



REVEILLE'S GPS WEEKLY SCRIPTURE GUIDE

Explore scriptures and daily devotionals that reflect on this Sunday's sermon message. Sign up to receive the daily devotional email at www.bit.ly/devotional-rumc.

March 22, 2026

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Sermon Title: "Out of the Wilderness" by Rev. Dr. Peter Moon

Use the space below to reflect on the questions in this week's devotionals, make class and sermon notes, and write down prayers and concerns.

Questions for small groups and individual reflection:

1. Describe any time you have spent "in the wilderness." How did it feel? It could be a literal wilderness, but try to push the understanding and describe a season when it was more on the side of the spiritual/emotional characterization.
2. How do you escape those seasons when it feels like you are in Ezekiel's "Valley of Dry Bones"?
3. The message this week is centered around the assumption that Jesus is the cure for a dry faith or life. Just saying "Jesus," however, isn't enough. It requires us to embrace the fullness of Jesus in all the tension and complexities. Describe how this fuller understanding of Jesus can be the way out of the wilderness of a dry life or faith.

Monday, March 16: Read John 11:1-27

It's easy to get hardened in the wilderness – not just our feet, our hands, and our bodies, but our hearts. We turn on the TV to see more war and destruction, and just turn it off. We see pain and injustice, and turn away because we've become resigned to it all. We experience our own season of personal pain and begin shutting ourselves off from others. This is natural – but it's not what Jesus wants for us. This week, as we enter our final weeks in Lent, we will explore how to avoid having a "heart of stone" during seasons of wilderness in our lives and instead embrace the "heart of flesh" Jesus is offering us. As we read the beginning of the story of the death of Lazarus, we can see how easily Martha and the disciples could become hardened by the danger and death around them. But Jesus shows a better way. Jesus shows tenderness and hope where there seems to be none. How can we embrace the tender heart of Jesus in the midst of the wilderness around us?

- **Relationship Opportunity:** Discuss how current events have affected your heart. When is it tempting to harden your heart? How do you keep it open and tender to others?

Tuesday, March 17: Read John 11:28-35

The words and actions of Jesus in this story may seem contradictory at times. He seems almost callously late to arrive at the house of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, then gently weeps with those at the graveside. A moment later, he speaks with a cosmic thundering voice to Lazarus to come out of the tomb. How do we reconcile these very different characterizations? What might Jesus be teaching us? When might we need fortitude and strength in the wilderness, and when do we need to embrace gentleness?

- **Relationship Opportunity:** *Discuss the polarity you see in Jesus's words and actions in the reading.*

Wednesday, March 18: Read Ezekiel 37:1-14

It's difficult to remain open to hope in a "valley of dry bones." All we see is death and decay. All we think about is what has been lost. But today's scripture points to a world where there is always hope; always the promise of renewal, even if it seems impossible. A world where God's love and power can overcome any death and destruction of mankind. Are we only seeing dry bones in our world today, or are we seeing the hope and promise of God's healing renewal? Are we allowing our own hearts and lives to be open to renewal by God?

- **Study Opportunity:** *Research what was happening to the people of Israel during the writing of the prophet Ezekiel. Why would this image of dry bones be so important for them?*

Thursday, March 19: Read Romans 8:6-11

Where is our mind nowadays? Is it in our social media feed, our news feed, the prices at the gas pump, or our own material needs? Today's words from Paul tell us this is a recipe for despair and even "death." When we set our minds on the Spirit, however, we embrace life and peace. This does not mean we are immune to the suffering of others (see Jesus at Lazarus's tomb); it means we can live with open hearts and peaceful spirits as we walk in the wilderness...and out of it, helping others do the same.

- **Discipleship and Relationship Opportunity:** *Explore ways you can more regularly set your minds on the Spirit throughout our day and help others do the same.*

Friday, March 20: Read Psalm 130

Having an open heart means we are going to feel pain. We will sometimes feel despair. We will not be immune to suffering – our own, or others. If we read the psalms, we see all emotions represented, and today's is no exception. Yet we see hope in the midst of pain; patience in the midst of suffering; God's love in the midst of sin. We do not need to harden our hearts to survive the wilderness because we are loved, protected, and redeemed by a Lord and Savior who sees our pain, walks alongside us, weeps for us, and then offers eternal life.

- **Discipleship Opportunity:** *Take a walk today, allowing yourself to cry out to God, feel everything you need to feel, say everything you need to say, then remain open to God's presence and response.*

Saturday, March 21: SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: John 11:25

"Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?'"

Sunday, March 22: Let us prepare our hearts and minds with our Prayer of Confession:

Gracious Lord, today we remember that you walked out of the wilderness. We are paralyzed by it. We are trapped by our doubts, our cynicism, our questions, and our grief. Forgive our lack of faith and trust in you and your way out. By your grace, O Lord, draw us closer to you, and in so doing, draw us out of our valleys of dry bones and dark tombs; for this we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.