

***Fifth Sunday in Lent***  
March 22nd, 2026



**Divine Service 9am**

**St. James Lutheran Church**  
1213 US Hwy 22  
Phillipsburg, NJ

908.454.2864

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Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



# Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 marked our 275<sup>th</sup> 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  
Polly Newbold  
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 559 – Oh, For A Thousand Tongues to Sing**

## \*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: Ezekiel 37:1-14**

*A reading from Ezekiel.*

<sup>1</sup> The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, "Child of Adam, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause wind to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

<sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the wind, prophesy, Child of Adam, and say to the wind: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." <sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to me, "Child of Adam, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' <sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup> I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

*The word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM: Psalm 130**

<sup>1</sup> Out of the depths

I cry to you, O Lord;

<sup>2</sup> **O Lord, hear my voice!**

**Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.**

<sup>3</sup> If you were to keep watch over sins,

O Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup> **Yet with you is forgiveness,**

**in order that you may be feared.**

<sup>5</sup> I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits;

in your word is my hope.

<sup>6</sup> **My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch for the morning,**

**more than those who keep watch for the morning.**

<sup>7</sup> O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is steadfast love;

with the Lord there is plenteous redemption.

<sup>8</sup> **For the Lord shall redeem Israel**

**from all their sins.**

## **SECOND READING: Romans 8:6-11**

*A reading from Romans.*

<sup>6</sup> To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup> For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, <sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup> But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in 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 11:1-45**

*The holy gospel according to St. John.*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather, it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup> Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup> after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

<sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup> The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble because they see the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them." <sup>11</sup> After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." <sup>12</sup> The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." <sup>13</sup> Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. <sup>14</sup> Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup> For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup> Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, <sup>19</sup> and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. <sup>21</sup> Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." <sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." <sup>24</sup> Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, <sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" <sup>27</sup> She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

<sup>28</sup> When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." <sup>29</sup> And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. <sup>32</sup> When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup> He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup> Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup> So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" <sup>37</sup> But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

<sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" <sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him,

and let him go.”

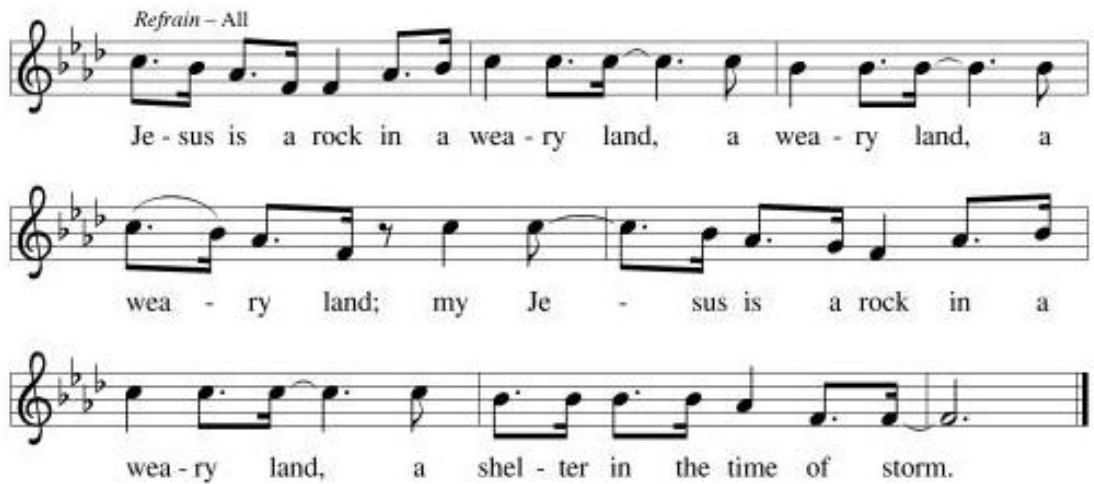
<sup>45</sup> Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him.

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

## SERMON


### \*HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 333 – Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land

*Refrain – All*



Je - sus is a rock in a wea - ry land, a wea - ry land, a  
wea - ry land; my Je - sus is a rock in a  
wea - ry land, a shel - ter in the time of storm.

*Leader or All*



1 No one can do like Je - sus, not a  
2 When Je - sus was on earth, . . . . . the . .  
3 Yon - der comes my Sav - ior, him . .

mum-bling word he said;                      he went walk - ing down to Laz-  
 flesh was ver - y weak;                      . . he took a towel and gird-  
 whom I love so well;                      . . he has the palm of vic -

*Refrain*

- a - rus' grave, and he raised him from the dead.  
 ed him - self and he washed his dis - ci - ples' feet.  
 - to - ry and the keys of death and hell.

## **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: "...Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great."

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.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn, consisting of four staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has two measures: 'The Lord be with you.' and 'And al - so with you.'. The second staff also has two measures: 'Lift up your hearts.' and 'We lift them to the Lord.'. The third staff has one long measure: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.'. The fourth staff has one long measure: 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'. The notes are mostly quarter notes and half notes, with some beamed eighth notes. There are bar lines and repeat signs at the end of each staff.

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.

## \*THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

## \*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

### COMMUNION

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and each person may respond*

Amen.

## LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

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: ELW 591 – That Priceless Grace**



1 That price-less grace, that price-less grace, that price-less  
2 That price-less blood, that price-less blood, that price-less  
3 That pain-ful death, that pain-ful death, that pain-ful  
4 That pre-cious word, that pre-cious word, that pre-cious



grace, which gave me life: Je - sus' life is price-less grace.  
blood was shed for me: Je - sus' blood is price-less grace.  
death took sins a - way: Je - sus' death is price-less grace.  
word, which brought me light: Je - sus' word is price-less grace.



That price - less grace is life for me.

**\*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](mailto: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**

- **Wednesday 3/25:** Fellowship at Sharky's 4pm-6pm
- **Wednesday 3/25:** Lenten Vespers service 7pm; soup supper 6:15pm

## **UPCOMING**

- **Wednesday Lenten Services**
  - Lenten Vespers: 3/25- 6:15pm soup supper and 7pm service. Soup sign up sheet on bulletin board in hallway.
- **Thursday, 3/26:** **No** Bible Study with Pastor Levi this day
- **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(3/22)**

**Usher/Greeter: Bob Agans**  
**Lector: Jamie McRoberts**  
**Altar Guild: Steve Stocker**  
**Tellers: Steve Stocker**

### **NEXT SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HELPERS(3/29)**

**Usher/Greeter: Harvey Walters**  
**Lector: Joanne Willauer**  
**Altar Guild: Steve Stocker**  
**Tellers: Steve Stocker**

Let us remember in prayer:

The Family & Friends of Barbara Lawrence, 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; Janet, Janice, Alayne and Elsie.