

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



Sunday Worship

Rev. Jamie Retallack

716-848-9683

Fourth Sunday in Lent
Sunday, March 15, 2026

The Prelude
The Greetings



Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign,

and for hindering the work of the Spirit:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,

and for disdaining the living water Christ offers:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin,

and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:

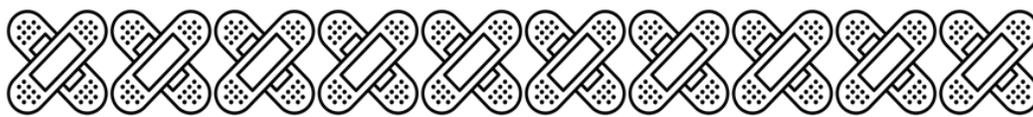
Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,

and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:

Gracious God, **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace. **Amen.**



Opening Hymn

WOV 737

There Is a Balm in Gilead

Refrain



There is a balm in Gil-e - ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-e - ad to heal the sin-sick soul.



1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can-not pray like Paul,
3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

Refrain



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
and if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BALM IN GILEAD, African American spiritual

The Prayer of the Day

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



The First Reading

1 Samuel 16:1-13

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.” 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.’ 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.” 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?” 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.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely his anointed is now before the Lord.” 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.”

Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” 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.” 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.” 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.

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



Psalm 23
(Read Responsively)

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

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

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

**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.**

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

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



The Second Reading
Ephesians 5:8-14

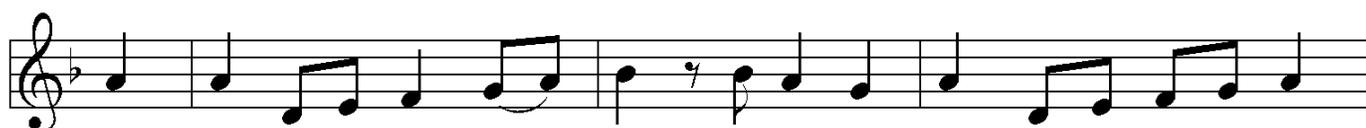
Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. For it is shameful even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

“Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

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



Lenten Gospel 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.

The Gospel Reading
John 9:1-41

Glory to you, O God.

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 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, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 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?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” 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.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

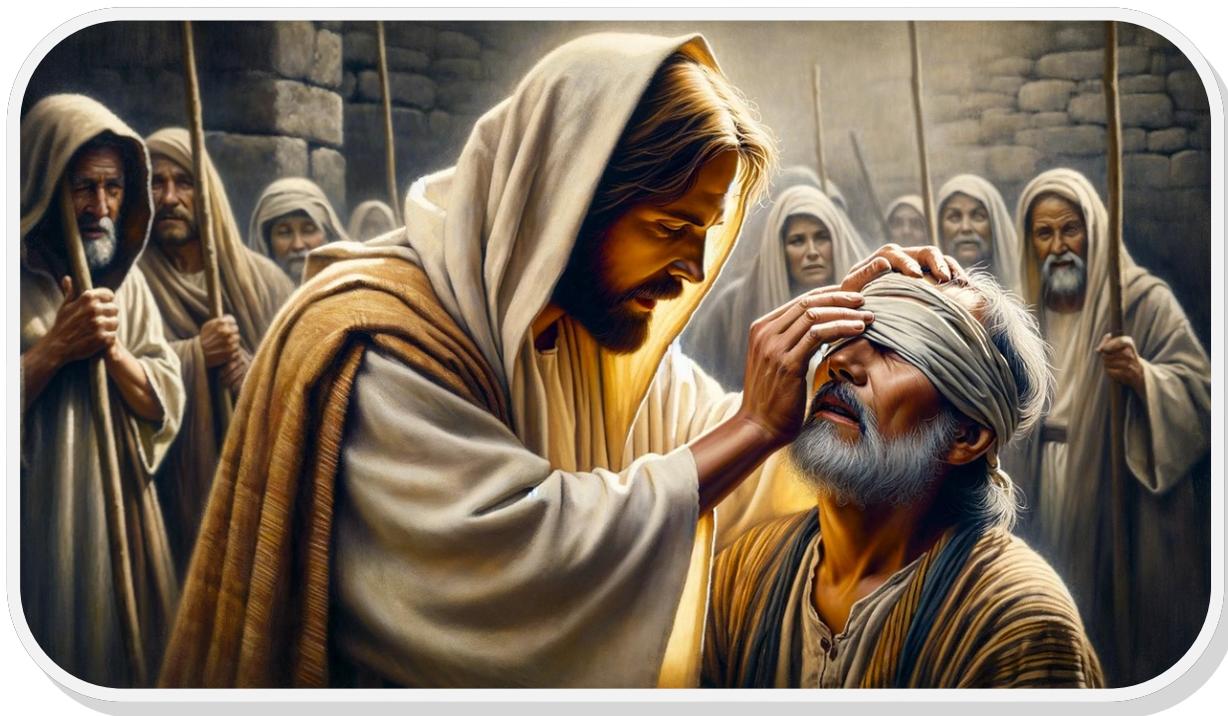
They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees 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. 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.”

