



Saturday, February 21, 2026, 5:30 pm
Sunday, February 22, 2026, 8:30 am

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT



*Changing lives with the love of God
to the glory of God*

Welcome Guests!

We're glad you're with us today!

We hope you'll introduce yourself to the Pastor at the Church door after worship today.

Worship Schedule

Our regular worship times are:

Saturdays at 5:30 pm

Sundays at 8:30 am & 10:00 am

Sunday School at 10:00 am September-June

Serving in the Lord's house today:

5:30: Carol Chirco / 8:30: Sam Eisen / 10:00: Erin Bradbury

Altar flowers have been given- to the glory of God

Pastor: Neil Mittelstaedt

Pastor: Conner Forbes

www.stjlc.com

631- 584-5212

Ministers: All the people of St. James

Prelude: I Want Jesus to Walk With Me

Wayne Wold

Hymn: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, A sword and shield vic -
2 No strength of ours can match his might. We would be lost, re -
3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land All threat'ning to de -
4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, No thanks to foes, who



to - rious; He breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod And wins sal -
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, Whom God Him -
your us, We trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; They can - not
fear it; For God Him - self fights by our side With weap - ons



va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe Has sworn to
self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be? The Lord of
o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage; In bat - tle
of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house, Goods, hon - or,



work us woe. With craft and dread - ful might He
hosts is He, Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord, God's
we'll en - gage. His might is doomed to fail; God's
child, or spouse, Though life be wrenched a - way, They



arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
can - not win the day. The King - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Welcome & Invocation

Confession and Absolution

- P** During the season of Lent we are called to return to the Lord with all our heart.
Let us confess our sin and turn to Him, seeking renewal.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Merciful God,
C **You sent Jesus Christ to save the lost.**
We confess that we have strayed from You
and turned aside from Your way.
We have failed in goodness, neglected love,
and ignored Your truth.
Have mercy on us and wash away our sin.
Create in us clean hearts
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

P People of God, look to the ✠ Son,
sent by the Father to restore you.
By His cross, death, blood, and sacrifice you are ransomed and set free.
Do not doubt, but firmly believe in your forgiveness,
and in your heart take hold of the new life in God.

C **Amen.**

Hymn: Wonderful, Merciful Savior

Wonderful, merciful Savior
Precious Redeemer and Friend
Who would have thought that a Lamb could
Rescue the souls of men
Oh, You rescue the souls of men

Counselor, Comforter, Keeper
Spirit we long to embrace
You offer hope when our hearts have
Hopelessly lost our way
Oh, we've hopelessly lost the way

You are the One that we praise
You are the One we adore
You give the healing and grace our
Hearts always hunger for
Oh, our hearts always hunger for

Almighty, infinite Father
Faithfully loving Your own
Here in our weakness You find us
Falling before Your throne
Oh, we're falling before Your throne

You are the One that we praise
You are the One we adore
You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for
Oh, our hearts always hunger for

You are the One that we praise
You are the One we adore
You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for
Oh, our hearts always hunger for

Epistle Reading

1 John 3:4-10

A The Epistle is from 1 John, chapter 3.

⁴ Those who live sinful lives are disobeying God. Sin is disobedience. ⁵ You know that Christ appeared in order to take away our sins. He isn't sinful. ⁶ Those who live in Christ don't go on sinning. Those who go on sinning haven't seen or known Christ. ⁷ Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you. Whoever does what God approves of has God's approval as Christ has God's approval. ⁸ The person who lives a sinful life belongs to the devil, because the devil has been committing sin since the beginning. **The reason that the Son of God appeared was to destroy what the devil does.** ⁹ Those who have been born from God don't live sinful lives. What God has said lives in them, and they can't live sinful lives. They have been born from God. ¹⁰ This is the way God's children are distinguished from the devil's children. Everyone who doesn't do what is right or love other believers isn't God's child.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle and Verse



C 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, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Holy Gospel Reading

Matthew 4:1–11

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fourth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Nar. ¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

²And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³And the tempter came and said to him,

Dev. "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

Jes. ⁴But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Nar. ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple
⁶and said to him,

Dev. "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you,' and
"On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone."

