

Saint James Lutheran Church

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday in Lent



*Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation.
Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.*

The Rev. John Locke

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Musician: Alyssa Hall

Worship Leaders		
	March 8	March 15
Assisting Minister	Lindsey Smith	Jane Boelke
Lectors	Jim Wright	Beverly Beale
Communion Assistant	Dave Runkle	Jacky Hummel
Ushers	Tonie Neal, James Peterson	John & Gayle Frinak
Greeter	Nancy Oliver	Fran DeSilva
Acolyte	Henry Orellano	Ian Gibson
Rover	Todd Burns	Dave Runkle
Nursery	Erika Stockwell, Jennifer Linkous	Verena Min, Kathy Brown

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GATHERING

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

PRELUDE

Alyssa Hall

WORDS OF WELCOME

A MINISTRY MOMENT

WORSHIP VOLUNTARY

We stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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 disdainning 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.

GATHERING HYMN *There Is A Fountain* TFF 78



1 There is a foun - tain filled with blood drawn
 2 The dy - ing thief re - joiced to see that
 3 Thou dy - ing Lamb, thy pre - cious blood shall
 4 E'er since by faith I saw the stream thy
 5 When this poor, fal - t'ring mor - tal tongue lies



from Im - man - uel's veins; and sin - ners, plunged be -
 foun - tain in his day; and there have I, though
 nev - er lose its pow'r till all the ran - somed
 flow - ing wounds sup - ply; re - deem - ing love has
 si - lent in the grave, then in a no - bler,



neath that flood, lose all their guilt - y stains: lose
 vile as he, washed all my sins a - way: washed
 church of God be saved, to sin no more: be
 been my theme, and shall be till I die: and
 sweet - er song I'll sing thy pow'r to save: I'll



all their guilt - y stains, lose all their guilt - y stains; and
 all my sins a - way, washed all my sins a - way; and
 saved, to sin no more, be saved, to sin no more; till
 shall be till I die, and shall be till I die, re -
 sing thy pow'r to save, I'll sing thy pow'r to save; then



sin - ners, plunged be - neath that flood, lose all their guilt - y stains.
 there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins a - way.
 all the ran - somed church of God be saved, to sin no more.
 deem - ing love has been my theme, and shall be till I die.
 in a no - bler, sweet - er song I'll sing thy pow'r to save.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We sit.

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Following Children's Time, children are invited to go downstairs for an adult supervised activity time. They will return to the sanctuary during the Hymn of The Day.

FIRST READING Exodus 17:1-7

¹ From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. ⁶ I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

