

Second Sunday in Lent

March 1st, 2026



Divine Service 9am

St. James Lutheran Church

1213 US Hwy 22

Phillipsburg, NJ

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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 377 - Lift High the Cross

*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: Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from Genesis.

¹ The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a} So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 121

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?

² **My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

³ The Lord will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

⁴ **Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

⁵ the Lord watches over you;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;

⁶ **the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

⁷ The Lord will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.

⁸ **The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore.**

SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans.

¹ What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵ But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³ For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

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 3:1-17

The holy gospel according to St. John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." ³ Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 448 - This Is the Spirit's Entry Now**

1 This is the Spir - it's en - try now: the wa - ter and the word,
 2 This mir - a - cle of life re - born comes from the Lord of breath;
 3 Let wa - ter be the sa - cred sign that we must die each day
 4 Re - new - ing Spir - it, hear our praise for your bap - tis - mal pow'r

the cross of Je - sus on your brow, the seal both felt and heard.
 the sin - less one from life was torn; our life comes through his death.
 to rise a - gain by his de - sign as fol - l'wers of his way.
 that wash - es us through all our days. Come, cleanse a - gain this hour.

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.**

Installation of New Council Members

The following people have been elected by the congregation to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that they will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

Bob Agans, **president**
Erin Church, **secretary**
Olivia Iglesias, **council member**

Address and Questions

A reading from First Corinthians: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

A reading from Mark: Jesus said, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:42-45)

You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation.

You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church.

You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world.

You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified.

You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your siblings in Christ, I ask you:
Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

Response (all together): I will, and I ask God to help me.

People of God, I ask you:

Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all the baptized?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

I now declare you installed as council president, council secretary, and council member of this congregation. Almighty God +blesses you, and directs your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

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.**

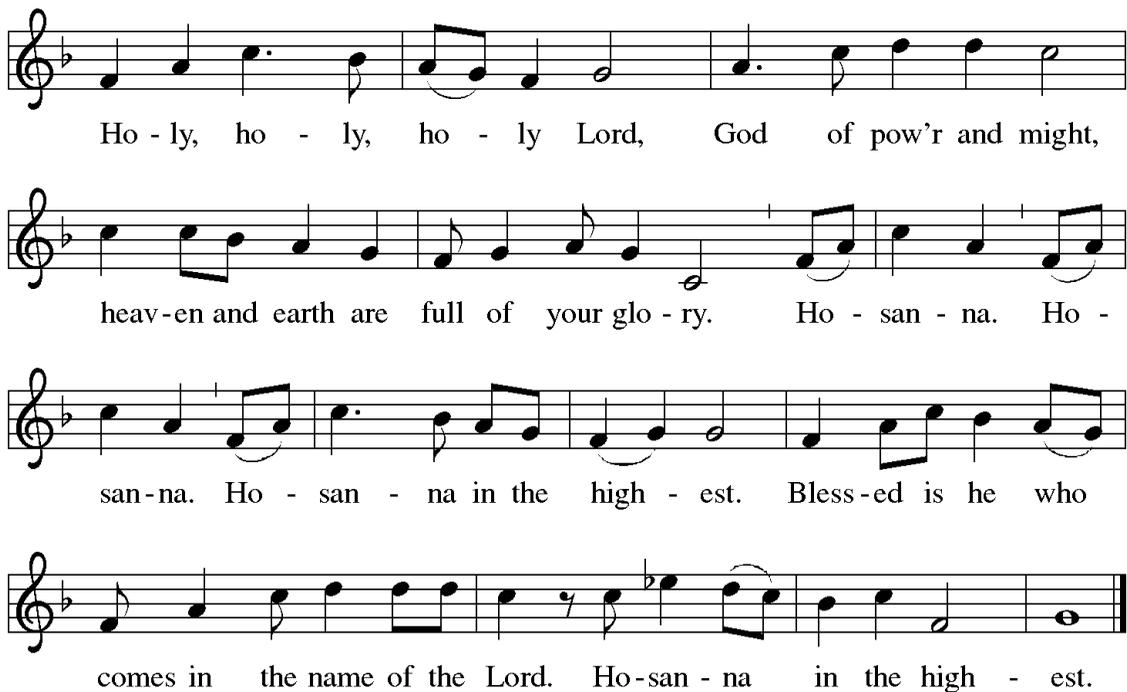
***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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 image displays four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics are: "The Lord be with you. And al - so with you."
- Staff 2: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics are: "Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord."
- Staff 3: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics are: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."
- Staff 4: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics are: "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.

*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

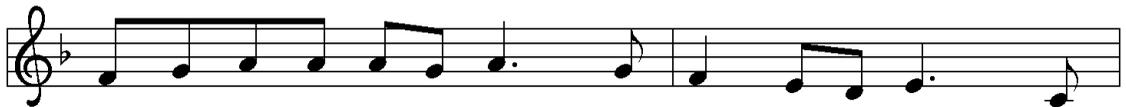
The body of Christ, given for you.

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: LBW 479 - My Faith Looks Up to Thee**

***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 jdwillauer@rcn.com with your available dates!

Social Ministry Donation:

Links of Love sale starts this Sunday 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.

The following charities will be receiving these donations determined by voting at the Annual Congregational meeting:

- Vets: \$550
- Habitat for Humanity: \$300
- DASACC: \$400
- River of Life \$600
- Cross Roads: \$100
- Family Promise: \$150

If you would like to join us in the meal packing program called Feed My Starving Children. Volunteers are needed on Saturday, March 7th from 2:30pm-4:30pm at Zion Lutheran Church in Oldwick. Let Pastor know by Sunday, March 1 if you would like to join.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Wednesday 3/4:** Lenten Vespers service 7pm; soup supper 6:15pm

UPCOMING

- **Wednesday Lenten Services**
 - Lenten Vespers 3/11, 3/18 and 3/25- 6:15pm soup supper and 7pm service. Soup sign up sheet on bulletin board in hallway.
 -
- **Tuesday 3/10:** Property Committee and Social Ministry meetings 10am at the church.

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, The Family & Friends of Faith Frenzel, Kevin, Shirley, Lynn, Keith, Sara, Bob, Patrick, John, Gary, Sharon and those unable to attend church service; Carol, Janet, Janice, Alayne and Elsie.