



# BEWILDERED

2025 LENTEN GUIDE



## **A Note from St. Luke's Pastors**

### **Are you ready for the journey ahead?**

We're about to set off on a pilgrimage through the wilderness with Jesus, and it's important that we travel together, supporting one another through the highs and lows. You might be wondering where this journey will lead. This road we'll be walking will lead us into disorientation and we will learn from Jesus how to stay and find our stability until Resurrection comes.

Lent is not just a time of reflection; it's a journey that holds both mystery and promise. It's a journey inward, where we embrace the paradox of our faith—sorrow and joy, uncertainty and trust. It's a journey upward, as we draw closer to God, finding stability not in our understanding, but through Christ's example. It's a journey onward, walking alongside others who share this pilgrimage, bearing witness to the cross, the resurrection, and the hope that emerges from the mysteries of our faith.

Consider this Lenten Guide your companion and map for the season ahead. It will help you navigate through the wilderness and hold you steady through the paradoxes you'll encounter. Choose a special journal to keep your thoughts, your notes and even your prayers in your journey to Be Wildered these forty days. As you return to it each day, let it remind you that you are not alone on this journey. When you are bewildered, tired, or uncertain, the Holy Spirit will be the partner you lean on.

Through this guide, we will LEARN, LIVE, LOVE, and LEAD together, embracing the mystery of faith and walking forward with resilience and trust. The road ahead may not always make sense, but we know that with Jesus, we are never alone. So let's take the first step together—ready or not, the journey is before us!

~St. Luke's Clergy Team

## **Weekly Candle Lighting Ritual**

The custom of lighting candles has long been a part of ritual in Scripture and throughout the Judeo-Christian experience. One historical commentary states that the custom and praxis of lighting candles is a significant convention in Catholic and Orthodox churches, communities, and families, originating from Old Testament times where an oil lamp was lighted to 'sustain a perpetual flame.' In the New Testament they emphasize the sacredness of this light in Paul's Letter to the Hebrews. 'A first tent was prepared with the lamp stand, the table, and the bread of the presence; this is called the Holy Place.' Our St. Luke's tradition on Good Friday is to celebrate a Tenebrae service – a service of moving from light to darkness – as we read of the suffering, crucifixion, and death of Jesus, holding vigil in the darkness until the new dawn's light of the third day of resurrection.

This Lent we will be lighting candles, much like we do during Advent, each week of the season. Lighting candles to help us find the glimmers of hopeful discipleship acts that guide us in the wilderness and help us BE until resurrection.

As a part of your daily ritual, consider gathering **one large white candle** representing the Christ Candle, and then **gather six other candles** of any colors or sizes. You could choose six very different candles to represent the six different ways to be centered in the wilderness.

Each week you can light a candle from the Christ Candle flame, adding a candle per week to celebrate the power and light of the word to guide you in the wilderness that week. You'll find candlelight prayers throughout this Lenten Guide booklet as well, which we will also use in worship.

### **Monday** – Podcast and Prayer (LEARN)

On Mondays you'll begin the week with your new candle lighting ritual and then listen to the podcast. Listening to the podcast will get you caught up on the Scripture for the week and provide you with a solid understanding of the passage.

### **Tuesday** – Reflective Writing Prompt (LIVE)

Take time to read and respond to a brief writing prompt (write in this booklet, in a journal, or using a notes app on your mobile device). Reflective writing creates space to reflect meaningfully on your life, hear God's voice, and discern what God is saying to you in this season. Reflective writing is not intended for an audience; it is solely for you and God.

**Wednesday** – Conversation Starter / Discussion Questions (LIVE)

On Wednesdays, we will take time to reflect on what we've learned and share with others. Discussion questions will be provided to inspire conversation with your Life Together Groups, friends, or family. You'll also find a short prayer to use for your own personal devotion time.

**Thursday** – Audio / Lectio Divina (LOVE)

Lectio Divina is the practice of sacred reading performed by reading a text and simply being open to what God reveals to you. You are not reading for practical understanding, but trying to notice what names, faces, ideas, places, and stories come up for you as you read. If you are listening to a song or music, we follow the same process and call it Audio Divina. Each Thursday you'll find songs that match the week's theme to listen to and reflect on.

**Friday** – LEAD Your Life

On Fridays, you'll find suggestions and opportunities for you to serve, give, and make a difference in your daily life having been shaped by the Scripture and God's story throughout the week. This is your chance to practice leading your life as the primary theologian who uses every opportunity to be a part of helping God's story come to life through your daily interactions.

**Saturday** – Invitation to Sabbath (LOVE)

Each Saturday you will be invited to observe Sabbath. Sabbath is a time of rest, and as such you are encouraged to abstain from work and strenuous activity in the interest of relaxing and connecting with God and neighbor. We'll also provide some ideas for families with children to navigate the Lenten journey together.

**Sunday** – Worship (LOVE)

Having learned about and wrestled with the story throughout the week, worship will be the punctuation, the "so what" of the story you have learned, making it a practical application for your daily life. We hope you'll make it a spiritual discipline to join us for worship all of the Sundays of this Lenten season. In this booklet, you'll find space to jot down sermon notes, prayer requests, and anything else that comes to mind.

## **NEW! Lenten Life Together Groups**

These new Life Together Groups will provide a space for shared reflection and growth as we journey through Lent together. Meeting weekly, these groups will engage in thoughtful discussions based on the daily content from the Lenten Guide. Each week, you'll have the opportunity to reflect on Scripture, share insights, and support one another as you deepen your spiritual journey during this season of renewal. Whether you're new to the Lenten tradition or have participated for years, these groups offer a chance to walk through Lent with others, cultivating community and reflection along the way.

