

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II — 10:15 A.M.
SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023

THE GATHERING

Welcome to St. John's! We invite you to help create the experience of silence before our service. Our hope is to calm our hearts as we prepare to enter into an intensity of shared presence.

Prelude **Erbarm' Dich Mein, O Herre Gott** **J.S. Bach**

All rise at the sound of the bell.

A Penitential Order: Rite Two

Presider Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins. **BCP p. 351**

People **His mercy endures for ever.**

Presider Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

Confession of Sin

Presider Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

The people kneel as able. A moment of reflective silence is kept.

People **Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Presider Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Please stand

Kyrie eleison

Cantor
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Choir & Congregation
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Cantor
Chri - ste e - lei - son. Chri - ste e - lei - son.

Choir & Congregation
Chri - ste e - lei - son.

Cantor
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Choir & Congregation
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Setting: Plainsong, Tone 8; fauxbourdon Janet Hall (b. 1923)
© 1980, The Church Pension Fund.

Collect of the Day, *standing*

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

You may be seated.

The First Lesson: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

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." 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.' 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." 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?" 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.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." 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 Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-14

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

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

Hymn 7, *standing* **Christ, whose glory fills the skies**

RATISBON

The Holy Gospel: John 9:1-41, *standing*

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to John.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Presider The Gospel of our Savior
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Kate E. Wesch

A quiet time for reflection follows the sermon.

The Nicene Creed, *standing*

**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 worshipped 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, *standing*

Intercessor: Gracious God, you gave your Beloved One, Jesus, who taught us that what we seek, we shall receive. We humbly beseech you to open our hearts, so we may see ourselves as you see us. Reveal the barriers we have constructed deep within our hearts. Born of pain and fear, these barriers cause us to harm ourselves and each other. Grant us the generosity of spirit to break free from our desire for self-protection and the courage to crush the stumbling blocks we place before each other.

Intercessor: God, help us affirm each other for who and what we are, all human beings worthy of your abiding love. Move our hearts to lift-up the marginalized and vulnerable. Empower us to heal.

People: **Hear us, O Christ.**

Intercessor: Lord, comfort and liberate the lonely and grieving.

People: **Hear us, O Christ.**

Intercessor: Heal the sick in body, mind or spirit.

People: **Hear us, O Christ.**

Intercessor: Provide for those who are homeless, hungry, or destitute.

People: **Hear us O Christ.**

Intercessor: Guard and protect all children who are in danger.

People: **Hear us O Christ.**

Intercessor: Shower your compassion on those who prisoners, hostages, refugees and all who are in trouble .

People: **Hear us O Christ.**

The ringing of a bell marks the beginning (and end) of a period of silence. Please be seated. During this time, you may center yourself in prayer or write personal intercessions on the prayer cards, which have been placed in each pew. At any time during the service, you may place the cards in one of the prayer boxes placed near the Prayer Table or The Saint John's Bible.

Your prayers are invited for those on our Prayer List as well:

Kathy Arthur, Jinny Buracchi, Helen Chatman, Connie Cliffe, Sandra and Tony Custodio, Roger Deakin, Bix Dupont, Robert Fresher, Nancy Gould, David Guernsey, Elizabeth Guernsey, Glenn Jacobsen, Ann Parko, John Schumacher, Joan Squelia, Donna Stutts, and Kathy Wesch.

During Holy Week, The Rev. Kate Wesch will offer God intercession on behalf of our prayers. The cards will then be burned in the New Fire, kindled during the Easter Vigil.

The bell rings.

Concluding Collect, standing

Intercessor: Gracious God, your love for us is never ceasing. We are imperfect, and yet you love us to perfection. We are lost and afraid, and you gave us your Beloved One, Jesus, who crushes every fear - so that we may be reborn. Heal our brokenness and rekindle lost hopes. In our introspection, let us be gentle with ourselves and each other. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Savior, restore us to a more perfect union with you, now and for all times. **Amen.**

The Peace, all standing

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Then the ministers and people may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Welcome and Announcements, you may be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Offertory Sentence

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

The congregation's offering for the mission and ministry of the church is received. Please be seated.

