

# SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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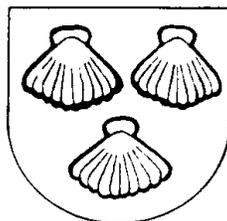


**March 23, 2025**  
**9:30 am**

**My Soul Clings**  
**ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE**

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Administrative Assistant: Kenna Haj | Bell Choir Director: Laural Clark  
Director of Music Ministry: Antuan Hairston | Organist: Clarice Snyder  
Pastor: Rev. Patricia Abell



**Saint James United Methodist Church**

Marriottsville, MD

410-442-2020 [stjamessec@verizon.net](mailto:stjamessec@verizon.net)

## Gathering

**Prelude** "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Lowell Mason) setting by John Carter  
*Offered by Clarice Snyder*

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**Welcome** *Rev. Patricia Abell*

### Lighting the Prayer Candle

One: The light shines in the darkness.

**All: We stand in this light, unshaken, knowing that the darkness has never overcome the light.**

One: Let us recommit ourselves to walking in Jesus' ways of justice.

**All: Empower us, Jesus, to boldly use the freedom and power given to us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.**

**Call to Prayer and Praise** "What Wondrous Love Is This?" (vs.2) *UMH 292*

2. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,  
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, that caused the lord of life  
to lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,  
to lay aside his crown for my soul.

Music: USA folk hymn; harm. by Paul J. Christiansen, 1955 (MH harm by Carlton R. Young)  
Harm. © 1955, renewed 1983 Augsburg Publishing House

**Call to Worship** *Jan Petrosch*

ONE: Children of God, what has God done for you?

**ALL: God saves, provides, and holds us in God's steadfast love.**

Consider and remember: in the joyful times and in the sorrowful times, what has God done for you?

**God covers us and lifts us up, protecting and empowering us with steadfast love.**

When you have been like the fig tree in Jesus' story that seems unable to produce and that everyone has given up on, what has God done for you?

**God tends the soil and waters the ground, nurturing us into life with steadfast love.**

Children of God, come, let us worship God who never gives up on us!

**We come to worship and cling to God, for God's steadfast love never fails!**

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, September 2024.

**\*Opening Prayer** *Jan Petrosch*

We are wounded, worried, betrayed, afraid, and injured. We are physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged.

**Drink from these waters and you will never thirst again.**

We chase thrills, happiness, wealth, health, longevity, *him, her*, peace; the right job, the right look, anything to lessen our pain. We exhaust even ourselves with our efforts.

**Drink from these waters and you will never thirst again.**

We continue, broken—day in and day out, hopelessly applying quick fixes. The pain will not subside. We are beckoned by an eternal yearning. We remember a prayer that grandmamma taught us; a lesson earned the

\*Please stand as able

hard way, or a word from the Word spoken by a sage. We long for relief, we seek it, search for it, yearn for it—relief that can't be purchased or bartered.

**Drink from these waters and never thirst again.**

**God we are grateful that your thoughts and your ways are higher than our own. Thank you for forgiving our sins. Thank you for new mercies each new day. Thank you for always welcoming us back into fellowship with you. Thank you for providing waters from which we may drink and never thirst again.**

Written by Toni Payne in *The Africana Worship Book, Year C* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2008), 89.

## Prayer of Confession

*Jan Petrosch*

**We confess that we have not always brought forth good fruit.  
In the midst of chaos and frenzy, we have often lost our way.  
Our feet have strayed from the place where we met you.  
Our egos have kept us from noticing our missteps;  
Yet, with you, we know there's another chance for change.  
There is another opportunity to bear good fruit  
In a world full of spoiled and rotten produce and systems designed to kill,  
We are called to be the change that sustains generations.  
Let us lean with you into this chance for transformation.**

Adapted from Rev. Mia M. McClain on the Worship Ways site of the United Church of Christ, <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/lent-3c-march-20-2022/>.