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 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, 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." 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. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

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." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 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?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

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

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



The Sermon
Pastor Jamie Retallack

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807

Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

The Blessing of the Prayer Shawls



Prayers of Intercession

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

God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the church. Lead Christians in our community (here local congregations may be named) and across the globe (here international companion churches and synods may be named) in right paths for your name's sake. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our provider, we cry out for this planet and the life it holds. Rescue endangered animals and plants, preserve threatened ecosystems, and save creatures from natural disasters. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on earth. Bring an end to war and violence, and raise up leaders in governments, courts, businesses, schools, and community organizations who seek goodness and mercy. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our healer, we call to you in our need. Uplift all who are made to feel unimportant, and transform the hearts of all infected by bigotry and prejudice. Care for all in special need this day (especially Edna Mann, Tom Morse, Jackie Wolfram, Dave, Sara Hermsmeyer, Eoin Mast, Arden Kruger, Jillian Graap, Anna Hart, Kelly R., Bryce, Mary Anne, Paul Rudz, Rob Webster, Jake, Gloria Richards, Ian Nowicki, Pat Spanitz, Jenny Gozdzia, Pastor Erik Hart, Donna Parr, Alice, Sandy Wiess, Tom Lafferty, Eugene, Drue, Darrion, Rob & Lauren, Joe & Shelly, Susan Loniewski, the Carpenter Family, and the family and friends of Shirley Hellenbach). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our friend, we praise you for the diversity of people among us. Awaken us to share and receive the gifts we each possess, and stir up a spirit of understanding, celebration, and welcome for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our home, we thank you for all who have died and completed their baptismal journeys. Grant us faith to live until we too dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

The Prayers of the Church

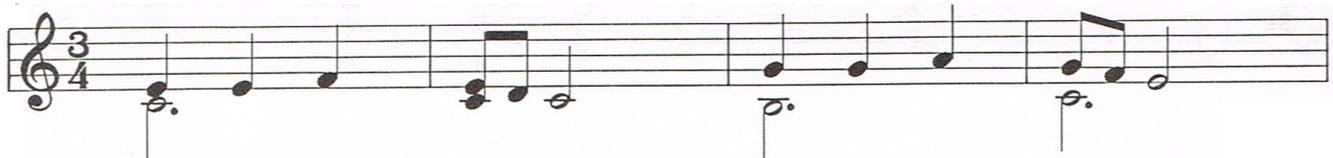
Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