**Lenten Life Together** | Sundays on campus at 11:00 a.m.  
*starting March 9*

**Lenten Life Together** | Mondays on Zoom at 7:00 p.m.  
*starting March 10*

**Lenten Life Together** | Wednesdays on campus at 6:30 p.m.  
*starting March 12*

For more information on the groups listed above and to sign up to join visit [st.lukes.org/lent](https://st.lukes.org/lent).

## **NEW! Adult Studies for Lent**

### **Wesleyan Way with Pastor Melissa**

How we live out our faith is directly tied to our core beliefs as a Methodist church in the Wesleyan theological tradition. If you didn't grow up in this tradition, or if you never got a chance to dig deep with the "why" of who we are as a church, this class is going to be a great chance to get a thorough overview of the core beliefs about God, humanity and the church from a Wesleyan perspective.

#### **Two class options:**

- Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. (online) *starting March 11*
- Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. (on campus) *starting March 12*

### **Psalm Reading & Contemplation in Bewilderment with Pastor Jad**

In times of bewilderment, the Psalms offer a path through disorientation into renewed faith and hope. This class will explore Walter Brueggemann's typology of the Psalms—orientation, disorientation, and new orientation—while engaging in contemplative reading practices to deepen our spiritual journey.

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. (on campus) *starting March 12*

For more information on the studies listed above and to register to join visit [st.lukes.org/lent](https://st.lukes.org/lent).

# BE CENTERED IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 11:45-54

**Thursday, March 6**

## **Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be in me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be before me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be behind me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be beneath me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be above me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Now choose one of the candles to represent "Be Centered" and light it from the Christ Candle. Reflect on what it means for you to Be Centered – how do you find that, when have you experienced it? Spend some time in silence considering how the call to Be Centered helps you encounter the wilderness.

## **Pray this prayer:**

The world feels unsafe. Plans are disrupted. The future is unclear. The wilderness is not abandonment - it is preparation. We do not choose the wilderness, but we find ourselves in it, untethered and searching for steady ground. Yet even here, we are not alone. Stability is not found in certainty, but in our willingness to retreat, to breathe, to be reoriented. Where do we turn to regain our footing in the midst of chaos?

When I am bewildered, I can be centered. Because of Jesus, I know how to sustain myself. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*



"Into the Woods" from *Into the Woods*

"I Need Thee Every Hour" by Annie S. Hawks

*(scan the QR code to listen)*

Listen to both songs as you let the glow of the candles open your heart and mind. Then choose one of the songs to listen to more deeply.

First, listen to the music - let it settle in your mind, your heart, your body. Sit in silence and let the music linger within you. Then listen for a second time to the lyrics - identify which words or phrases stand out to you. Let those words guide your prayer time throughout the day and ask the Spirit what she might be revealing to you in those words.

How do those words help you make sense of this week's theme? What kind of actions or prayers do those words invite you into? How is God calling you through those words or phrases?

## Friday, March 7

Leading your life is the understanding of taking all you have learned of God's story, what you've experienced living God's story in community and loving God's story through worship, and allowing God to use your life – your spiritual gifts, your time, your resources – to serve God and serve others. Today we want you to explore the discipline of generosity through our Lenten Offering and understanding your Spiritual Gifts.

This year our **Lenten Offering** will be shared between two long-term partners of St. Luke's:

1. **ZOE Empowers** works to empower orphans and vulnerable children to move beyond charity and become fully self-reliant leaders who change entire communities. Over 380 million children worldwide live in extreme poverty. Among this population, orphans and child-led families are especially vulnerable to isolation and exploitation. Last year St. Luke's sponsored two new family groups in Rwanda. Urumuri "Light" and Ikizere "Hope" Empowerment Groups who add up to 180 children and youth. ZOE Empowers provides them with the tools, resources, and training to pull themselves out of poverty - for good.
2. **Florida Immigration Law and Justice Center**, previously known as JFON (Justice for our Neighbors), is committed to welcoming immigrants by providing affordable, high-quality immigration legal services. They actively advocate for immigrants' rights on both local and national levels. Through dedicated education initiatives, Florida ILJC aims to enlighten both immigrant and non-immigrant communities about the issues facing our immigrant populations, fostering understanding, compassion, and unity within our diverse society.

Will you join St. Luke's Missions in setting aside at least \$1.00 per day over 40 days for a special Lenten Offering to support Florida Immigration Law and Justice Center, and to help sponsor 180 children through Zoe Empowers, who are orphans in Rwanda?



Scan the QR code or visit [st.lukes.org/give](https://st.lukes.org/give) and select "Lenten Offering" from the drop-down menu to give a special gift this Lent. You can also bring your gift to any of our on-campus worship services.

Read what Paul wrote about **Spiritual Gifts** in 1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-12.

Did you know your Spiritual Gifts not only change in each stage and season of life, but also based on what God wants for the community of faith to accomplish through you? To best discern not only your gifts, but your passion and how you have been uniquely wired, spend some time taking St. Luke's Gifts Inventory at [leadyourlife.org](https://leadyourlife.org). You will receive not only information on your gifts, but how your gifts align with particular places to serve on and off campus through St. Luke's.

Pray about the gifts you have been given and how God might want you to LEAD your life with these gifts to serve God and serve others.



## Saturday, March 8

Spend the day preparing for Sabbath, which begins at sundown and lasts through Sunday at sundown. Consider creating a special meal for Saturday night or Sunday afternoon. Light candles at your table and pray the prayer. Make preparations for Sunday morning worship and make plans to rest and renew on Sunday afternoon.

