



**Accompaniment Play List and Sermon available on YouTube at**

<http://bit.ly/OUMC03-08-2026>

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Psalm 27: 11-14 WEB**

<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, Yahweh.

Lead me in a straight path, because of my enemies.

<sup>12</sup> Don't deliver me over to the desire of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen up against me, such as breathe out cruelty.

<sup>13</sup> I am still confident of this:

I will see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living.

<sup>14</sup> Wait for Yahweh.

Be strong, and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for Yahweh.

**INTROIT UMH #473**

**"Lead me, Lord"<sup>1</sup> (refrain)**

[https://youtu.be/1Y0Tiol\\_1ME](https://youtu.be/1Y0Tiol_1ME)

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness;

make thy way plain before my face.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious and merciful God, You are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. We come as people who fall short, yet are made new by Your grace. Teach us Your way, O Lord, and lead us on a level path.

Give us courage to wait for You with hope, and to trust the mercy that restores and renews us. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

**AFFIRMATION**

**"Affirmation from 1 Timothy and 1 John"**

**UMH # 889**

There is one God and there is one mediator, Christ Jesus, who came as a ransom for all, to whom we testify.

This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and was manifested in

the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory. Great indeed is the mystery of the gospel. Amen.

**GLORIA PATRI**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**HYMN UMH #361**

**"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"<sup>2</sup>**

<https://youtu.be/gFs3jwE3VHw>

1. Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
let me hide myself in thee;  
let the water and the blood,  
from thy wounded side which flowed,  
be of sin the double cure;  
save from wrath and make me pure.

2. Not the labors of my hands  
can fulfill thy law's commands;  
could my zeal no respite know,  
could my tears forever flow,  
all for sin could not atone;  
thou must save, and thou alone.

3. Nothing in my hand I bring,  
simply to the cross I cling;  
naked, come to thee for dress;  
helpless, look to thee for grace;  
foul, I to the fountain fly;  
wash me, Savior, or I die.

4. While I draw this fleeting breath,  
when mine eyes shall close in death,  
when I soar to worlds unknown,  
see thee on thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
let me hide myself in thee.

### ANTHEM (Suggested)

### “Come As You Are”

<https://youtu.be/uvjvSDk8T5M>

Crowder

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

### Romans 3:21-26 WEB

<sup>21</sup> But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been revealed, being testified by the law and the prophets; <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all those who believe. For there is no distinction, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup> being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in

Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God sent to be an atoning sacrifice through faith in his blood, for a demonstration of his righteousness through the passing over of prior sins, in God’s forbearance; <sup>26</sup> to demonstrate his righteousness at this present time, that he might himself be just and the justifier of him who has faith in Jesus.

### JOYS & CONCERNS and PASTORAL PRAYER

Holy and gracious God, You are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and so we come to You with open hearts.

You invite us to return—not in fear, but in trust—

and we thank You for the mercy that meets us before we can even form the words of our confession.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that we fall short.

We miss the mark in ways seen and unseen, in choices we regret and in habits we barely notice.

Yet Your grace reaches us still.

You lift the burdens we cannot carry,

You forgive the sins we cannot fix,  
and You restore the joy we thought we had lost.

Teach us Your way, O Lord.

Lead us on a level path when life feels uneven,  
when decisions weigh heavy, when fear clouds our vision.

Give us courage to wait for You— to trust that Your timing is good, Your presence is near,

*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 trespasses, as we forgive those*

and Your light is enough for the next faithful step.

We pray today for those who feel far from home, for those who long for a fresh start, for those carrying guilt, grief, or worry.

Surround them with Your compassion.

Renew their spirits.

Let them know they are held in Your steadfast love.

We lift up our community, our families, our church.

Shape us into people who reflect Your mercy, who extend grace as freely as we have received it, and who walk in Your way with humility and hope.

Gather all our prayers—spoken and unspoken— into the heart of Christ, who redeems, restores, and renews us day by day.