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

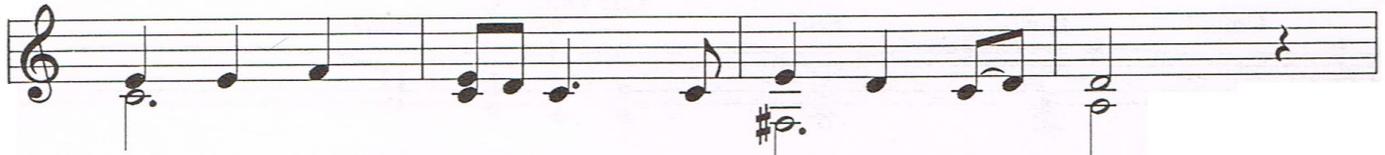
The Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

The Offertory Hymn



1. Meek - ness and maj - es - ty, man - hood and De - i - ty,
 2. Fa - ther's pure ra - di - ance, per - fect in in - no - cence;
 3. Wis - dom un - search - a - ble, God, the in - vis - i - ble;



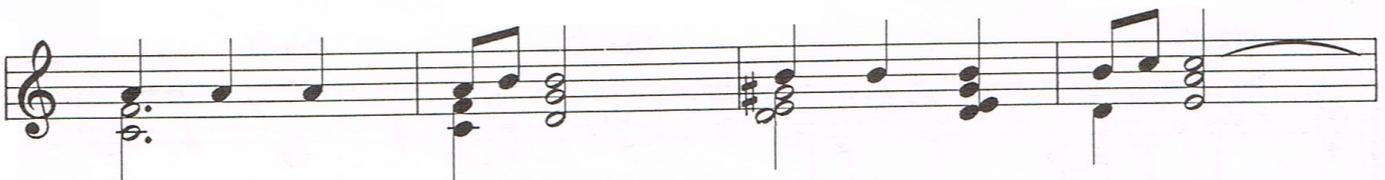
in per - fect har - mo - ny, the Man who is — God.
 Yet learns o - be - di - ence to death on a — cross.
 Love in - de - struct - i - ble in frail - ty ap - pears.



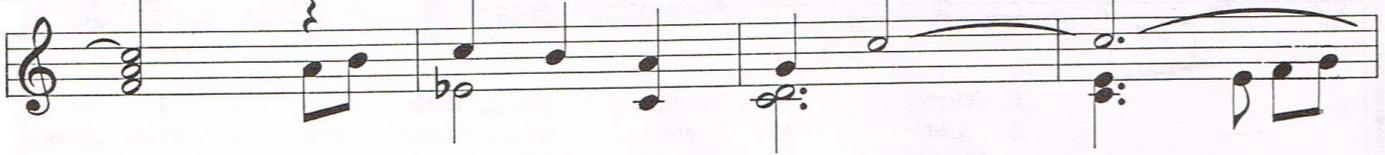
Lord of e - ter - ni - ty, dwells in hu - man - i - ty;
 Suf - f'ring to give us life, con - quering through sac - ri - fice;
 Lord of in - fin - i - ty, stoop - ing so ten - der - ly;



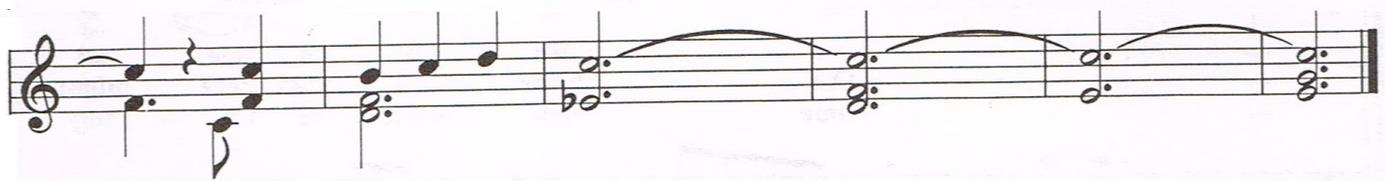
Kneels in hu - mil - i - ty — and — wash - es our feet.
 And as they cru - ci - fy — prays, — "Fa - ther, for - give."
 Lifts our hu - man - i - ty — to the heights of His throne.



