

“The Free Way”

Week Five - Sunday March 22, 2026

WE GATHER

Meeting One Another on The Way

PRELUDE

“Tear Off the Roof”

B. Lake
Bill Dorfner

WELCOME

THRESHOLD MOMENT

Leader: Our worship series leads us along the path of our faith journey in a way that leads to new life in Jesus Christ, the message of Easter that we move towards. New paths are possible through freedom in Christ. And these ways can be made plain before us if we have eyes to see. Yes, we will strain against adversity—such is life. We don’t reach Easter until we’ve been through the agony of Holy Week that will soon be upon us. But new paths are always possible. There will be both stumbling blocks and stepping stones along the way. But God is our rock and our redeemer—God is with us in our every step.

SONG

“A Wilderness Wandering People”

PRAYER FOR THE PATH

God our Rock, be with us on The Way. At times we are not sure how we will carry the burdens of grief and disappointment that accumulate in life. We come asking for help in lightening the load so that we can be free to move in new directions. Help us to help each other as Jesus asks us to do. Amen.

* OPENING HYMN

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

Black Hymnal 2158

WE PROCLAIM

Discovering Ourselves on The Way

EXTINGUISHING THE FIFTH CANDLE

As we extinguish this fifth candle, we remember that the journey of faith sometimes asks us to release what we have been carrying. Along the way we gather burdens, fear, grief, resentment, doubt, and disappointment, but Christ invites us to lay them down. In Jesus, we are reminded that the road ahead is not meant to be walked under the weight of everything we hold. God’s grace lightens the load, making a new path possible.

“Stillness” [chorus]

Meet me in the stillness, Lord

Be the air I breathe

Meet me in the stillness, Lord

Free me to receive

PRAYERS FOR GETTING OUT OF OUR OWN WAY

Leader: Let us pause along the way to turn towards the Holy One, the One whose way is freedom from fear. We come with our honesty about just how difficult it is to trust the path, trust our instincts, trust our inner compass. And we remember that God meets us even here.

O God, There are times when we feel hopeless and afraid. We become confused and unsure as to how to face the next moment. Sometimes the thought of our own death stirs up feelings of doubt and uncertainty. We feel as though we are on a treadmill, rather than moving toward a destination. Worst of all, in the midst of our anxiety, we become impatient and angry with those who mean the most to us. If it is possible, let that cup pass from us, but if not...Amen.

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 who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

THE WORD IN MUSIC

“Let Us Walk This Road Together”

arr. J. Carter

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As we walk together, our offerings become part of how we share God’s abundance, with one another, with our community, and with the world. Let us give now with grateful hearts.

* RESPONSE

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

UM Hymnal 94

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

READING

Mark 2:1-12

(NRSV)

SERMON

“We Get By With A Little Help From our Friends.”

Rev. Dr. Hope Luckie

WE RESPOND

Opening to the Holy on The Way

“Stillness” chorus
Meet me in the stillness, Lord
Be the air I breathe
Meet me in the stillness, Lord
Free me to receive

Time for Contemplation

Hear this: You are already free because Jesus makes it so. Whether or not you know it, believe it, or feel it quite yet, your burden is shared by Jesus, who is gentle and humble of heart. You are forgiven and freed, especially when your way needs the relief of less weight. May it be so.

WE GO FORTH
Continuing with Jesus on The Way

* CLOSING HYMN *“My Hope Is Built”* UMH 368

* BENECTION

The Creator God filled you with breath, inviting you to this journey called Life.

We will follow on The Way.

Jesus, our Guide, showed us what it means to make a new way with Love.

We will follow on The Way.

The Spirit gives us strength to move forward with Courage and Compassion for all we meet.

We will follow on The Way.