**Prayer for the day:** Holy One, in a world that pulls me in a thousand directions, bring me back to You. In the stillness of this Sabbath, quiet my restless thoughts, calm my anxious heart, and center me in Your presence. Remind me that I am not defined by what I do, but by the love that holds me. May I rest in the deep assurance that You are here, steady and unshaken, guiding me home. Amen.

### **Activity for families: "Sacred Space at Home"**

**What to Do:** As a family, choose a small space in your home (a table, a corner, or even a blanket on the floor) to create a "sacred space" for Lent. Place a candle, a cross, a simple cloth, or anything that feels meaningful. Sit together in silence for a moment, then talk about how Jesus often retreated to quiet places to pray and find strength.

**Reflection:** Ask, *Where do we go when we feel overwhelmed? How can we create moments of stillness with God?* Encourage family members to return to this space throughout Lent when they need a moment to be centered.

## Sunday, March 9

Attend worship, rest, and renew.

Spend some time reflecting on the message and music of worship. How have you reconsidered what it means to Be Wildered for this season? How will you center yourself to find your stability? What are the prayer requests and praises you want to remember throughout the week?

### **Notes & Prayers**

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# BE OBEDIENT IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 12:1-11

**Monday, March 10**

## **Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be in me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be before me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be behind me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be beneath me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be above me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Light your “Be Centered” candle from the Christ Candle. Now choose your second candle for “Be Obedient” and light it from your “Be Centered” candle.

In the glow of this new candle, reflect on what it means to Be Obedient – what feelings does that word conjure up for you – don’t be afraid if they aren’t all positive. Sit with that and offer it to the light of the Christ Candle. Consider how obedience and centeredness connect. Does it reframe the word for you if it is a movement of centeredness in Christ as you face the wilderness?

## **Pray this prayer:**

Fear of the unknown. Doubt about the future. We long for solid ground, but the path ahead remains uncertain. Still, stability is not about knowing what’s next—it is found in remaining faithful, even when the way is unclear. God calls us forward, not with a map, but with a promise. Can we take the next step, even without seeing the destination?

When I am bewildered, I can continue to be obedient to my callings. Because of Jesus, I know how the story ends. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that’s the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there’s hope  
Of getting through the journey*

Scan the QR code to listen to this week’s episode of “**Your Week with St. Luke’s**” (available wherever you get your podcasts).



[st.lukes.org/podcast](https://st.lukes.org/podcast)

## Tuesday, March 11

Read John 12:1-11.

In John 12:1-11, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with costly perfume, an act of extravagant devotion. Others question her choice—why waste something so valuable? But Mary is not deterred. She recognizes who Jesus is and responds in obedience, even when the future is uncertain. Meanwhile, Judas operates from a place of doubt and self-interest, missing the deeper significance of the moment.

Consider moments in your own life when obedience to God's call felt uncertain, risky, or even foolish to others. Have you ever struggled with doubt or fear about the future? What helped you remain faithful? Write below about a time when you felt disoriented, unsure of what was next. How did you respond? Looking back, can you see where God was present? How might this passage encourage you to trust and remain faithful even when the path ahead is unclear? End your reflection by considering this: What is one small act of obedience I can take today, even if I don't see the full picture?

Write in response to this passage and these questions. Remember, this is only between you and God, no one else has to see what you write.

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## Wednesday, March 12

**Pray:** God of steadfast love, You call me to follow—not out of obligation, but from a heart transformed by grace. Teach me to trust, to listen, and to respond with courage, even when the path is uncertain. Like Mary, who poured out her love without hesitation, may my obedience be an offering, freely given. Open my heart to Your presence this week, that I may walk in step with Your will and rest in the assurance that You are leading me forward. Amen.

Read John 12:1-11, then discuss the following with your Life Together Groups, family, and friends:

- Mary's act of anointing Jesus was an extravagant display of devotion. How do you think she felt in that moment, especially with others questioning her actions?
- Have you ever felt called to do something that didn't make sense to others? How did you respond?
- Judas criticizes Mary, questioning her choice. How can fear of judgment from others impact our obedience to God?
- Jesus affirms Mary's act, saying she is preparing Him for burial. What does this teach us about trusting God, even when we don't fully understand the bigger picture?
- How does obedience to God bring stability, even when we don't know what's ahead?
- In what areas of your life do you struggle with obedience because of fear or uncertainty?
- What is one small step of obedience you can take this week, even if you don't see the full picture yet?

## Thursday, March 13

Light your candles for this week, and let the following songs center your spirit:



"Trust in You" by Lauren Daigle

"Order My Steps" by Glenn Edward Burleigh

"Trust and Obey" by John H. Sammis

"I Know Things Now" from *Into the Woods*

(scan the QR code to listen)

Choose one song to listen to a few more times as a part of your prayer reflection. With your journal open, listen to the song and identify which words or phrases stand out to you. Listen a second time and identify new words or phrases and consider those you first wrote to allow God to speak to you. What is the Spirit speaking to you through these words? Listen a third time and let these words help you construct a prayer for the day. Ask the Spirit what she might be revealing to you in those words.

### Pray this prayer:

When I am bewildered, I can continue to be obedient to my callings. Because of Jesus, I know how the story ends. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*

## Friday, March 14

As we continue to trust in God, even in seasons of doubt or uncertainty, God entrusts us to use our lives and gifts for the Kingdom. A way to remain faithful to God's calling is through service to one another. Is God calling you to step out of your comfort zone and step into new opportunities to be used for God's Kingdom?