O what a mys - ter - y, meek - ness and maj - es - ty;



Bow down and wor - ship,



for this is your God.

The Offertory Prayer

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. 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.

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

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The Benediction

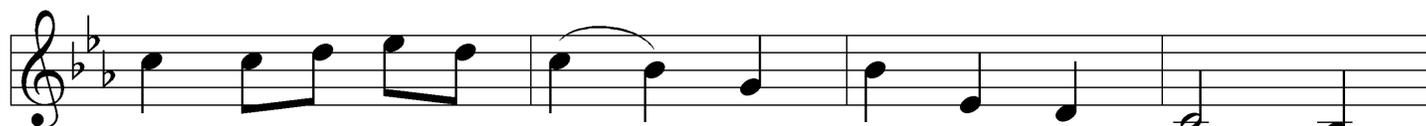
Be Thou My Vision



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high tow'r,
 thou, and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish 8th–10th cent.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.
 Music: SLANE, Irish tune

The Sending

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

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

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

Office Hours:

St John's Lancaster M, W, Th 10am-3pm.

St John's Elma Tuesdays 10am-3pm.

Offering

3/8/2026

\$ 2159.00

Quarterly Statements available upon request.

If you would like to receive quarterly statements by mail, please let the office know.

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!



B*I*N*G*O NIGHT

We had so much fun playing Bingo that we're doing it again! Join us on Wednesday, March 18th in the Fellowship Hall (Lancaster) for fun, fellowship and goofy prizes! Doors open at 630pm - bingo starts at 7:00pm. Bingo chips, drinks and snacks will be available for anyone who doesn't bring their own!

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

Altar Flower Arrangements:
as of **January 1, 2026**, flower arrangements are \$40 (for 2).

Available Flower Dates: Mar 29; Apr 5, 12, 19, 26

Altar Guild: Kathy Snyder
Deacon: RaeAnn Jakubowski
Ushers: Rich Rice & Janet Sincebaugh

We lift up: Edna Mann, Tom Morse, Jackie Wolfram, Dave, Sara Hermsmeyer, Eoin Mast, Arden Kruger, Jillian Graap, Anna Hart, Kelly R., Bryce, Mary Anne, Paul Rudz, Rob Webster, Jake, Gloria Richards, Ian Nowicki, Pat Spanitz, Jenny Gozdziaak, Pastor Erik Hart, Donna Parr, Alice, Sandy Wiess, Tom Lafferty, Eugene, Drue, Darrion, Rob & Lauren, Joe & Shelly, Susan Loniewski, the Carpenter Family, and the family and friends of Shirley Hellenbach.

New Choir Practice Time

Choir will now practice on Sundays 11:05-11:20am.
All are welcome to join!

BOOK CLUB: Please join us at the Conference Table downstairs in the Chapel Hall at St. John's Lancaster (using the ramp entrance) on Wednesday, March 25th @ 2:30 PM to discuss the inspiring true story, **THE BOYS IN THE BOAT**, by Daniel James Brown.

The flowers on the altar today are in memory of our 51st wedding anniversary - Judy and Robert Reynolds.

YOUTH EVENTS

March 22, 10:00 – 11:00am	Fill Easter eggs for Easter egg hunt. Discuss plans for Palm Sunday breakfast and Easter egg hunt that follows service.
March 29, 8:00 – 9:30am	Serve breakfast to congregation, family and public. -----
11:00am – 12:00pm	Assist with Easter egg hunt.

The Women's Lunch Group will meet at 11:30am on Wed, April 8 at **St John's Lancaster**. Pizza and salad will be served and there will be a free will offering. The reason for the **change in venue** is to reflect on past luncheon meetings and plan for the future. Please bring your comments and ideas for discussion. Sign up by April 5. Hope to see you there!