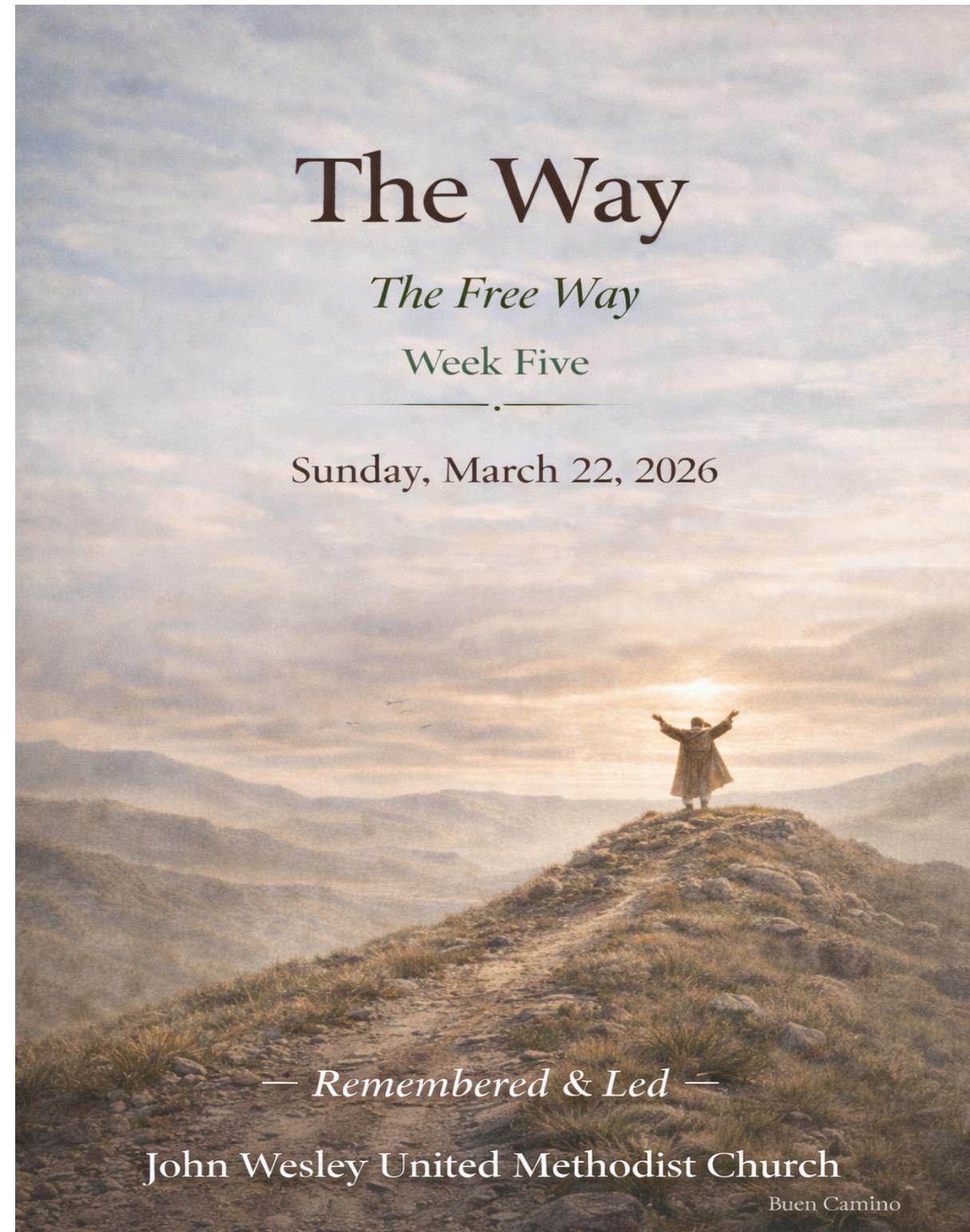
May this week be filled with opportunities to choose to let go of those things that no longer serve you, and be on the lookout for ways to encourage the same in those you meet. May it be so. Amen. ¡Buen Camino!

POSTLUDE

*The flowers adorning the altar this morning are donated To the Glory of God in honor of
Pat Dinsmore’s 100th Birthday by Bob Dinsmore and Family*

Rev. Dr. Hope Luckie, Director of Pastoral Care, holds a doctorate in ecumenism and interreligious dialogue and an M.Div. in spiritual formation and direction. She co-chairs the Open Spirit Task Force, serves on COSROW, contributes to the Ministry Exploration Summit, and trains for Dismantling Racism and mentoring in the Annual Conference. She lives with her husband, Matthew Grasse, their children Gabriel and Eden, and their three cats—Mary Magdalene (Maggie), Mary Cleopas (Chloe), and Acorn.

✦ *Program Series is from www.worshipdesignstudio.com/theway*



The Way

The Free Way

Week Five

Sunday, March 22, 2026

— *Remembered & Led* —

John Wesley United Methodist Church

Buen Camino



WELCOME TO

JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

We are a welcoming and active congregation which seeks to **“LOVE GOD...LOVE OTHERS...SERVE THE WORLD.”**

We invite you to experience meaningful worship services, engaging Bible studies, Sunday school, fellowship, preaching, life-changing local and global mission opportunities and more. We are an active congregation. At John Wesley, there is always room for everyone to become a part of something greater than ourselves. **WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE!**

WEEK AT A GLANCE:

Worship Every Sunday: 10:00 AM

Monday 23rd

- *Lent In Plain Sight* Book Study 6 PM (Library)

Tuesday 24th

- *Give It Up* Lent Book Study 10:30 AM (Fitzgerald Room)

Wednesday 25th

- Prayer Meeting 11 AM (Youth Room)
- *The Difficult Words of Jesus* Book 2 PM (DiAngelis Residence. See Pastor for info)
- Handbell Choir Rehearsal 5:45 PM (Sanctuary)
- Choir Rehearsal 7 PM (Sanctuary)

Thank you Rev. Dr. Hope Luckie for being our guest preacher this morning.

MAUNDY THURSDAY POTLUCK SUPPER,

April 2nd at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Maundy Thursday is believed to be the day when Jesus celebrated his final Passover with His disciples. Here at John Wesley, we commemorate the day with a potluck supper and share communion together.

Pre-registration is helpful, please sign up by scanning the QR Code or at the connection desk.



Good Friday Service – April 3rd, 6:30–7:30 PM

Join us for a reflective Good Friday service as we remember the moment when Jesus walked the most difficult part of the human journey—suffering.

Whatever hardships we may face in our own lives, Jesus understands that pain.

Come and share in this meaningful time of reflection, prayer, and remembrance.

All are welcome.

Easter Sunrise Service

Join us for a beautiful and meaningful Easter Morning Sunrise Service at **Nobska Lighthouse at 6:00 AM on April 5th!** Come celebrate the joy of Easter as the sun rises over the ocean—bring a friend, dress warmly, and experience this special moment together. Please note: The time listed in our mailed announcements was incorrect. The service will begin at 6:00 AM (not 6:15 AM).

Along with our Sunrise Service on April 5th, we also have a **10 AM Easter Service** right here at JWUMC!