Each week we'll share information about our Missions partners, not only to help you find places to serve but to help you better understand all the ways St. Luke's serves our community. One ministry partner we support is Circles West Orange. This ministry connects a circle of Allies with particular life or work experience, expertise, and wisdom with a Leader trying to accomplish a life goal. This ministry has helped people lower their need for assistance, increase their assets, and achieve goals they would not have on their own.

What if your generosity of time and spirit to build relationships, and your unique experiences, could be life changing for a neighbor in our community? How could you give some time each week to help someone else in their season of uncertainty with a listening ear or loving heart? Are you ready to answer the call?

Currently we are looking for 20 more Allies for this new class of Leaders. Consider your gifts, passion, and expertise and scan the QR code to learn how to get involved.



[st.lukes.org/circles](http://st.lukes.org/circles)

## Saturday, March 15

The fourth commandment in Exodus 20: 8-11 tells us to “Keep the Sabbath and make it Holy.” How will you obey this command this week from Saturday at sundown through Sunday? Consider one new way you can make space for obeying the call by God to keep Sabbath Holy.

Prepare your hearts for worship by reading the Scripture for the week and spending time in prayer and silence.

**Prayer for the day:** God of unwavering love, teach me the rest that comes from trust. So often I resist surrender, clinging to my own way, fearing what I cannot control. But You call me to a deeper obedience—one not of burden, but of freedom. Like Mary, who poured out costly perfume in devotion, let my obedience flow from love rather than duty. Let me rest in the assurance that following You is not striving, but abiding. Amen.

### **Activity for families: “Follow the Leader Walk”**

Take a short walk together as a family, taking turns being the leader. Discuss how it feels to follow and trust someone else’s direction. End with a short reflection on trusting God’s guidance even when we don’t know what’s ahead.

## Sunday, March 16

Attend worship, rest, and renew.

Spend some time reflecting on the message and music of worship. How have you reconsidered what it means to Be Wildered for this season? How does the word obedience ring different in your life through this week’s learning? What are the prayer requests and praises you want to remember throughout the week?

### **Notes & Prayer Requests**

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# BE SERVANTS IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 13:1-17

**Monday, March 17**

## **Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be in me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be before me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be behind me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be beneath me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be above me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Light your “Be Centered” candle from the Christ Candle, then light your “Be Obedient” candle from your “Be Centered” candle. Choose your third candle for “Be Servants” and light it from your “Be Obedient” candle.

In the glow of this new candle, reflect on what it means to Be Servants. Sometimes being a servant is easy when you love them, trust them, know them. But Jesus washed Judas and Peter’s feet – one’s he knew would betray and deny him. What does it mean to be a servant of everyone, even those who the world would count as enemies? What kind of centered obedience does such servanthood require of us? How do we serve others when we are in our own wilderness?

## **Pray this prayer:**

We resist surrender. We want control, not servanthood. We grasp for certainty, for power, for the security of knowing. But Jesus shows another way—one where true stability is found in humility, in service, in letting go. What might it mean to release our grip and trust the One who holds all things?

When I am bewildered, I can still serve. Because of Jesus, I know vengeance is not mine to take. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that’s the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there’s hope  
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[st.lukes.org/podcast](https://st.lukes.org/podcast)

## Tuesday, March 18

Read John 13:1-17.

In John 13:1-17, Jesus does something unexpected—He kneels before His disciples and washes their feet. Peter resists. How could the Messiah take on such a lowly task? But Jesus gently reminds him: “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.” Jesus, fully aware of His authority, chooses servanthood over power, humility over control.

Think about a time when you resisted letting go—perhaps a situation where you wanted control rather than surrender. What emotions arose? What was at stake for you?

Jesus teaches that true stability comes not from grasping for control but from serving others. In what areas of your life is Jesus inviting you to surrender control and embrace humility? How does this passage challenge your understanding of leadership and power?

End your reflection with this: What is one act of humble service I can offer this week as a response to Jesus’ example?

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## Wednesday, March 19

**Pray:** Jesus, You knelt before Your disciples, showing that true power is found in love poured out. As I enter this week, reshape my heart to reflect Yours—humble, willing, and ready to serve. Give me eyes to see the needs around me, hands that are open to give, and a spirit that delights in lifting others up. May my service be a reflection of Your grace, and may I find joy in the simple, sacred act of loving as You love. Amen.

Read John 13:1-17, then discuss the following with your Life Together Groups, family, and friends:

- Peter resists when Jesus tries to wash his feet. Why do you think he struggled to accept this act of service? Have you ever found it difficult to receive help or an act of kindness from someone else? Why do you think we sometimes resist being served?
- How does our desire for control keep us from fully embracing a life of service?
- Jesus, knowing He had all authority, chose to serve. How does this challenge the world’s definition of power and leadership?
- How can serving others bring a sense of stability, even in times of uncertainty?
- Think of someone you know who models Christlike humility and service. What can you learn from them?
- Where in your life might Jesus be calling you to let go of control and serve with humility?
- What is one practical way you can follow Jesus’ example this week—whether at home, work, church, or in your community?

## Thursday, March 20

Light your candles for the week as you listen to the following songs:



"I Give Myself Away" by William McDowell

"Here I am Lord" by Dan Schutte

"Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service" by Albert F. Bayly

*(scan the QR code to listen)*

After some silence, choose one of the songs for Audio Divina, and listen to the song again with your journal open. What images come to mind, or what lyrics stand out to you? Let those images and words guide your heart and mind. What is the Spirit saying to you?

