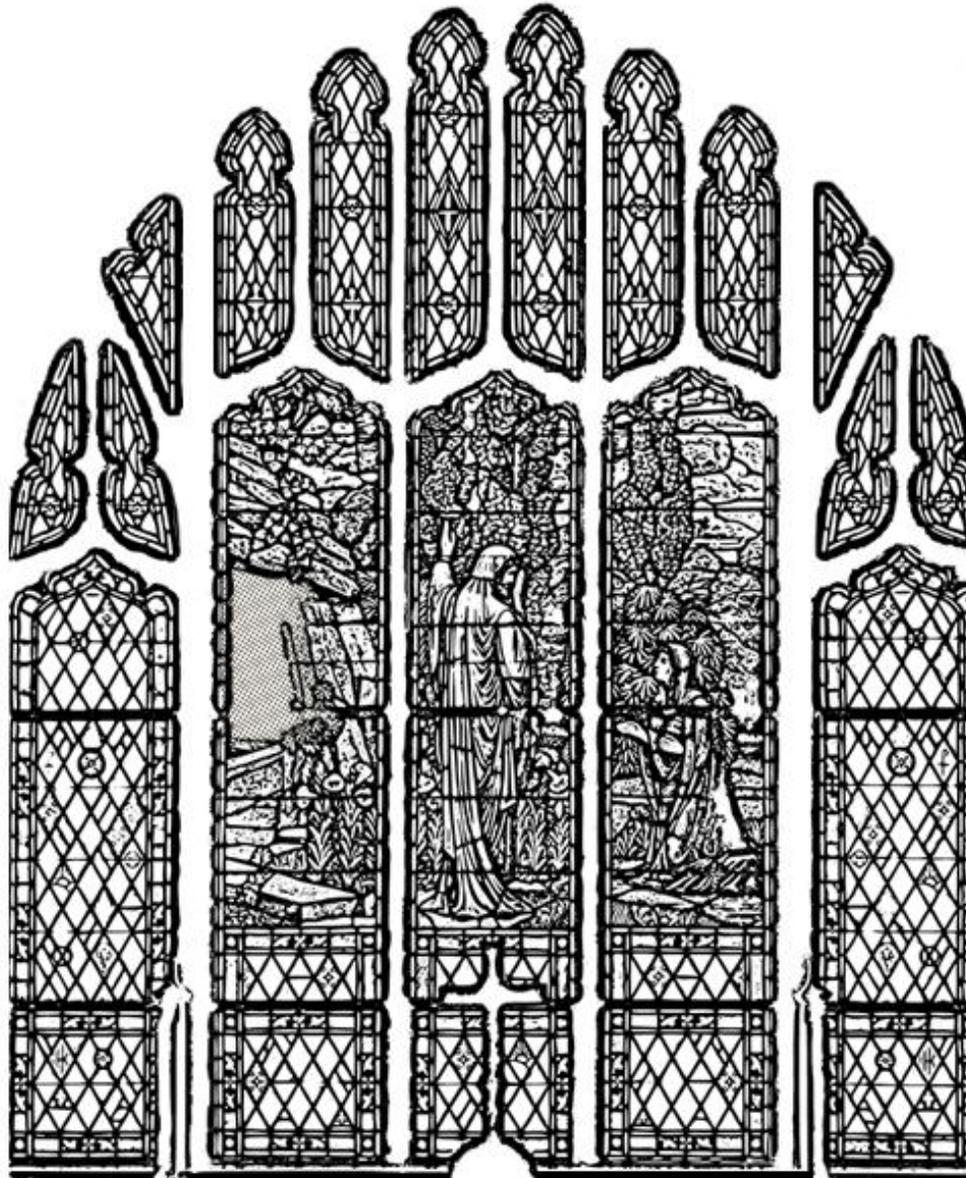


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, February 22, 2026, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The First Sunday in Lent

3319 WEST LIBERTY AVENUE ... PITTSBURGH, PA 15216 ... 412-531-7131

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, PASTOR ... tstrandburg@mlumc.org



Sunday, February 22, 2026 – Lent I

It's hot in the desert. And it's holy. Especially after this forsaken ground was trod upon by Jesus after his ordeal with the tempter. Or was the ordeal with himself? Either way, Jesus affirms his identity as God's agent as the foundation for his ministry. As a result, we are never in a wilderness not already traveled by God.

**Indicates an invitation to stand in spirit or posture, as able.*

***The Procession (10:45)**

The people stand when invited and remain standing as the altar party processes in silence.

***The Decalogue**

*At 10:45, responses sung by the choir,
musical setting by John Stainer*

∇ God spake these words, and said:

I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Honor thy father and thy mother.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt do no murder.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not commit adultery.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not steal.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

∇ Thou shalt not covet.

℞ **Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.**

***The Greeting & Call to Worship**

℣ The Lord be with you.

℞ **And also with you.**

℣ When the Spirit leads us into wilderness places,

℞ **God is already there.**

℣ When the sun is hot and the ground feels like stone,

℞ **God is our strength and our shelter.**

℣ When we are tested and weary,

℞ **God sends grace to sustain us.**

℣ The One who forms us in the desert

℞ **is the One who feeds and restores us.**

℣ Come, let us worship the God who leads and sustains.