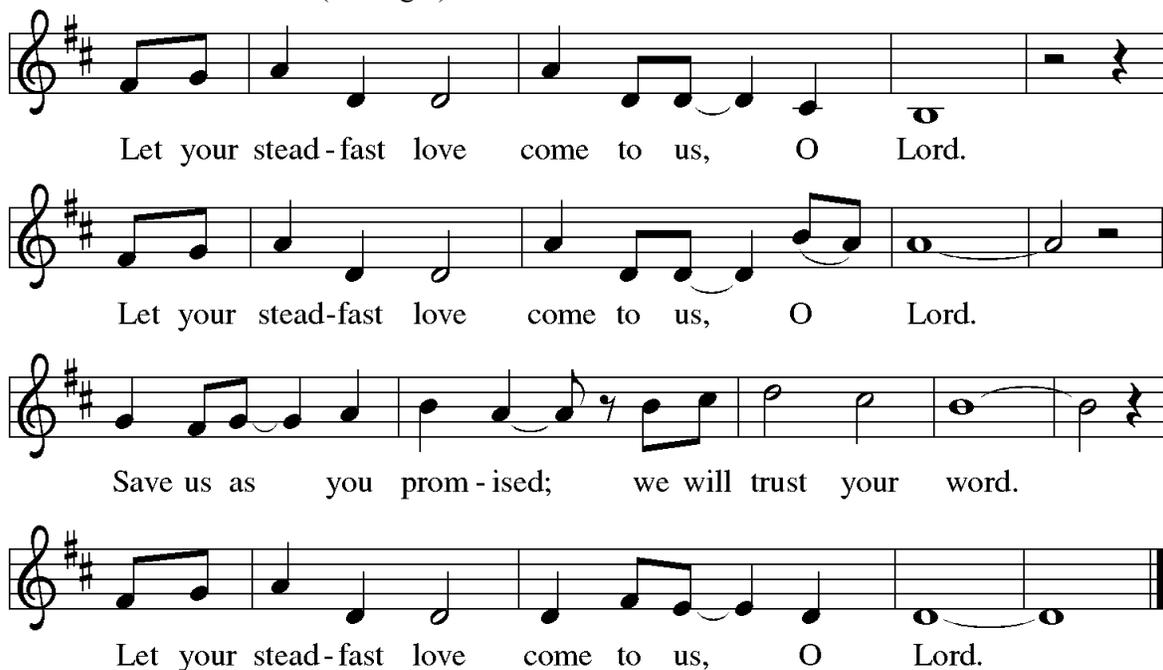
PSALM Psalm 95

- ¹ Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
- ² **Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the Lord with psalms.**
- ³ For you, Lord, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.
- ⁴ **In your hand are the caverns of the earth;
the heights of the hills are also yours.**

- ⁵ The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.
- ⁶ **Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord our maker.**
- ⁷ For the Lord is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.
Oh, that today you would hear God's voice!
- ⁸ **"Harden not your hearts,
as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert.**
- ⁹ There your ancestors tested me,
they put me to the test, though they had seen my works.
- ¹⁰ **Forty years I loathed that generation, saying,
'The heart of this people goes astray; they do not know my ways.'**
- ¹¹ Indeed I swore in my anger,
'They shall never come to my rest.'"

We stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Setting 8)



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

GOSPEL The Holy Gospel according to John **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 4:5-42

⁵ [Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. ⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."⁸ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."¹¹ The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?" ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob,

who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?”¹³ Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.”¹⁷ The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband,’¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!”¹⁹ The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet.²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.”²¹ Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.”²⁶ Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

²⁷ Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?”²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,²⁹ “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?”³⁰ They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.”³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”³³ So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?”³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.³⁵ Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting.³⁶ The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.³⁷ For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

³⁹ Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.”⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word.⁴² They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

We sit.

SERMON

Pastor John

We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Come To The Water* ACS 955



1 All who are thirst - y for mer - cy, all who are thirst - y for
2 All who are thirst - y for heal - ing, all who are thirst - y for
3 All who are thirst - y for beau - ty, all who are thirst - y for
4 All who are thirst - y for jus - tice, all who are thirst - y for



love; all who are thirst - y for love, for mer - cy,
touch; all who are thirst - y for touch, for heal - ing,
truth; all who are thirst - y for truth, for beau - ty,
peace; all who are thirst - y for peace, for jus - tice,



come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.
come: come to the Wa - ter of life.

APOSTLES CREED

We join with the Great Communion of Saints in confessing our faith, using the words of the 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 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

(Names of those on the congregation's prayer list are listed in the back of the bulletin)

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of God be with you always.

And also with you.

We share this peace as a sign of our baptismal unity as children of God. The "exchange of peace" (also commonly called "sharing the peace" or "passing the peace") is an act of reconciliation that serves as a transition point between the Word and Meal portions of the liturgy.

We sit.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.



Support of the ministries of St. James, as well as the wider church, is appreciated. To donate with cash or check use an envelope from the back of the pew or scan the QR code to donate digitally. Thank you for your generosity.



OFFERORY / ANTHEM *Fill My Cup Lord* Adult Choir

We stand.

OFFERING 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.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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 our thanks and praise.

