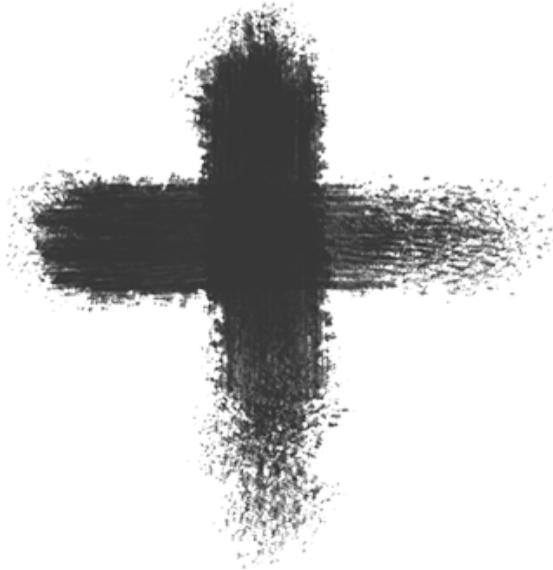


TO MAKE A RIGHT BEGINNING

Prayer Resources for the Season of Lent



**Saint James Episcopal Church
Lancaster, Pennsylvania**

Dear Friends in Christ,

Each year on Ash Wednesday, we hear the Church's invitation: "I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent..."

Lent is a season of return — a season to make a right beginning again.

We are blessed and strengthened by a tradition of common prayer. When the world feels unsettled, its steady rhythm anchors us. The Book of Common Prayer places time-tested words on our lips — prayers that unite, console, and ground us, reminding us that we never pray alone.

Common prayer forms habits in us. It teaches us to turn toward God not only when we feel strong, but also when we feel weary or unsure. It gives us language when our own words fall short and roots us in something deeper than the moment.

In this Lenten season, we look honestly at the ways we have fallen short in loving God, ourselves, and our neighbors. This honesty is meant to open space for grace. Repentance is reorientation — turning again toward the One who never turns away from us.

This booklet is offered as a companion for these forty days. Within it you will find the Daily Devotions from the Book of Common Prayer, simple guidance for meditation, and suggestions for weaving silence into your daily prayer. You will also find prayers for ordinary moments — such as meals — so that even our nourishment may become part of our returning.

You are not asked to do everything in these pages. Choose what is life-giving. Begin wherever you are. If you miss a day, begin again.

That is the heart of Lent.

May this season be gentle and honest for you. And may each day become, by grace, a right beginning.

Faithfully,

David+, Stacey+, Glenn+, StephJo

Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families

In the Morning

From Psalm 51

Open my lips, O Lord, *

and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, *

and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence *

and take not your holy Spirit from me.

Give me the joy of your saving help again *

and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3

A period of silence may follow.

Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

At Noon

From Psalm 113

Give praise, you servants of the LORD; *
praise the Name of the LORD.

Let the Name of the LORD be blessed, *
from this time forth for evermore.

From the rising of the sun to its going down *
let the Name of the LORD be praised.

The LORD is high above all nations, *
and his glory above the heavens.

A Reading

O God, you will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on you; for in returning and rest we shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be our strength.

Isaiah 26:3; 30:15

A period of silence may follow.

Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Blessed Savior, at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may look to you and be saved; for your mercies' sake. *Amen.*

or this

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you:" Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

In the Early Evening

This devotion may be used before or after the evening meal.

O gracious light, pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Son of God, O Giver of Life, and to be glorified through all the worlds.

A Reading

It is not ourselves that we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants, for Jesus' sake. For the same God who said, "Out of darkness let light shine," has caused his light to shine within us, to give the light of revelation—the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. *2 Corinthians 4:5-6*

A period of silence may follow.

Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

At the Close of Day

Psalm 134

Behold now, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, *
you that stand by night in the house of the LORD.

Lift up your hands in the holy place and bless the LORD; *
the LORD who made heaven and earth bless you out of Zion.

A Reading

Lord, you are in the midst of us and we are called by your Name: Do not forsake us, O Lord our God. *Jeremiah 14:9,22*

The following may be said

Lord, you now have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised; For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, whom you have prepared for all the world to see; A Light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel.

A period of silence may follow.

Prayers for ourselves and others may follow. It is appropriate that in reviewing the day past, brief prayers of thanksgiving for the blessings of the day, or any regrets for our sins, be included.