And send us out strengthened by Your Spirit to live as Your beloved people.

In the name of Jesus, our Lord, our Savior and our guide...who taught us to pray...

*who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

**HYMN UMH #348**

**“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”**

<https://youtu.be/wprDdSGijl>

1. Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,  
calling for you and for me;  
see, on the portals he's waiting and watching,  
watching for you and for me.

**Refrain:**

**Come home, come home;  
ye who are weary come home;  
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
calling, O sinner, come home!**

2. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,  
pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger & heed not his mercies,  
mercies for you and for me? (Refrain)

3. Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,  
passing from you and from me;  
shadows are gathering, deathbeds are coming,  
coming for you and for me. (Refrain)

4. O for the wonderful love he has promised,  
promised for you and for me!  
Though we have sinned, he has mercy & pardon,  
pardon for you and for me. (Refrain)

**SCRIPTURE LESSON**

**Joel 2:12-17 WEB**

<sup>12</sup> “Yet even now,” says Yahweh, “turn to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.”

<sup>13</sup> Tear your heart and not your garments, and turn to Yahweh, your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness, and relents from sending calamity.

<sup>14</sup> Who knows? He may turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meal offering and a drink offering to Yahweh, your God.

<sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion! Sanctify a fast.

Call a solemn assembly.

<sup>16</sup> Gather the people. Sanctify the assembly. Assemble the elders.

Gather the children, and those who nurse from breasts. Let the bridegroom go out of his room, and the bride out of her chamber.

<sup>17</sup> Let the priests, the ministers of Yahweh, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, “Spare your people, Yahweh, and don’t give your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them.

Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

**MESSAGE**

**“Return, Restore, Renew”**

**Rev Jim Canody**

<https://bit.ly/Sermon03-08-2026>

**There’s a moment in every journey when you realize you’ve drifted. Maybe it’s on a road trip when you suddenly notice the GPS has been “recalculating” for the last five minutes. Maybe it’s in a conversation when you realize you’ve said something you wish you could take back. Or maybe it’s in your spiritual life – when you wake up one day and think, “How did I get here? When did I stop praying? When did I stop trusting? When did I stop listening?”**

Lent is the season when God gently taps us on the shoulder and says, **“Come back. I’m still here. Let’s walk together again.”**

Today’s scriptures – Joel 2, Romans 3, and Psalm 27 – give us a three-part movement for that return:

**Return to God. Receive grace. Walk in God’s way.**

*“Rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the Lord your God,*

*for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love."*

Joel is speaking to a people who have wandered far.

But notice what he doesn't say.

He doesn't say, "Return to the Lord, because you've messed up."

He doesn't say, "Return, because God is furious."

He says, **Return because God is gracious. Return because God is merciful. Return because God is love.**

**A pastor once told the story of a child who dropped a plate in the kitchen.**

**It shattered everywhere.**

**The child froze – eyes wide, waiting for the explosion of anger.**

**But instead, the parent knelt down, picked up a piece of the broken plate, and said, "Well... I guess we clean this up together."**

That's Joel's message.

God doesn't stand over us with crossed arms.

God kneels beside us and says,

**"Let's clean this up together. Come home."**

Lent is not about shame.

It's about **returning**.

**A man once told the story of growing up on a farm where the nights were pitch-black. No streetlights. No glow from nearby towns. Just darkness.**

**Every evening, his father would hang an old kerosene lantern on a hook by the front porch.**

**The boy asked once, "Why do you put that lantern out every night? We're all inside."**

**His father smiled and said,**

**"It's not for us. It's for anyone who might be trying to find their way home."**

**Years later, that boy – now a teenager – found himself walking home after making a poor decision he regretted deeply. He was ashamed, afraid of what his father would say, and tempted to turn back into the darkness.**

**But then he saw it.**

**That same lantern, glowing on the porch.**

**A small, steady light saying,**

**"You can come home. The door is still open." He said, "I didn't know what my father would say when I walked in. But I knew the lantern meant he wanted me to come home."**

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift."*

Paul doesn't mince words.