Listen to the song again. What new ideas come to you? Identify which words or phrases stand out, you may want to listen to the song or just read the lyrics. Then, let those words guide your prayer time throughout the day. Ask the Spirit what she might be revealing to you in those words.

### **Pray this prayer:**

When I am bewildered, I can still serve. Because of Jesus, I know vengeance is not mine to take. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*

## Friday, March 21

We are called to follow the example of Jesus and live a life of service. We can be humble servants by helping to provide basic needs to our neighbors. Close to 800,000 children in the U.S. don't have a bed. A bed is a basic need for the physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing of a child. Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a national organization answering the call to a national problem. They partner with organizations to build, assemble, and deliver top-notch bunk beds to children and families in need. Our next Bed Build is Saturday, May 3, 2025, where we will build 60 beds.



[st.lukes.org/SHP](https://st.lukes.org/SHP)



## Saturday, March 22

Genesis 2:2-3 tells us: *“On the sixth day God completed all the work that he had done, and on the seventh day God rested from all the work that he had done. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all the work of creation.”* (CEB)

God invites us to worship, rest and renew through the example of the Divine at the end of creation. To delight and look back on all that is beautiful, accomplished, and even complex. How can you prepare your heart, mind, spirit and yes, physical body – environment, schedule, and priorities – to follow God’s example to rest on Sabbath. What must be done today to check off your to do list of this week, so you can make tomorrow holy?

**Prayer for the day:** Jesus, You knelt to serve, revealing a power that does not grasp, but gives. In a world that rewards ambition and self-promotion, remind me that true rest is found in love freely offered. Slow me down, that I may see the sacred in small acts of kindness, the holiness in washing another’s feet. May I rest in the knowledge that when I serve, I am not depleted but renewed, reflecting Your love in the world. Amen.

### **Activity for families: “Secret Service Challenge”**

Each family member picks another person in the family (secretly) and does something kind for them during the day—a small act of service, like making their bed, leaving a kind note, or helping with a chore. At dinner, try to guess who served whom!

## Sunday, March 23

Attend worship, rest, renew, and take delight.

Spend some time reflecting on who has served you and made an impact in your life. What did that act of servanthood do to your heart, spirit, your understanding of people? Give thanks to the servants who have touched you and consider ways in which YOUR servanthood has impacted others. Give thanks to God for the gifts, experience, and wisdom given to you to allow you to serve others. What are the prayer requests and praises you want to remember throughout the week?

### **Notes & Prayer Requests**

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# BE RESILIENT IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 14:1-21

**Monday, March 24**

## **Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be in me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be before me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be behind me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be beneath me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be above me;  
Light of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Light your “Be Centered” candle from the Christ Candle. You’ve done this for three weeks now, so you know the drill: light your “Be Obedient” candle from “Be Centered,” “Be Servants” from “Be Obedient,” and now find that special “Be Resilient” candle and light it from your “Be Servants” candle.

In the glow of this new candle, reflect on your understanding and feelings about the word Resilient. It’s been used a lot since 2020. We probably have many feelings about that word, memories or events that go along with it. Consider them all and know that feelings are just that, feelings, that should be noticed and then placed in the glow of Christ’s light. To stand firm in the wilderness and allow the Bewildered place to help us grow means a resilience that is found in strength and confidence – maybe not from yourself, but from Christ. How do each of the other candles, lit in sequence, lead to the brighter glow of resilience in your life?

## **Pray this prayer:**

We don’t have all the answers. The future feels uncertain. We are waiting, longing, hoping. Yet even in the waiting, we are held. God’s faithfulness is not dependent on our understanding. It is steady, present, unwavering. What if trust is not about certainty, but about resting in the One who never leaves us?

When I am bewildered, I can still be resilient. Because of Jesus, I know that I am never going to be left alone. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that’s the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there’s hope  
Of getting through the journey*

Scan the QR code to listen to this week’s episode of **“Your Week with St. Luke’s”** (available wherever you get your podcasts).



[st.lukes.org/podcast](https://st.lukes.org/podcast)

## Tuesday, March 25

Read John 14:1-21.

In John 14:1-21, Jesus reassures His disciples: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me." He knows they are anxious about the future, uncertain about what's next. But instead of giving them all the answers, Jesus gives them a promise: You are not alone. The Spirit will be with you.

Think about a time when you longed for certainty but had to wait in the unknown. What emotions did you experience? How did you try to take control? Jesus calls us to trust, even when we can't see what's ahead. How does His promise—that He will never leave us—change the way we navigate uncertainty? End your reflection with this: What is one way I can practice resilience this week by choosing trust over control?

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## Wednesday, March 26

**Pray:** Holy One, when the road ahead feels uncertain, strengthen my heart with the promise of Your presence. Let resilience not be my own striving, but a deep trust in You—the One who sustains, the One who never leaves. When I am weary, be my rest; when I am afraid, be my peace. This week, help me to abide in the truth that no hardship, no failure, no fear can separate me from Your love. Amen.

Read John 14:1-21, then discuss the following with your Life Together Groups, family, and friends:

- Jesus speaks to the disciples' fears, telling them not to let their hearts be troubled. What do you think was causing their anxiety?
- How do we typically respond when faced with uncertainty about the future? Is there a tendency to grasp for control?
- Can you think of a time when not having all the answers left you feeling disoriented? How did you cope?
- Jesus assures His disciples that they will not be left alone—that the Holy Spirit will come to guide them. How does this promise offer comfort in times of waiting?
- How does remembering God's faithfulness in the past help you trust Him in the present?
- Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." How does knowing that Jesus is the way through uncertainty change the way we approach challenges?
- Where are you being called to trust and wait, rather than control or rush through uncertainty?
- In what area of your life do you need to remind yourself that you are not alone, and God is faithful to hold you in the waiting?
- How can we support each other in cultivating resilience, especially when facing unknowns in our personal lives or in our community?

