



Thomas A. Edison
Congregational Church

MARCH 22, 2026



Order of Worship

Fifth Sunday in Lent

** You are invited to stand
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.

Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

Prelude

Layla Morell, Piano

Fantasia in D minor K.397

By W. A. Mozart

Call to Worship (responsively)

One: We believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God, who knows our names and recognizes our deepest needs. We believe that Jesus is the closest mirror image of the living God, and that His grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted. We believe in the birthing, renewing, enabling spirit of God who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.

All: God, on this Fifth Sunday in Lent, help us to live into our beliefs and to live more authentic lives of faith.

One: We believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures, and that hard times and discipline are also loving gifts. We believe that our journey has a purpose and a destination, and that our path leads to a human glory we cannot yet imagine.

All: God, on this Fifth Sunday in Lent, help us to live into our beliefs and to live more authentic lives of faith.

One: We believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road, and that we are called to love one another as God loves us. This is our faith, and we are humbled to profess it in the name of Jesus the Christ.

All: God, on this Fifth Sunday in Lent, help us to live into our beliefs and to live more authentic lives of faith. Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer titled: Traveling to Easter with Jesus as our Guide, Patmos Abbey
— The Order of Saint Columba website. patmosabbey.org.

Hymn of Faith

Lord, if Only You Had Been Here

Tune: Beach Spring

By: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

**“Lord, if only you had been here,
one I love would not have died.”
Martha shared her grief with Jesus
in these words she sadly cried.
Jesus said, “I’m resurrection.
Martha, do you know it’s true?
I’m the life for which you’re longing.
She said, “I believe in you!”**

**“Lord, if only you had been here!”
Jesus heard these words again.
Mary, sitting home and waiting,
spoke to Jesus of her pain.
So our Lord was deeply troubled
in this world of death and sin.
Sometimes all we see is struggle;
death and evil seem to win.**

**When we share your resurrection,
when we know that you are life,
We find courage for our living
in this world of pain and strife.
We your church will work for justice,**

welcome strangers, help the poor.
Faced with death, we'll be a witness:
You are with us, Risen Lord.

Passing of the Peace

May Christ be with You on Your Journey!
And, also with you!

Gift of Music

Dr. Jason Bahr, Baritone

O Lamb of God

By W. A. Mozart

Prayer of Discipleship (responsively)

Prayer For God's Guidance on our Journey of Lent

One: Tender God, we yield to Your gentle guidance. Like a shepherd, You provide all that we need: You know when we should lie down and rest, and when we should rise up and be on the move.

All: Help us to trust the rhythms of the spirit; lead us away from compulsive action and the false peace of apathy.

One: You restore our souls.

All: We gaze into still waters and see ourselves clearly now: reflections of Your image looking back with love.

One: You lead on the paths that are right for us and for this planet. We trust Your guidance.

All: Even in the darkest valleys and most treacherous passes, the ground beneath us is firm, and our confidence is great that You are with us.

One: You, Great Shepherd, the ground of our being, do not desert us. Our cup overflows with gratitude.

All: May our lives be filled with compassion and goodness: this is all You ask in return. Amen.

Silent/Individual Prayer

Prayer for a Change of Heart and Change of Mind

One: God, from the cowardice that dares not face new truth,

All: From the laziness that is contented with half-truth,

One: From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,

All: Good Lord, deliver us. Amen.

~slightly adapted from *If Darwin Prayed* by Bruce Sanguin/ And a traditional Kenyan prayer

Prayers of the People / Concerns of the People

Our Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

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 debts as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer of Response

Change My Heart, O God

Eddie Espinoza and the Praise Song Advisory Team

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like You.

You are the Potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God, may I be like You.

Lazarus is ill

11 A certain man, Lazarus, was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ⁽² This was the Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was ill.) ³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one whom You love is ill." ⁴ When He heard this, Jesus said, "This illness isn't fatal. It's for the glory of God so that God's Son can be glorified through it." ⁵ Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ When He heard that Lazarus was ill, He stayed where He was. After two days, ⁷ He said to His disciples, "Let's return to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples replied, "Rabbi, the Jewish opposition wants to stone You, but You want to go back?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Aren't there twelve hours in the day? Whoever walks in the day doesn't stumble because they see the light of the world. ¹⁰ But whoever walks in the night does stumble because the light isn't in them." ¹¹ He continued, "Our friend Lazarus is sleeping, but I am going in order to wake him up." ¹² The disciples said, "Lord, if he's sleeping, he will get well." ¹³ They thought Jesus meant that Lazarus was in a deep sleep, but Jesus had spoken about Lazarus' death. ¹⁴ Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died. ¹⁵ For your sake, I'm glad I wasn't there so that you can believe. Let's go to him." ¹⁶ Then Thomas (the one called Didymus) said to the other disciples, "Let us go too so that we may die with Jesus."

