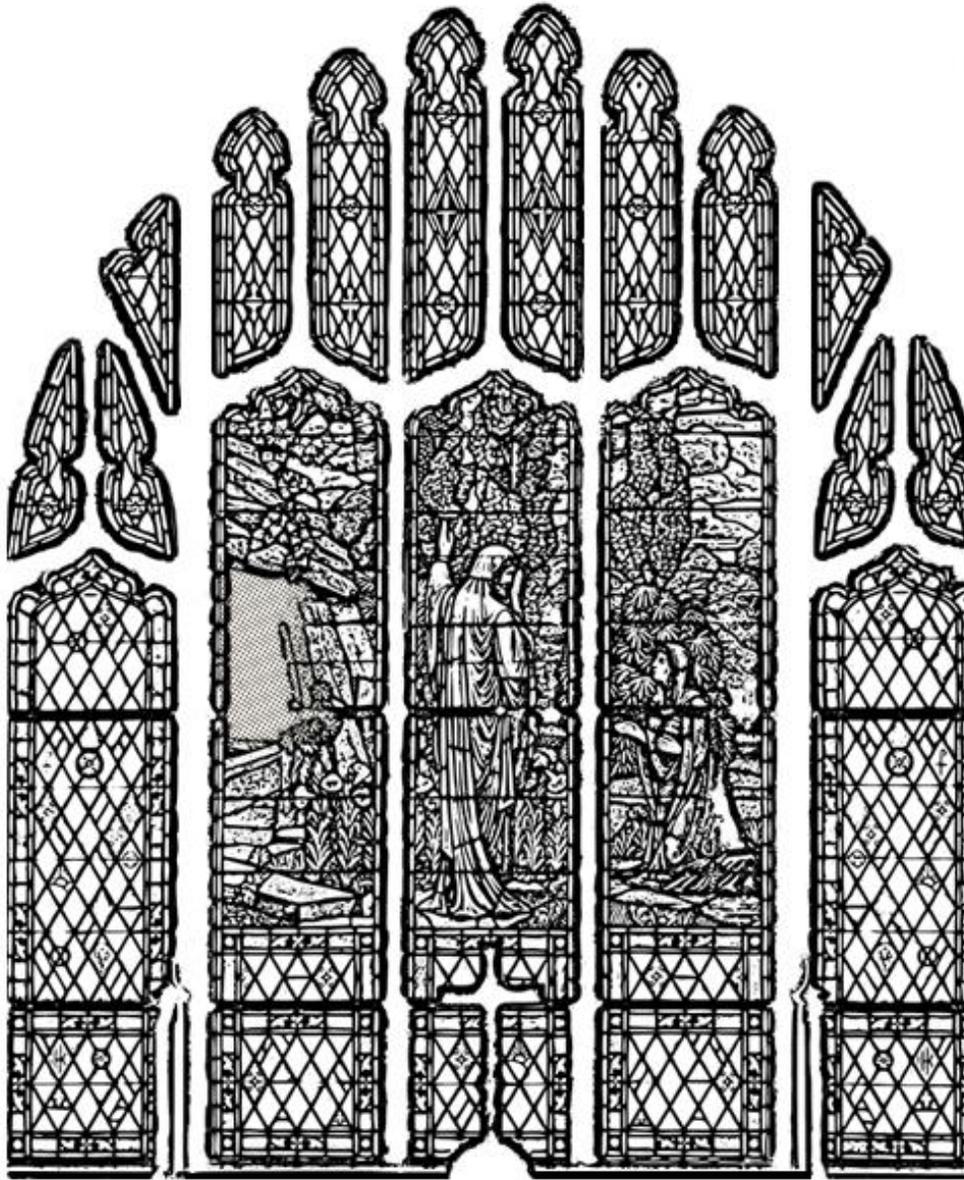


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, March 15, 2025, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Fourth Sunday in Lent - Laetare Sunday

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

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



Sunday, March 15, 2026 – Lent IV: Laetare Sunday

Jesus seeks us out, just as he sought out that formerly blind man. He asks if we believe in him and can envision a new outlook on life, seeing with the eyes of the soul.

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

The Prelude

Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort

Christa Rakich (b.1952)

As the prelude begins, all are humbly asked to conclude any conversation and make use of this moment of quietude to prepare your hearts and minds for the worship of Almighty God.

The Introit (10:45)

*Introit for the Fourth Sunday in Lent
(Laetare Sunday)*

Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Rejoice ye with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all ye that love her.

Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.

V. I was glad when they said unto me: let us go into the house of the Lord.

R. Glory be...

All rise, in body or spirit, at the sound of the chimes.

***Opening Hymn**

“O Christ, the healer” (*vv.1-4*)

UMH 265

*** The Greeting & Call to Worship**

∇ The Lord be with you.

℞ **And also with you.**

∇ There is something deeper than trouble.

℞ **It is mercy.**

∇ God’s amazing grace;

℞ **Carrying, lifting, holding us in all seasons.**

∇ There is something more powerful than despair.

℞ **It is mercy.**

∇ God’s amazing love;

℞ **Seeing us through dark nights, waves of sadness, mountains of grief.**

∇ There is something longer lasting than pain.

℞ **It is mercy.**

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

**Lord Jesus, healer of blind eyes,
there are so many ways we live our lives in darkness,
so many ways we miss the mark, so many ways we fall short of your glory.
We simply do not have it in us to reach across the chasm separating us from you.
But you come to us in the silence. You lift us away from all our fear.
You allow us to hear your voice. You claim us as your choice.
May we learn to be still and know you are here, and we are yours. Amen.**

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"O Christ, the healer" (v.5)

UMH 265

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.

The First Lesson

A Reading from the Epistle to the Ephesians

EPH. 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."

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

People: Thanks be to God.

***Hymn**

"When Jesus the healer passed through Galilee" (vv.1-5)

UMH 263

*The Second Lesson

A Reading from the Gospel according to John

JN. 9:1-12

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 he."

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."

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Said by all, with one voice.

**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 Sermon

"New Eyes"

Rev. Strandburg

*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) **"Open my eyes"** **UMH 454**

The Anthem (10:45 am) *Open our Eyes* Will C. MacFarlane
 (1870-1945)

*Open our eyes, O loving and compassionate Jesus,
 that we may behold Thee, walking beside us in our sorrow.
 Thou hast made death glorious and triumphant;
 for through its portals we enter into the presence of the Living God.*

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication** **UMH 95**

***The Sending Hymn** **"He leadeth me: O blessed thought!"** **UMH 128**

*The Dismissal

∇. Let us bless the Lord.

℞. Thanks be to God.

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

The people remain in place until the altar party has retired.

All are invited to return to the sanctuary at 12:15 PM for this month's Third Sunday organ recital. In observance of Women's History Month, the theme is "Organ Music by Women Composers".

Prayer Concerns

*The family and loved ones of **Quay Strandburg**, father of Pastor Tom, who passed from this life on Tuesday.*

Clark Remington, hospitalized with an infection.

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 **Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.***

(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

OLIVIA SCHMIDT AND EMILY SCHMIDT, ACOLYTES

COURTNEY SCHMIDT, CROSS BEARER

KATHY TREMBLAY (8:30AM) AND BILL CARPENTER (10:45AM), LECTORS

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

*The altar flowers this morning given by
the Schultz Family:*

*Ken, Holly, Christian, Abby & Andrew
to the Glory of God, and in loving memory of*

Lillian Schultz

on the occasion of her birthday (Mar. 13).

*To provide flowers for a future service of worship, please call the church office at 412-531-7131,
or use the form linked through the QR code below.*

