

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
March 1, 2026

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-2192 www.stjohnlcsandusky.com
Sanctuary Worship 10:30 a.m. Live streamed to Facebook

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

March 1, 2026

Second Sunday in Lent

Welcome to Worship! During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the celebration of Holy Communion as he is God with us. Christians of all denominations are encouraged to come to the Lord's table. We commune children of any age who have received communion instruction at St. John or another Christian church. Children who have not yet received communion instruction will receive a blessing. Both red wine and white grape juice are offered to accommodate various traditions. Gluten free wafers are provided for those with dietary restrictions. Please make the pastor aware of your need.

If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Noisy Offering in support of Lutheran Disaster Response of the ELCA

Gathering

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

Please stand if you are able

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive 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.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“O God of Mercy, God of Light”

ELW 714

Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

1 O God of mercy, God of light,
in love and mercy infinite,
teach us, as ever in your sight,
to live our lives in you.

2 You sent your Son to die for all,
that our lost world might hear your call;
oh, hear us lest we stray and fall!
We rest our hope in you.

3 Teach us the lesson Jesus taught:
to feel for those his blood has bought,
that ev'ry deed and word and thought
may work a work for you.

4 For all are kindred, far and wide,
since Jesus Christ for all has died;
grant us the will, and grace provide,
to love them all in you.

5 In sickness, sorrow, want, or care,
may we each other's burdens share;
may we, where help is needed, there
give help as though to you.

6 And may your Holy Spirit move
all those who live to live in love,
till you receive in heav'n above
all those who live in you.

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.

Lenten Wreath

“Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed”

ELW 337

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Music: Hugh Wilson, 1764–1824 Public Domain

During the singing of "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed" verse 1 & 2, a single candle on the Lenten wreath is extinguished. Our space becomes a little darker as we journey together toward the Passion of Christ.

1 Alas! And did my Savior bleed,
and did my sov'reign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
for sinners such as I?

2 Was it for sins that I had done
he groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
and love beyond degree!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from Genesis.

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

¹The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

^{4a} So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 121 (Read responsively)

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?

² **My help comes from the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

³The LORD will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

⁵the LORD watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶**the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

⁷The LORD will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.

⁸**The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore.**

Second Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans.

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh?

²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

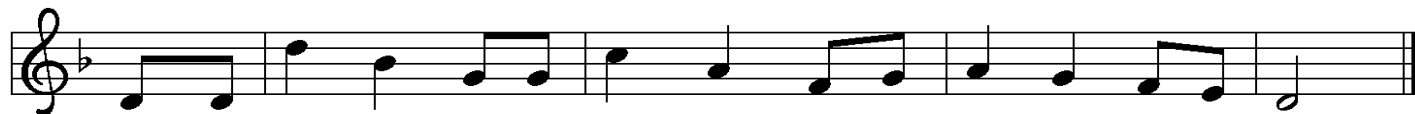
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

Gospel: John 3:1-17

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who

believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

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

Please be seated.

Youth Time

“Jesus Loves Me”

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt. Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868 Public Domain

Sermon

Please stand if you are able

Hymn of the Day

“Lift High the Cross”

ELW 660

Text and music © 1974 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

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Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

2 All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
Refrain

1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. Refrain

3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee.
Refrain

Prayers of the people:

Response: Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

Offering

“Lift High the Cross”

Text and music © 1974 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

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Please stand if you are able

Offertory

“As the Grains of Wheat”

ELW 465

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Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.

1 As this cup of blessing is shared within our
midst,
may we share the presence of your love. Refrain

2 Let this be a foretaste of all that is to come
when all creation shares this feast with you.
Refrain

Offering Prayer

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.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

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

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

Thanksgiving at the Table

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 all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us

not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Invitation to Communion

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated

Communion Song



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Distribution Hymn

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

ELW 666

Arr. © 1955 Augsburg Publishing House, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?

3 To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing.

2 When I was sinking down,
sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down
beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown
for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.

4 And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free,
I'll sing God's love for me,
and through eternity
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.

1 We are baptized in Christ Jesus,
we are baptized in his death;
that as Christ is raised victorious,
we might live a brand new life.
And if we have been united
in a dreadful death like his,
we will all be reunited, for he lives.

2 In the water and the witness,
in the breaking of the bread,
in the waiting arms of Jesus
who is risen from the dead,
God has made a new beginning
from the ashes of our past;
in the losing and the winning we hold fast.

3 Glory be to God the Father,
glory be to Christ the Son,
glory to the Holy Spirit,
ever three and ever one;

as it was in the beginning,
glory now resounds again
in a song that has no ending. Amen

Post Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His care.

Amen

Prayer After Communion

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.

Amen.

Sending

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

Blessing

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.

Amen

Sending Hymn

“Blessed Assurance”

ELW 638

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915 Music: Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830-1908 Public Domain

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain
This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior, all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. Refrain

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. Refrain

Dedication of the New Kitchen and Fellowship Hall

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord!
Thanks be to God.

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St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is:

“A Family of Disciples, Faithfully Making Christ Known”

And a congregation of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN'S, MINISTERS

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

Pastor Stacy's Day Off – Friday

Mrs. Sandy Thompson, Admin.

Church: 419-625-2192

Cell: 419-680-0358

419-625-2192

E-mail: Sandy8110@gmail.com

Nathan Samsa, Organist

Usher: Ray Witt

Audio/Visual Tech: Ann Voight

Website: www.stjohnlcsandusky.com

Like us on Facebook: St. John's Lutheran Church, Sandusky

Lay Reader: Melinda Zorn

Communion Assistant: Melinda Zorn

Attendance: Feb. 22 - 52

2026 The Year of the Way of Love. Welcome to 2026: The Way of Love! This year for our annual theme, we will be grounded in 1 John 4:19, “We love because he first loved us.”