Jes. ⁷Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Nar. ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

Dev. ⁹And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Jes. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

"You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve."

Nar. ¹¹Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Prayer of the Day

L This is no ordinary battle, O God. We are not surrounded by the din of combat,

C **save for the whisper of the tempter.**

L We are not overcome by the clash of sword ... the sting of arrow,

C **save for the devils' evil barbs.**

L This is no ordinary battle, O God. But it IS a battle, nonetheless.

C **The ancient battle of good and evil rages—within us and around us.**

L We require a conqueror, O God, to defend us against the ancient foe.

C **Help us to follow the holy, victorious Savior You have sent.**

- L** Through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now,
C and forever. Amen.

Hymn: O Christ, You Walked the Road



- 1 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan-d'ring feet must go.
 2 No bread of earth a-lone Can fill our hun-g'ring hearts.
 3 No blind-ing sign we ask, No won-der from a-bove.
 4 When lures of eas-y gain With prom-ise bright-ly shine,
 5 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan-d'ring feet must go.



You faced with us temp-ta-tion's pow'r And fought our an-cient foe.
 Lord, help us seek Your liv-ing Word, The food Your grace im-parts.
 Lord, help us place our trust a-lone In Your un-swerv-ing love.
 Lord, help us seek Your king-dom first; Our wills with Yours a-lign.
 Stay with us through temp-ta-tion's hour To fight our an-cient foe.

Sermon: The Champion

Apostles' Creed

- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died and was buried.
 He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the dead.
 He ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy Christian Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

Prayer of the Church

Offering

Some time ago we stopped passing the offering plate. There is now a box in the Narthex in which you may place your offering. Even more helpful, you may give electronically either by using the QR code below or visiting stjlc.com/give. You may also give to God and the work of His Church by mailing your offering in.



Offering Prayer

- L** Almighty God, we come to You seeking mercy.
- C** **You offer us so much - gift upon gift...grace upon grace.**
- L** Inspire us by Your lavish giving. Motivate us by Your abundant grace.
- C** **Lead us to spread Your love. Help us to spill it on others.**
- L** Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
- C** **Amen.**

✠ Holy Communion ✠

To Our Guests Regarding Holy Communion:

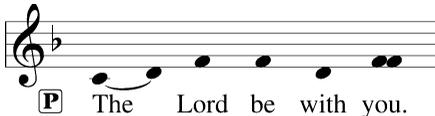
Holy Communion is a gift Christ gives to His Church.
In it, He offers His true Body and Blood in and with the bread and wine.

It is the gift of Himself!

When received in faith, Holy Communion gives forgiveness, new life & salvation.
Those who receive the Lord's Supper at St. James Lutheran Church are baptized Christians, committed in their faith in Christ, who have been instructed in and believe these truths.
(We run classes both for young people and adults – everyone welcome.)

God bless you!

Preface

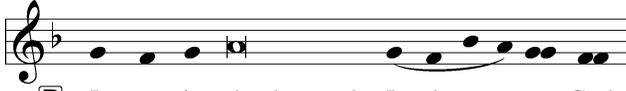




P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P Blessed are You, gracious God, creator of heaven and earth. We give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was tempted in every way that we are, yet without sin, and who, having overcome temptation, is able to help us in our times of trial, and to give us grace to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for Him who died for us and rose again. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are 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 in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Prayer

☐ We do not presume to come to this Your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but rather in Your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Your table. But You are the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

Agnus Dei



☐ 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.

Distribution

Hymn: On Eagles' Wings



1 You who dwell in the shel-ter of the Lord, Who a -
 2 snare of the fowl - er will nev - er cap-ture you, And
 3 You need not fear the _____ ter - ror of the night, Nor the
 4 For to His an - gels He's giv - en a com - mand To



bide in His shad - ow for life,
 fam - ine will bring you no fear;
 ar - row that flies _____ by day; Though
 guard you in all of your ways; Up -



Say to the Lord: "My _____ ref - uge, My _____
 Un - der His wings your _____ ref - uge, His _____
 thou - sands _____ fall a - bout you,
 on their _____ hands they will bear you up, Lest you



rock _____ in whom _____ I _____ trust!"
 faith - ful - ness _____ your _____ shield.
 Near you it shall _____ not _____ come.
 dash _____ your foot a - gainst a stone.

