

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026



We seek to be instruments of God's peace, bearing witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ for all people.

ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ministers: Every member of the Congregation



Welcome in the name of the living Christ to St. Francis Church! May you find renewed grace and peace as we worship together today. St. Francis is an Episcopal Church, part of the wider ministry of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. If you are visiting with us today, please help us get to know you by introducing yourself at the door, and also by signing our guest book or filling out a pew card. *Please be sure to include an email address if you wish to be added to our mailing list.*

Please remember to take your cell phone or electronic device off silent mode at the end of worship.

You are invited to enter in reverence and awe of God's presence in this holy place. Before the liturgy begins we commend the keeping of silence as a time for prayer and reflection.

All baptized persons – regardless of denomination or age – are invited to receive the sacrament with us. All are welcome to the Table; even if you choose to not receive, you may wish to receive a blessing. Gluten-free bread is provided for those who request it; please be in touch with one of the clergy or ushers to make this request.

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP:

The liturgy that we use for worship is from the red Book of Common Prayer (**BCP**). **Bold** print is to be spoken by the people of God.

At 10:00 a.m. our hymns and service music is from the blue Hymnal found in the book racks in the pews. Numbers that begin with an S- are in the front of the Hymnal.

We occasionally use supplemental hymn books called *Wonder, Love & Praise* and *Come Celebrate* which will be given to you with your bulletin. These will be listed as WLP or CC followed by the hymn number.

THE PENITENTIAL ORDER

SILENT PROCESSION

OPENING ACCLAMATION

BCP 351

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People ***His mercy endures for ever.***

Please kneel or sit, as you are able

CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION

BCP 352

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:29-31*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8,9

The Celebrant then says:

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

The Celebrant stands and says:

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

KYRIE ELEISON

8:00 a.m. Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.

Lord have mercy upon us.

10:00 a.m.

Hymnal S-86

THE WORD OF GOD

COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

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." 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.' 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." 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?" 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. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord." 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." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." 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." 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." 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 23

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

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

3 He revives my soul
and guides me along right pathways
for his 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 spread a table before me in the
presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.

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

SECOND READING: *Ephesians 5:8-14*

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand, as you are able

SEQUENCE HYMN: 10:00 a.m.

I want to walk as a child of the light

Hymnal 490

GOSPEL: *John 9:1-41*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I

am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 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?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 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." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. 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." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 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." 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. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 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." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 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?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. 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.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” 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, Lord Christ

SERMON:

The Rev. Patrick Perkins

THE NICENE CREED

BCP 358

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE - FORM II

BCP 385

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world;
...for Doug, our Bishop, Miguelina, our Bishop-elect, for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; for the
community of St. Francis; and for all ministers and people.
...for The Anglican Church of Kenya; for the parish of St. Luke's, Worcester; for the mission of Heifer
International;
...for those in our Parish Cycle of Prayer: Jim Cole; Tom and Andrea Colyer; Mary and Steven Cook;
Kari, David, Tessa and Ruth Ann Currie;
Pray for the Church.

Silence

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well being of all people.
... for all Federal and State employees, for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their
families, especially J. Pigsley, Gregory Smith, Jason Haynes, Mark Williams, Jacob Pezzini, Tyler Jeck,
David Lane, Riley Smith, James Cimochoowski, Sam Richenburg;
...for Donald, our President; Maura, our Governor; and all who govern and hold authority in the
nations of the world;
...for peace throughout the world; for the victims of war and terrorism, for the people of Ukraine and
Afghanistan, for peace in Sudan, Yemen, and the region of the Middle East; and for those facing
famine and drought in Somalia and the Horn of Africa;
Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison. Rich, Eric Warner, Kathleen Lloyd Jones, Jack, John Dougherty, Paul Stanovich, Tom, Bev, Judy Crosby, Brenda, Hilda Schinsing, Judy Capone, Mary Lee and Bob Kraushaar, Jen Gadowski, Jeanette, James Kelly, Carmelita Bello, Andrea McDonald, Mary Mullahy, Kathy Vogel, Richard, Donna Giuliani, Angela Favulli, Patrick Kelly, Priscilla Morris, Maryann Bello, Mark, Lisa, Joshua Olson, Deirdre, Andi, Amy Polwarczyk, Abigail Runstrom; those suffering from homelessness and all types of addiction and mental illness; the residents and staff of Holden Nursing Home; and those who mourn;

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of God.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the departed. Pray for those who have died.

Silence

I ask your prayers of thanksgiving or petition, either silently or aloud.

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored, especially Francis and Clare; Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Silence

Celebrant add a concluding collect.

THE PEACE

BCP 360

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY HYMN: 10:00 a.m.

My Shepherd will supply my need

Hymnal 664

OFFERTORY PRESENTATION

8:00 a.m. *All things come of thee, O Lord. **And of Thine own have we given thee.***

10:00 a.m.

Tune: Hymnal 380 v.3

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Eucharistic Prayer C

BCP 369

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

8:00 a.m. (spoken)

10:00 a.m. (sung)

Hymnal S-124

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

Lord God of our Fathers; God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation.

AMEN.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

BCP 364

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

FRACTION ANTHEM:

8:00 a.m. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

10:00 a.m. Agnus Dei **Hymnal S-161**

COMMUNION HYMN: 10:00 a.m. *Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness* **Hymnal 339**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

BCP 366

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

LENTEN BLESSING

RECESSIONAL HYMN: 10:00 a.m.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

Hymnal 690

THE DISMISSAL

BCP 366

Go in peace and walk in the Way of Love.

Thanks be to God.

SERVERS THIS WEEKEND:

Altar Guild: Roz Glanville, Julie Russell, Carol Perkins, Kari Currie

Nursing Home: Tina Chen

8:00 a.m.

Reader: Jeremy Sanders

LEM: Dick Delorme

10:00 a.m.

Ushers: Jeffrey and Nancy Plante

Reader: Laura Caswell

LEM: Christina Melzar

St. Francis Episcopal Church



Bearing Witness
to
Christ's Love

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