

Friends of the Chapel Weekly Scripture Study

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42:14–21

English Standard Bible Scripture Text

For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out ^clike a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. ¹⁵ ^dI will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands,³ and dry up the pools. ¹⁶ ^eAnd I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, ^fthe rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. ¹⁷ ^gThey are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, “You are our gods.” Israel’s Failure to Hear and See

¹⁸ Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! ¹⁹ Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one,⁴

or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰ ^hHe sees many things, but does not observe them; ⁱhis ears are open, but he does not hear. ²¹ The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness’ sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

Historical Context

Isaiah 42 forms part of the Servant Songs within the latter portion of Isaiah. In verses 14–21, the LORD speaks of both restraint and decisive action—promising deliverance, judgment upon idols, and restoration for His people. The passage emphasizes divine initiative to bring light to the blind and faithfulness to His covenant purposes.

Verse-by-Verse Exegetical Commentary

Verse 14 – The LORD declares a shift from long silence to powerful intervention.

Verse 15 – Imagery of desolation reflects judgment upon opposition.

Verse 16 – God promises guidance for the blind, turning darkness into light.

Verse 17 – Idolaters are put to shame, exposing the futility of false worship.

Verses 18–20 – Israel is described as blind and deaf, highlighting spiritual dullness.

Verse 21 – The LORD magnifies His law, demonstrating righteousness and covenant fidelity.

Theological Themes

- Divine intervention after apparent silence
- Light overcoming blindness
- Judgment of idolatry
- Covenant faithfulness

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 5:8–14

English Standard Version Scripture Text

for ^bat one time you were ^cdarkness, but now you are light in the Lord. ^dWalk as children of light ⁹ (for ^ethe fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and ^ftry to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ ^gTake no part in the ^hunfruitful ⁱworks of darkness, but instead ⁱexpose them. ¹² For ^kit is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³ But when ^lanything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, ^m“Awake, O sleeper, and ⁿarise from the dead, and ^oChrist will shine on you.”

Historical Context

In Ephesians 5, Paul exhorts believers to live in a manner consistent with their new identity in Christ. Having moved from darkness to light, Christians are called to reflect that transformation through holy conduct and discernment.

Verse-by-Verse Exegetical Commentary

Verse 8 – Believers were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; identity precedes behavior.

Verse 9 – The fruit of light consists of goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Verse 10 – Christians discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

Verse 11 – Exposure of works of darkness replaces participation in them.

Verses 12–13 – Light reveals and transforms what it touches.

Verse 14 – The call to awake reflects resurrection imagery and renewal in Christ.

Theological Themes

- Transformation from darkness to light
- Ethical living rooted in identity
- Exposure and renewal
- Resurrection imagery in Christian life

Concluding Reflection

On the Fourth Sunday in Lent, the Church reflects on light breaking into darkness. Isaiah proclaims God’s decisive action to guide the blind and uphold His covenant. Paul calls believers to live as children of light, reflecting their new identity in Christ. In the midst of Lent’s sober reflection, the promise of illumination and renewal shines brightly.

Thoughts to Consider – 03/15/26

- 1. In Isaiah 42:14, the LORD speaks of long silence before decisive action.**
How do we interpret seasons when God seems silent? What does this passage teach about divine timing?
- 2. Isaiah promises that God will lead the blind and turn darkness into light (42:16).**
In what ways does spiritual blindness manifest today? How does God’s Word function as light?
- 3. Israel is described as blind and deaf (42:18-20).**
What is the difference between physical inability and spiritual unwillingness? How can believers guard against becoming spiritually dull?
- 4. Paul says, “At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8).**
What does it mean that believers are not merely “in” the light but are themselves light? How does identity shape behavior?
- 5. Ephesians 5:14 calls believers to “awake... and arise from the dead.”**
How does this resurrection imagery connect to Lent? What practical habits help us live as children of light?