## Thursday, March 27

Light your candles for this week and choose two of the songs from the list below (one you know and one you do not know), and let the music center you:



"No One is Alone" from *Into the Woods*

"Way Maker" by Sinach

"Stand" by Donnie McClurkin

"Great is thy Faithfulness" by Thomas Chisholm

*(scan the QR code to listen)*

First, identify which words or phrases stand out to you. You may want to listen to the song or just read the lyrics. Then, let those words guide your prayer time throughout the day. Ask the Spirit what she might be revealing to you in those words.

How do those words help you make sense of this week's theme? What kind of actions or prayers do those words invite you into? How is God calling you through those words or phrases?

### **Pray this prayer:**

When I am bewildered, I can still be resilient. Because of Jesus, I know that I am never going to be left alone. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*

## Friday, March 28

We are called to support each other in cultivating resilience when facing unknowns. As we continue to see the increase of natural disasters each year, we seek opportunities to respond and be of service to our neighbors in need. We are building awareness on disaster relief by training and fundraising in order to meet the needs of our communities during a crisis. Volunteers can be involved with various types of disaster response including hurricane assistance and clean up, assisting with answering calls for help, coordinating donations, and being beacons of hope. There is a role for everyone, so join us for Disaster Response Trainings in April! Scan the QR code below to learn more:



[st.lukes.org/disaster](https://st.lukes.org/disaster)

## Saturday, March 29

Psalm 66 reminds us to prepare our hearts and lives to offer God all of our thanks and praise: *“But you brought us out to freedom! So I’ll enter your house with entirely burned offerings. I’ll keep the promises I made to you, the ones my lips uttered, the ones my mouth spoke when I was in deep trouble.”*

In the midst of the week, in seeking resilience and strength in the wilderness, we often utter promises to God. *“I promise I will...if you will...”* One of the ways we keep those promises is to come and give God ourselves in worship, praise, adoration, thanks, and to offer God a day of Sabbath.

Prepare your heart, mind, body, and soul for Sabbath and worship. What can you do to help you build your resilience for the coming week?

**Prayer for the day:** God of refuge, when I grow weary, remind me that resilience is not about pushing through, but about leaning in—to You, to love, to grace. You do not ask me to carry the weight of the world alone. Instead, You invite me to abide, to trust, to rest in the promise that I am never forsaken. Let my strength be found not in striving, but in surrendering to Your steadfast love. Amen.

### **Activity for families: “Building Together”**

Work together to build something simple—a tower with blocks, a puzzle, or even a small fort with blankets. Talk about how things might fall apart along the way, but with patience and teamwork, you can rebuild—just like how God helps us remain strong in uncertain times.

## Sunday, March 30

Attend worship, rest, renew, and look back.

Spend some time reflecting on times in your life that have shaped your resilience. How did God see you through? How can you trust God in the wilderness next week solely based on God’s faithfulness in the past. Give God praise and thanks for the way God’s faithfulness has guided you. And been your strength. What are the prayer requests and praises you want to remember throughout the week?

### **Notes & Prayer Requests**

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# BE ROOTED IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 15:1-17

**Monday, March 31**

## **Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be In me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be before me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be behind me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be beneath me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be above me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Light your “Be Centered” candle from the Christ Candle. Then light your “Be Obedient” candle from “Be Centered,” “Be Servants” from “Be Obedient,” “Be Resilient” from “Be Servants,” and now let your “Be Resilient” candle light your “Be Rooted” candle.

In the glow of this new candle, reflect on what it means to Be Rooted. What roots you – is it your faith, the disciplines, relationships? What in the wilderness you are experiencing is threatening to “unroot” you? How do you deepen your roots and what practices do you use to ground yourself? How do each of the other candles, lit in sequence, lead to deeper roots in you?

## **Pray this prayer:**

The desire to disconnect, to retreat, to disengage—it is real. When the world feels overwhelming, we long to withdraw. But stability is not found in isolation; it is found in deep, sustained relationship with Christ. Are we trying to navigate the wilderness alone? Or will we allow ourselves to remain rooted, even in uncertainty?

When I am bewildered, I can still grow. Because of Jesus, I know how to stay rooted. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*

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## Tuesday, April 1

Read John 15:1-17.

In John 15:1-17, Jesus describes Himself as the vine and His followers as the branches. Without staying connected to Him, we cannot bear fruit. Jesus speaks about pruning and remaining in Him so that we can grow and thrive.

Think about a time when you felt disconnected—whether from God, others, or yourself. What made you want to retreat or disengage? How did that disconnection affect you? Jesus teaches that stability comes from staying rooted in Him. How does this passage challenge your approach to your relationship with Jesus, especially when life feels difficult or uncertain? End your reflection with this: In what ways can I intentionally stay rooted in Christ this week, even when I'm tempted to withdraw?

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## Wednesday, April 2

**Pray:** Vine of Life, ground me in Your love as I step into this new week. In a world that pulls me in many directions, remind me that my strength is not in what I accomplish, but in staying connected to You. Nourish my spirit, that I may bear the fruit of kindness, patience, and grace. Let my roots grow deep in Your presence, so that I may stand firm in faith and flourish in love. Amen.

