



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
February 22, 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

February 22, 2026

First Sunday in Lent

Welcome to Worship! Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

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.

We thank Linda Stauffer for sharing her music with us today. If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Bell Prelude

"All Night, All Day" Arr. By Martha Lynn Thompson

©1986 in BEGIN TO RING 2 by Agape, Carol Stream, IL 60188

Refrain:

All night, all day, angels watching over me, my Lord.

All night, all day, angels watching over me.

1 Now I lay me down to sleep. Angels watching over me, my Lord.

Pray the Lord my soul to keep. Angels watching over me. (Refrain)

Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering

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

Please stand if you are able

Confession and Forgiveness

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.

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 disdaining 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

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

ELW 325

Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 I want Jesus to walk with me;
I want Jesus to walk with me;
all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. | 2 In my trials, Lord, walk with me;
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. |
| 3 When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me; | when my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. |

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

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

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

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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 2:15-17; 3:1-7

A reading from Genesis.

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.' " ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 32 (Read responsively)

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you ¹ with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Second Reading: Romans 5:12-19

A reading from Romans.

Through Adam’s disobedience, humanity came under bondage to sin and death, from which we cannot free ourselves. In Christ’s obedient death, God graciously showers on us the free gift of liberation and life.

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man’s trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

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

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

The holy gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”

⁴ But he answered, “It is written,
‘One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, “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,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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

Please be seated.

Youth Time

“Jesus Loves Me”

Sermon

Please stand if you are able

Hymn of the Day

“Chief of Sinners Though I Be”

ELW 609

Text: William McComb, 1793-1870 Music: Richard Redhead, 1820-1901 Public Domain

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed his blood for me,
died that I might live on high,
lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am his, and he is mine. | 2 Oh, the height of Jesus' love!
Higher than the heav'ns above,
deeper than the depths of sea,
lasting as eternity.
Love that found me—wondrous thought—
found me when I sought him not. |
| 3 Only Jesus can impart
balm to heal the wounded heart,
peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
faith and hope to walk with God
in the way that Enoch trod. | 4 Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
all my wants to him are known,
all my sorrows are his own.
He sustains the hidden life
safe with him from earthly strife. |
| 5 O my Savior, help afford
by your Spirit and your word!
When my wayward heart would stray, | keep me in the narrow way;
grace in time of need supply
while I live and when I die. |

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

Choir Offering

“Moment by Moment” Lani Smith/Daniel Whittle
©Lorenz Publishing Co. 1970

Please stand if you are able

Offertory

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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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.

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

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.
Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.
Come, Holy Spirit.

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.

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

"Lord Jesus, Think on Me"

ELW 599

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375-430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808-1896, alt.

Music: W. Daman, *The Psalmes of David*, 1579, alt. Public Domain

1 Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin;
from selfish passions set me free
and make me pure within.

3 Lord Jesus, think on me,
nor let me go astray;
through darkness and perplexity
point out your chosen way.

2 Lord Jesus, think on me,
by anxious thoughts oppressed;
let me your loving servant be
and taste your promised rest.

4 Lord Jesus, think on me,
that, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see
and share your joy at last.

Distribution Hymn

“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”

ELW 608

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909 Music: Will L. Thompson Public Domain

1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
calling for you and for me.
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.

2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me? Refrain

Refrain
"Come home, (Come home,
come home! (come home!)
You who are weary, come home."
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, "O sinner, come home!"

3 Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me. Refrain

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

“Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song”

ELW 808

Text and music © Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Tr. © 1970 Stephen Somerville, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey;
I'll tell ev'rybody about you wherever I go:
you alone are our life and our peace and our
love.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.

3 As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant,
to carry your cross and to share all your burdens
and tears.
For you saved me by giving your body and blood.
As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant.

2 Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.
May all of my joy be a faithful reflection of you.
May the earth and the sea and the sky join my
song.
Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.

4 I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey;
but courage will come with the sound of your
steps by my side.
And with all of the family you saved by your
love,
we'll sing to your dawn at the end of our journey.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

"Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song"

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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

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Nathan Samsa, Organist

Lay Reader: Carolyn Steinfeldt

Usher: Ray Witt

Communion Assistant: Sandy Thompson

Audio/Visual Tech: Melinda Zorn

Attendance: Feb. 15 - 49

Website: www.stjohnlcsandusky.com

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

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 and watch out for their neighbors during the challenging winter weather, to open our hearts to new opportunities with Zion Huron, and to give thanks for congregational leaders who serve God and our members with dedication.

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.

Sunday, March 1st will be the grand opening for the kitchen and fellowship hall right after worship. We hope you will be able to be with us as we bless our new areas.

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 Birthday to Sue Lucht, Kevin Young, and Ted Call.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 22ND THRU MARCH 8TH

Sunday, February 22	9:15 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Confirmation Instruction Sunday School K-4 Worship
Wednesday, February 25	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Lenten Soup Supper Lenten Worship Choir Practice
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 125 th anniversary celebration



EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM

We will beautify our sanctuary with Easter flowers on Easter.
 Please place your order in the offering plate by **Sunday, March 8**
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) _____