Poppi's Pantry is extremely grateful for all donations. If you are looking for donation ideas, **the pantry is in dire need of ready-to-eat soups**. You may also consider: cereal/oatmeal, canned meats (chicken, spam), canned meals (Hash, stew), pasta sauce (including Alfredo) and single serving pudding and/or gelatin cups (including sugar free), Thank you!

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

One Call Now: One Call Now is the automated phone service we use to make "robo calls" to the congregation with closings, updates, event information and general reminders. If you are not receiving calls but would like to, please leave a note, send an email, or call the office with the best phone number we can use to reach you. Thank you.

LENTEN/EASTER SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY ~ MARCH 29TH

Pancake Breakfast @ 8am-10am

Worship @10am

Easter Egg Hunt @ 11am

MAUNDY THURS ~ APRIL 2ND

Worship @ 7pm @ St. John's Elma
2131 Woodard Rd, Elma NY 14059

GOOD FRIDAY ~ APRIL 3RD

Worship @ 7pm @ St. John's Lancaster

EASTER VIGIL ~ SAT APRIL 4TH

Worship @ 5:30pm @ Lancaster

RESURRECTION SUNDAY ~ APRIL 5TH

Worship @ 8:45am @ Elma

Worship @ 10am @ Lancaster

FASTNACHT SUNDAY ~ APRIL 12TH

Fastnachts @ 8am

This Week at-a-Glance

Sunday, March 8, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Bible Study	9:00am	Memorial Lounge
Joysingers	9:30am	
In Person/ Online Service	10:00am	Sanctuary
Sunday School	10:00am	
Youth: Cinnamon Bun Fundraiser	10:00am - 12:00pm	
Worship & Music Committee	11:00am	
Choir Practice	11:05am - 11:20am	Choir Room - Off of the Chapel Downstairs
Confirmation Class	11:15am	
Property & Grounds	11:30am	

Monday, March 9, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Church Office Hours	10:00am - 3:00pm	Church Office
Guiding Eyes	5:00pm - 7:30pm	Fellowship Hall
Chordsmen	7:30pm	Chapel

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Quilters	9:30am	Fellowship Hall
NA Meeting	7:00pm	Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Church Office Hours	10:00am - 3:00pm	Church Office
Women's Lunch	11:30am	Olive Tree
Lancaster Garden Club	7:00pm	Fellowship Hall
LYMA Mtg.	7:00pm	

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Church Office Hours	10:00am - 3:00pm	Church Office
Bible Study	1:00pm	Chapel - Conference Area
Mtg. Pastor	5:30pm	
Handbell Practice	6:30pm	Balcony

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Guiding Eyes	1:00pm - 2:00pm	Fellowship Hall
In Person Service	5:30pm	Chapel

Sunday, March 15, 2026

Event	Time	Location
Good News Articles Due		
Bible Study	9:00am	Memorial Lounge
Joysingers	9:30am	
In Person/ Online Service	10:00am	Sanctuary
Sunday School	10:00am	
Coffee Hour	11:00am	Memorial Lounge
St Patty's Day Meal - LYMA	11:00am - 12:00pm	Fellowship Hall
Choir Practice	11:05am - 11:20am	Choir Room - Off of the Chapel Downstairs

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
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
55 Pleasant Avenue, Lancaster, NY 14086
Office 683-8972 (Mon-Wed-Thurs 10am-3pm)
www.stjohnslanc.org
stjohnslancaster55@gmail.com

Congregation Council

Janet Sincebaugh (President)
Carol Graham (Vice-President)
Karen McClintock (Secretary)
Kathryn Snyder (Treasurer)

Pauline Bauer	Jeff Miller
Tom Frost	Rich Rice
Sam Gierlinger	Paul Rudz
RaeAnn Jakubowski	Kelly Sieracki
Marjorie Kruger	

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