Jesus with Martha and Mary

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was a little less than two miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Many Jews had come to comfort Martha and Mary after their brother's death. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet Him, while Mary remained in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died. ²² Even now I know that whatever You ask God, God will give You." ²³ Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha replied, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me will live, even though they die. ²⁶ Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She replied, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, God's Son, the one who is coming into the world."

²⁸ After she said this, she went and spoke privately to her sister Mary, “The teacher is here and He’s calling for you.” ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. ³⁰ He hadn’t entered the village but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. ³¹ When the Jews who were comforting Mary in the house saw her get up quickly and leave, they followed her. They assumed she was going to mourn at the tomb. ³² When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet and said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who had come with her crying also, He was deeply disturbed and troubled. ³⁴ He asked, “Where have you laid him?” They replied, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus began to cry. ³⁶ The Jews said, “See how much He loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “He healed the eyes of the man born blind. Couldn’t He have kept Lazarus from dying?”

Jesus at Lazarus’ tomb

³⁸ Jesus was deeply disturbed again when He came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone covered the entrance. ³⁹ Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said, “Lord, the smell will be awful! He’s been dead four days.” ⁴⁰ Jesus replied, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believe, you will see God’s glory?” ⁴¹ So they removed the stone. Jesus looked up and said, “Father, thank You for hearing Me. ⁴² I know You always hear Me. I say this for the benefit of the crowd standing here so that they will believe that You sent Me.” ⁴³ Having said this, Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his feet bound, and his hands tied, and his face covered with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Untie him and let him go.” ⁴⁵ Therefore, many of the Jews who came with Mary and saw what Jesus did believed in Him.

~Common English Bible

Response to the Sharing of God’s Story

The Story of God for the People of God!
Thanks Be to God!

Pastoral Words

Hymn of Praise

In the Bulb There is a Flower

Tune: Promise
By: Natalie Sleeth

**In the bulb there is a flow-er;
in the seed, an ap-ple tree;
in co-coons, a hid-den prom-ise:
but-ter-flies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of win-ter
there's a spring that waits to be,
un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son,
some-thing God a-lone can see.**

**There's a song in ev-ery si-lence,
seek-ing word and mel-o-dy;
there's a dawn for ev-ery dark-ness,
bring-ing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the fu-ture;
what it holds, a mys-ter-y,
un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son,
some-thing God a-lone can see.**

**In our end is our be-gin-ning;
in our time, in-fin-i-ty;
in our doubt there is be-live-ing;
in our life, e-ter-ni-ty.
In our death, a res-ur-rec-tion;
at the last, a vic-to-ry,
un-re-velaed un-til its sea-son,
some-thing God a-lone can see.**

Invitation to the Offering

What we give, and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.

Offertory

Dr. Jason Bahr, Baritone

How Beautiful are the Feet from Messiah

By G. F. Handel

**Doxology

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.

Life of Our Church

Quilting on Wednesday at 12:00 pm.

Faith Development

**JOIN US WEDNESDAY @ CHURCH @ 11 AM ONLY
AS WELL AS ONLINE THURSDAY 11 AM**

Entering the Passion of Jesus

Dive deep into the history of the last days before the crucifixion.

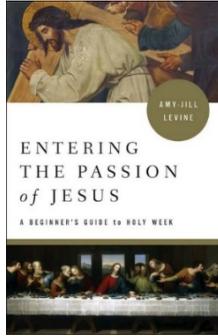
What if we look at the "ordinary" people who witnessed the Passion events... the women around Jesus? Or the "bad" guys...

Judas, Pilate, and Caiaphas?

Amy-Jill Levine looks closely at the people who were part of Jesus' life during his last days.

Readings:

**Matthew 26:36-50, Mark 14:32-46,
Luke 22:39-49, John 18:1, John 18:2**



**Timeline:
The Night in Gethsemane**

Today's flowers are gifted to the church by Sandy Cole, thanks and blessings from her wonderful family. We would like to thank her for this beautiful gift.

**Parking for Sunday Service or
Faith Development**

Please Park on church side on Llewellyn Dr. and Menlo Rd. This is to make room for emergency vehicles if needed to come into the neighborhood.

Sunday, March 22nd

Lori McMullen will be offering Blood Pressure checks. Blood Pressure Screening is an important part of health maintenance. All are encouraged to do this.

We will be welcoming new members on Sunday, March 29th. If anyone would like to become a member of the church, please see or call Pastor Jim.