Anthem **My Eyes For Beauty Pine**

H. Howells

Presentation, standing

The congregation's gifts of bread, wine, and money are presented and placed on the Holy Table. Weekly donations to the Shoreline Pantry are placed before the Altar.

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer C

BCP p. 369

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

People **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

Presider At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

People **By your will they were created and have their being.**

Presider From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

People **Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

Presider Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

People **By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.**

Presider And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

Sanctus

Blue Hymnal S-124

The people stand or kneel, as the Presider continues

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, 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. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
People: **We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our Ancestors: God of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob, Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

People: **Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray.

**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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

Blue Hymnal S-161

The Invitation to Communion

Presider 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.

*All seeking God are welcome at Christ's Table to receive Holy Communion or a blessing.
For a blessing, cross your hands over your chest. We are not allowing intinction at this time.
Gluten-free bread is available for those requiring it. Please indicate this by holding one arm across your chest. If you are unable to come forward, ask an usher or someone nearby to request that communion be brought to you.*

Hymn 499, standing Lord God, you now have set your servant free

SONG 1

Postcommunion Prayer, standing

Presider Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us
as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Sending of Eucharistic Visitors, as requested

Presider In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People **We, who are many, are one body, for we all share one bread, one cup.**

The Blessing, standing

Look with compassion, O Lord, upon this your people; that, rightly observing this holy season, they may learn to know you more fully, and to serve you with a more perfect will; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn 493, standing O for a thousand tongues to sing

AZMON

The Dismissal, standing

Presider Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude Tocatta

Flor Peeters

THURSDAY NIGHTS IN LENT — EVENING PRAYER | 6 PM (March 23 & 30)

The season of Lent is a time of introspection and preparation. These Thursday evenings are an opportunity for prayer and calm reflection. Evening Prayer takes place in the church with candlelight. The service is led by members of the parish presiding and preaching. The service ends with a favorite Lenten hymn.

FEEDING GOD'S SHEEP: A LENTEN DISCIPLINE THAT HELPS OUR NEIGHBORS

This season, as you attend the services, forums, Bible Study, or special events, if you can do so, you are invited to bring a nonperishable food item for the Shoreline Soup Kitchen Pantry distributions. Boxes for collection are in the Narthex, the Parish Hall, and outside the office.

**PILGRIMAGE INFORMATION SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 20TH, AT 6:00 PM IN THE PARISH HALL**

In April 2024, St. John's will be taking a group on *A Journey to the Holy Land*. Rev. Kate will lead this two-week pilgrimage with the assistance of local guides Canon Iyad Qumri and Rami Qumri. A pilgrimage differs from a vacation or a trip in that it is sacred journey, a once in a lifetime experience, in which the participants are transformed by exploring the self and being in community along the way.

WATCHNIGHT SIGN-UP AVAILABLE

Jesus asked, "Could you not stay awake with me one hour?" Can you?

The Watchnight Vigil begins at 9:00 PM on Maundy Thursday evening and continues until 9:00 AM on Good Friday morning. We need at least one person per hour but multiple people per hour are welcome. When you arrive for your hour, knock on the front door and the previous watcher will open the door. You lock the door when that person leaves. All other doors of the church remain locked. There will be a reimagined Garden of Gethsemane at the rear of the church and additional prayer materials will be available to hopefully enhance what can be an incredibly moving experience and worthwhile sacrifice.

Sign-up sheets will be in the front entrance of the church and the Parish Hall from Sunday March 19 through Palm Sunday April 2. Please call the office at 860-767-8095 or email chelsea@stjohnsessex.org with any questions. All volunteer watchers will be contacted by email by Maggie Walden prior to the Vigil to review the process and answer any questions.

**FORUM: A GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK & EASTER AT ST. JOHN'S
SUNDAY, MARCH 26 AT 9 AM**

The worship services of Holy Week and Easter are some of the most ancient liturgies in our tradition. This class explores the history and traditions of the Triduum, "the sacred three days," leading up to Easter. Holy Week is our Super Bowl, March Madness, and playoffs rolled into one. This is the big show! Come to learn more about the most sacred traditions of our faith.