## Words of Assurance

*Jan Petrosch*

### \*Opening Hymn

“The Lord of Life, a Vine Is He”

*W & S 3155*

1. The Lord of Life a vine is He  
And grafted to Him we must be  
And thus we yield abundantly  
Sweet fruit for all to taste and see

2. If we be joined to him we know  
His strength and power will help us grow  
His Spirit's grace through us will flow  
To prune and shape us as we go

3. The vine is He the branches we  
For now and to eternity  
His word sown deep in us will be  
Both sun and rain sufficiency

4. The Lord of Life the Source Divine  
Calls us to come with him entwine  
Will we unhearing dare decline  
The call of Christ the One True Vine

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John Carter | Mary Kay Beall  
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## Passing of the Peace

*Jan Petrosch*

### Proclaiming

### Children's Moment

*Amanda Yoo*

### Scripture

**Psalm 63:1-8 (NRSVue)**

*Jan Petrosch*

**Luke 13:1-9 (NRSVue)**

**Word in Music**

“Jesus Changed My World” (Rojahn)

**Chancel Choir**

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**Message**

“My Soul Clings”

**Rev. Patricia Abell**

**Response**

**Prayers of Intercession**

**Jan Petrosch**

**Response:** Sometimes, though, we find ourselves in a dry and weary land (2 times)

**Response:** Sometimes we find ourselves in the rich feast of your presence (3 times)

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Jan Petrosch**

**\*Doxology**

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

**UMH 95**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him all creatures here below  
Praise Him above ye heavenly host  
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost

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**Offering Prayer**

**Going Forth**

**\*Closing Hymn**

“Come Back Quickly to the Lord”

**UMH 343**

1. Come back quickly to the Lord  
Just come back to the Lord  
Though how grave your sins may be  
Or how burdensome they seem  
There is no sin he cannot bear  
Nor sinner not accept  
For the bosom of our loving Lord  
Is much greater than all the skies

2. Come back quickly to the Lord  
Just come back to the Lord  
Our Lord waits every day  
With his doors kept open wide  
He is anxiously waiting for you  
Every day and every night  
The Lord is waiting through the night  
For a child who has gone astray

3. Come back to the Lord  
Just come back to the Lord  
Though you think that you have sinned  
And aren’t fit to be his child  
God will celebrate with a big feast  
When repentance brings you home  
So come back to his open arms  
Come back quickly unto the Lord

Words: Young Taik Chun, 1943; tran. By Sang E. Chun and Ivy G. Chun, 1988  
Music: Jae Hoon Park  
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**Benediction**

**Rev. Patricia Abell**

## Postlude

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory” (Ithamar Conkey) setting by John Carter

### *Offered by Clarice Snyder*

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### Question for Reflection

Luke 13:1–9 tells the story of a fruitless fig tree that the owner is ready to cut down. The gardener, however, asks for a little more time. The gardener wants to tend and cultivate the soil in the hope that figs may yet grow. The gardener is open to a different future for this tree, in spite of its present condition.

Think about my own life, or the life of someone I love, in relationship to this story:

What needs special tending?

What will cultivate the “soil” of daily life so that new growth, new possibilities, might emerge?

And what can I learn from this gardener about allowing for a different outcome, a new possibility?

### Household Prayer: Morning

Gracious God, this new day carries the potential for growth and new life.

Help me to attend to those things in me that need care and attention.

Sow your word in me that I may grow in faithfulness and understanding.

Shake me out of dull routines, so that I may take part in the good news you continue to tell urgently and passionately. In Christ’s name.. Amen.

### Household Prayer: Evening

As I lie down this night in the shadow of your wings, God of my life,

I know that you will be with me even as you have helped me through this day.

Whether I am weary from the day, or whether the day has been a rich feast of blessings,

I give thanks for your power and glory, which are present in every circumstance.

As I give myself over to rest and sleep, I remember that your steadfast love is better than life.

So, I pray, surround me with your love tonight and always.

In the peace of Christ I pray. Amen.

**Resources:** \*Steadfast Love; Discipleship Ministries, 2025. [umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/steadfast-love](https://umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/steadfast-love)

\*Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1 © 2012 Westminster John Knox Press.

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*Saint James UMC is a Lighthouse Congregation of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church.*