



**As long as
I am in the
world, I
am the
light of
the world**

~ John 9:5

Sunday, March 15, 2026
Fourth Sunday in Lent

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Sara Stall-Ryan
P.O. Box 202, 183 William Street
Portland, CT 06480
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HOLY COMMUNION

Setting Four

*Regular font: Worship Leader; **Bold font: Congregation***

Time for Meditation and Personal Prayer

Prelude

WELCOME

GATHERING

Please stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign,

and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,

and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin,

and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,

and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
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.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN "Lift High the Cross" **ELW 660**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

ELW 155

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

Please be seated

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹ 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." ² 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.'" ³ 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." ⁴ 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?" ⁵ 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.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely his anointed is now before the Lord.” ⁷ 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.” ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹ 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.” ¹² 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.” ¹³ 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 23

¹ The LORD ¹ is my shepherd;

I shall not ¹ be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down ¹ in green pastures
and leads me be- ¹ side still waters.**

³ You restore my ¹ soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways ¹ for your name’s sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I
shall ¹ fear no evil;**

**for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they ¹ comfort
me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence ¹ of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is ¹ running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days ¹ of my
life,**

and I will dwell in the house of the ¹ LORD forever.

SECOND READING**Ephesians 5:8-14**

⁸ Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

Word of God. Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

pg. 151

GOSPEL READING**John 9:1-11**

The holy gospel according to John the 9th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ 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, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ 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?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

Pastor Sara Stall-Ryan

One Minute of Silence is kept for reflection.

Please stand

HYMN OF THE DAY “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”

ELW 779

APOSTLES’ CREED

pg. 105

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the church. Lead Christians in our community (here local congregations may be named) and across the globe (here international companion churches and synods may be named) in right paths for your name’s sake. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our provider, we cry out for this planet and the life it holds. Rescue endangered animals and plants, preserve threatened ecosystems, and save creatures from natural disasters. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on earth. Bring an end to war and violence, and raise up leaders in governments, courts, businesses, schools, and community organizations who seek goodness and mercy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our healer, we call to you in our need. Uplift all who are made to feel unimportant, and transform the hearts of all infected by bigotry and prejudice. Care for all in special need this day (especially). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our friend, we praise you for the diversity of people among us. Awaken us to share and receive the gifts we each possess, and stir up a spirit of understanding, celebration, and welcome for all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our home, we thank you for all who have died and completed their baptismal journeys. Grant us faith to live until we too dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

Amen.

PEACE

pg. 152

MEAL

Please be seated

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (vs.4)
ELW 803

Please Stand

OFFERING PRAYER

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.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

pg. 152

It is indeed right...

SANCTUS

pg. 153

Please kneel or sit

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER (*Traditional*) pg. 154

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

Please be seated

LAMB OF GOD pg. 154

Please kneel or sit

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Remember and Rejoice" **ELW 454**

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" **ELW 656**

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

Please stand

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

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. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN "Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling" **ELW 582**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude:

SERVING TODAY

Kate Schneider - Lector
Peter Willse - Worship Assistant
Donna Berndtson, Rick Borg, - Ushers/Greeters
Pauline Neumann - Altar Guild
Sarah Dzialo - Organist

WORK ZONE

Notice:

At the end of March, work will start on the outside of the building. This should not disrupt the flow of traffic, but occasionally, certain entrances will be closed and areas will be roped off and marked "No Parking" for safety reasons.

Join us for Zion's 2nd annual Spiritual Salon!

Sunday, March 22 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm in
the Sanctuary

In these last days of darkness and cold weather, let's share the warmth of each other's company at our second annual Spiritual Salon!*

Church members young and old are invited to share a Bible passage, meaningful poem, piece of spiritual trivia, song or piece of music, or anecdote about something spiritually meaningful to you. Take a few minutes to share with us, or just sit back and enjoy the atmosphere. Refreshments will follow. RSVP to Sylvia LeShane: sleshane98@gmail.com or Text/Call: 860-759-6418. Hope to see you there!

**Salon (historical definition): a social gathering of people (especially writers, artists, philosophers and sometimes musicians) at the house of a person prominent in high society. These gatherings – which flourished in Italy and then France in the 16th through 19th centuries – followed Horace's definition of the aims of poetry, "either to please or to educate" (Latin: aut delectare aut prodesse). At our Zion gathering, we will add a spiritual aspect to this tradition for all to enjoy.*

Etymology: The term "salon" comes from the French, meaning "reception room," from Italian salone "large hall," and earlier from Old High German sal "hall, house" (Modern German Saal).

Prayer List

For Health:	Jessica A	Charline C	For Safety:
Joyce G	Charlotte D	Alexis R	Andrew C
Bill B	Jonathan A	Malynda A	Todd S
Cathy L	Pauline N	Annamaria T	Michael C
Marion B	Curt R	Brenda B	Tyler G
Lily V	Matthew S	Lee T	Erik B
Holly N	Joan A	Judi E	Justin Earl B
Dylan G	Diane E	Liam S	Evan G
Lisa A	Dick C	Jamie S-R	David P
Aiden J	Karen R	Don R	
Helen A	Stacey T	David O	
Matthew A	Pat J	Michael G	
Bud J	Lois B		
Marjorie F	Loee M		



Make sure to use a **Goodwill Good Neighbor Donation Card** whenever you donate to Goodwill. See Donna Berndtson for the donation cards and details.