**Sunday, April 5th Easter Luncheon
Right after Sunday's Service.
Signup sheet is on the bulletin board in
The Fellowship Hall or call the office Monday - Friday
between 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM by March 29th.
\$7.00 per person. Please see either
Patti Seebock, John Seebock or Sandy Cole.
Menu: Ham and fixing.**

**EASTER LILY or HYACINTH
ORDER FORM**

Each year our worship spaces are adorned with beautiful Lilies and Hyacinth for Easter Sunday. If you would like to order one of these flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one, please pick up an order from the Fellowship Hall and return it to Cindy in the church office.

Lilies are \$13.00 each and Hyacinth's are \$10.00 each. We encourage you to take your flower home after services on Easter Sunday. You can make your check out to: TAECC. You can mail to church or drop off at the office after Sunday services. If you want to drop off the check during the week, the office is open Monday – Friday 9AM – 1PM.

Name and phone number:

Email:

Which flower would you like to order

In memory of:

In honor of:

Given by:

FYI - EDISON PARK CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

on April 12, 4:00 - 6:00 pm.

**There will be a resident's parade, along with FMHS
Marching Band, EP School Drum Group and
EP School Violin Mini Recital. All are welcome.**

✨ **Two Sopranos. One Stage. A Night to Remember.** ✨

Join us for The Dazzling Drama Queens – Battles of the Sopranos and witness all the glamor and madness as international opera star Angela Maria Blasi, German American soprano Stephanie Lorenz, and phenomenal pianist Janet Carter grace the stage.

Here at the church on April 17th, 2026, At 7:00 PM.

Battles of the Sopranos

Stephanie Lorenz and Angela Blasi

Janet Carter – Pianist

Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board to donate flowers to enhance our Sunday Service.

Looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board if interested.

Communion for April will be on Sunday, April 12th.

**For next week's God's word:
"Jesus on the Road Again"
– Matthew 1:1-11**

Benediction (responsively)

Our worship has ended, but now our life of service begins!
Go from this space, for you and I are the body of Christ, and all of creation awaits us. So, live passionately, love faithfully, and celebrate every moment of your life from now until the finale. Our God of relentless, amazing, creative, and hopeful grace goes with us! Amen. **Amen.**

~ Adapted from The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

Postlude

Choral from Suite Gothique, Op.25

By Leon Boellmann

Time With Our Children

Lazarus' Story

By Dell Smith Klein

John 11:1-45

What is wrong with this flower? It is dead, isn't it? It's been cut away from the plant and it has died. Look at this fresh and beautiful flower. But look! This flower has been cut off from the plant, too. What will happen to it? Yes, it will die, too, won't it?

Who has power to bring life back into something that is dead? Jesus has power over death. During His lifetime, He brought several dead people back to life. Let's look at Lazarus' story from the Holy Bible.

Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, lived in a village called Bethany. When Lazarus got sick, his sisters sent word to Jesus to come visit, but Jesus didn't go right away. By the time Jesus got to Bethany, He found mourners gathered around Lazarus' home. It was a custom of the Jewish people that when someone died, people would come and visit the family. It was their way of showing sympathy to the family. Because there were so many people at Lazarus' home, Jesus sent word to Lazarus' sisters that He was waiting nearby.

Both Mary and Martha came out to talk with Jesus. Jesus told Martha that Lazarus would be raised up. But Martha didn't understand. She thought Jesus was talking about some far future time when people would all be raised from the dead to live again. Later Mary came out to see Jesus. Mary complained that Lazarus wouldn't have died if only Jesus had visited sooner.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will still live, even if he dies." Jesus asked Mary and Martha if they really believed His words. Jesus wept over the death of His friend, and while the people watched, Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth." And Lazarus came out of the tomb.

Lazarus had been dead, but Jesus brought him back to life. That reminds us of another miracle that we know that is true, too. After Jesus died on the cross, He was buried and a big stone rolled in front of the tomb where He was placed. But Jesus rose from death. And today, Jesus lives.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Lazarus' story is so amazing. We have never seen a person made alive after death, but we know that Jesus has power to bring life back into things that have died. He brought Lazarus back to life. And Jesus also rose from the dead after He was crucified. Thank you for the Holy Bible that teaches us about Jesus' amazing miracles. Amen.

Scripture quotations from the World English Bible Copyright 2013, Richard Niell Donovan

March 29th – Palm Sunday (10:00 AM)
“Jesus on the Road Again”

April 2nd – Maundy Thursday (6:30 PM)
“Jesus in the Upper Room”

April 3rd – Good Friday (6:30 PM)
“Jesus and the Old Rugged Cross”

April 5th – Easter (10:00 AM)
“Jesus Is An Early Riser”



Wellness Newsletter

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." **John 16:33**

Measles Update

Measles (rubeola) is an illness caused by a contagious virus, rubeola. Measles is spread through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. The virus may remain active in the air or on surfaces for up to two hours.

