

Welcome to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lancaster



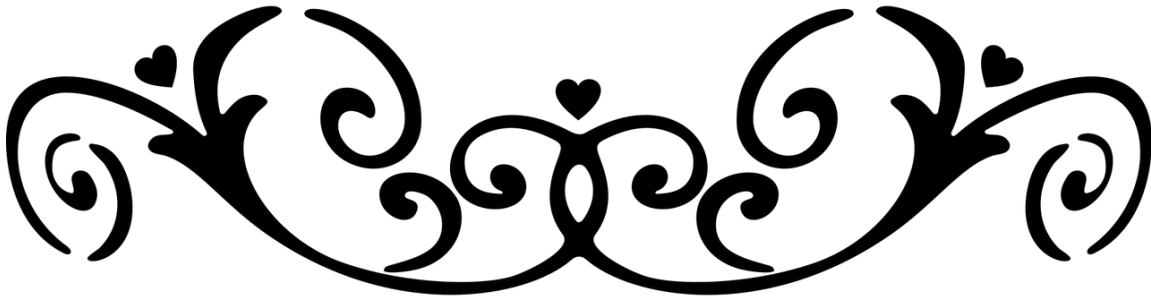
Sunday Worship

Rev. Jamie Retallack

716-848-9683

7th Sunday after Epiphany
February 23, 2025

The Prelude
The Greetings



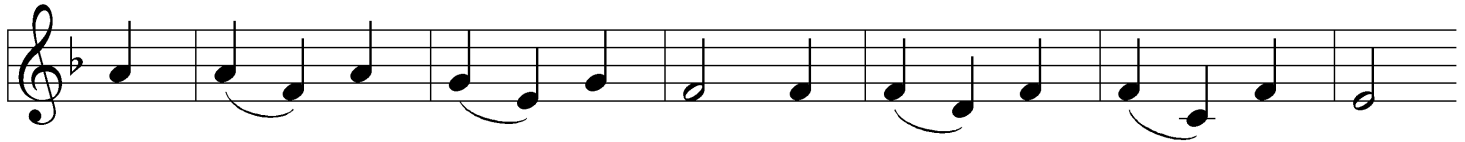
Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our creator,
our protector, our wellspring of life. **Amen.**

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts,
let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful God, you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In + Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

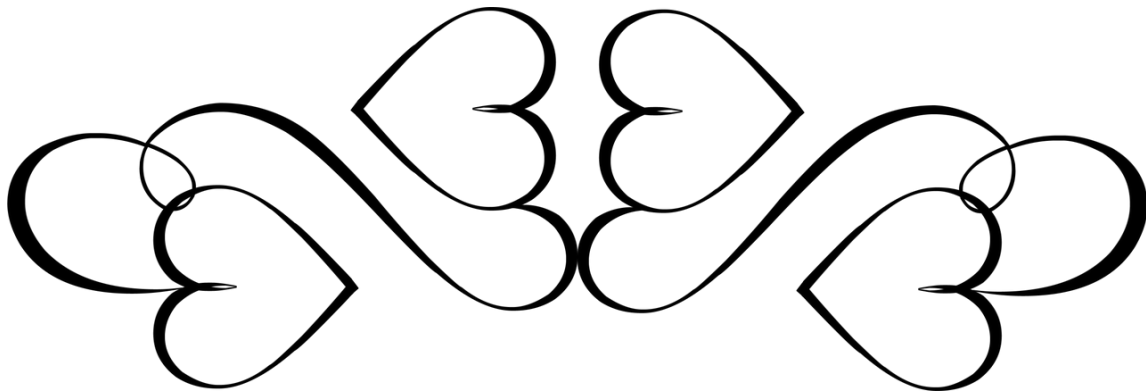
1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;
 2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
 3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
 4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;



the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
 and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
 and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.

Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1774–1836, adapt. Reprinted with permission under One License #A-740145. All rights reserved.



The Prayer of the Day

Let us pray..O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The First Reading
Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

Read responsively

Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,

**for they will soon fade like the grass,
and wither like the green herb.**

Trust in the Lord, and do good;
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.

**Take delight in the Lord,
who will give you the desires of your heart.**

Commit your way to the Lord;
put your trust in the Lord,
and see what God will do.

**The Lord will make your vindication shine like the light,
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.**

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.

**Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.
Do not fret—it leads only to evil.**

For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

**Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look diligently for their place,
they will not be there.**

But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

**The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord;
their refuge in the time of trouble.**

The Lord helps them and rescues them;
rescues them from the wicked, and saves them,
because they take refuge in the Lord.



