

Welcome to Worship

at

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
reconciling in Christ congregation



Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 30, 2025

10:30 am

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Mike Button

Director of Music: Jessica Madow

330 Ferry Street; Easton, PA 18042-4500

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Statement of Welcome

*There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female;
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. — Galatians 3:28*

As a community of God striving to be open to all people, we at St. John's Lutheran Congregation believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We welcome all to join us as we struggle to better understand the mysteries of God's teachings. We are challenged by Christ to care for, to love, to understand, and to listen to each other, regardless of race, age, gender, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual/affectional orientation, national origin, or economic status. We celebrate together our unity as God's people.

St. John's Lutheran Congregation is a place for each person to shine in their own unique gifts.

Statement of Mission

St. John's Lutheran Church is a downtown, community-oriented, congregation of Christians. We worship God, strive to welcome, and wholly accept everyone, and reach out with and in God's love.

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Communion is a time we invite all baptized Christians who believe that our Lord Jesus is truly present in the bread and wine of the Sacrament. If this is your belief, there are instructions to follow at the time of Communion later in the bulletin.

Service Notes:

- (asterisk) indicates, please stand as you are able.
- Page # indicates the front of the hymnal is used . . .
- Hymn # indicates the back of the Hymnal is used . . .

Hymn Book Abbreviations:

ELW – Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book
WOV – With One Voice
ACS – All Creation Sings

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Welcome

Prelude

“Amazing Grace”

Amelia Fink & Jessica Madow, pianists

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires 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.

C: Amen.

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

. . . Most merciful God,

C: 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

P: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

***Gathering Hymn**

ELW # 807 *“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”*

***Greeting**

- page 138

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

C: And also with you.

***Kyrie**

- page 138

***Prayer of the Day**

A: Let us pray. God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Children's Chat

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading

Joshua 5:9-12

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my
guilt.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you
forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in
time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should
go;
I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay
near you."

**¹⁰ Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation** ***“Return To the Lord” - page 142

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 15th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’” ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and

approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – *The Rev. Mike Button*

***Hymn of the Day**

ELW # 460 *“Now the Silence”*

(Sing twice: 1st: Choir; 2nd: Congregation)

***Apostles Creed**

C: 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 to the dead.*

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**

A: Let us pray. God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love.

God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy,

After each petition, please join in singing:

ELW #752 “*Lord Listen to Your Children Praying*”

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system's lyrics are: "Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;". The second system's lyrics are: "Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace." The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes in the treble staff and chords and eighth notes in the bass staff.

A: God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all.

God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .* Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy,

Join in singing:

ELW #752 ***“Lord Listen to Your Children Praying”***

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all.

God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died. We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy,

Join in singing:

ELW #752 *“Lord Listen to Your Children Praying”*

A: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C: Amen

*** *The Sharing of the Peace***

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

(Ushers now proceed to the Altar to receive the offering plates...)

Offertory “Give Me Jesus” arr. Kristin Campbell
James Heck, violin

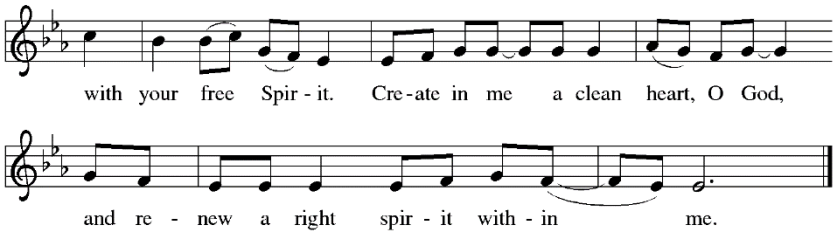
*Presentation of Gifts

(Ushers now bring the offering plates forward.)

*Offertory Hymn

ELW # 185 “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. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,
and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.

***Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

***Great Thanksgiving** *- page 144*

*** Preface** *(Leader continues . . .)*

***Holy, Holy, Holy** *- page 144*

***Thanksgiving at the Table** *(Leader continues . . .)*

***Lord's Prayer** *- page 145*

***Lamb of God** *- page 146*

Holy Communion - *If you are baptized and believe that it is the real blood and body of Christ, we welcome you at the Lord's table.*

**At the invitation of the usher, please proceed to the front to receive communion. Communion is also available in your pew, please let an usher know. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are available upon request.*