Council asks the congregation to pray for those families coming to us as new members on April 26th, that they may find a welcoming spiritual home as they join the St. John’s family.

Communion Clean-up today: Sandy Thompson

Mar. 1 – Set-up – Jim Kluding	Cleanup - Jim
8 – Worship at Zion Huron	
15 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Cleanup – Sue & Lynn Schlessman
22 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender	Cleanup – Sandy Thompson
29 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Cleanup – Sue & Lynn Schlessman

Thank you for your willingness to help with this important ministry. If you would like to help, please see Joleen Dillender or Sandy Thompson.

New Members: We will be welcoming new members on April 26. If you would like to join the St. John’s family, please let Pastor Stacy know by March 15.

New Book Study: “Love is the Way” by Bishop Michael Curry and Sara Grace. Walk the path of love with one of the warmest, most beloved spiritual leaders of our time, and learn how to put faith into action. The way of love is essential for addressing the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: poverty, racism, selfishness, deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God. This book will lead readers to discover the gifts they need in order to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity. **The new study begins on Tuesday, March 17th at 10:00 am at Panera Bread, Sandusky.**

We need your help: Our confirmation kids will be going to a special worship service with the bishop and will be doing a service project while they are there. We will be collecting instant macaroni and cheese and peanut butter crackers until March 15. These will be put into kits that will help to feed the hungry in our area. Thank you for your support!!

The Season of Lent

Join us at St. John's for special opportunities for fellowship and worship on Wednesday evenings during Lent beginning February 25th, featuring soup suppers at 5:30 pm followed by worship at 6:30 pm. We will begin our time in the fellowship hall and then move to the sanctuary for Holden Evening Prayer along with focus on the "Holy Lament"! **The soup supper sign-up sheet is on the back window for you to share your delicious soup recipes.** May God bless you in your Lenten journey.

Wednesday Lenten Offerings: All offerings from our Wednesday evening Lenten services will be donated to Lutheran Disaster Response of the ELCA. These offerings will go to help where most needed. Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

Zion Lutheran 125th Anniversary Invitation: All members of our community are warmly invited to the 125th anniversary celebration of Zion Lutheran Church Huron on **Sunday, March 8, at 10:00 am.** Bishop Daniel Beaudoin will be our guest pastor. Following the worship service, join us for lunch in the fellowship hall. Several German dishes will be served. If you plan to attend the luncheon, please see the sign-up board in the back of the sanctuary or call Zion's church office (419-433-4711) to RSVP **no later than March 1.** (This is a catered meal, so we will need an accurate count.)

Worship on Sunday, March 8th: St. John's will worship with Zion Lutheran to celebrate their 125th anniversary. There will be no worship in the sanctuary at St. John's on March 8th.

Happy Anniversary to Ray and Ann Witt.

Church Council and Team Leaders were installed for the year 2026 on Feb. 15th. We are blessed to have the following leaders in place for 2026:

President:	Jeff Justi	Faith Life Rep:	Dawn Schlessman
VP:	Allison Young	Financial Team Rep:	Ron Zorn
Secretary:	Melinda Zorn	Property Team Rep:	Bill Deehr
Treasurer:	Ron Zorn	Young Adult Rep:	Jenna Stacy
Worship Team Rep:	Sandy Thompson	Endowment:	Bob Stacy
At Large Rep:	Mike Babiuch	At Large Rep:	Richard Schlessman

We thank Jerrie Krawetzki with gratitude for her service as an At Large Rep. of St. John's Council. Many thanks. We also thank Richard Schlessman for accepting the At Large Rep. position.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR MARCH 1ST THRU MARCH 15TH

Sunday, March 1	9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Study with Lynn Sunday School K-12 Worship Kitchen/Fellowship Hall grand opening.
Tuesday, March 3	1:00 pm	Faith Life
Wednesday, March 4	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Soup Supper Lenten Worship Choir Practice
Sunday, March 8	10:00 am	Worship at Zion Luth. Huron 125th anniversary celebration
Wednesday, March 11	10:30 am 12:00 noon 5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	World Religion Study in Upper Room Scripture and Prayer at Parkvue Lenten Soup Supper Lenten Worship Choir Practice
Sunday, March 15	9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Sunday School K-12 Worship

Holy Week Worship Opportunities

March 29 - Palm Sunday Worship - 10:30 am

April 2 – Maundy Thursday Joint Worship – 7:00 pm at Zion Lutheran Huron with celebration of Holy Communion

April 3 – Good Friday Joint Worship at St. John's – 6:30 pm

Easter Sunday Schedule:

Easter Sunday, April 5

Easter Breakfast – 9:00 am

Easter egg hunt will be held for the youth at 9:45 am.

Easter Worship at 10:30 am with Holy Communion.

Note: only one service will be held on Easter morning.



EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM

We will beautify our sanctuary with Easter flowers on Easter.
Please place your order in the offering plate **Wednesday, Mar. 4**
deadline to order.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: St. John's Lutheran Church

DESCRIPTION	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
EASTER LILY 6"	\$14.00		
DAFFODIL 6"	\$12.00		
TULIP 6" (PINK)	\$12.00		
TULIP 6" (RED)	\$12.00		
TULIP 6" (YELLOW)	\$12.00		
6" is pot size			
	TOTAL		

NAME _____

IN LOVING MEMORY OF (Deceased) _____

IN HONOR OF (Living) _____