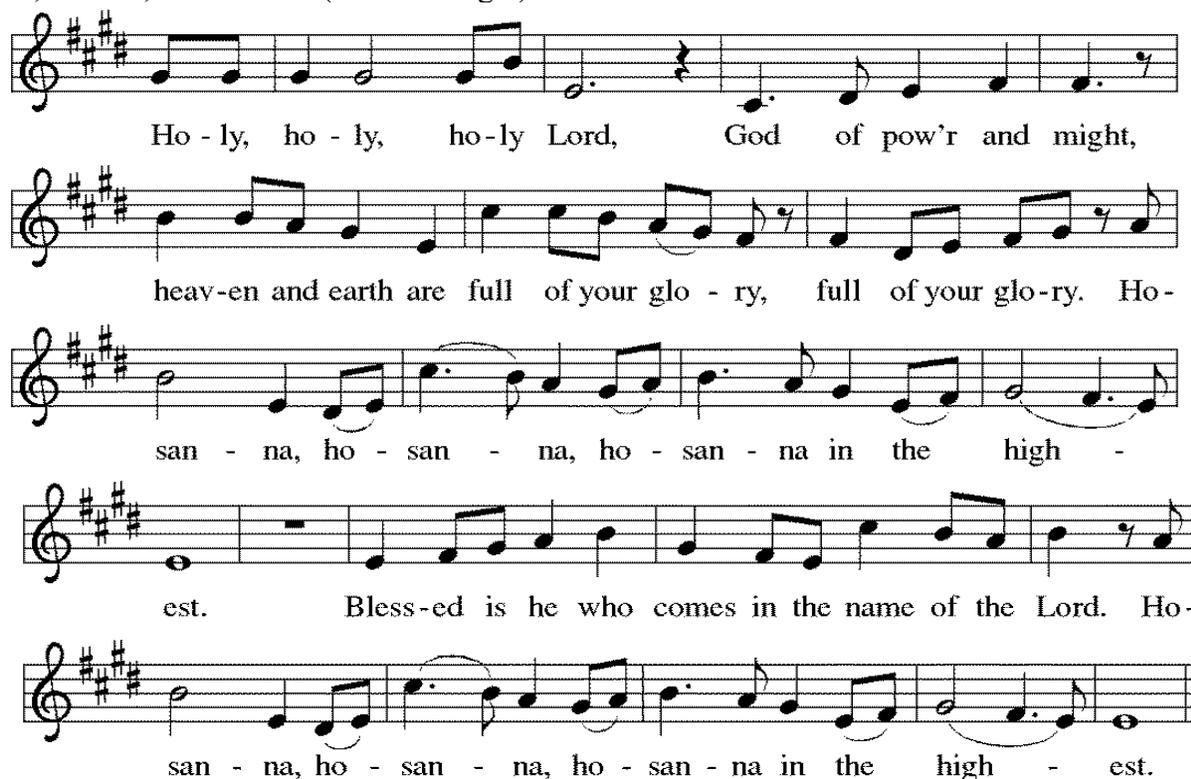
PREFACE

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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW setting 8)



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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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 covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (*Modern Version*)

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table.
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.
Thanks be to God.

The assembly may be seated.

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS

All are welcome at Holy Communion. Lutherans believe that Jesus' real presence is in, under, and through the bread and wine. The sacrament is effective in either bread or wine, so if you have an issue with either bread or wine, you may commune with one element. Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available for those who prefer. We will distribute bread and wine by individual cup. Children and others not communing may fold arms across their chest, and they will receive a blessing from the communion minister.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

