

Welcome to Worship

at

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



Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

10:30 am

Interim Pastor: The Rev. Mike Button

Director of Music: Jessica Madow

330 Ferry Street; Easton, PA 18042-4500

Phone: 610-258-6119

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www.stjohnseaston.org

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 *“Your Love Is Finer than Life”* by Marty Haugen
Donna Lang, soloist

*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**

ACS # 1049 *“Before the Waters Nourished Earth”*

***Greeting**

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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. Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, 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

Isaiah 55:1-9

¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations

that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 63:1-8

¹ O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

² Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might behold your power and your glory.

³ For your steadfast love is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise.

⁴ So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your name. R

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

**⁶ when I remember you upon my bed,
and meditate on you in the night watches.**

⁷ For you have been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

**⁸ My whole being clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

*** Gospel**

Luke 13:1-9

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 13th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?”³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon – The Rev. Mike Button

***Hymn of the Day**

ELW # 726 *“Light Dawns on a Weary World”*

***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. We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions.

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy,

After each petition, please join in singing:

ELW #752 “Lord Listen to Your Children Praying”

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

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.

A: We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live.

We pray for those in need, may they receive your compassion. Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict including *those we mention on our prayer list . . . and those we name aloud or in our hearts . . .* Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy,

Join in singing:

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

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst.

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended. May their witness inspire our own. 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...)

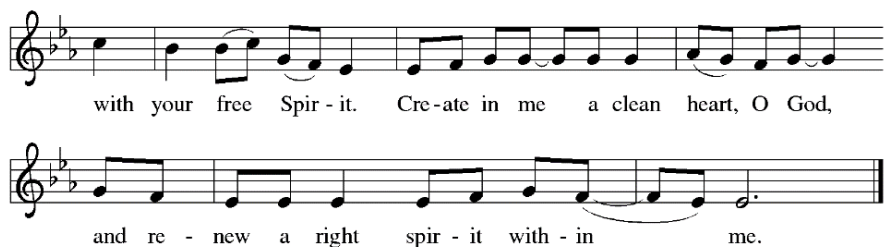
Offertory “*Come to the Water*” by John B. Foley, S.J.
Donna Lang, soloist

***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 # 486 ***“God Extends an Invitation”***

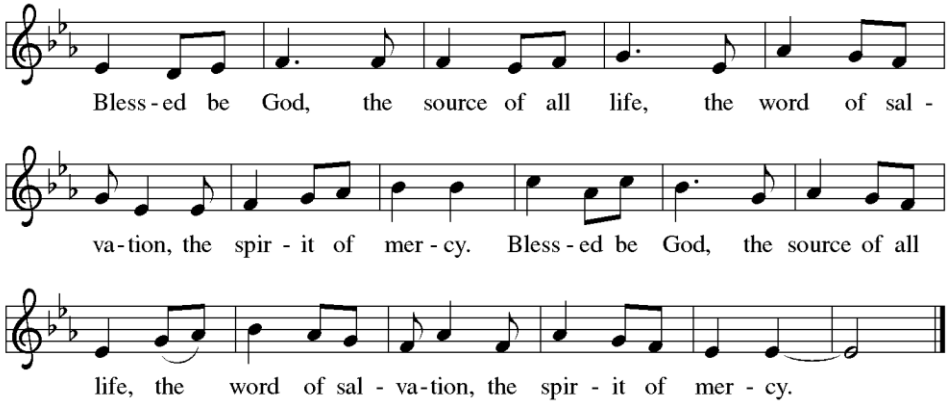
ELW # 331 ***“As the Deer Runs to the River”***

ELW # 623 ***“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”***

***Table Blessing**

*Post Communion Hymn

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



The musical score is written on three staves in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like. 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."

*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 # 618 *“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”*

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Thank you to our Worship Volunteers . . .

Worship Assistant–Jim Heck

Ushers – Cindy & Bob Black

Reader – Cindy Black

Altar Guild – Barbara Horinko / Sylvia Orem

Video Team – David Faulkner

This Week at St. John's March 23rd – March 30th

Today (3/23/25) – Third Sunday in Lent, 10:30 am

Today (3/23/25) – Following Worship: Rachel's Circle

Today (3/23/25) – Gallery Open, 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Monday (3/24/25) – Choir Rehearsal, 1:00 pm

Wednesday (3/26/25) – Prayer Group, 11:00 am – Hospitality Room

Wednesday (3/26/25) – Lenten Dinner, 6:00 pm /Worship, 7:00 pm
@ Arndt's

Sunday (3/30/25) – Sunday School / Adult Forum, 9:00 am

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

Week 11, 3/16/25 Attendance - 37

Last Sunday's Envelope / Plate Offering	\$1,691.00
Weekly amount needed to reach our Budget:	\$1,971.00
Year to Date Envelope / Plate Offering:	\$23,047.00
Difference Compared to Budget	+ \$3,337.00

Thank you, Donna Lang, 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*

*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)



March 26th,

*Arndt's Lutheran Church
(1851 Arndt Road, Easton)

April 2nd,

*United Fellowship Lutheran
(2115 Washington Blvd. Easton)



April 9th,

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

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3. "Light Dawns on a Weary World" (ELW #726, Text: Mary Louise Bringle © 2002, GIA Publications, Inc.; Music: © 2000 William P. Rowan, admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)
4. "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" (ELW #752, Text & Music: Ken Medema © 1973 Hope Publishing Company.)
5. "Come to the Water" (Text: Based on Isaiah 55:1-2; Matthew 11:28-30. Text and music © 1978, John B. Foley, S.J. and OCP.)
6. "God Extends an Invitation" (ELW #486, Text: Miria T. Kolling; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford; Text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress; Tune © Miria T. Kolling, admin. Augsburg Fortress.)
7. "As the Deer Runs to the River" (ELW #331, Text: Herman Stuempfle Jr.; Music: David Hurd; Text © 2002 and music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc.)

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Preparing FOR Easter



Memorialize or Honor someone you love by
sponsoring Easter Flowers.

These beautiful flowers will be arranged in the
Sanctuary, glorifying God with the joy and
splendor of the Resurrection !

Order Deadline: April 6, 2025



Name: _____

Phone: _____

In Memory / Honor / Other:

Amount: _____

(\$9.00 / Plant)

