

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 15th, 2026



Divine Service 9am

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 marks our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

If you are visiting today: Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks.

To the parents of our younger children please:

Sit towards the front so the little ones can see and hear all that is going on and quietly explain parts of the service and what pastor, ushers, etc. are doing. Don't sweat the small stuff-God gave your littles the wiggle, noise and energy they have and we don't want to suppress that in God's house! Children are always welcome here! If you feel as if you need to step out of the service with your child, feel free but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

To the members of our church please:

Welcome children and their parents-their presence is a sign our congregation is growing and a gift to us all.

Following along in the bulletin: *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

Presiding Minister
Assisting Minister
Musician

The Rev. Levi Q. Powers
Dan Gulick
Dave Miller

I. GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross † may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the †Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority alone, I forgive you the entirety of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the †Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: LBW 98 – Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

*GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

II. WORD

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

A reading from 1 Samuel.

¹ The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵ He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the SPIRIT of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no
evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall pursue me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

A reading from Ephesians.

⁸ Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***LENTEN ACCLAMATION**

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL READING: John 9:1-41

The holy gospel according to St. John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said,

“How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 448 – Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound**

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 into hell.
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**

Each petition ends: "...God of grace, **receive our prayer.**"

Prayers conclude: "Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior." **Amen.**

***Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.
The assembly is seated.*

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER

OFFERTORY



Scan the QR Code to give electronically. An offering plate is in the back of the sanctuary if you wish to give check or cash. You are welcome to give to the ministry of St. James Lutheran Church freely and spontaneously. There is no guilt or shame. If you do give, give with a cheerful heart.

***OFFERING VERSE: ELW 186 – Create in Me a Clean Heart**



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Together with the bread and the cup we receive the body and the blood of Christ. We invite all baptized Christians to this sacrament. Children and adults who do not yet receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward with arms folded for a blessing. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know. We commune in tables of 10-15 people. The pastor will give you the bread, an assistant will give you a cup. Then two will come to pour into your cup—the first with grape juice, the second with wine. Whoever partakes receives orally the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...**Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding:** ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

***THE WORDS OF GIFT**

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new testament in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

***POST COMMUNION SONG: ELW 497 – Strengthen for Service, Lord**

1 Streng - then for ser - vice, Lord, the hands that ho - ly
2 The tongues that sang your ho - ly name now purge of
3 And may the feet that walked your courts be nev - er
things have ta - ken; and let the ears that heard your
all de - cep - tion; keep bright the eyes that saw your
lured to wan - der; but lead the faith - ful nour - ished
word to false - hood nev - er wak - en.
love and sharp - en their per - cep - tion.
here to jour - ney on in splen - dor.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

IV. SENDING

***BLESSING**

Blessing concludes: **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG: LBW 482 – When I Survey the Wondrous Cross**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Worship Helpers: Joanne Willauer will be coordinating the monthly schedule. Please contact her at 610-393-6317 or jwillauer@rcn.com with your available dates!

Social Ministry Donation:

Links of Love will run through Palm Sunday. Cost is \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. This year's beneficiary is River of Life food pantry.

Food pantry item collection for March: Breakfast and Spice and everything nice! Needed items include: cereal, oatmeal, peanut butter, jelly, granola, muffin mix, honey, maple syrup, spices, seasonings, salad dressings, etc.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Tuesday 3/17:** Church Council meeting 7pm at church
- **Wednesday 3/18:** Lenten Vespers service 7pm; soup supper 6:15pm
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UPCOMING

- **Wednesday Lenten Services**
 - Lenten Vespers 3/18 and 3/25- 6:15pm soup supper and 7pm service. Soup sign up sheet on bulletin board in hallway.
- **Holy Week Services:**
 - **Palm Sunday** – Sunday, March 29 at 9am
 - **Holy Thursday** - Thursday April 2 at 7pm
 - **Good Friday** - Friday, April 3 at 7pm
 - **Easter Sunday** – Sunday, April 5 at 9am

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP

HELPERS(3/1)

Usher/Greeter:

Lector:

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers: Steve Stocker

NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP

HELPERS(3/8)

Usher/Greeter:

Lector:

Altar Guild: Steve Stocker

Tellers:

Let us remember in prayer: The Family & Friends of Helen Mae Nickel, The Family & Friends of Patrick Pursell, The Family & Friends Judy Nicholson, The Family & Friends of Donald Grube, The Family & Friends of Ronald Turchi, The Family & Friends of Harry Gordon, Debbie, Joanne, Jerry, Pat, Kevin, Shirley, Lynn, Keith, Sara, Bob, Patrick, John, Gary, Sharon and those unable to attend church service; Carol, Janet, Janice, Alayne and Elsie.