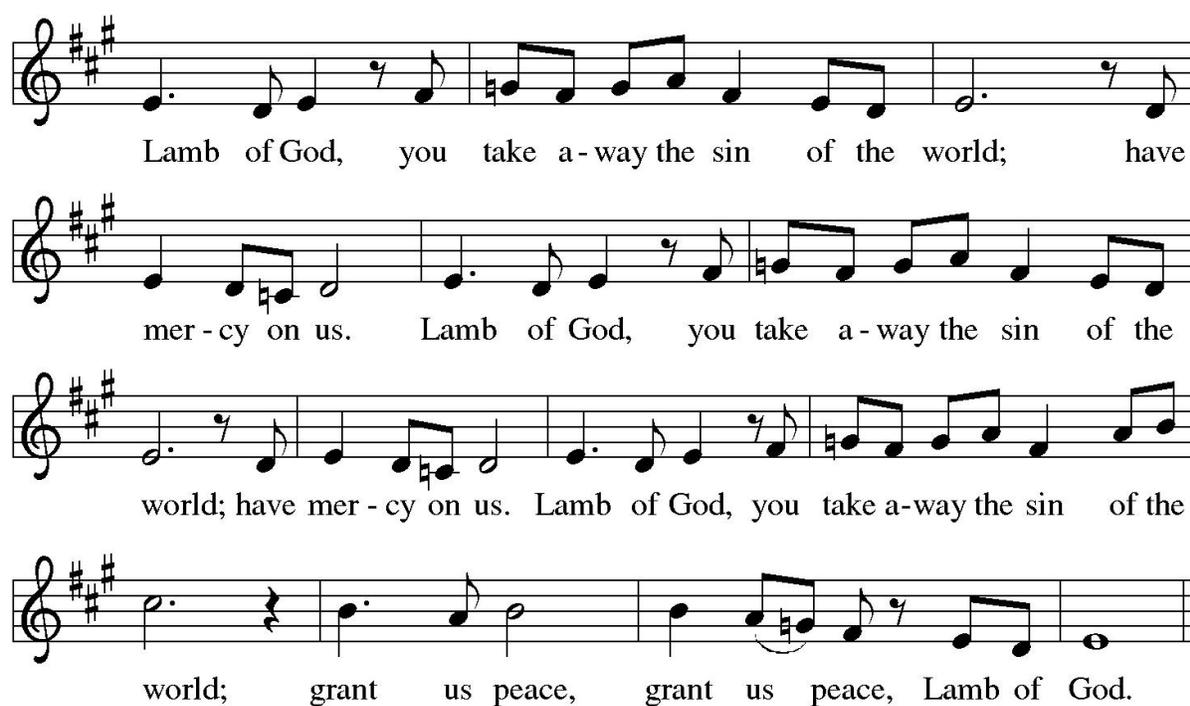
The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONGS

Lamb of God (Setting 8)



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, Lamb of God.

Taste and See ELW 493

Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me ELW 623

We remain seated.

TABLE BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His Grace. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.

SENDING

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

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

We stand.

BLESSING

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:
God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,
✠ bless you now and always.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN *O Jesus Joy of Loving Hearts* ELW 658

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS

March 8, 2026

The list in the weekly bulletin is intended to be for persons in immediate crisis. Generally, those names will be moved to the newsletter after 3 weeks. The newsletter has our long-term prayer list which is updated as you tell us.

Members · Beth Sessoms · Stella San Miguel · Larry Schiebe · Georgette Miller · Avery Walker
 · Philip Williams · Anna Lena Andersen · Gary Eissinger

Friends & Family

· Simone Ryan · Diane Stultz · Peter Lundell · Chrissy Tyndall · Faye Zimmerman Cashwell
· Gregg Nazario · Sandy Pangle · Stasha · Alan Carlson · Katie Maxwell · Chuck Warren
· Darcey Beale · Pat Earle · Ming Drogos · Charlotte Choice and family

People at Home or in Care facilities: · Charlotte Davis · Brenda Killett · Carolyn Uchtorff

Our military members (*deployed)

· Earl Stockham · Dan Gibson · Joshua Trogdon* · Bella Fish · Hochang Min
· Alex Habermehl · Robert James · Matthew Porter* · Derek Carlson · Howard Hogan*

Ministry at St. James ... March 8 – 15, 2026

- Sun. Mar 8** *Third Sunday in Lent*
9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation (Sunday School)
10:00 am Worship
 Congregation Meeting at end of Worship to RATIFY Constitution,
 and consider / approve the 2025 annual report
11:30 am Choir Practice
11:30 am Congregation Council
- Mon. Mar 9** 9:00 am Quilters (Annex)
10:00 am Finance Ministry Team (Office Conference Room)
6:00 pm Cub Scout Den Meeting
6:00 pm Property Ministry Team
- Tue. Mar 10** 5-7 pm Boy Scouts BBQ & Fried Chicken Fundraiser
7:00 pm Fellowship on Zoom
- Wed. Mar 11** 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch & Worship
5:45 pm Lenten Meal
6:00 pm Cub Scouts Leaders Meeting (Room 127)
6:30 pm Lenten Vespers
- Thu. Mar 12** 9:00 am Women's breakfast at Biscuitville
 - 3110 Raeford Road (Tallywood Shopping Ctr)
11:00 am Bread & Bowls at Snyder Memorial
- Sun. Mar 15** *Fourth Sunday in Lent*
9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation (Sunday School)
10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Choir Practice

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - at the end of worship TODAY

*Ratify the Congregation's Constitution and Consider the 2026 Annual Report.