Refrain



And He will raise you up on ea - gles' wings,



Bear you on the breath of dawn, Make you to shine like the

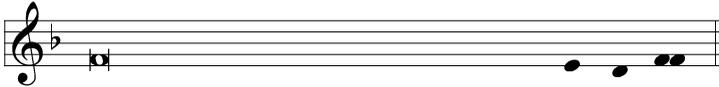


sun, And hold you in the palm of His hand. 2 The

Prayer after Communion

- L** Eternal God,
- C** **we give You thanks for the holy promises in this meal**
- L** where You have fed us with the precious body and blood of Your Son,
- C** **assuring us of Your favor and goodness towards us.**
- L** Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of Your Spirit
- C** **watching for Your Kingdom, giving ourselves for others.**
- L** In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

Benediction



- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



- C** A - men.

Announcements

Closing Hymn: O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days



- 1 O Lord, through - out these for - ty days You
- 2 You strove with Sa - tan, and You won; Your
- 4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, And



- prayed and kept the fast; In - spire re - pen - tance
- faith - ful - ness en - dured; Lend us Your nerve, Your
- all our earth - ly days, That when the fi - nal



for our sin, And free us from our past.
skill and trust In God's e - ter - nal Word.
Eas - ter dawns, We join in heav - en's praise.

Postlude: O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days

setting by James Biery

✠ **Spiritual Practices for Lent 2026** ✠

Read: -the Gospel of John
-some each day
-Download the Lutheran Study Bible App
onto your phone

Pray: -the 'Saint and Sinner Prayer'
-pick one up from Church
-pray it a lot, like meditation

Fast: -from screens, 1 hour per day
-no social media, news, or entertainment.

The point of all this is to draw close to God.

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

You are Invited to

ALPHA!

There are 2 different Alpha courses coming up!

Wednesday February 25th, 7pm - 9pm

Mike Wheelers Home

40 Marwood Place, Stonybrook, NY 11790

or

Wednesday March 4th, 12:30 - 2:30 pm

Parish Hall

RSVP office@stjlc.com or 631-584-5212

FEBRUARY LAF LUNCHEON: The theme will be "Love is in the Air" The Date is February 25th. Please sign up in the Narthex and join us!

GIVING TREE: The Giving Tree was up in the Narthex asking for donations for health kits to be sent along with other items for the Orphan Grain Train. The members of the Outreach committee will be putting together the health kits on Monday March 2, so we need all donations by Sunday March 1 at the latest.

PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER: Eat Pancakes and Support our Preschool! Our Applebee's Pancake Fundraiser is coming soon on Saturday, March 8th from 8-10am at the Lake Grove location. **Prepaid tickets only!** See ushers for Reservation Flyers or look in our Preschool Basket in the Narthex. All monies raised funds our Benner's Farm and Sweetbriar Nature Center field trips. **Fun fact:** Our Preschool Dads and our Teacher's Husbands will be your waiters! Contact Meredith or Julianne at #631-862-8934, Email meredithpreschool@stjlc.com if you have any questions!

FESTIVAL OF WORKSHOPS: at SUNY Maritime College - Saturday, March 7th from 8:30am - 3 pm. Over 30 interesting workshops will be offered - some being led by our own STJLC Pastors and Staff. Continental Breakfast and Lunch will be served. Registration is required at ad-lcms.org. See flyer and/or Carol Mittelstaedt for more information and/or to register. Cost is \$35 for the day and we will carpool from the church.

MUSIC MINISTRY: We are looking to resume rehearsals for the Festival Choir to prepare special music for Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday and Easter. If you are interested in being part of this mixed-voice, inter-generational choir (middle school age and older), please speak with Christine Kenny after worship or email her at music@stjlc.com.

TECH TEAM: Are you looking for ways to volunteer and have a particular set of skills in technology? Then we need you! We are looking for volunteers to help run slides and run livestream. If you are interested, please sign up on the sign up sheet in the back in the narthex. We are also looking for people who work in IT. Got questions? Ask Pastor Conner.