Read John 15:1-17, then discuss the following with your Life Together Groups, family, and friends:

- Jesus uses the imagery of the vine and branches to show the importance of staying connected to Him. Why do you think we sometimes have a desire to withdraw or disconnect, especially in times of uncertainty?
- Have you ever tried to “go it alone” or pulled away from God or others during a difficult season? How did that affect your spiritual life?
- What might be some signs that you are beginning to disconnect from Christ or your faith community?
- Jesus says, “Remain in me, and I will remain in you.” How does staying connected to Jesus provide stability in the midst of life’s challenges?
- What does it look like to be “rooted” in Christ, and how can we nurture that relationship?
- Jesus mentions pruning, which can be a painful process. How can God use times of difficulty to help us grow deeper in our faith?
- What are some practical ways you can stay rooted in Christ this week, especially when life feels chaotic or uncertain? How can we, as a group, support one another in maintaining deep, sustained relationships with Jesus and with each other?

## Thursday, April 3

Light your candles for this week and play the songs. How do they all, as different as they are, connect you to the discipline of what it means to Be Rooted?



"Abide with Me" by Matt Maher  
"Rooted" by Kerrie Roberts  
"Children will Listen" from *Into the Woods*

*(scan the QR code to listen)*

### **Pray this prayer:**

When I am bewildered, I can still grow. Because of Jesus, I know how to stay rooted. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

*Into the woods, you have to grope  
But that's the way you learn to cope  
Into the woods to find there's hope  
Of getting through the journey*

## Friday, April 4

We should abide in Christ, especially when life feels chaotic or uncertain. By rooting in our relationship with God, we find stability in life's challenges. The same is true for our partner, ZOE Empowers, which helps orphaned children and youth-led, vulnerable families to overcome poverty, move beyond charity, and experience more stability and purpose. ZOE kids abide in their faith, root in their relationship with God, and transform their lives. Be sure to visit the ZOE Empowers tables at our Easter Hop event tomorrow and after worship on Sunday to learn more and support this cause.



[st.lukes.org/ZOE](http://st.lukes.org/ZOE)



## Saturday, April 5

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can't do anything. If you don't remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples."* - John 15:5-8

Be rooted – how can your Sabbath time help you grow your roots and abide in the vine which is Jesus?

**Prayer for the day:** Vine of Life, in You I am nourished, in You I belong. When the winds of uncertainty shake me, remind me that my roots are deep in Your love. Help me to trust that I do not have to earn my place, for I am already held, already chosen, already beloved. In this Sabbath rest, let me drink deeply from Your presence, drawing the strength I need to bear the fruit of love in the world. Amen.

### **Activity for families: "Plant Something Together"**

Plant a small seed (indoors or outside) as a family. Talk about how roots help plants grow strong, just like staying connected to Jesus gives us strength. Keep checking on it each week as a reminder of your faith growing. As an alternative, plan a trip to a nursery or home improvement store and take pictures of the plants or flowers that make your smile or make your heart sing.

## Sunday, April 6

Attend worship, rest, renew, and abide.

Spend some time reflecting on what abiding means to you. How do your roots grow deeper in your relationship with God? What gets in the way and how do you start to eliminate those obstacles? What will root you as we move closer to Holy Week? What are the prayer requests and praises you want to remember throughout the week?

### **Notes & Prayer Requests**

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# HOLD PARADOX IN THE WILDERNESS

Scripture for the Week: John 16:16-32

**Monday, April 7**

**Light your Christ Candle and pray:**

*Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be In me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be before me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be behind me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be beneath me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be above me  
Light of Father, Son and Holy Spirit be all around me.*

Light your "Be Centered" candle from the Christ Candle. Then light your "Be Obedient" candle from "Be Centered," "Be Servants" from "Be Obedient," "Be Resilient" from "Be Servants," "Be Rooted" from "Be Resilient," and now light your candle to represent "Hold Paradox" from your "Be Rooted" candle.

In the glow of this new candle, reflect on Holding Paradox. Not sure what it means? How can the Friday of the crucifixion be called good? Two things that seem to be opposite can be true at once. We can hold opposite emotions and when we do, we are holding paradox. Carl Jung believed paradox was a spiritual discipline of highest work – to understand the mystery that has not been revealed but among us in Christ. He wrote that "the paradox is one of our most valued spiritual possessions." All of Holy Week is about being able to hold the paradoxes of this life of faith: the first shall be last, deny yourself to follow me, death leads to resurrection. Is it possible to hold paradox in the wilderness without moving through each of the previous disciplines? How does holding the paradox of faith invite our relationship with God and others to grow? How does it hold us steady in the wilderness?

**Pray this prayer:** The world is not black and white. Things don't always make sense. We struggle with the mystery of faith, longing for answers that may never come. And yet, the paradox of Jesus invites us deeper—where sorrow and joy, death and life, weakness and power, all exist within the mystery of the cross. What if faith is not about resolving the tension, but learning to hold it?

When we are bewildered, we can know that we don't have to make sense of it all. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

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## Tuesday, April 8

Read John 16:16-32.

In John 16:16-32, Jesus speaks to His disciples about a time when they will no longer see Him, but then, in a little while, they will. He acknowledges the pain of loss but also promises joy to follow. He reveals the paradox of the Christian faith—joy and sorrow, life and death, hope and despair are often interwoven.

Think about a time when your faith felt like a paradox—where sorrow and joy, struggle and peace, seemed to coexist. How did you navigate that tension? What emotions arose in you during those moments? Jesus invites us to hold both the mystery of suffering and the promise of resurrection in tension. How does this passage challenge your understanding of faith, especially when things don't make sense or feel unresolved? End your reflection with this: How might embracing paradox—rather than trying to resolve it—lead to deeper faith and trust in God?

