

St. John's Episcopal Church



First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026 - 9am Holy Eucharist

Prelude

Processional: *A Mighty Fortress is our God* (verses 1-3)

Hymnal # 688

1. A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
our helper he, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
for still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.
2. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;
were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing:
dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth, his Name, from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.
3. And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us;
the prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure,
one little word shall fell him.

Lenten Acclamation:

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

God's mercy endures for ever.

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts be open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Kyrie Confession (sung response)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. Let us confess our sins, remembering before God the times when we have fallen from temptation into sin.

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect of the Day

A Prayer Book for Australia

Almighty God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet did not sin: Give us grace to direct our lives in obedience to your will, that, as you may know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Lesson:

A reading from *The Book of Genesis* (2:15-17; 3:1-7).

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You

will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 32

Let us recite the psalm responsively, alternating verses.

- 1 Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, *
and whose sin is put away!
- 2 *Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, *
and in whose spirit there is no guile!*
- 3 While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, *
because of my groaning all day long.
- 4 *For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; *
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.*
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, *
and did not conceal my guilt.
- 6 *I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." *
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.*
- 7 Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers
to you in time of trouble; *
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.
- 8 *You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; *
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.*
- 9 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; *
I will guide you with my eye.
- 10 *Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; *
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you."*
- 11 Great are the tribulations of the wicked; *
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.
- 12 *Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; *
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.*

Second Lesson:

A reading from *The Letter of Paul to the Romans (5:12-19)*.

As sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned- sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses,

even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Sequence Hymn: *Lord, who throughout these forty days (vv. 1-2)*

Hymnal #142

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|--|---|
| 1. Lord, who throughout these forty days
for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with thee to mourn our sins,
and close by thee to stay. | 2. As thou with Satan didst contend,
and didst the victory win,
O give us strength in thee to fight,
in thee to conquer sin. |
|--|---|

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *Matthew (4:1-11)*.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After Jesus was baptized, he was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards 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 splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 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.

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

3. As thou didst hunger bear and thirst,
so teach us, gracious Lord,
to die to self, and chiefly live
by thy most holy word.

4. And through these days of penitence,
and through thy Passiontide,
yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesus! with us abide.

Homily

Fr. Walter Connelly

Nicene Creed

*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:

Common Worship, Church of England

Worship Leader: With confidence and trust, let us pray to the Holy One of Israel.

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness she may preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For peace in the world, that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations and peoples, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer, especially Nancy Scarry, Malcolm Silva, Teddi, Terrie Sevier, Gail Smith, Dom & Joanie Tello, Kathy Webber, Nancy White, Rachel, Abigail, Claire, Carol Ann, Patty, Holly, Kevin O'Connor, Kelly, and Jesse Tucker; let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For those whom we have injured or offended, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God, let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

For those who have gone before us in faith and walked the way of the cross, especially Ralph Selvitella, Patty O'Brien, Lewis & Helen Stanhope, Larry LeBlanc, and Bob Simmons; let us pray to the Holy One.

In your mercy hear us.

Priest: Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer, so that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Peace and Announcements

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Invitation to the Offering

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works,
and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Offertory Hymn: When we are tested

(tune: SLANE, eg #488)

1. When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.
2. When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.
3. When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for power to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.
4. When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Doxology

(v. 3) Hymnal #380

*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.*

God of our journey, as we walk with you on your path of obedience, sustain us on our
way and lead us to your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Great Thanksgiving

Common Worship, Eucharistic Prayer E

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise, almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son. For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again. Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart. Through study of your holy word, you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love. As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast with joyful hearts and minds, we bless you for your mercy and join with saints and angels for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest [in the highest].

+ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest [in the highest].

We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine out poured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended, he took the cup of wine. Again, he praised you, gave it to them 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. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross. Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Jesus Christ is Lord:

Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

You are the Saviour of the world.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes, and

justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth. Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with Blessed Mary of Nazareth, Blessed John the Evangelist, and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven. Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

*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: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

*Jesus, Lamb of God, Bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, Lamb of God, Savior of the world, have mercy on us.
Jesus, Lamb of God, gentle Prince of Peace, grant us peace [grant us peace].*

The Invitation to Holy Communion

In fellowship with our sisters and brothers worshipping online, let us join together in praying for that spiritual communion shared by all Christ's disciples.

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

The gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I

will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Mt 11:28-29). All those wishing to share in the life of Christ are welcome at God’s altar.

Post-communion Prayer

*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 for ever. Amen.*

Lenten Blessing:

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Recessional: *Forty days and forty nights (vv. 1-4).*

Hymnal #150

1. Forty days and forty nights thou wast fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights tempted, and yet undefiled.
2. Should not we thy sorrow share and from worldly joys abstain,
fasting with unceasing prayer, strong with thee to suffer pain?
3. Then if Satan on us press, Jesus, Savior, hear our call!
victor in the wilderness, grant we may not faint nor fall!
4. So shall we have peace divine: holier gladness ours shall be;
round us, too, shall angels shine, such as ministered to thee.

Dismissal:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Welcome to St John’s Episcopal Church. All those wishing to share in the life of Christ

are invited to receive Holy Communion. Proceed up the aisle on the right, allowing room on the left for others to return. You may kneel or stand at the rail to receive. Most people receive the consecrated Host in the hands, and some receive on the tongue. We have not returned to the Common Cup but offer individual Communion Cups. Please deposit the empty cups in the tray as you return. If you would prefer a blessing instead of Holy Communion simply cross your hands over your chest as the priest approaches. Please join us for fellowship and refreshment in Ashworth Hall after worship.

Announcement(s)

Agape Meal Sign-up

April 2nd is Maundy Thursday; our Agape meal will be held at 6pm. If you plan to attend and would like to bring food or a beverage, please see the sign-up sheet posted in Ashworth Hall.

Parish Calendar

Weekly	Tue	Bible Study, Hurll Room, 10 - 11:00am
Mar 14	Sat	Artisan Marketplace, 9am - 2pm

Parish Cycle of Prayer

(Please help to keep this list *current* and inform the office of any changes - thank you.)

Week One of the Month:

Emily Graves Autori, Nicholas Bettencourt, Paul Brophy, Norma Cahill, Barbara Cox, Ken DiBiccari, Jim & Tim Eldridge, Joanne & Paul Felci, Ruth Garrett, Allison Gray, and Jerica Hamre

Week Two:

Will Hare, Carolyn Hashem, Bruce Higgins, Louis Hoelzl, Jeanne Kelly-Smith, Anthony K., Janet Lancaster, Melissa McSheffery, Matt, Mary & Dante, Harriet Miraglia, Jonelle Moloney, and Darlene Jackson

Week Three:

Erica Moore, Gisela Moore, Jeanine Morris, Fran Muise, Sara Murray, Ralph Nasuti, Lisa P., Kathy Pothier, Tom & John Puckett, Shirley Raithel, Sandy & David St. Clair, Marilyn Aham, Amy Wright, and Liana

Week Four:

Nancy Scarry, Malcolm Silva, Teddi, Terrie Sevier, Gail Smith, Dom & Joanie Tello, Kathy Webber, Nancy White, Rachel, Abigail, Claire, Carol Ann, Patty, Holly, Kevin O'Connor, and Jesse Tucker

Participants in this Service:

The Rev. Walter Connelly, Priest-in-Charge
Stephen Sikorski, Music Director
Sandy Mears, Layreader & Joanne Lancaster, L.E.M.

St. John's Episcopal Church, 8 Prospect Street, Saugus, MA 01906