

First Sunday of Lent

February 22, 2026

9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

*Congregation is invited to rise if able and comfortable.

Readings in **BOLD** are to be read in unison.

Hymnals: **UMH is Red or Purple-TFWS is Black-W&S is Green**

Please note that this service is being recorded and viewed on social media.

WE GATHER

PRELUDE (9:30 a.m.)

Emotions

Tonioli

As you settle into the sanctuary, please open your phone and share the live service from your Facebook page as a way of inviting the larger community to worship.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST (9:30 a.m.)

A Wilderness Wandering People W&S 3113, v.1

We are a wilderness wandering people on a journey of the soul.

May we find our destination in our longing to be whole.

Our Holy God is calling to us.

With Jesus by our side may compassion be our compass;

may the Spirit be our guide.

*INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Taken from Psalm 100

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with songs of joy.

We come into God's presence with praise.

We enter God's gates with thanksgiving.

Know that the Lord is God.

It is God who made us, and we are God's.

We are God's people, the sheep of God's pasture.

The Lord is good and God's love endures forever;

God's faithfulness continues through all generations.

*SHARING THE LOVE OF THE CHRIST

We invite you to turn to the person next to you and greet them saying,

"May the great I AM be with you"

You are invited to respond by saying,

"And also, with you"

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Here I Am to Worship

W&S 3177

CENTERING PRAYER

Holy and Mysterious I AM, we long to know your ways and be guided by your Spirit. We want to experience your presence and come to know more deeply the great "I Am." But so often, you call us by name and we hide. You invite us into holy ground and we cling to comfort. Call us once again from the burning bush. Direct us into that realm where your purposes govern the hearts and minds of all your children. We want to grow into the image you desire for us. Be with us as we draw near to you and closer to each other through the ministry and words of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd and the True Vine. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC (9:30 a.m.)

Holy Ground

Davis

Praise Team

MESSAGE FOR OUR YOUNGEST DISCIPLES (9:30 a.m.)

WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

"I Am Who I Am"

Horeb (Mount Sinai)

LESSONS FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Exodus 3:1-14

May God Bless Our Reading, Hearing and Understanding.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

HYMN OF RESPONSE

W&S 3029, vs. 1-3

In the Desert, on God's Mountain

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Just as God spoke to Moses, God wants to speak to us.

Let us open our hearts to God who wants to be known

and who says, **"I Am Who I Am."**

When life pressures us to care more for things than for God, remember that Jesus said,

"I am the Bread of Life. Come to me and never be hungry."

When we feel puzzled about which choices are right,

we can ask for guidance from the one who said,

"I am the Light of the World."

When we feel vulnerable and lost, we can find comfort in knowing that we are continuously being sought by the one who said,

"I am the Good Shepherd. Come to me."

When we feel powerless and weary, we can find power

offered to us by the one who said,

"I am the True Vine. Abide in me."

When we wonder who's in and who's out with God,

we can find reassurance in the grace embodied in Jesus

who welcomed all, saying,

"I am the Way, Truth, and Life. Follow me."

When we face loss and pain, we can find hope in the one who promised us renewed and abundant life, saying,

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. Live in me."

CHORAL PRAYER

Music In Pews, v. 2

Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud

Word and Wisdom, Root and Vine, Shepherd, Savior,

Servant, Lamb, Well and Water, Bread and Wine,

Way who leads us to I AM:

May the church at prayer recall that no single holy name

but the truth behind them all is the God whom we proclaim.

SERMON

Knowing the Great "I AM"

Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith

No one has ever seen God, except God's only Son, who has come to make God known.

Paraphrased from John 1:18

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

SHARING OUR PRAYERS

At the **9:30** service, you are invited to name your prayers for the congregation.

After each prayer request, the congregation will respond...

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

PRAYERS FOR ALL GOD'S BELOVED PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS TO THE MINISTRY OF GOD

*PRESENTATION

My Tribute

UMH 99

To God be the glory, to God be the glory,

to God be the glory for the things he has done.

With his blood he has saved me, with his power he has raised me;

to God be the glory for the things he has done.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Thank you, God, for the signs and wonders that reveal your presence. We want to do our part to share your love with the world. Use our offering and our lives to bring a realization of your presence among us. May we be humble, teachable, and faithful as we seek to follow in your ways. Amen.

*HYMN OF DEDICATION

How Great Is Our God

W&S 3003

*SENDING FORTH

*LIGHT OF CHRIST LEADS US INTO THE WORLD (9:30 a.m.)

As We Go

W&S 3183

As we go, may your Spirit go before us.

As we go, may we follow where you lead.

May we live what we have learned, share the message we have heard, and be a light unto the world as we go.

*POSTLUDE

Please join us at 10:30 in Fellowship Hall for refreshments and fellowship.

An Adult Study is offered in FUMCO's Wesley Hall at 11:00 a.m., located on the lower level of the building. All are welcome.

