

MARCH 8

# ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE WEEKLY UPDATE

2026

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church! **Today is the Third Sunday of Lent.** We are delighted to have you worship with us. All who have come to worship are heartily welcomed. Let us joyfully open our hearts to God and one another. If you'd like to connect with us, share a prayer request, or learn more about St. John, please complete a yellow communication card located on the back of the pews and place it in the offering plate.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**When we pray for each other, we demonstrate Christ's love for each of us**

For **Logan Rutter**, grandson of Ed and Freda Rutter, home from the hospital, doing better, recovering at home

For **Bill Meyer**, back in Fairfield Medical Center with continued health issues

For **Heather Moore**, daughter-in-law of Mike & Willie Moore, dealing with a health issue

For **Alan Ott**, grandson of Michele (Mike) Moore, diagnosed with a tumor at the base of the brain

For **Karma Wisecarver**, daughter of Lee & Peggy Smith, is starting a new treatment in her cancer journey

For **Brian Fowler**, as he slowly recovers from West Nile Virus

Continued prayers for **Jim Fogle, Jon & Linda Leist, Linda Miller.**

If you have a prayer request, please reach out to Sue Mason, who will email our church members. She can be reached at: 614-260-1107 or at [susiemase3@hotmail.com](mailto:susiemase3@hotmail.com).

The **Third Sunday in Lent** in the ELCA continues our Lenten journey of reflection and renewal, often focusing on themes of repentance, spiritual growth, and God's patient grace. The readings frequently challenge us to examine our lives honestly while reminding us that God is merciful and desires our restoration, not our condemnation. This Sunday invites us to turn again toward God, to bear the fruits of faith in our daily lives, and to trust that even in seasons of pruning and discipline, God is at work bringing about new life.



### UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Alan Butterbaugh

March 7

Baker Dillon

March 8

Gina Meyer

March 18



The altar flowers are given by Bonnie Butterbaugh to the glory of God and in honor of Alan's 82nd birthday.



Jon and Linda Leist would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Sally & Tim Acton for the wonderful time of fellowship last Sunday in their home. Sally's singing meant a great deal to Linda and was truly appreciated. Again, many thanks to Tim & Sally.



## THE INSIDE STORY BY SALLY ACTON



Today's Closing Hymn, "**Beneath the Cross of Jesus**", was written by Elizabeth Clephane and was published in 1872. It is a song reflecting on finding spiritual refuge and rest in Christ's sacrifice, drawing inspiration from Isaiah 32:2. It emphasizes "redeeming love" and personal "unworthiness". It contrasts the "burning noontide heat" of life's burdens with the "rest upon the way" provided by the cross.

Mark your calendars for **March 14, 2026**, as Country Church Promotions presents a gospel concert here at the church starting at 2:00 pm. Some of the artists include All4Him (Tim & Sally Acton), Arnold Coy (Lima area), Cameron Spencer (Bloom-Carroll HS), Rick Moore (Lockbourne area), Eddie Ewing (Grove City area),



**CALLING ALL SHOPPERS!** Did you know that Kroger has a Community Rewards Program? They will send monies to St John every time you shop at any of their stores. Instructions for signing up are in a blue folder on the bulletin board in the back of the sanctuary. Please consider enrolling in this easy way to earn money for our church while doing your grocery shopping!



The **Altar Flower** chart is in the Narthex where you may sign up to place flowers on the altar. Flowers are \$35. You may leave the money in the envelope under the chart for Linda Leist. Please be sure to indicate if the flowers are for a special occasion, and let Don Hornbeck know if you would like it posted in the Bulletin.



Please place your food donation for the **Food Pantry** in the shopping cart. Thank you—everything is appreciated.



**Watch Your Email** – Winter is far from over, so please watch your email in case church services are canceled. Sue Mason will also text you with any closure messages.



Please note the change to the website address. It is now [www.stjohnlithopolis.com](http://www.stjohnlithopolis.com). You can use this QR Code to access the site on your mobile phone.