We all fall short.

We all miss the mark.

We all have broken places in our lives.

But Paul also says something revolutionary:

**Grace is a gift.**

Not a reward.

Not a paycheck.

Not a gold star for good behavior.

**A gift.**

**Imagine you receive a bill in the mail for an amount you could never pay.**

**You panic.**

**You calculate.**

**You lose sleep.**

**And then one day, another letter arrives:**

**"Your balance has been paid in full."**

That's what Paul is saying.

We couldn't pay the bill.

We couldn't fix ourselves.

We couldn't earn our way back.

But God, in Christ, stepped in and said,

**"I've covered it. You're free."**

Grace is not God lowering the bar.

Grace is God lifting us up.

*"Teach me your way, O Lord,  
and lead me on a level path."*

*"Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage."*

Once we return...

Once we receive grace...

We don't just go back to life as usual.

We walk in a new direction.

Psalm 27 is a prayer for guidance.

A prayer for clarity.

A prayer for courage.

**If you've ever driven on the Eastern Shore on a foggy morning, you know the feeling of not being able to see more than a few feet ahead. You slow down. You grip the wheel. You trust the lines on the road. You move forward, even though you can't see the whole path.**

That's what the psalmist is describing.  
Faith is not seeing everything clearly.  
Faith is trusting the One who leads us.  
Faith is waiting with courage.  
Faith is walking even when the path is dim.

Joel says: **Return.**

Paul says: **Receive grace.**

The psalmist says: **Walk with courage.**

This is the Lenten journey.

Not a journey of guilt, but a journey of grace.  
Not a journey of fear, but a journey of trust.  
Not a journey of perfection, but a journey of transformation.

So today, hear the invitation:

If you've drifted – return.

If you're carrying shame – receive grace.

If you're unsure of the path – ask God to teach

you *His way*.

If you're afraid – wait with courage.  
Because the God who calls you back  
is the God who forgives you,  
the God who restores you,  
and the God who walks beside you  
every step of the way.  
Thanks be to God.

**Let us Pray...**

Merciful God,

You have called us to return, and we have  
heard Your voice.

You have reminded us that grace is Your gift,  
freely given, never earned, always offered.

And You have promised to teach us Your way  
and lead us on a level path.

As we leave this place,

create in us hearts that trust Your mercy,  
spirits that rest in Your forgiveness,  
and courage that waits on You with hope.

Shape our steps, guide our choices,  
and let Your steadfast love be the light before  
us.

Send us out renewed, restored, and ready to  
walk with You.

In the name of Christ, our Redeemer and our  
strength. **Amen.** †

#### **HYMN UMH #474**

#### **"Precious Lord Take My Hand"**

<https://youtu.be/5lrZmNAZOol>

1. Precious Lord, take my hand  
Lead me on, let me stand  
I am tired, I'm weak, I am worn  
Through the storm, through the night  
Lead me on to the light  
Take my hand, precious Lord  
Lead me home

2. When my way groweth drear  
Precious Lord, linger near  
When my light is almost gone  
Hear my cry, hear my call  
Hold my hand lest I fall  
Take my hand, precious Lord  
Lead me on

3. When the darkness appears  
and the night draws near  
And the day is past and gone  
At the river I stand  
Guide my feet, hold my hand  
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home

## BENEDICTION

Go now in the mercy of the God who calls you to return, in the grace of Christ who makes you new, and in the strength of the Spirit who teaches you the way.

May your heart trust the love that never lets you go.

May your steps be guided by the One who leads you on a level path.

And may courage rise within you as you wait upon the Lord.

Go in peace, renewed and restored, to walk as God's beloved people.

## RESPONSE UMH #473

### "Lead me, Lord" (refrain)

<https://youtu.be/O2WhWRnR5k0>

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness;

make thy way plain before my face.

