

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
March 15, 2026 **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world!

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

PRELUDE

GATHERING **Welcome, Announcements, Celebrations**

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

If the human body is to live, it needs salt.

If the new creation we are in Christ is to flourish, it needs the Spirit's light!

But if salt isn't salty?

It isn't meant to be.

And if a light doesn't shine?

It isn't what it's meant to be.

Jesus says we are the salt of the earth, the light of the world.

Our faith, our love, our hope—essential as salt and light.



OPENING HYMN** ***“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” **(UMH # 89)**

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love; hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away. Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

2. All thy works with joy surround thee, Earth and heaven reflect thy rays, stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea, chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

3. Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest, well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest! Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine; teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

4. Mortals, join the mighty chorus, which the morning stars began; love divine is reigning o'er us, binding all within its span. Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife; joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, this morning we come seeking Jesus, the light of the world! Shine in our hearts, Lord Jesus! We believe in Your strength to illuminate our darkest night. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it. Dearest Lord, in this hour of worship, kindle in us the light of Your love. Let Your light shine through us, and through our community, always. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

COMMUNITY PRAYERS (pastor)

SILENT PRAYER (pastor)

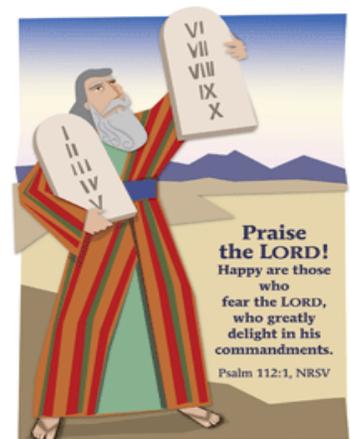
THE LORD'S PRAYER (all)

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Praise the Lord!

- Those who honor the Lord,
who adore God's commandments, are truly happy!
- ² Their descendants will be strong throughout the land.
The offspring of those who do right will be blessed;
- ³ wealth and riches will be in their houses.
Their righteousness stands forever.
- ⁴ They shine in the dark for others who do right.
They are merciful, compassionate, and righteous.
- ⁵ Those who lend generously are good people—
as are those who conduct their affairs with justice.

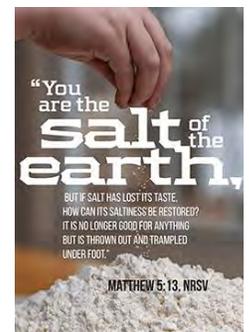
Psalm 112: 1-5



GOSPEL READING

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It's good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

John 1:35-51 (NIV)



MESSAGE

“Salt and Light”

Keith Baker, Lay Speaker

HYMN

“*Amazing Grace*”

(UMH # 378)

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be, as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil, a life of joy and peace.
6. When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

(UMH # 95)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Gracious God, You are the giver of every good gift. What we place before You today is small beside Your abundance. Take these offerings and use them to bring light to places that need it. Let our generosity reflect Your endless gift. In the name of the One who is the Messiah. Amen

MUSICAL REFLECTION

CLOSING PRAYER (pastor)

Dearest Lord, Thank you for calling us to be the salt of the earth. Help us to live our lives in a way that brings goodness and flavor to the world around us. May we never lose our saltiness, but always remain true to our calling. If we ever begin to lose our way, please guide us back to you and renew our strength. We pray that we may always be a shining light for Your glory. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *“This Little Light of Mine”* **(UMH # 585)**

1 This little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine, this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine; this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine)

2 Everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine, Everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine; Everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine)

3 All through the night, I'm goin'a let it shine, All through the night, I'm goin'a let it shine; All through the night, I'm goin'a let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine)

BENEDICTION (pastor)

Day by day, oh dear Lord, three things we pray: to see Thee more clearly, to love Thee more dearly, and to follow Thee more nearly day by day. Go forth in the Lord's grace and peace. Amen

POSTLUDE

Beverly J, Matthews, PsyD
Certified Lay Minister, Supply Pastor
217 825 9010

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 32

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

- Sun. Mar. 22 8:45 am Confirmation Class
- Sun. Mar. 22 9:00 am Sunday School
- Sun. Mar. 22 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
- Sun. Mar. 29 9:00 am Sunday School
- Sun. Mar. 29 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
- Sun. Apr. 03 6:30 pm Good Friday Service
- Sun. Apr. 05 8:45 am Confirmation Class
- Sun. Apr. 05 9:00 am Sunday School
- Sun. Apr. 05 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Mar 16 Cheryl Laskowski Mar 21 Kim Belskamper

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of cereal, cereal bars or oatmeal; canned fruits and vegetables; canned soup; canned pasta; mac and cheese; shampoo; and antiperspirant. Cash donations are always welcome.

SPEAKER SCHEDULE

- Mar. 22 Beverly Matthews Certified Lay Minister, Supply Pastor
- Mar. 29 Mark Dallner, Lay Speaker
- Apr. 03 Beverly Matthews Certified Lay Minister, Supply Pastor
- Apr. 05 Beverly Matthews Certified Lay Minister, Supply Pastor
- Apr. 12 Kirk Yenerall, Certified Lay Minister
- Apr. 19 Keith Baker, Lay Speaker
- Apr. 26 Beverly Matthews Certified Lay Minister, Supply Pastor

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation class will be first and fourth Sundays at 8:45 am for one hour in the pastor's office using the book Confirm which can be purchased online through Cokesbury.