Second Reading
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Gospel Reading
Luke 6:27-38
Glory to you, O Lord

[Jesus said] “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ



The Sermon
Rev. Jamie Retallack

Build a Longer Table

1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
 2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
 3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
 4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
 where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
 Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
 Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
 For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
 When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
 So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



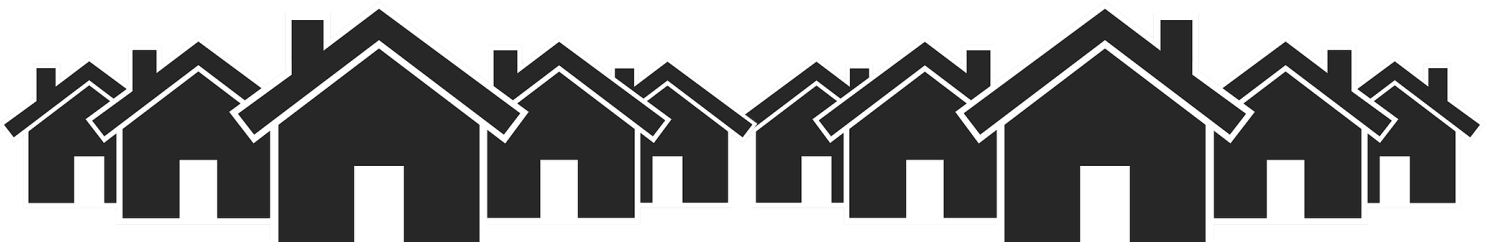
Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
 Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
 Christ tears down our fenc - es: all are wel - come here.
 None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

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Baptism of Paisley May Brunka



God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

Sponsors present the candidate:

I present Paisley May Brunka for baptism.

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your child baptized into Christ?

Parents: We do.

As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with them among God's faithful people, bring them to the word of God and the holy supper, teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in their hands the holy scriptures, and nurture them in faith and prayer, so that they may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. Do you promise to help your child grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents: We do.

Sponsors, do you promise to nurture *Paisley* in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help this child live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: We do.

People of God, do you promise to support *Paisley* and pray for this child in their new life in Christ?

Congregation: We do.

Affirmation of Faith

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church:

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God? **Congregation: We renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.

Congregation may be seated.



Paisley May, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain *Paisley* with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen.

Paisley May, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Amen.

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Let us welcome the newly baptized:

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

The Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

The Offertory Music

The Offertory Hymn



- 1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.
- 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.
- 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.



We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, b. 1957

Music: BARBARA ALLEN, English folk tune
Text © 1990 Augsburg Fortress

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The Offertory Prayer

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. **Amen.**

The Prayers of the Church

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Surprising God, you call us to love our enemies and to show kindness in the face of cruelty. Let our actions be a shining witness of your overwhelming grace for all. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

As animals hibernate and fields lay dormant, let them be a reminder that life and faith are not static but always changing and growing. May we, with all creation, trust that the ending of one thing promises life in a new way. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for leaders and policymakers who work to reduce violence in our nations, cities, and towns. Give your wisdom and discernment amid heated arguments and differing viewpoints. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the victims of abuse and violence. Provide safe shelter and new beginnings to those experiencing domestic violence and dangerous situations. Enfold with love all who seek your healing care (especially Edna Mann, Tom & Ruth Morse, Jackie Wolfram, Bruce Jacobs, Dave, Jay, Heather, Denise Krueger, Lee Babirad, Sara Hermsmeyer, Eoin Mast, Arno Konstabel, Susan Wilson, Lisa J, Donna, Carol A, Dee, Linda Dean, Andrea, Cindy, Joshua, Scott, Pastor Tim, Michael, Pat, and Kevin). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Empower our faith communities to be signs of your gracious love. Bless the local ministries of parish nursing and caregiving, that they will be a voice for those in need in our communities (other ministries may be named). God of grace, hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the enduring witness of those who have died before us (especially Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna). May their lives in you provide a witness of your everlasting grace. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