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## Wednesday, April 9

**Pray:** God of mystery, I come into this week holding both certainty and doubt, hope and fear, sorrow and joy. Help me to trust that I do not need all the answers to rest in Your presence. When I am tempted to resolve tension too quickly, give me the patience to sit in the unknown, knowing that You are at work in ways beyond my understanding. Let me hold both the questions and the promise that, through it all, You are near. Amen.

Read 16:16-32, then discuss the following with your Life Together Groups, family, and friends:

- Jesus tells the disciples that they will experience sorrow for a time, but their sorrow will turn to joy. How do you think the disciples felt hearing this?
- Can you think of a time when something in your faith journey didn't make sense, or when the world felt confusing and chaotic? How did you respond to that tension?
- Jesus presents the paradox of sorrow and joy, death and life, in this passage. How does this invitation to embrace mystery help us grow in deeper truth?
- How does the mystery of the cross—where life came from death—shape your view of faith and the struggles you face?
- Jesus speaks of the peace He gives that the world cannot give. How can this peace sustain us when the world feels uncertain or overwhelming?
- In what areas of your life might Jesus be inviting you to embrace the paradox rather than resist it?
- What is one way you can lean into the paradox of faith this week, trusting that you don't need to make sense of it all?

## Thursday, April 10

As you light your candles this week and listen to the songs, consider the paradox of light and dark. There are many powerful moments in Holy Week that happen in the dark – the gathering of the disciples in the Upper Room, the prayer of Gethsemane, it became dark when Jesus breathed his last breath and resurrection happened before the dawn. But all of those moments in darkness were moments of God's light breaking through.



*(scan the QR code to listen)*

"Though You Slay Me" by Shane & Shane

"Blessed Be Your Name" by Matt Redman

"Ride on King Jesus" by Evelyn Larter

### **Pray this prayer:**

When I am bewildered, I can still grow. Because of Jesus, I know how to stay rooted. The light is getting dimmer, I think I see a glimmer.

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Of getting through the journey*

## Friday, April 11

When we are tempted to resolve tension too quickly, we are reminded to be patient and to sit in the unknown, knowing that God is at work in ways beyond our understanding. Let us hold both the questions and the promise that, through it all, God is near. We don't have to know all the answers, we just have to be willing to be present and listen for God's Call. As we think about sorrows and joys throughout this week, what's speaking to your heart?

Next week is Holy Week, and we'll offer different services and activities throughout the week to complete the journey to the cross and to prepare you for the resurrection. Which days will you attend? Who will you invite? In what ways will you be open to the voice of the Spirit as she guides you?

## Saturday, April 12

*"During that time, Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night long." - Luke 6:12*

Throughout the gospels, Jesus observed Sabbath, attended Synagogue where he taught, and took moments away to rest and to pray over every decision. While Sabbath is often considered the discipline of a full day, taking Sabbath moments of prayer, silence, worship, and fasting pull us into a closer and deeper relationship of faith. Tomorrow is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. In planning for Sabbath and celebration on Palm Sunday, consider looking at your calendar and plans to prioritize sabbath moments throughout this week, including Holy Week services.

**Prayer for the day:** God of mystery, I confess that I want certainty, clarity, resolution—but You call me to hold both sorrow and joy, longing and fulfillment, doubt and faith. Teach me to rest in the tension, to trust that even when I do not understand, You are present in the in-between. May I let go of my need for all the answers and instead embrace the wonder of Your unfolding grace. In the paradox, in the waiting, in the unknown, I find You. Amen.

### **Activity for families: "Yin-Yang Art"**

Draw a simple picture that includes both light and dark (e.g., a sunset, the moon and stars, a tree with both leaves and bare branches). Talk about how life isn't always just one thing—joy and sorrow, struggle, and hope often exist together, and that's okay.

## Sunday, April 13

### **PALM SUNDAY - Worship, celebrate, prepare for Holy Week.**

How do each of the moments of Holy Week – Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter hold paradox? What competing emotions or situations that sit in tension are you holding space for in your own life?

### **Notes & Prayer Requests**

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## April 14-19

Use this week to reflect on your Lenten journey thus far. Go back through the guide and fill in or complete any areas you might have missed.

As you move throughout the week, remember not to rush to Easter. Be sure to spend time in silence and reflection, using the spiritual disciplines you have practiced throughout the last few weeks, to reflect on whatever death cloths you left on Ash Wednesday so Jesus' resurrection can unbind you to new life. How will you continue to Lead your life with this story now that this season is over?



## **Holy Week at St. Luke's**

### **Palm Sunday, April 13**

**9:30 a.m.**

Contemporary worship in Founder's Hall

**10:00 a.m.**

Traditional worship in the Sanctuary

*Worship streamed live on YouTube at 9:30 (Contemporary)  
and 10:00 a.m. (Traditional)*

### **Holy Thursday, April 17**

**7:30 p.m.**

in the Sanctuary

### **Good Friday, April 18**

**7:30 p.m.** in the Sanctuary and  
streamed live on YouTube

### **Easter Sunday, April 20**

**9:30 a.m.**

Contemporary worship in Founder's Hall

**10:00 a.m.**

Traditional worship in the Sanctuary

**11:00 a.m.**

Contemporary worship in Founder's Hall

**11:15 a.m.**

Traditional worship in the Sanctuary

*Worship streamed live on YouTube at 9:30 (Contemporary)  
and 10:00 a.m. (Traditional)*



***For the most updated information on the services listed above  
visit [st.lukes.org/holyweek](http://st.lukes.org/holyweek).***