Note that the Universal Church Directory app is having issues and may not be working at this time



**AED Training – TODAY** – immediately following church service: in conjunction with February Heart Health Month, a Bloom Township Fire EMT will come to our church to train members on the AED machine (Automated External Defibrillator). Our device is located on the right side of the wall in the gathering space outside the sanctuary entrance and it could potentially save someone's life during a sudden cardiac arrest. We would like to have at least 6 members stay for this training but the more people who know how to operate this machine, the more help we can provide to someone in distress. Please consider attending.



**Sunday, March 8, 2026**  
Third Sunday in Lent  
ELW Service of the Word

## **GATHERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **PRELUDE**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
who creates us and forms us,  
who redeems us and calls us,  
who unites us and sends us.

**Amen.**

Gathered in God's presence, let us confess our sin.  
Mighty and loving God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**

**We seek our own way. We divide the body of Christ.**

**In your mercy, cleanse us and heal us.**

**Let the words of our mouths,  
the thoughts of our hearts,  
and everything that we do  
be filled with faith, hope, and love.**

**Amen.**

Hear the voice of Jesus:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to proclaim release to the captives." In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, I proclaim to you that your sins are forgiven and you are released.

The joy of the Lord is your strength,  
and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours forever.

**Amen.**

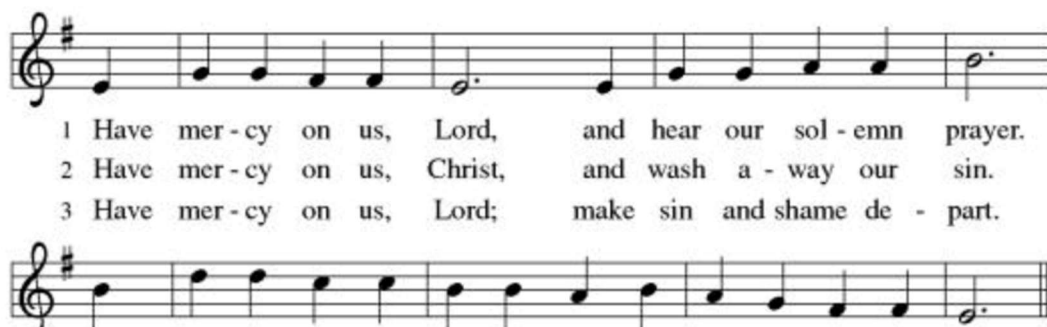
**GATHERING SONG (ELW 329)**  
***As the Sun with Longer Journey***

- 1 As the sun with longer journey  
Melts the winter's snow and ice,  
With its slowly growing radiance  
Warms the seed beneath the earth,  
May the sun of Christ's uprising  
Gently bring our hearts to life.
- 2 Through the days of waiting, watching,  
In the desert of our sin,  
Searching on the far horizon  
For a sign of cloud or wind,  
We await the healing waters  
Of our Savior's victory.
- 3 Praise be given to the maker  
Of the seasons' yearly round:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--  
Source, Sustainer, Lord of life,  
As the ever turning ages  
Roll to their eternal rest.

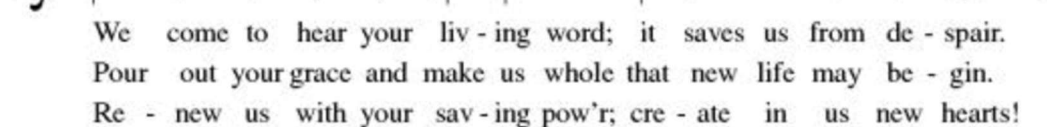
**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## KYRIE



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.  
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.  
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.  
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.  
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together the prayer of the day.

**Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Exodus 17:1-7

*Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question—"Is the LORD among us or not?"—received a very positive answer.*

A reading from Exodus.

<sup>1</sup> From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink."

Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” <sup>5</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. <sup>6</sup> I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM: Psalm 95**

<sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

<sup>2</sup> **Let us come before God’s presence with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.**

<sup>3</sup> For you, LORD, are a great God,  
and a great ruler above all gods.

<sup>4</sup> **In your hand are the caverns of the earth;  
the heights of the hills are also yours.**

<sup>5</sup> The sea is yours, for you made it,  
and your hands have molded the dry land.