Who is at Risk

- Vaccination lowers risk but does not exclude measles, especially with high-intensity exposure, if suspected, isolate and get tested
- If you live or work in Ave Maria, Immokalee, or area of outbreak
- If you've had a known measles exposure
- If you are contacted by the Florida DOH and told you have encountered someone who has tested positive for measles
- If you are immunosuppressed

You are at low-risk if

- You have been vaccinated against measles even if the immunizations occurred during childhood. Vaccine effectiveness is approximately 75% after the first dose and 97% after the second dose for measles, mumps, and rubella.
- You have laboratory confirmation of having been infected with the disease in the past.
- You were born before 1957 – Although birth before 1957 is considered acceptable evidence of immunity, you should consider vaccinating if you were born before 1957 **and** lack laboratory evidence of immunity or laboratory confirmation that you have had the disease.
- Your physician can order a blood titer test to check for antibodies to confirm immunization.

Measle Symptoms include:

- Early Symptoms, within 7-14 days after exposure: Fever (>100.3), cough, runny nose, red watery eyes (conjunctivitis).
- Symptoms that develop within 3-5 Days after early symptoms (within 10-19 days after exposure): A rash all over the body, known as a Descending maculopapular RASH. This rash may extend to the mouth and appear as red spots, known as Koplik spots.

- If you experience any of these symptoms, see your health care provider immediately.

Confirmed Measle cases by county as of Feb. 14th, 2026

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Total in Florida | 92 |
| Alachua | 2 |
| Broward | 1 |
| Collier | 66 |
| Duval | 6 |
| Escambia | 5 |
| Hillsborough | 2 |
| Lee | 1 |
| Manatee | 3 |
| Miami-Dade | 1 |
| Pinellas | 3 |
| St. Johns | 2 |

Dear Worshipers,

We invite your child to join us for Faith Formation learning in Cathy's Place at Thomas Edison Congregational Church. Your children will learn about Jesus through age-appropriate faith activities, songs, prayers, Bible stories, games and arts & crafts.

March class curriculum Faith Formation

March 8th, 2026 – Jesus Heals a Blind Man, *John 9*

March 22nd, 2026 – Jesus Raises Lazrus, *John 11*

Blood Pressure clinic on March 22nd.

Lori McMullen RN-FCN



JOIN THE INTERMEZZO CHOIR
FOR A MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO THE SPIRIT
OF AMERICAN CULTURE



AMERICAN ODYSSEY

Wednesday
March 25th
6:30 PM

ST. HILARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MASTERSINGERSFM.COM

**GRIEF IS LOVE WITH
NOWHERE TO GO,
LEARNING HOW TO BREATHE
IN THE SPACE SOMEONE
LEFT BEHIND—CARRYING
THEIR ABSENCE IN ORDINARY
MOMENTS, AND DISCOVERING
THAT MISSING THEM IS A
LIFELONG CONVERSATION
THE HEART NEVER
STOPS HAVING.**

Cards can be sent to the following:

**General Dozier
Barrington Terrace, of Ft. Myers
9731 Commerce Center Ct., Room #326
Fort Myers, Fl. 33908**

PRAYER LIST

Our Church Members:

Jean Lindenlaub; Liz Lloyd; General Dozier; Jack Walmsley;
Jean Long; Phyllis Contino; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch.

Friends & Family:

Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Michele Baron (friends of Rod Schaffter and Carol Skaza); Fred & Natalie Johnson (friend of Rod Schaffter & Carol Skaza); Bob Mesce (brother of Patti Seebock); Tom Simpson (brother of Kathy Bolen); Dwight Brzinski (friend of Pat Jessie); Christopher Smith and Darwin Solorzono – missing at sea (friends of Mark Rosandich); Edward Yergeau (brother of Roger Yergeau); Ben Collens - stationed in Qatar (friend of Martha Jean Long).

***No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church.
Welcome home!***

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|---------------|---|
| Website: | www.edisonchurch.com |
| Facebook: | Facebook.com/EdisonChurch |
| Email Pastor: | Pastorjim@taecc.com |
| Email Office: | Admin@taecc.com |
| Office Phone: | 239-334-4978 |
| Office Hours: | Monday-Thursday 9 AM – 12PM |
| Mailing: | 1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901 |

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

Our Church Staff

Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III

Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce

Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson

Distinguished Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel

Faith Community Nurse – Lori McMullen

Pianist - Stephen Brittain

Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.