Our Service Of Worship Has Ended.

Our Worship Through Service Begins.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Given in honor of Hudson Ryder Pettit's 6th birthday by his family.

Given in loving memory of Marty Bailey by Shirley Bailey.

Lenten Devotionals

Weekly Lenten devotionals are available on the sanctuary entrance tables. The devotionals run Sunday to Sunday. Each Sunday you will find a new devotional for that week.

For Your Information

- There are **hearing devices** to assist you to experience the service more clearly with our streaming team, at the rear of the sanctuary. Feel free to pick one up.
- A **rocking chair** is available for the comfort of parent and baby, in Blair Chapel, behind the pews.
- To access the **restrooms**, please exit the side door to the right of the lectern/chancel area. In the hall, make a left into Fellowship Hall and follow the signs.
- There are **infant changing tables** available in the restrooms.
- There are **large print hymnals** available. Please ask the usher.



This Week We Hold in Prayer...

Marley, Jagger, Debbie Eckert
Our Homebound: Bev Itell, Jean Gillette,
 Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens,

Cary Carlisle, Priscilla Smith, Elaine Gould

At Home: Peg Kuchen, Avery Fallon

Jersey Shore Care Center: Dave Miller

Sunnyside Manor: Nancy Burt

- **The church has a team of prayers, known as the Prayer Chain. If you have a prayer need, please contact the office.
- **If you know someone who is in need of pastoral care, please contact Jill Hubbard-Smith 732-209-4563 or revjmh@gmail.com.

Our Leadership Team This Morning

Acolyte: Sue McRae
 Counters: Jane Gittines, Randy Danielson
 Fellowship Host: Bonnie McNamara
 Greeter: Mike Sheckler
 Lay Reader: Robin Whitney
 Usher: Chip Stoll

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to this service of worship. We pray this service offered an opportunity to engage with the Divine. If we can be of service to you in any way, please let us know. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining us, where we help one another grow in faith, love, and service.

Please Join Us in Mission and Ministry

...where together we help each other grow in faith, love, and service.

TODAY:

Fellowship Time – Fellowship Hall 10:30 a.m.
 Adult Sunday School – Wesley Hall 11 a.m.
 Worship In Person 11 a.m. (Old First)

Monday, February 23

AA – Wesley Hall 7:30 a.m.
 Alanon – Wesley Hall 10 a.m.

Tuesday, February 24

Women’s Covenant Group – Library 8:30 a.m.
 Naranon – Wesley Hall 11 a.m.
 Scouts – Fellowship Hall 7 p.m.
 Lenten Study – Wesley Hall 7 p.m.

Wednesday, February 25

AA – Wesley Hall 7:30 a.m.
 Miriam Circle Meeting – Wesley Hall 10 a.m.
 Lenten Study – Wesley Hall 12 p.m.

Thursday, February 26

Alanon – Wesley Hall 10 a.m.
 Brownies Show Rehearsal – Fellowship Hall 4:15 p.m.
 Chancel Choir Rehearsal – Sanctuary 6:30 p.m.
 OA – Wesley Hall 6:30 p.m.

Friday, February 27

AA – Wesley Hall 7 p.m.

Saturday, February 28

Eagle Scout Court of Honor – Sanctuary 11 a.m.
 Court of Honor Reception – Fellowship Hall 12 p.m.

Sunday, March 1

Worship in Person & Online 9:30 a.m.
 Fellowship Time – Fellowship Hall 10:30 a.m.
 Worship In Person 11 a.m. (Old First)
 Adult Sunday School – Wesley Hall 11 a.m.

Announcements

Join in Faithful Resistance: A Public Witness for Immigration Justice-On 2/25 faith leaders and congregants across the EPA & GNJ conferences are invited to participate and support a meaningful ecumenical & interfaith gathering to stand in solidarity with our neighbors and advocate for immigrant justice. The gathering will take place in Washinton, D.C. If interested in joining, please contact FUMCO’s church office 732-531-1150.

Altar Flowers are needed for March 15th & March 22nd. Donation price is \$20. Please contact Diane Maher, 732-513-8413.

Church Council Meeting-12:00 p.m. (Old First)



“I AM”

No one has ever seen God, except God’s only Son, who has come to make God known.

Paraphrased from John 1:18

First UMC of Oakhurst

...is a community of faith committed to Christ, seeking to learn the needs of others and responding with Christian love.

