*

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