<sup>6</sup> **Come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

- <sup>7</sup> For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.  
Oh, that today you would hear God's voice!
- <sup>8</sup> **"Harden not your hearts,  
as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert.**
- <sup>9</sup> There your ancestors tested me,  
they put me to the test, though they had seen my works.
- <sup>10</sup> **Forty years I loathed that generation, saying,  
'The heart of this people goes astray;  
they do not know my ways.'**
- <sup>11</sup> Indeed I swore in my anger,  
'They shall never come to my rest.' "

## **SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-11**

*Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.*

A reading from Romans.

<sup>1</sup> Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

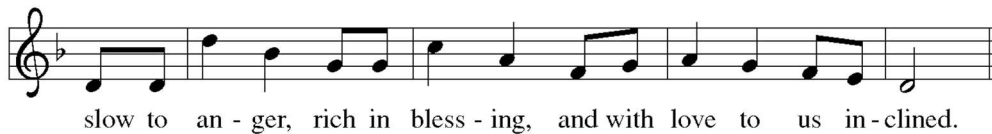
<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die.

<sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup> But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



## GOSPEL: John 4:5-42

*Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.*

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>5</sup> [Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” <sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?” <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” <sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” <sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.” <sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband,’ <sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!” <sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” <sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” <sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” <sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, <sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” <sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to him.

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” <sup>33</sup> So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. <sup>35</sup> Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. <sup>36</sup> The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. <sup>37</sup> For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON: DRINK FROM THE WELL**

**HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW 337)**  
***Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?***

- 1 Alas! And did my Savior bleed, and did my sov'reign die?  
Would he devote that sacred head for sinners such as I?
- 2 Was it for sins that I had done he groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree!
- 3 Well might the sun in darkness hide and shut its glories in  
When God, the mighty maker, died for his own creatures' sin.
- 4 Thus might I hide my blushing face  
While his dear cross appears,  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness, and melt my eyes to tears.
- 5 But tears of grief cannot repay the debt of love I owe;  
Here, Lord, I give myself away: 'tis all that I can do.

**OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH**

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**  
**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**  
**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**Amy:** Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

**Reader 1:** O God, when suffering arises, preserve your church. Give to pastors, deacons, bishops, and all servants of your gospel the endurance that produces character and the hope that will never disappoint. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

**Reader 2:** When the waters run dry, sustain this earth. Send water to places languishing with drought and bring relief to places damaged by floods. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

**Amy:** When quarrels ensue, soften our hearts. Quell hostilities between nations and peoples, and reconcile all humans across the lines of race, class, nationality, moral conviction, religion, and all else that divides or oppresses. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

**Reader 3:** When your people thirst, satisfy their needs. Send water and food to all who need nourishment. Grant welcome to all who are excluded. Show your mercy to any in need. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

**Reader 4:** When we gather to worship, send us your Spirit.  
Renew our hearts through the joyful noise we make and bless the  
work of our church musicians and musical ensembles.  
Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

**Reader 5:** O God, when death draws near, we rejoice in the  
promise of life with you. We remember all who have entered  
eternal rest, and we pray that you bring us the hope of sharing in  
your glory. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

**Amy:** Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ,  
our strength and salvation.  
**Amen.**

## **WE SHARE THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

## **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made  
all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from  
chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your  
wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert  
journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.  
For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love.

For your Word of life, O God,  
**we give you thanks and praise.**

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.  
**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

The God of glory dwell in you richly, name you beloved,  
and shine brightly on your path; and the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, the ✝ Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG (ELW 338) *Beneath the Cross of Jesus***

- 1 Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand;  
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,  
A home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way,  
From the burning of the noontide heat and burdens of the day.
- 2 Upon the cross of Jesus, my eye at times can see  
The very dying form of one who suffered there for me.  
And from my contrite heart, with tears, two wonders I confess:  
The wonder of his glorious love and my unworthiness.
- 3 I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place;  
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;  
Content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,  
My sinful self my only shame, my glory all, the cross.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **CONGREGATION JOINS IN SINGING:**

God be with you 'til we meet again,  
By his counsel's guide, uphold you,  
With his sheep securely fold you,  
God be with you 'til we meet again. Amen.

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