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2026-2027 IS UNDERWAY: If you would like to schedule a personal tour, please call the Preschool Office at 631-862-8934 or email meredithpreschool@stjlc.com. Registration is ongoing until all spots are filled. Preschool Registration Forms may be found in the Narthex in the Preschool basket.

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR NEEDED: Our beloved Pre-School Director, Meredith Johansson, will be retiring at the end of this school year. We are now seeking her replacement to join our Church staff. Position description provided upon request. Contact Pr. Neil Mittelstaedt by emailing pastorneil@stjlc.com or by calling 631-584-5212.

REMINDERS

MITE BOXES – SMALL GIFTS BIG IMPACT: The Lutheran Women’s Mission League, LWML, provides these small boxes, that are in the Narthex of our Church. These MITE boxes are available for parishioners who wish to support Mission Grants in our Country and around the world, through small voluntary offerings. Even spare change adds up and helps fund Mission work locally and globally. The January Mission Grant has allowed showers to be made available to LERT locations that help in disaster areas. If you haven’t used a MITE box before, we invite you to pick one up and be part of this meaningful ministry. If you have any questions, contact Durinda Dalton 631-897-0307

FOOD PANTRY NEWS: The pantry has been increasingly busy servicing 210 families in the month of December during our Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 10-1200 hours. We thank everyone who has donated food, funds and willing hands to help hand out food and essential products. We currently are in need of cereal, baked beans, chunky soups, and jelly that can be left in the church Narthex red box. Monetary donations can be sent directly to the Smithtown Emergency Food Pantry, PO BOX 1663, Smithtown, NY 11787. Funds are used to purchase items such as milk, eggs, chicken or chopped meat. Volunteers are needed to hand out food and stock items on pantry days from 930-1200. Congregational youth ages 16-18 are welcome on Saturdays and can earn community hours. Questions, call Jeanne Harmer 631-484-5203. ACTS 20:35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

GIVING WITH SUBSPLASH: In order to ensure the most secure and seamless experience, we will be transitioning to a new giving platform. **We will be moving from Vanco to Subsplash.** This change will help us manage resources more effectively, at less cost, and make it even easier for you to support the mission of our church. Visit stjlc.com and click on the tab that says "Give" for full directions on how to make the switch! If you need assistance, please email Sandra at sandramcilveen@hotmail.com

CHURCH OFFERINGS: If you do not use our electronic offering service, you may mail your church offering to the Church Office, 230 Second Ave, St. James, NY, 11780. Thank you for your continued support of our church!

TO ORDER ALTAR FLOWERS: Call Connie Marohn at 862-7123 after you have signed up for your requested date in the Altar Flower Book in the Narthex. Please use an Altar Guild envelope located in the Narthex to place your check for \$25.00 for *each* Bouquet payable to St. James Lutheran Church Flowers and the wording you wish printed in the bulletin. Place the envelope into the offering plate or mail to 230 Second Ave., NY 11780. Envelopes must be received by Monday for the subsequent weekend.

Peek at the Week

SUNDAY February 22

8:30am Worship (Sanctuary)

10am Family Worship with Sunday School (Sanctuary)

11:30am – 12:15pm King's Kids Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

6:30pm – 8pm TOF All Youth Party (Parish Hall)

MONDAY February 23

1pm Piecemakers (Youth Room)

7pm-9pm MAD Ministry/Caregivers Meeting (Parish Hall)

TUESDAY February 24

7:30pm Moms Group (Upper Room)

WEDNESDAY February 25

10am - 12pm Griefshare (Youth Room)

12:30pm LAF Luncheon (Parish Hall)

6:30pm Chancel Chimes Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

6:30pm Confirmation (Parish Hall)

7pm Alpha Course (Wheeler Home)

7:45pm Worship Band Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

THURSDAY February 26

7pm Troop 301 Meeting (Parish Hall)

FRIDAY February 27

8am Morning Prayer (Sanctuary)

SATURDAY February 28

5:30pm Worship (Sanctuary)

SUNDAY March 1

8:30am Worship (Sanctuary)

10am Family Worship with Sunday School (Sanctuary)

11:30am – 12:15pm King's Kids Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)