



Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2026

10:30 am

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.

106 Maple St., Reading, OH 45215 • 513-821-0987 • stpaulreading.org

Fifth Sunday in Lent: March 22, 2026

Prelude: “Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart”

Gathering

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness

Please stand as you are able. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Please kneel or sit as you are able. Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Gracious God,

C: **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

P: For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

C: **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

P: For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

C: **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

- P: For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,
- C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- P: For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdain-
ing the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
- C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- P: For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs
of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,
- C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- P: For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disre-
garding Christ’s call to come forth to life: Gracious God,
- C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- P: God’s steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith,
the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of
Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The
Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you,
pours God’s love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
- C: Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

Entrance Hymn #559 (green hymnal) vv. 1, 3-5

“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

Greeting

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.

Kyrie

Schubert *Deutsche Messe*



Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.



Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.



Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.



Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Word

Blessing of the Lector

P: Let us pray.

Oh, that today we would hear God's voice. May we hear your voice today, Lord, as Marie reads to us the scriptures. Let not our hearts be hardened, but open to the word of life.

C: Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

¹The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh

to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

⁷ So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” ¹⁰ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ ¹² Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Hymn #295 (green hymnal)

“Out of the Depths I Cry to You”

Second Reading: Romans 8:6-11

⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

Gospel Acclamation: Hymn #102 (green hymnal)

“On My Heart Imprint Your Image”

Gospel: John 11:1-45

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 11th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ²Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³So the

sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.”⁴ But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather, it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

⁵ Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,⁶ after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

⁸ The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?”⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble because they see the light of this world.¹⁰ But those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them.”¹¹ After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.”¹² The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.”¹³ Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep.¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.¹⁵ For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”¹⁶ Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away,¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.”²³ Jesus

said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

²⁸When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”²⁹ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

³¹The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.³² When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.³⁴ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”³⁵ Jesus began to weep.³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.³⁹ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.”⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”⁴¹ So

they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me.”⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

⁴⁵ Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Children’s Sermon

Special Music: Canticle #9

LBW

“I Called to My God for Help”

Sermon

Silence for reflection and meditation.

Hymn of the Day #97 (green hymnal)

“Christ, the Life of All the Living”

General Order of Blessing:

Lenten Congregational Art—Marks of the Church Mobile

P: Friends in Christ: Today we give thanks to God and we seek God's blessing as we dedicate this Marks of the Church Mobile to the praise and glory of God.

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (*Matthew 28:19-20*).

This work of art invites our reflection on God's promise to be with us in worship through the Word and sacraments, and it inspires our commitment to being an assembly of believers among whom the Gospel is purely preached, the sacraments are rightly administered, the suffering are comforted, and the forgiveness of sin is proclaimed in Jesus' name.

The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You made the whole earth for your glory; all creation praises you. We lift our voices to join the songs of heaven and earth, of things seen and unseen. You stretched out the heavens like a tent; you divided the day

from the night; you appointed times and seasons for work and rest, for tearing down and building up. You blessed your people through all generations and guided them in life and death: Abraham and Sarah; Moses and Miriam; Isaiah and all the prophets; Mary, mother of our Lord; Peter, James, John, and all the apostles; and all the saints and witnesses in your church of ages past, in whom your Spirit spoke and moved.

We give you thanks, O God, as we dedicate this Marks of the Church Mobile to your glory and praise. Grant that our life and mission as your Church are marked by the Cross of Christ and lead us to the building up of your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

The Apostles' Creed

A: Let us confess our common faith with all Christians throughout time and place, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

Please kneel or sit as you are able.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

After each petition:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

After the last petition:

A: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

The Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Invitation to Offering

A: Like Israel, we might be tempted to say, “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely,” but God says, “I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people” (*Ez. 37:11-12*). Let us place our trust in God’s power by giving our offering so that we may be part of God’s work of bringing many up from their graves.

Offering: Hymn #216 (maroon hymnal) - refrain only

“Give Me a Clean Heart”

Offertory Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: **O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

The Meal

Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Preface

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

Schubert *Deutsche Messe*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

P: Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

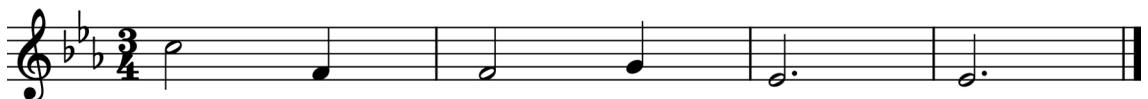
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



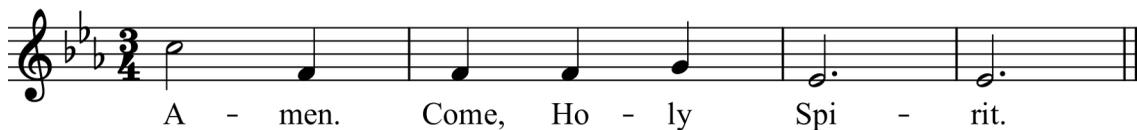
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come a - gain.---

P: Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us. And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast.



A - men. Come, Lord Je - sus.

P: Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.



P: Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.



The Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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;

and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

P: Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Please be seated.

Agnus Dei

Schubert *Deutsche Messe*



Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, bear - er of our sins, have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Communion

P: The Body of Christ, broken for you.
The Blood of Christ, shed for you.

Those who wish to commune at the communion station in the front of the sanctuary may either bring forward their individual Communion kit, or receive the wafer and wine/grape juice by intinction (dipping) from the Communion Ministers, when they are directed forward. Those who wish to commune in their seat with their individual kit may remain seated. Children may come forward with their family for a blessing.

Communion Hymn #702 (blue hymnal)

“I Am the Bread of Life”

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post-Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray.

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ’s body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

Announcements for God's Mission in the World

Please stand as you are able.

Blessing

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, † bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn #464 (green hymnal)

“You Are the Way”

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude: “Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense”

Announcements

Congregational Lunch March 22: All are invited to stay after worship today for food and fellowship. The meal will be provided and all are welcome.

Buckeye Strings Give a Lenten Concert March 26: Mark your calendars for Thursday, March 26 as our final Lenten service for the year before Easter. Once again, Buckeye Strings will be performing a concert of hymns for us. We would like to provide a reception to the musicians following the concerns. You can sign up in the narthex if you wish to bring a light refreshment item to share at the reception.

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Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 22: 5 Lent

9 am Adult Christian Education:
Living Purple
10:30 am Worship Service

Tuesday, March 24

11 am Bible Study

Thursday, March 26

7 pm Buckeye Strings Lenten Concert
(reception to follow)

Sunday, March 29: Palm Sunday

9 am Adult Christian Education:
Living Purple
10 am Sunday School
10:30 am Worship Service

Tuesday, March 31

11 am Bible Study

Thursday, April 2

7 pm Maundy Thursday Worship Service:
Jesus' Last Supper

Friday, April 3

7 pm Good Friday Worship Service:
Gathering Around the Cross

Worship Leaders

The Rev. Emily Beckering, Pastor

Kris Keith, Music Director ***away*

Kate Wollenburg, Organist ***away*

Carolyn Koehl, Guest Organist

Addy Kruse, Hymn Leader

Chet Laine, Assisting Minister

Marie Calhoun, Reader

Becky Betsch, Livestreamer