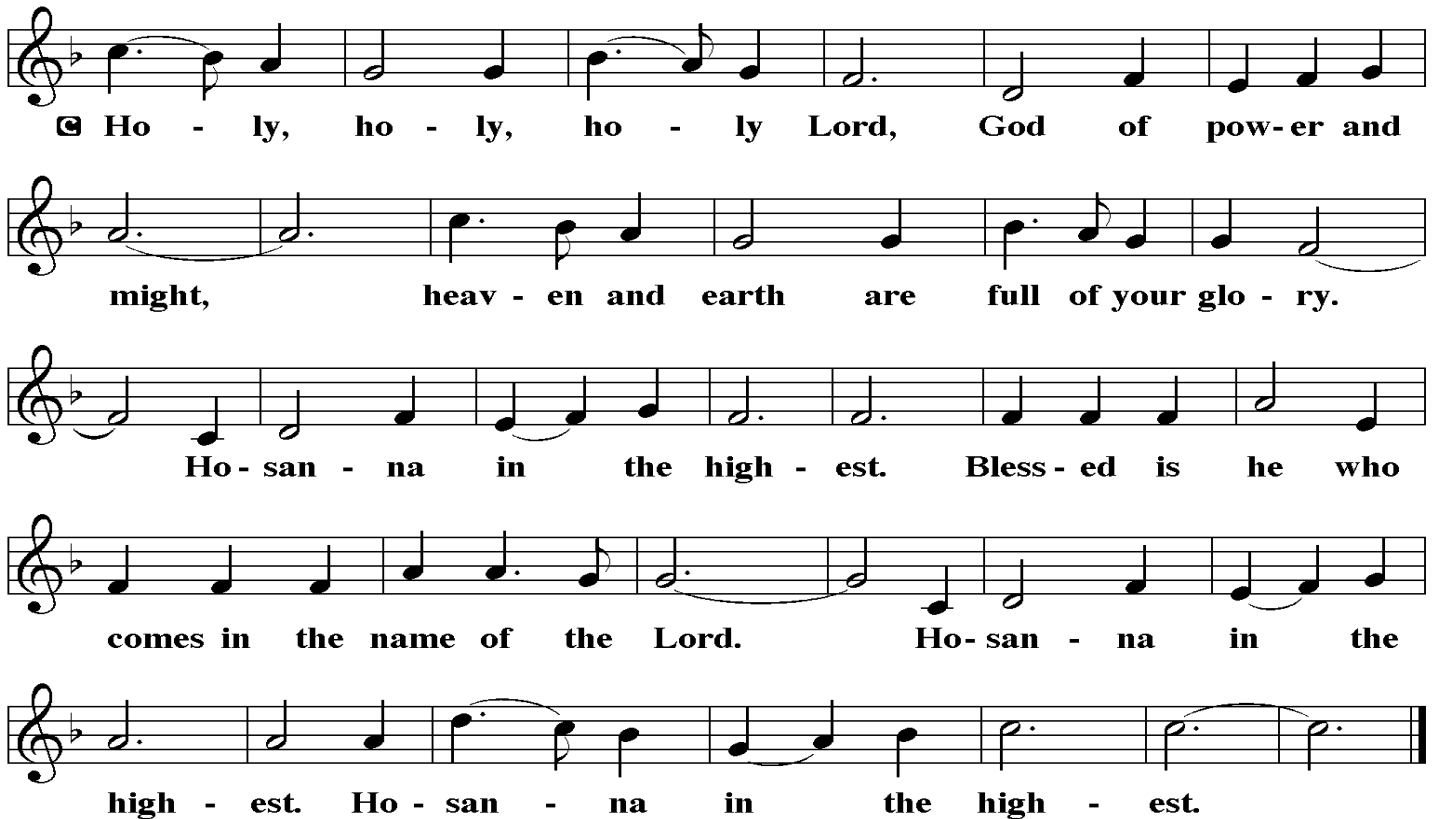
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Preface

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took the bread, and after giving thanks He 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 covenant in my blood, poured out for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Invitation

The Lamb of God



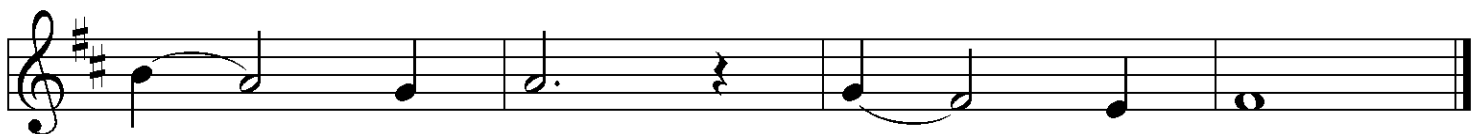
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



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, grant us peace.

Communion Music
LBW 212, WOV 709

The Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

The 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.**

The Sending Prayer

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, **Amen.**

The Benediction

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling



1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
 3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for



you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
 you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain



watch - ing for you and for me.
 mer - cies for you and for me? "Come home, come home!
 par - don for you and for me.