The Constitution was approved by congregation vote in December, and now needs a final ratification.

The 2026 annual report by the council to the congregation is in final stages of preparation and will be available electronically by mid-week.



Join our Nursery Volunteers!



We need a few adults who can volunteer in our nursery on Sunday. We will screen anyone interested with a *SafeGatherings* background check, before they can participate. The children will go downstairs after “Children’s Time” just before the sermon and return during the Hymn of the Day after the sermon. Contact Michelle at the office: 910-484-8052 / saintjameslutheran@gmail.com



Thank you to all who contributed to Ian Gibson’s Eagle Project! We collected \$700. The project is getting underway.



Our mid-week vespers devotions will focus on several aspects of life:

Family (Mar 11) (How do we define family in the current day? What do we do when family relationships turn sour?)

Mortality (Mar 18) (Do we fear death? How do we grieve and mourn the loss of a loved one? How does a congregation deal with the loss of key leader(s)? How do we plan for so that others do not have extra burdens?)

Each of these topics have an impact on our lives from the very beginning of our lives; we can have long discussions about them: our anxieties, fears, anger, worry, longings, jealousies, etc. ... and we can do it without ever including God, faith, or the church in the content of our discussions. We’ll contemplate these topics from a faith perspective, as we face the various fears, truths, or trust concerns we might have. How do we hear the words of Jesus in the midst of challenges?

Through conversation, prayer, study, and meditation, we’ll listen for God’s directions, forgiveness, and strength. Each week we’ll end our vespers with Holden Evening Prayer.

You are encouraged to come, enjoy a meal, fellowship, and grow in faith and strength.



Beginning Wednesday Feb 25th
Meal at 5:45 pm. Vespers at 6:25 pm

Lenten Meal Menu

Fellowship is asking your assistance for some of the meals planned for Lenten suppers on Wednesday evenings. Please consider donating food or your time to help. **Sign up sheets** will be available in the Gathering space or contact Ruth Ann Crecelius.

- March 11 Casserole and salad
- March 18 Taco bar (provided by Fellowship)
- March 25 Soup and sandwiches

BREAD 'N BOWLS

MARCH 12, 2026
11 AM - 2 PM

Proceeds benefit the ministry of Fayetteville Area Operation Inasmuch

Bread Bowl + Salad Bar: \$25

Pottery Bowl + Everything: \$30

Group Rate + Free Delivery on 10 or More: \$12

SNYDER
MEMORIAL
Baptist Church

701 Westmont Dr.



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AN INVITATION TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

Forty is a number that appears in the Bible many times.

The rains of the great flood lasted for 40 days and nights.

Moses spent 40 days and nights fasting on Mount Sinai.

The children of Israel spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness.

These are only a few examples, but the commonality is that 40 depicts a time of testing and teaching in the Bible. During the 40 days of this Lenten season we have a beautiful opportunity to make space in our lives for repentance, prayer, and generosity. Consider how God might use your time and resources to serve those in need.

PRACTICE 40 MINUTES OF SILENCE EACH DAY

Find God in the stillness by stepping away from the noise and chaos of the day. Light a candle, make yourself comfortable and be present with God.

BE IN PRAYER FOR 40 PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

Deepen your connection with God by turning the focus to others and find what God has done for us in Christ. Small notebooks are available for you for this Lenten discipline.

DONATE 40 TOYS AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR CAPE FEAR VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER (As a congregation)

There are children in the hospital that have special circumstances and no resources for small items to pass the time. We are specifically collecting NEW

- Coloring books and crayons
- Puzzles (no more than 200 pieces)
- Uno card games
- Sticker books
- Fidgets
- Children's books for ages 8-14

DONATE 40 ITEM PER WEEK TO THE ALMS HOUSE (as a congregation)

Help to ensure access to healthy food and hygiene products for those in our community.

- 8 March. Canned fruit
- 15 March Instant potatoes
- 22 March Deodorant
- 29 March Toothpaste

In this 40-day season God allows us time to grow in our understanding of and appreciation for the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. On our journey through the wilderness our hearts will rejoice even more in the feast that God has prepared for us in the resurrection.

If you have any questions please contact Ruth Ann Crecelius