Thank you to The Schneiders for organizing and hosting coffee hour today.

Lenten Calendar



On **Wednesdays during Lent** we begin The Soup and Substance program together with Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Hampton at **6:00 p.m.**

Dates are:

March 18 at Bethlehem

March 25 at Zion



Alms Giving

Through alms giving, we also can draw closer to God during Lent. Being charitable to others helps us look beyond ourselves. By helping those in need, we are acting in faith and giving freely of our love, as the Lord does with us.

Beginning February 22, we will be collecting items for the Portland Food Bank on the following schedule:

February 22 - Shampoo, Conditioner

March 1 - Soap, Bodywash

March 8 - Paper goods - Toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, napkins

March 15 - Toothpaste, toothbrushes mouthwash, dental floss

March 22 - Deodorant, feminine products

March 29 - shaving cream, hand lotion, body lotion

Please place items in the shopping cart in the Narthex.



Life Line Screening will be here

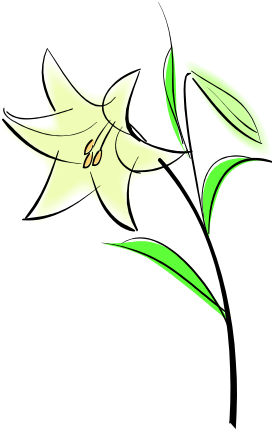
at Zion on **Tuesday, April 28th**

from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If

you would like to register for an

appointment call 1-800-640-6307 or visit LLSA.SOCIAL/HC

Easter Flowers



Anyone who would like to order an Easter Lily, in memory of a loved one for Easter may do so by completing this form and returning it by **March 22nd** with a **check for \$10 per plant** to:

Attention: **Valerie**
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. Box 202
Portland, CT 06480

Please make checks payable to:
Zion Lutheran Church Flower Fund

Quantity _____ Lily

In order to beautify Zion's sanctuary, I would like to order Easter Plant(s) in memory of:

Given by:

- I will pick up my Easter Plant after the Service
 Please deliver my Easter Plant to a shut-in member.
 I will deliver my Easter Plant to a shut-in member



Join us for Adult Bible Study

We are excited to dive into Season 5 of The Chosen!
We will meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the lounge after worship.

Please join us as we explore Season 5

You can watch Season 5, Episode 1 here:

<https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683621777>

The study guide can be ordered on Amazon.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Sara



Lenten Series with Bishop Pippo on the ELCA's Faith and Civic Life Social Statement (Thursdays in Lent--2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19-- at 7PM)

Please join us for this online discussion on Thursdays in Lent. Amidst the turmoil we experience in our society today, the guidance of this social statement is all the more important for

how Christians (and Lutheran Christians!) engage the world in faith. You can register for the program here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeZZm9Yk45Fx-iQfDclzCrr_P7a7X0EVUFvttPR-CwcERrYDg/viewform

To register without having to type in all these letters and numbers, see Zion Happenings (the email newsletter that Michelle sends)

Anyone interested in volunteering for Coffee Hour you can sign up for a Sunday on the sign up sheet in the narthex. It doesn't have to be anything fancy, just a simple snack to share for a time of fellowship after the church service. See Sandy Chiasson for details.



Please Recycle Ink and Toner Cartridges Here.

There is a container to leave your used ink and toner cartridges for us to recycle.



RaiseRight

RaiseRight Gift Cards

Place your order today to get RaiseRight (formerly Scrip)

cards! You pay face value for the cards, but Zion receives a percentage of the amount of the card. It's a win-win! See Rick Borg for details.



The **Word in Season Daily Devotions for January, February and March** are available in the Narthex and the Red Box outside the door with the doorbell.

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Council Members: President - Kathy Richards, Vice President - Paula Brown, Secretary - Barbara Helming, Financial Secretary - Rick Borg, Other Members - Beth Keser, Bob Redman Peter Willse, Christine Kelsey, Kate Schneider



Emergency Closings due to weather will be announced on the following channels:
Channel 3 , Channel 30, Channel 61, Channel 8

Today: March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday in Lent

9:00 a.m. Worship/Communion
10:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Adult Education
11:30 a.m. True Vine Church

This Week:

Monday: **1:00 p.m.** Grace Guild
6:00 p.m. N/A
Tuesday: **9:30 a.m.** Happy Handz
7:00 p.m. Council
Wednesday: **6:00 p.m.** Soup and Substance at Bethlehem
Thursday: **5:30 p.m.** Cub Scouts
Friday: **7:00 p.m.** N/A

Next Sunday:

March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:00 a.m. Worship/Communion
10:30 a.m. Adult Education - The Chosen
11:30 a.m. True Vine Church



Next weeks readings: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130;
Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

Attendance: Last Sunday - 50; Last year - 58

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Sara Stall-Ryan

9:00 a.m. Worship

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