℞ **We come to worship with open hearts and trusting spirits. Thanks be to God.**

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

Holy God,

**As your Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness,
so lead us now into this time of worship.**

**Meet us in the dry and weary places we carry,
and remind us that no wilderness is without your presence.**

Form us through what tests us, and sustain us with your ministering grace.

In this hour, quiet our hearts, steady our spirits, and draw us near to you.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord: Amen.

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"I want Jesus to walk with me"

UMH 521

A Message for Young Disciples (10:45 am)

As the young disciples gather at the front of the church, all sing:

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.
Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

The young disciples (3 yr. - 3rd grade) then depart the sanctuary for Kids Praise.

Teachers will lead them back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of the service.

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. While I kept silent, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah.

I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you. Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

***Hymn**

"Praise to the Holiest in the Height"

See inserted below

Text: J.H. Newman,

Tune: Mt LEBANON CHURCH, A.M.V. Stecker

Unison



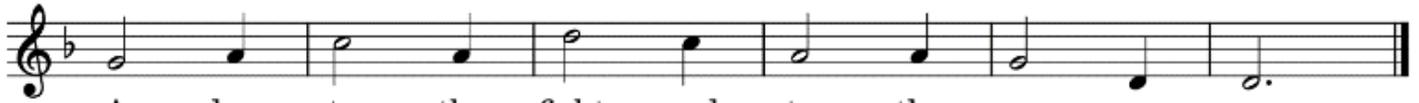
1.Praise to the Ho-liest in the height, and in the depth be praise in
 2.O wis-est Love!that flesh and blood which did in A - dam fail, should
 3.And that a high - er gift than grace should flesh and blood re - fine, God's



all his words most won - der - ful, most sure in all his ways. O
 strive a - fresh a - gainst the foe, should strive and should pre - vail; O
 pre-sence, and God's ve - ry self, and es - sence all - di - vine. Praise



lo - ving wis - dom of our God! when all was sin and shame, a se - cond
gen'rous love! that he, who smote in Man for man the foe, the dou - ble
to the Ho - liest in the height, and in the depth be praise: in all his



A - dam to the fight, and to the res - cue came.
a - go - ny in Man for man should un - der - go.
words most won - der - ful, most sure in all his ways.

*The Second Lesson

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

MT. 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***The Affirmation of Faith**

UMH 882

All are invited to stand, in spirit or in posture, and to face the altar as the affirmation of faith is recited.

Pastor: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

All: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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, is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and 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.

***The Sign of Peace**

☩. The peace of Christ be with you.

☩. **And also with you.**

The people are now invited to share signs of peace with their fellow members of Christ's body.

Extended conversation would ideally and most appropriately be reserved until the end of the service.

Announcements

At the Offertory

The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am) “Lord, who throughout these forty days” UMH 269

The Anthem (10:45 am) Lord, for thy Tender Mercy's Sake Attr. Richard Farrant (c.1525-1580)

Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake, lay not our sins to our charge, but forgive that is past, and give us grace to amend our sinful lives to decline from sin and incline to virtue, that we may walk in a perfect heart before thee, now and evermore. Amen.

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

UMH 95

*The Dismissal

∇. Let us bless the Lord.

℞. Thanks be to God.

*The Benediction, Choral Amen (10:45) & Recessional

Prayer Concerns

Maxine Furedy, *who is ill and is in need of a heart procedure.*

David Barber, *son of Gloria Barber, who is suffering from cancer, that he might have peace and relief from pain.*

Gary Henry, *undergoing cancer treatment.*

The Rev'd **Deborah Ackley-Killian**, *undergoing cancer treatment.*

Norma Buhrman, *enduring serious illness.*

For those serving their country or community as first responders or in the armed forces, especially:

SPC **Russell Dale** - CPT **Shaun Hay** - LTC **Azizi Wesmiller** - LTC **Matthew Wesmiller**

2LT **Keith Cable** - LTC **Zachary Allen Finch** - CPL **Wyatt Hoover**

We pray for victims of violence in our nation and around the world.

We pray for our church community, and all who will encounter us in this season of Lent, that we might grow in holiness and in love toward one another.

*This week, we remember and pray for Christ's body throughout the world, especially remembering this week the church in **France, Germany, and Monaco.** (Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

Please remember the special concerns of those in our community and throughout our world in your personal prayer life throughout the week. If you wish to solicit prayers from the congregation for any matter (health, travel, special concerns, etc.), please contact the church office to have your concern added to the prayer list.

Leaders in Worship this Morning

TREY KNABB AND KALEB KNABB, ACOLYTES

JJ KNABB, CROSS BEARER

LIZ DIPIETRO (8:30AM), LECTOR

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MR. A. MITCHELL V. STECKER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY

MR. DAVID SEITZ, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

*The altar flowers this morning given by
John, Donna, & Shannon College, and Lauren
to the glory of God and
in loving memory of
Johnathan Heath College*

If you would like to furnish our altars with flowers in memory or celebration; you can use the QR Code or call the church office at 412-531-7131.



Chancel Flower Order Form