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

Meditation as a Daily Prayer*

How to Meditate

Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly.

Interiorly and silently begin to recite a single word — a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer word Maranatha. Say it as four equal syllables: Ma-ra-na-tha.

Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it — silently, gently, faithfully, and above all, simply.

The essence of meditation is simplicity. Stay with the same word throughout the entire meditation and from day to day. Do not visualize. Do not analyze. Simply listen to the word as you say it.

When thoughts arise — even good thoughts — let them go. Do not fight distractions. Gently return to your word as soon as you notice your attention has wandered. The returning is the practice.

Whether 5 or 20 minutes, a daily time of centering oneself through silence, stillness and simplicity is a vital spiritual exercise. It can be done in a ‘forest bath’ walk alone or with a candle lit at home or online with a meditation group. It takes time to grow into this discipline. The support of community is always helpful.

You may begin each meditation with this prayer, used at Urban Well daily meditation:

Heavenly Father, open our hearts to the silent presence of the Spirit of your Son. Lead us into that mysterious silence where your love is revealed to all who call: **Maranatha**: come, Lord Jesus.

You may use a bell at the beginning and end of your meditation.

*Within the Daily Devotions in this booklet, you may insert meditation where it says, “A period of silence may follow,” or where prayers are invited. Simply allow that silence to become your time of faithful attention to the word.

Praying at Meals

Before a Meal

Bless, O Lord, these gifts to our use and us to your service; for Christ's sake. Amen.

After a Meal

We give you thanks, Almighty God, for these and all your mercies...

For Simplicity in Lent

God of abundance, as we fast and as we feast, teach us gratitude. Let this meal remind us that all is gift.

For Meals Shared in Community

Gracious God, be present at this table. Bless our conversation. Nourish us in body and in love.

Family Prayer for Mealtimes During Lent

Gracious God, Thank You for this food and for the hands that prepared it. As we eat, remind us of those who are hungry. Give us generous hearts to share what we have, and help us to hunger most for Your Word and Your ways. Amen.

Prayers for Families, Prayers for All

Tips for Using These Prayers as a Family:

- **Create a Lenten Prayer Corner:** Place a purple cloth, a cross, and a candle in a small space where you gather to pray. Incorporating a candle for each child can be a good idea so that each one can blow out their candle at the conclusion of your prayers.
- **Rotate Prayer Leaders:** Let children take turns leading the prayer each day.
- **Incorporate Silence:** After the prayer, pause for 20–30 seconds of quiet to listen for God's voice.

Prayer for the Beginning of Lent

Lord Jesus, As we begin this season of Lent, help us to walk with you in love and humility. Teach us to listen for your voice, to turn away from selfishness, and to follow the path that leads to life. May our home be filled with kindness, our words with truth, and our hearts with Your peace. Amen.

Prayer for Mealtimes During Lent

Gracious God, Thank you for this food and for the hands that prepared it. As we eat, remind us of those who are hungry. Give us generous hearts to share what we have, and help us to hunger most for your Word and your ways. Amen.

Prayer for Forgiveness

Merciful Father, We have not always loved you with our whole hearts. We have not always loved our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us, and help us to forgive one another. Wash us clean, and make us new, so that we may walk in your light. Amen.

Prayer for Serving Others

Loving God, Show us the needs of the people around us. Give us courage to help, patience to listen, and joy in serving. May our hands be your hands, and our hearts be your heart in the world. Amen.

Prayer for Peace

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

– A Prayer attributed to St. Francis, The Book of Common Prayer, p. 833

Prayer for Holy Week Preparation

Lord of the Cross, As we draw near to Holy Week, help us to remember your great love for us. Teach us to carry our own crosses with faith, to trust you in hard times, and to rejoice in the hope of Easter morning. Amen.