**EASTER FLOWERS AND MUSIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
DEADLINE: THURSDAY, MARCH 30**

The Easter flowers and the special music we enjoy in the church on Easter contribute so much to the glory of this season for all of us. We are offering acknowledgments on Easter day. Please mail in (P.O. Box 422, Essex, CT 06426) or donate to the Easter flowers and music online. Please indicate in the memo line for flowers or music. Please also indicate in whose memory or thanksgiving.

All donations and information must be in the office by Thursday, March 30. For questions, please call 860-767-8095 ext. 10 or email chelsea@stjohnsessex.org.

CLERGY & PARISH STAFF

The Rev. Kate E. Wesch, *Rector*
 Chelsea DiDonato, *Parish Administrator & Communications Director*
 Anthony Pandolfe, Jr., *Director of Music*
 Mairi Graham-Shaw, *Intern for Liturgy & Preaching*
 Manuel Matute, *Sexton*
 Dayle Larson, *Bookkeeper*

VOLUNTEER PROFESSIONALS

Allison Fresher, *Liturgical Coordinator & Serving Ministry*
 Bill Scharfenstein, *Building and Grounds*
 Greg Perruccio, *Stewardship Chair*
 Dave Rogers, *Treasurer*

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY LEADERS

Barbara Stacks, *Prayer Shawl Ministry*
 Mary Bowers & Paulette Rider, *Rummage Sale*
 Marlene Going, *Weekly Food Collection*
 Stephanie Patterson, *Altar Guild*
 Peggy Tuttle, *Pastoral Care Card Ministry*
 Jennifer Miller, *Meal Ministry*

THE SAINT JOHN'S BIBLE CORE TEAM

The Rev. Kate E. Wesch
 Allison Fresher
 Dan Taylor-Stypa
 Jennifer Miller
 Maggie Walden

OUTREACH PARTNERS

Mary Bowers	<i>Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantries</i>
David Evangelisti	<i>Middlesex Habitat for Humanity</i>
Ed Shyloski & Charlie Walden	<i>Ministry to Veterans and Active Military Personal</i>
Jenifer Grant	<i>Sister Cities Essex Haiti</i>
Jim Myslik	<i>The Witness Stones Project</i>
Karen van der Horst	<i>Nursing Ministry</i>
Rhode van Gessel	<i>A Sacred Place</i>

VESTRY

Dan Taylor-Stypa, *Warden*; Scott Konrad, *Warden*; Anne Littlefield, *Vestry Clerk*; Dave Rogers *Treasurer*; Carol Beisser, Nat Eddy, Sandy Loether, Jim Myslik, Stephanie Patterson, Ellen Pfarr, Patti Pickering, Patricia Pittsinger, Rob van der Horst

Serving Today at 10:15 A.M.

Organist	Doug Green
Ushers & Greeters	Sharon Craig & Walter Rasmussen
Lector	Scott Konrad
Intercessor	Darrell Jones
Crucifer & Eucharistic Minister	Darrell Jones
Verger & Liturgical Coordinator	Allison Fresher
The Saint John's Bible Gospel Bearers	Arnie Chester & Sharon Craig
Videographer	Alex Pichs
Altar Guild	Susan Guernsey & Peggy Tuttle
Counters	Ken Ewell & Bill Chatman
Intern for Liturgy & Preaching	Mairi Graham-Shaw
Presider & Preacher	The Rev. Kate E. Wesch

WORSHIP & STUDY TIMES

TUESDAYS | Bible Study — 10:30 AM
WEDNESDAYS | Morning Prayer — 10 AM
SUNDAYS | Holy Eucharist — 8 & 10:15 AM
 "Come As You Are" Worship Service — 5 PM

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

3 Cross Street, / (P.O. Box 422) Essex, CT 06426

860.767.8095 | www.stjohnsessex.org

Rev. Kate E. Wesch (Rector) | kate@stjohnsessex.org / 860.767.8095 ext. 12