



**Sunday, February 22, 2026, 10 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](http://www.stjlc.com)

631- 584-5212

Ministers: All the people of St. James

## **Opening Song: Blessed Be Your Name**

Blessed Be Your Name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name

Blessed Be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed Be Your name

Every blessing You pour out  
I'll turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in, Lord  
Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name!

Blessed be Your name  
When the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's all as it should be  
Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name  
On the road of this suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering  
Blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out  
I'll turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in, Lord  
Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name!

You give and take away  
You give and take away  
I'll worship you and say  
Lord blessed be Your name

You give and take away  
You give and take away  
I'll worship you and say  
Lord blessed be Your name

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name!

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
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Blessed be Your glorious name!

## Welcome and Announcements

### Invocation

*(Children come to the front of the Church)*

### Children's Message

### The Lord's Prayer

*(Children leave for Sunday School)*

### Song: 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

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

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

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.

<sup>4</sup> Those who live sinful lives are disobeying God. Sin is disobedience. <sup>5</sup> You know that Christ appeared in order to take away our sins. He isn't sinful. <sup>6</sup> Those who live in Christ don't go on sinning. Those who go on sinning haven't seen or known Christ. <sup>7</sup> Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you. Whoever does what God approves of has God's approval as Christ has God's approval. <sup>8</sup> 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.**

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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.**

## **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.** <sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

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

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

**Jes.** <sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written,

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

**Nar.** <sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple  
<sup>6</sup>and 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.** <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

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

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

**Jes.** <sup>10</sup>Then 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.** <sup>11</sup>Then 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.**

**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](http://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.**

## 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.**

## ✠ 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** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**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.

**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**

## Distribution Song: Lead Me to the Cross

Savior I come  
Quiet my soul  
Remember

Everything I once held dear  
I count it all as lost

Redemption's hill  
Where Your blood was spilled  
For my ransom

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out  
Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down

Everything I once held dear  
I count it all as loss

Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out  
Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out  
Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down

Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me  
Lead me to the cross

Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me  
Lead me to the cross

You were as I  
Tempted and tried  
Human

The word became flesh  
Bore my sin in death  
Now you're risen

## 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

## **Closing Song: The Wonderful Cross**

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride

See from his head, his hands, his feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down  
Did ever such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

O the wonderful cross  
O the wonderful cross  
Bids me come and die  
And find that I may truly live

O the wonderful cross  
O the wonderful cross  
All who gather here  
By grace draw near  
And bless Your name

Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing, so divine  
Demands my soul, my life, my all

O the wonderful cross  
O the wonderful cross  
Bids me come and die  
And find that I may truly live

O the wonderful cross  
O the wonderful cross  
All who gather here  
By grace draw near  
And bless Your name

Love so amazing, so divine  
Demands my soul, my life, my all

## ✠ 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.



Please join us downstairs after the 10 a.m. Service in the Parish Hall for the SJ Cafe.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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)