Prayers for Parents

For the Care of Children (BCP pg. 829)

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

For Young Persons (BCP pg. 829)

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Breath Prayers

Maranatha (Come Lord, Jesus)

Inhale: Mara

Exhale: Natha

Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Inhale: Jesus Christ

Exhale: Son of God

Inhale: Have mercy on me

Exhale: A sinner

Fill me, Spirit, with your love

Inhale: Fill me, Spirit

Exhale: With your love

Light of Life, Shine in me

Inhale: Light of Life

Exhale: Shine in Me

Eternal Light, guide my way

Inhale: Eternal Light

Exhale: Guide my way

Additional Resources

Forward Day by Day printed booklet of daily scripture reading and reflections found at back of church and in parish office. Additional resources from Forward Day:

[Forward Movement – Inspire disciples. Empower evangelists.](#)

Episcopal Relief and Development

<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/worship-resources/let-us-pray/lenten-prayers/>

World Community for Christian Meditation –

<https://wccm-usa.org>

World Community for Christian Meditation – CYF

[Meditation with Children - WCCM-USA](#)

Short 13-minute audio guided scripture meditation and reflection. An easy app can be downloaded.

<https://prayasyougo.org>

Church of England

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Building Faith – CYF

<https://buildfaith.org/lent/>

Meditation *at* Saint James

30 minutes of simple teaching and silence

Mondays, 7:00 PM

In the chapel, in person only

Tuesdays, 8:00 AM

In the chapel and via Zoom

Wednesdays, 8:00 AM

In the chapel and via Zoom

Thursdays, 8:00 AM

In the chapel and via Zoom

Fridays, 6:45 AM

In the chapel and via Zoom



Scan for more info
and Zoom links



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SaintJamesLancaster.org

& Urban Well

UrbanWell.org

VESPERS

AT THE

Urban Well

Sundays, 5:00 - 5:45 PM, In the Chapel

A contemplative candlelit
service to nurture
mind, body and spirit

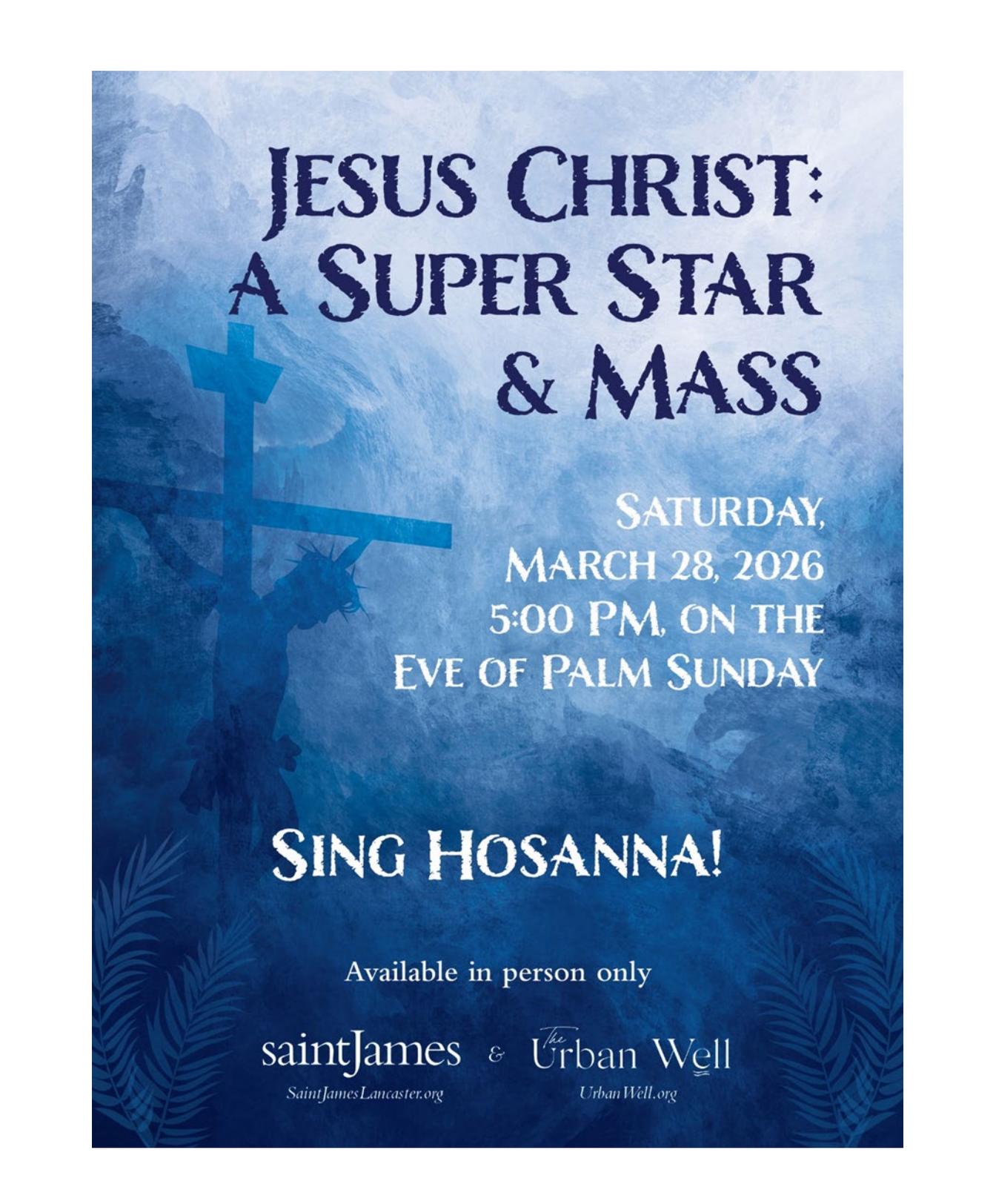


An offering from

saintJames

SaintJamesLancaster.org

2026



JESUS CHRIST: A SUPER STAR & MASS

SATURDAY,
MARCH 28, 2026
5:00 PM, ON THE
EVE OF PALM SUNDAY

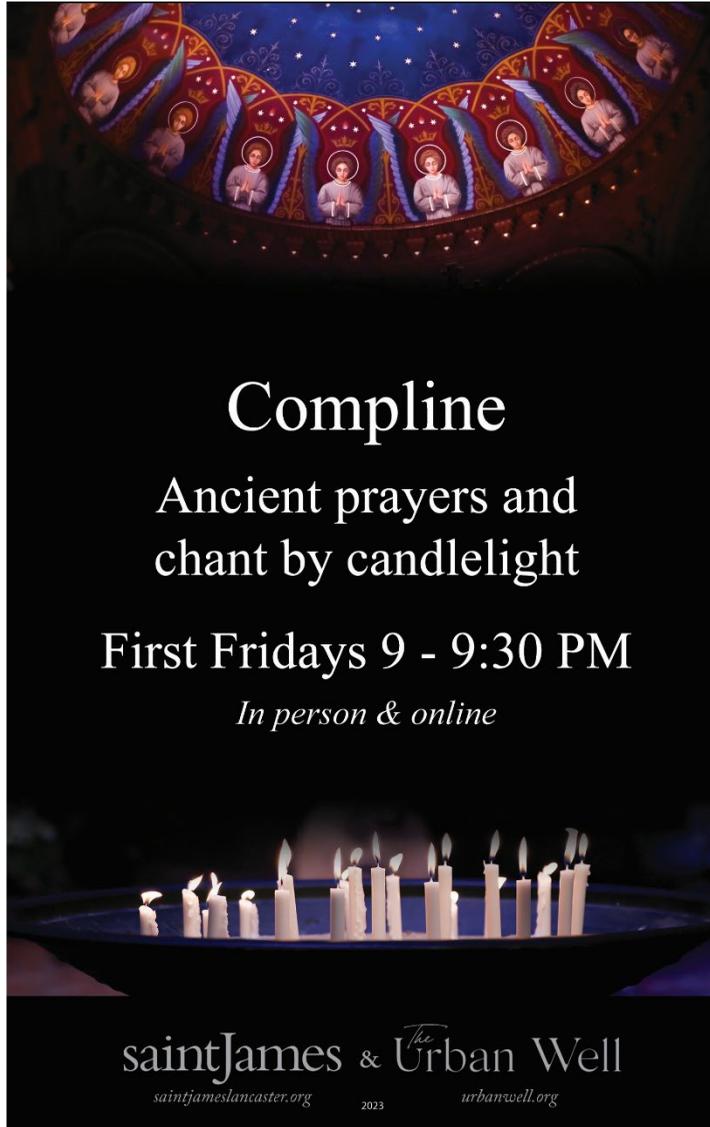
SING HOSANNA!

Available in person only

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Compline

Ancient prayers and
chant by candlelight

First Fridays 9 - 9:30 PM

In person & online

saintJames & ^{The}Urban Well

saintjameslanaster.org

2023

urbanwell.org

Join us any evening for **Night Prayer** (a spoken service of Compline) at 9:00 pm online. To learn more about Compline or Saint James, visit our website and complete the Get Connected card in your pew or online www.saintjameslanaster.org.