You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,



Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909
 Music: THOMPSON, Will L. Thompson



The Sending
 Go in peace. Live in hope.
Thanks be to God.

The People of St. John's Welcome You for Worship Today!

Follow us on Facebook [@stjohnslancaster](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnslancaster)

If you would like a **pastoral visit** for any reason, please call the office or call Pastor directly on his cell @ (716) 848-9683.

This Week at a Glance

Sunday	2/23	9am	Bible Study
Sunday	2/23	9:30am	Joysingers
Sunday	2/23	10:00am	Worship/Baptism Sunday School
Sunday	2/23	11am	Confirmation Class
Monday	2/24	4:00pm	Guiding Eyes
Monday	2/24	7:30pm	Queen City Chordsmen
Tuesday	2/25	9:30am	Quilters
Tuesday	2/25	7pm	NA Meeting
Thursday	2/27	1pm	Bible Study
Thursday	2/27	6:30pm	Handbell Practice
Thursday	2/27	7:30pm	Choir Practice
Saturday	2/29	5:30pm	Worship
Saturday	2/29		YOUTH: Lasertron
Sunday	3/2	9:00am	Bible Study
Sunday	3/2	9:30am	Joysingers
Sunday	3/2	10:00am	Sunday School Worship

QR Code for Offering

Using your camera app you can scan the QR code to go to **St. John's donation page** where you can make a one-time or recurring **offering!** Thank you for giving!



Offering: 2/16/2025:\$2141.25

Grape juice & gluten free wafers are available for **Communion**

We pray for: Edna Mann, Tom & Ruth Morse, Jackie Wolfram, Bruce Jacobs, Dave, Jay, Heather, Denise Krueger, Lee Babirad, Sara Hermsmeyer, Eoin Mast, Arno Konstabel, Susan Wilson, Lisa J, Donna, Carol A, Dee, Linda Dean, Andrea, Cindy, Joshua, Scott, Pastor Tim, Michael, Pat, and Kevin.

YOUTH

LUTHERAN YOUTH EVENT: Lasertron Lock-in. Feb 28-Mar1: Event begins at St Paul's Lutheran Church, 4007 Main St, Eggertsville, then moves to Lasertron, 5101 N Bailey Ave, Buffalo. Transportation provided if needed. Contact Kelly S for details.

St John's Elma & Lancaster Women's Lunch is Wed, March 12 @ noon @ Olive Tree. Sign up or call Bev Hess @ 716-868-5096 by Sun, March 9.

St Patty's Meal sponsored by LYMA is March 16th from 11am until sold out. The meal of corned beef, cabbage, veggies, and bread & butter is \$5. There are only 100 meals, and you must purchase a ticket. The meal is take-out only. Contact Gary Rudz for tickets 716-829-9618.



Altar Flower Dates Available:

3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23, 3/30 - \$30 for two bouquets

Collecting Dash's Register Receipts: Save your Dash's receipts and deposit them in the boxes in the Sanctuary or the Chapel to benefit Niagara Lutheran Health Services. Thank you!

Ushers

Linda Costa
Kathy Burr

Deacon

Paul
Rudz

Altar Guild

Kathy
Snyder

GOT SNEAKERS??? Guiding Eyes for the Blind is having a sneaker drive with a sneaker recycling organization called GotSneakers. If you would like to help, please bring in your used/old sneakers and deposit them in the receptacle in the Fellowship Hall marked GotSneakers? Thank you!

Confirmation Classes February 9 & 23





ST. PATTY'S DAY DINNER

**@ St. John's Lancaster: 55 Pleasant Ave.
Corned Beef/Cabbage/Vegetables/Bread & Butter**

Sunday, March 16th @ 11am

\$5 Dinner Reserve - Takeout Only

**Must Have Ticket! Limited to 100 Tickets
Sales end March 15th or Sold Out**

Contact: Gary Rudz — 716-829-9618



MISSION STATEMENT

*St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church provides
an inviting environment for spreading God's Word
through worship, teaching, and fellowship to address
the spiritual needs of our congregation and community.
Open - Inviting - Alive in Christ!*

Pastor Rev. Jamie Retallack (716-848-9683)

Pastors Emeriti -Rev. John Swanson -Rev. John Scarafia

Vicar Teresa J. O'Connor

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Congregation Council

Janet Sincebaugh (President)

Carol Graham (Vice-President)

Karen McClintock (Secretary)

Kathryn Snyder (Treasurer)

Pauline Bauer

Jeff Miller

Sam Gierlinger

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RaeAnn Jakubowski

Paul Rudz

Jamie Kloc

Kelly Sieracki

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