

The 4th Sunday in Lent

March 15th, 2026 ~ 8:30am



+ Friedens Evangelical Lutheran Church +

2451 Saucon Valley Rd. Center Valley, PA 18034

Office: 610-865-4144

The Rev. Lisa K. Borrell, Pastor ~ 610-762-2139

Quinette Brucker, Dir. of Music/Organist



WELCOME



(Please stand as you are comfortable and able*

Prelude Music

Welcome & Announcements

***Opening Litany** (by the Rev. Marilyn Kennedy Levine)

P: Holy Jesus, we confess that we fail to question our own sightlessness.

C: **Being so sure that we “see,” we miss the truths You would teach us.**

P: With the poultice of your love, cure this blindness.

C: **Open our eyes to our own misunderstandings, our own failures, and our own faults.**

P: Make our “shadow side” known to us and help us to diminish it with the light of your grace.

C: **For it is only when we see ourselves clearly that we can worship You truly. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

***Opening Hymn #614** “There is a Balm in Gilead”

***The Greeting and Prayer of the Day**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death, bring light into the darkness of our hearts and anoint us with your Spirit, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The First Reading ~ 1 Samuel 16: 1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the Lord, designating David as the Lord's chosen successor to Saul.

¹ The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'" ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴ Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵ He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the Lord." ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23 (read responsively, lector then congregation)

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

² The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.

³ You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I
shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

The Second Reading ~ Ephesians 5: 8-14

Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.

⁸ Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

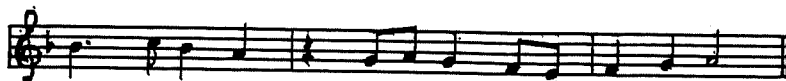
“Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

*The Gospel Acclamation (sung by all)



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - get, and a - bound - ing instead - fast love.

*The Holy Gospel ~ John 9: 1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that He regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

The Holy Gospel according to the 9th chapter of St. John.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹ As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of the One who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ When Jesus had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷ saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then the man went and washed and came back, able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." The man kept saying, "I am he." ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" He replied, "I do not know."

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask the man how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that the man had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this

is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰ The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon

*Hymn #779

“Amazing Grace”

*The Apostles’ Creed (professed together)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again; He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*The Prayers of Intercession

After each prayer petition, please respond:

Hear us, O God ... **Your mercy is great.**

Anthem

“The Lord is My Shepherd”

Blessing of the Elements



The Lord’s Prayer

+ Communal Reception of the Sacrament +

This morning, the sacrament will be distributed by method of intinction; that is, the Pastor will dip the wafer into the chalice, hand it to the recipient so that they may place it in their own mouth.

Post-Communion Blessing, Prayer, and Benediction

P: Compassionate God, You have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

P: The God of all grace + bless you now and forever. Amen.

*Closing Hymn #452

"Awake, O Sleeper ..."

*Dismissal

Go in peace and serve the Lord in love. ♥

Thanks be to God.

Postlude Music

*From Sundays and Seasons.com Copyright 2026. Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Annual License #.36667 NRSV Bible 2026.
Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.*



Remember in prayer ... Ronald Black, Ann Borrell, Caitlin Carfagno, Richard Eisenhart, Timothy Filler, Hope Geary, Jeanne Logan, Barb Shaneberger, Tyler and Elizabeth, Kathleen Tuomela May, Darrell Tuomela, Joe Ulmer, Brad & Monica Wagner, Leon Warmkessel,

Ramone DeLeon, people living in war-torn countries, victims of oppression, injustice, violence, and natural disasters, and other dear ones whom we name before God.

*thank
you*

... to Maureen Wagner for serving as our lector this morning

... to Drew Wagner for serving as our live stream tech

Join us for our mid-week Lenten soup supper (6pm) and worship (7pm) this Wednesday evening, March 18th at New Jerusalem Lutheran (3233 Apples Church Rd., Bethlehem). All are welcome!



Laundry detergent for Betty Lou's Pantry may be brought to church anytime during the month of March. Thx!

There Is a Balm in Gilead

614

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad to make the wound-ed whole;

there is a balm in Gil-e-ad to heal the sin-sick soul.

1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
 2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
 3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

Refrain

but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
 you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
 and if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound 779

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death



- 1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
- 2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
- 3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
- 4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
- 5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.



AZMON

so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
 to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
 one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
 with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
 A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