Communion Hymns

ELW # 461 ***“All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly”***

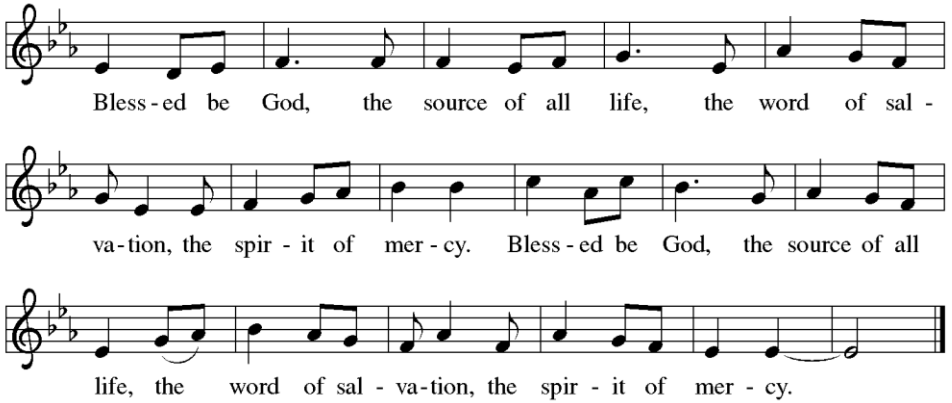
ELW #465 ***“As the Grains of Wheat”***

ELW # 779 ***“Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”***

***Table Blessing**

*Post Communion Hymn

ELW # 209 “*Blessed Be God, the Source of All Life*”



The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written in treble clef. The lyrics are: "Bless-ed be God, the source of all life, the word of sal - va-tion, the spir - it of mer - cy. Bless - ed be God, the source of all life, the word of sal - va-tion, the spir - it of mer - cy." The first staff covers the first line of lyrics, the second staff covers the second line, and the third staff covers the third line. The music ends with a double bar line.

*Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Announcements

*Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen.

*Sending Hymn

ELW # 328 *“Restore in Us, O God”*

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

Worship Assistant—Steve Moyer

Ushers – Cindy & Bob Black

Reader – Lynn Kutch

Altar Guild – Barbara Horinko / Sylvia Orem

Video Team – David Faulkner

This Week at St. John's March 30th – April 6th

Today (3/30/25) – Fourth Sunday in Lent, 10:30 am

Today (3/30/25) – Gallery Open, 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Monday (3/31/25) – Choir Rehearsal, 1:00 pm

Wednesday (4/2/25) – Bible Study, 11:00 am – Hospitality Room

Wednesday (4/2/25) – Lenten Dinner, 6:00 pm /Worship, 7:00 pm
@ United Fellowship

Sunday (4/6/25) –Sunday School / Adult Forum, 9:00 am

Sunday (4/6/25) – 5th Sunday of Lent, 10:30 am

Week 12, 3/23/25 Attendance - 51

Last Sunday's Envelope / Plate Offering	\$1,740.00
Weekly amount needed to reach our Budget:	\$1,971.00
Year to Date Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$24,787.00
Difference Compared to Budget	+ \$3,106.00



*Thank you, Amelia Fink and Jim Heck,
for sharing your special music
with us today.*



Prayer List: Chuck, Vicki, Clark, Donna, Kara, Christine, Jessica, Janice, Donald, Bucky, Maryland, Derrick, Tara, Gene, Kim, Will, Danny, Mary, Helen, John, Carolyn, Lois Anne, Charles, Julia, David, Donald, Barbara, Terry, Jeff, Chuck, Debbie, Pastor Orem, Peggy, Tony, Sharon, Sarah, Arlene, Joan, Our Homebound Family & Friends, the St. John's Call Committee, and Our Future Pastor



Join us for Prayer Group:
2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the Month
@ 11:00 am in the Hospitality Room

Come Celebrate with us . . . Palm Sunday Brunch

April 13th, 2025

(following Worship in the fellowship hall)

***The Congregation is being asked to
please, bring a dessert to share . . .***



***Volunteers are also needed to set up,
April 11th @ 10:00 am
and to clean up following the brunch.***

The Gallery at
St. John's presents . . .

**"Countryside Landscapes Knolls
and Meadow"**

March 9th thru April 13th
Sundays, 12:00 – 3:00 pm



NEPA Synod, Easton Cluster Churches invite you to . . .

Wednesday Lenten
Light Meals and Worship
(6:00 pm) (7:00 pm)



April 2nd,

*United Fellowship Lutheran
(2115 Washington Blvd. Easton)

April 9th,

*St. Andrews Lutheran Church
(3900 Freemansburg Ave., Easton)

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