

**First Sunday in Lent**  
**March 9, 2025**

**Journeying through the Wilderness**



The wilderness has captured the imaginations of artists, adventurers, and spiritual seekers for thousands of years. It can be a place of profound self-discovery, exploration, beauty, and solitude. It is a place of few distractions: no commerce, no schedule, no business as usual. The wilderness can be a freeing place that opens us up to

experience life in new and profound ways.

However, the wilderness is also disorienting and lonely. The landscape can be brutal and unforgiving. Wilderness wanderers can easily find themselves lost, exhausted, and dirty. The unbearable heat of the day, the uncomfortable cold of the nights, and the lack of food, water, or shade can bring people to their breaking point. The wilderness has been a place of exile and punishment, and a place where people's strength, determination, and faith are put to the test.

The complexities of the wilderness set the stage for today's gospel story, in which we get a glimpse of who Jesus is and who he is called to be. In the wilderness, we see the depth of Jesus' faith. Jesus is not swayed by the allure of power, control, authority, or physical comfort. He does not buy into the tempter's lies. Even in the disorientation and isolation of the wilderness, Jesus trusts in the Spirit, who has led him to this place and who gives him the strength to live into his call throughout his journey.

We are at the beginning of our own journey, a Lenten season of metaphorical wilderness wandering. The good news is that we do not go alone. The Spirit goes before us, behind us, beside us, and within us. Along this journey, the many voices of the tempter may try to lure us in with power, control, authority, or comfort. And yet, our trust and our identities lie with the One who already defeated the tempter. We already have all we need. In Christ, we are already loved, forgiven, and made whole, no matter where our journeys take us.

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**Presiding Minister:** Rev. Randy Marburger

**Worship Leader:** Dr. Wendy S. Farone, Vicar

**Assisting Minister:** Melanie Thomas

**Lector:** Kathy Morgan

**Organist:** Drew Pogyor

**Altar Care:** Loran Bohman

**The Sanctuary Light:** is given to the Glory of God.

**The Columbarium Light:** is given to the Glory of God.

### Hymns for Sunday

**Entrance Hymn**      **ELW 332 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say**

**Hymn of the day**      **ELW 319 O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days**

**Communion Hymns** **ELW 185 Create in Me a Clean Heart**  
**ELW 325 I want Jesus to Walk with Me**

**Sending Hymn**      **ELW 326 Bless Now, O God, the Journey**

**Communion-** If you need assistance or are unable to come to the communion rail, you can either stand at the step or stay in your seat and Pastor will come to you. If you are unable to receive either the consecrated bread or wine, receiving either one is acceptable.

**Membership-** There are many ways to be connected with our congregation. Everyone is welcome to participate in any and all congregation activities; and anyone baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is welcome to Holy Communion. We welcome your request for membership.

## **Lent Services on March 12, 19, 26 and April 2, 9**

- Lenten Light Dinner 5:30-6:45 pm
- Lenten Service 7:00 pm

**Maundy Thursday Service**, April 17, 7:00 pm

**Good Friday Service**, April 18, 7:00 pm

**Easter Sunday, Service**, April 20, 10:00 am

**Our Faith Quilters Quilting Day** is Saturday March 15<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 2pm. All are welcome! This is the day where we work on several quilts. No experience necessary. Bring a cover dish for lunch. There will be a sign up in the Narthex later in February.

**Easter Flower Orders** are due by March 18<sup>th</sup>. See insert in bulletin. Turn in forms to the office bin on Apryle's desk. Additional order forms can also be found in the narthex.

**Spring Craft Show** Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9 am – 3 pm.

**White Oak Borough Annual Spring Clean Up Day**- Saturday, April 26, 2025 10 am – 1 pm, at the Heritage Hill Park Pavilion. Volunteers should be present at 9:30 am. See bulletin board for registration information.

**Lost and Found** – We have several items located on the window shelf outside of the office: earrings, glove, key, pill box etc. Please stop by and check it out if you are missing one of these items.

## **Bible Storytelling News**

This Tuesday, March 11th, we will have the opportunity during BS to view and discuss the Sights and Sounds presentation on the Book of Ruth. "The story of Ruth teaches that God's plan for us can be found when our plans fail. It also encourages people to view their daily lives as part of God's plan for the world."

Thank you to Joyce for sharing the movie and to Rich for setting up the equipment! And thanks to Margie for providing the snacks!

Please join us. All are welcome at 10:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Bring a friend.

