

# Sermon Series Guide ~ February 22- April 5, 2026

## Sunday Lent Series: Jesus for the Curious

The Sunday lectionary for Lent in year A reveals Jesus in conversation with both friends and adversaries. Lent's first Sunday finds him confronting God's ancient adversary in Matthew's account of the temptation. The second Sunday presents Jesus' interaction with the seeker, Nicodemus, who is perhaps not ready to make a commitment to following this new teacher. The third, fourth, and fifth Sundays are full of intriguing conversation partners for Jesus: the Samaritan woman at the well, the man who received his sight, Martha and Mary after the death of their brother Lazarus. (These last stories were used in some ancient churches as part of baptismal preparation, essential to the Lenten season in the early church.)

We are blessed during these Sundays with some of the church's richest narrative treasures. These stories beckon curiosity because they are truthful stories about us, about our temptation, our confusion, our questions, our redemption. When, at the end of this season, Jesus proclaims to grieving Martha with a strong, confident voice, "I am the resurrection and the life," they shall surely hear him speaking to them.

### February 22, 2026

- **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 4:1-11
- **Key Ideas:** Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church, Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead. How can we faithfully follow Jesus in a way that challenges us to grow?
- **Daily Discipleship:** 1 Lent (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

### March 1, 2026

- **Scripture Reading:** John 3:1-17
- **Key Ideas:** In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.
- **Daily Discipleship:** 2 Lent (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

### March 8, 2026

- **Scripture Reading:** John 4:5-42
- **Key Ideas:** In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.
- **Daily Discipleship:** 3 Lent (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

## March 15, 2026

- **Scripture Reading:** John 9:1-41
- **Key Ideas:** Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.
- **Daily Discipleship:** 4 Lent (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

## March 22, 2026

- **Scripture Reading:** John 11:1-45
- **Key Ideas:** One of the hardest aspects of human life is imagining something beyond our current expectations and experiences. Yet Jesus expresses the wisdom that we must die to live, that Lazarus can return from the grave, and that we must take up our crosses.
- **Daily Discipleship:** 5 Lent (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

## March 29, 2026: Passion/Palm Sunday

- **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 21:1-11 & Matthew 26:14—27:66
- **Key Ideas:** Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.
- **Daily Discipleship:** Palm/Passion Sunday (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/daily-discipleship-lent-year-a/>

## April 5, 2026: Easter Sunday

- **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 28:1-10
- **Key Ideas:** This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34): Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.
- **Daily Discipleship:** Easter Sunday (A) <https://resources.elca.org/bible-studies/year-a-easter-2/>

➔ **The Daily Discipleship resources are free Bible Study resources from the ELCA website. You can print them from home. However, if printing presents itself as a problem, we would be delighted to print a copy for you or your Bible Study group.**