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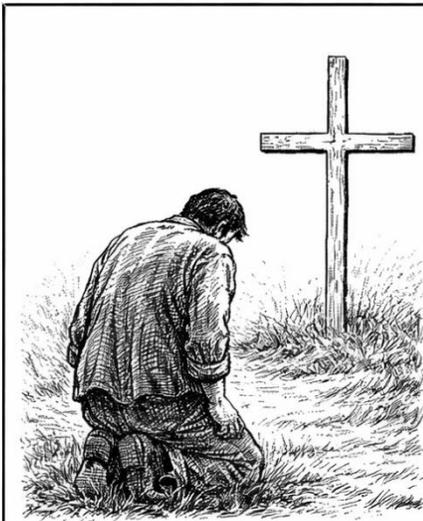
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<sup>1,5</sup> **Lead Me, Lord**, UMH #473, Text: Psalms 5:8, 4:8; Composer: Samuel Sebastian Wesley © Public Domain

<sup>2</sup> **Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me**, UMH #361, Words: Augustus M. Toplady, Composer: Thomas Hastings, © Public Domain

<sup>3</sup> **Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling**, UMH #348, Words & Music: Will L. Thompson, Tune: Thompson © Public Domain

<sup>4</sup> **Precious Lord Take My Hand**, UMH #474, Author and Composer: Thomas A. Dorsey, CCLI# 7205306, © Words: 1938 Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp.; Music: 1983 Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp.



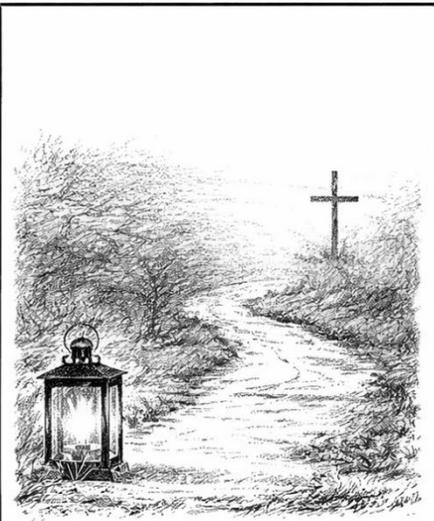
*Return to the Lord  
your God, for he is  
gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger,  
and abounding  
in steadfast love.*

*Joel 2:13*



*For all have sinned and  
fall short of the glory of  
God; they are now justified  
by his grace as a gift.*

**Romans 3:23-24**



*Teach me your way, O Lord,  
and lead me on a level path.*

*Wait for the Lord;  
be strong, and let your  
heart take courage:*

**Psalm 27:11 & 14**

## OUR PRAYER JOYS & CONCERNS from March 1, 2026

- The United States of America, other countries around the world, and our leaders
  - War-torn areas including Ukraine, Israel & the Middle East
  - Americans serving in the armed forces and in dangerous foreign diplomatic posts.
  - Our missionary in Cambodia, Clara Mridula Biswas.
  - Persecuted Christians
  - The United Methodist Church and The Virginia Annual Conference
- Beth McMath Byam
  - Kevin Daley
  - Ryan Custis
  - Nancy Dix
  - Cindy & Bill Bradford
  - Don Bowling
  - Norman Bowling
  - Linda Beasley
  - Nancy Guthrie and her family
  - Charlie Russell
  - Rodrick Drummond
  - Virginia UMC Bishop & her Cabinet
  - Pat Phillips
  - Bunny McLean
  - Lynn Bell
  - Laura Moore
  - Venezuela and Iraq
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo
  - Tyler Nickel
  - Drew Edwards
  - Brandon Pruitt
  - Those affected by Hurricane Melissa
  - Susan Taylor
  - Our Youth Sunday School
  - Rolland Elliot
  - Phyllis Edwards
  - Denis Curtis
  - Bobby Wood
  - Alice Denny
  - Roy Ballard
  - Linda Beloke
  - Terry Johnson
  - Ron McCabe
  - Alma Reid
- Rose Dryfus
  - Nancy Bisker
  - Ken Spain
  - Susan Fletcher
  - Camp Occohannock
  - Mary Paul Harmon
  - Crystal Foti
  - Peggy Byrd
  - Tom Webb
  - E. A. McMath
  - T.K. Fitchett
  - Betty Turlington
  - George McMath
  - Rosilee Lewis
  - Dianne Nickel
  - Travel Mercies
  - Unspokens