9:30 a.m. Worship Every Sunday Morning In Person & Streaming

103 Monmouth Road, Oakhurst, NJ 07755

732-531-1150

FUMCOakhurst@outlook.com

Oakhurst.umcchurches.org

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FUMCOakhurst>

Follow us on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstUnitedMethodistChurchofOakhurst>

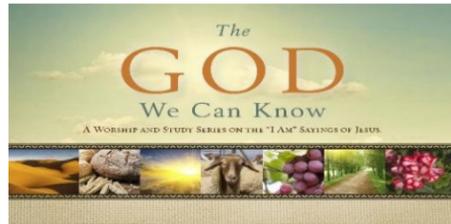
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11:00 a.m. Worship Every Sunday Morning In Person at First UMC located at 103 Monmouth Road, Oakhurst

Mailing Address: PO Box 214, West Long Branch, NJ 07764
office@oldfirstumchurch.org



Our Lenten Worship and Study Series is based on *The God We Can Know: Exploring the "I Am" Sayings of Jesus*. by Rob Fuquay

Sunday Worship: Feb. 22 through Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026

9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

- Lent 2: March 1:** "I Am the Bread of Life." Knowing God's Satisfaction. John 6:27-59 with Holy Communion.
- Lent 3: March 8:** "I Am" the Light of the World: Knowing God's Guidance. John 7:2, 14, & 8:12 with Special Music by our Chancel Choir.
- Lent 4: March 15:** "I Am" the Good Shepherd: Knowing God's Care. John 10:1-10 with Special Music by our Bells.
- Lent 5: March 22:** "I Am" the True Vine: Knowing God's Power. John 15:1-8 with our Praise Team and Children's Message.
- Palm Sunday (Lent 6) March 29:** "I Am" the Way, the Truth, and the Life: Knowing God's Way. John 14:1-7
- Easter Sunday April 5:** "I Am" the Resurrection and the Life: Knowing God's Possibilities. John 11:17-26

Study and Small Group Sharing:

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. & Wednesdays at Noon

In Wesley Hall, downstairs and to the left from our parking lot entrance.

Tuesdays: Feb. 24, March 10, March 17, March 24

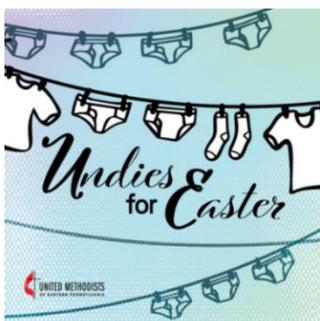
(Note: Not March 3)

Wednesdays: March 4, March 11, March 18, March 25

(Note: Not Feb. 25)

Daily Devotional: Available each Sunday for the coming week.

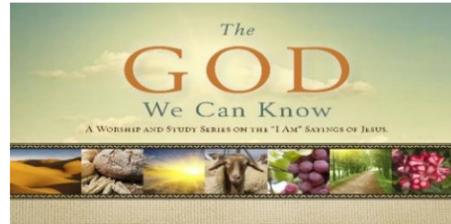
If you would like them mailed or emailed to you, please contact Joy in the First UMC Office at 732-531-1150.



Our Lenten Mission

... is to Prison Inmates who receive only ONE pair of underpants and no undershirts or socks when they arrive. Can you imagine living with only one pair of underpants? In this season of Lent, you are invited to step out in faith and reveal God's tender love by caring for their basic needs. Donations of Hanes white socks, white tee-shirts, and white underpants are welcomed to the church until **March 22nd**. OR click on this [Amazon](#)

[wishlist](#) to make your purchase and have it delivered to the EPAUMC Prison Ministry P.O. Box by **March 29**.



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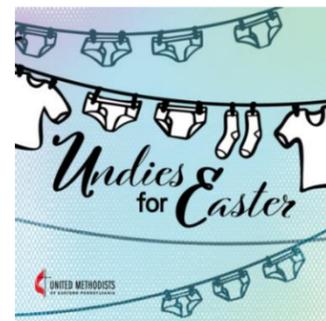
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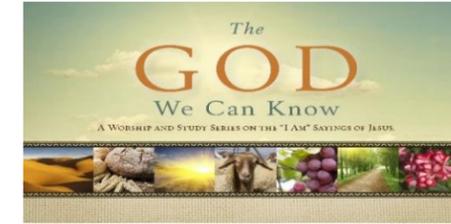
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Reflective Questions

*Do you know what your name means (both first and last)?
If not, try researching it, see if you think your name truly fits.*

Why was knowing God's name so important to Moses?

What do you think is significant about God's name in Exodus 3:14? What message is God sending Moses by telling God's name?

Based on the example of Moses, what can we learn today about carrying out touch assignments from God?

Thinking about Jesus' use of the words "I Am," what does it mean that Jesus associated himself with symbols like bread, light shepherding, a grapevine, a way, and so forth?

What does the statement, "We are not just made by God, we are made out of God" mean to you?

How do you end a sentence that begins, "I am...?"

Small Group Reflection

What would you do if a burning bush (or any inanimate object) began speaking to you as God?

Do you think God wants to talk to us and tries to?

How does this story about God and Moses connect with Jesus?

*What do you think of God's response of "I Am?"
What is God saying?*

*Do you think we learn more about God from this cryptic answer than we would have learned if the answer had just been "God?" Why?
What is the difference between those two types of answers?*

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