### ✠ *Special prayers for the family and friends of:*

- *Claudia Savage Webb*
- *Ronnie Andrews*
- *Nancy Camden*
- *James Laws*
- *Emily Kellam*
- *Linda Custis*
- *Dottie Milliner*
- *Nelda LoFaso*
- *Roy Ballard*
- *Dick Jenkins*
- *Victims of gun violence*

Please share your joys and concerns with Pastor Jim at : [jimcanody@vaumc.org](mailto:jimcanody@vaumc.org) or call 703-861-2023

Website: <https://www.onleyumc.org/>

Google Review: <https://g.page/r/CW9SLu50qxK6EBU/review>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OnleyUMC/>

YouTube Channel: <http://bit.ly/OUMC-YouTube>

Join our email chain: [onleymethodist@gmail.com](mailto:onleymethodist@gmail.com)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## MARCH Birthdays

## MARCH Anniversaries

Hannah Annis (Mar. 1)  
E.T. Dize (Mar. 5)

David Drummond (Mar. 17)  
Bev McMath (Mar. 25)

Claudia & Ronnie Harmon (Mar 6)



**Thank you for your dedication to the ministries of Onley UMC!** We greatly appreciate your gifts, tithes, and prayers. Your contributions are important to the life and mission of OUMC. **Checks, made payable to OUMC** should be mailed to:  
**Onley UMC, P. O. Box 216, Onley, VA 23418**



**Youth Group**  
Meeting @ Epworth this Sunday  
4-6 PM  
March 27-29 | High School Retreat | Camp OOTB | \$85  
Register: [bit.ly/2026HighSchoolRetreat](http://bit.ly/2026HighSchoolRetreat)

### Camp Occohannock on the Bay Spring Work Day Saturday March 14 @ 8am-3pm

- Preparing & Cleaning out flower beds
- Helping with boat cleaning/prepping
- Clearing Trails
- Clearing roofs
- Helping repair the dock and pier-replacing wood pieces
- Deep Cleaning Several Buildings
- Clean out Nurses Station
- Some light construction tasks
- Chainsaw & Tree work

**Lunch provided | Register [ootbay.org](http://ootbay.org)**



*We will be collecting items for the Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence.*  
*Their wish list includes:*

- Diapers
- Paper towels
- Full size hygiene products (shampoo, conditioner, soap, deodorant)
- Towels, washcloths and hand towels
- Cleaning Supplies
- Silverware
- Full and twin size bedding
- Baby wipes
- Toilet paper
- Trash bags
- Pots and pans



**BIBLE STUDY**  
**Thursdays @ 1pm**



### COAT CLOSET MISSION!



We continue to accept cash donations as well as coats, hats, scarves, jackets, and gloves during the year. Please either email us at [jre11@verizon.net](mailto:jre11@verizon.net) or call 757.710.1524 and leave a message to arrange pickup or drop off. Monetary donations may be sent to Onley UMC, P O Box 216, Onley, VA 23418; please note "coat closet" in the memo section of the check.



**Camp Occohannock on the Bay is one of OUR ministries- thank you for your support!**  
**WISH LIST:**  
You can help by supporting the camp with donations to their wishlist year round (craft items, snacks, tools, furnishings, activities, etc) found on Amazon at <https://amzn.to/4kKI8qG>