

March 19, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, Year A

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

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Sunday, March 19th 2023
Fourth Sunday in Lent, Year A
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WELCOME

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † One God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us bring our confession to God, so that what is hidden in us, may become visible. So that the shadows of our hearts may be illumined by God's grace.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

We are people who still love darkness rather than light. We flaunt our occasional acts of virtue, we see ourselves as blameless, but pass judgment on others. Forgive us we pray. Bring us into your light that we may see ourselves rightly, and know we are loved. Bring us into your light that we may live more fruitful lives. Shine upon us with your grace, in the name of Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

The psalmist assures us that God's goodness and mercy will follow us, even pursue us, all the days of our life. As God's forgiven people, receive this goodness and mercy, and live a new life in the grace of Jesus Christ † who forgives all your sins.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God,

Why is it that we look, but do not see? Bring us again and again into your light until your ways become visible to us, and bear fruit in us. So that we may share your light and your goodness with the world. In Christ we pray.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN

Be Thou My Vision



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Amen.

READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,

and Christ will shine on you.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



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.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you

trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5
 Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851–1921, alt.

INSTALLATION OF THE 2023 CHURCH COUNCIL

Jennifer Schwede, Karen Ohrmundt, Shelley Kufahl, Perry Kufahl, Tim Ohrmundt, Jim Borelli, Heidi Teske, Lane Bahr, Sue Harris, Barb Paulsen

Today it is also our privilege to recognize and support those who are engaged in the work of this congregation, especially those newly elected to the church council.

We give thanks for Karen Ohrmundt, Shelley Kufahl, Tim Ohrmundt, Heidi Teske, and Barb Paulsen's willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

A READING FROM FIRST CORINTHIANS: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church. You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world. You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified. You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you:
Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

People of God, I ask you:

Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

Congregation: We will, and we ask God to help us.

I now declare you installed as council members of this congregation.

May God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

Let us pray.

God of grace, you gather us into one and nourish us with word and sacrament, and we give you thanks in worship and with our lives. Bless St. John's Church Council. May your word may be proclaimed with clarity, may your banquet may be served with joy and reverence, may your house reflect your glory, and may all who are gathered know your welcome; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. Responding to "God of grace," with "hear our prayer."

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God,

Receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

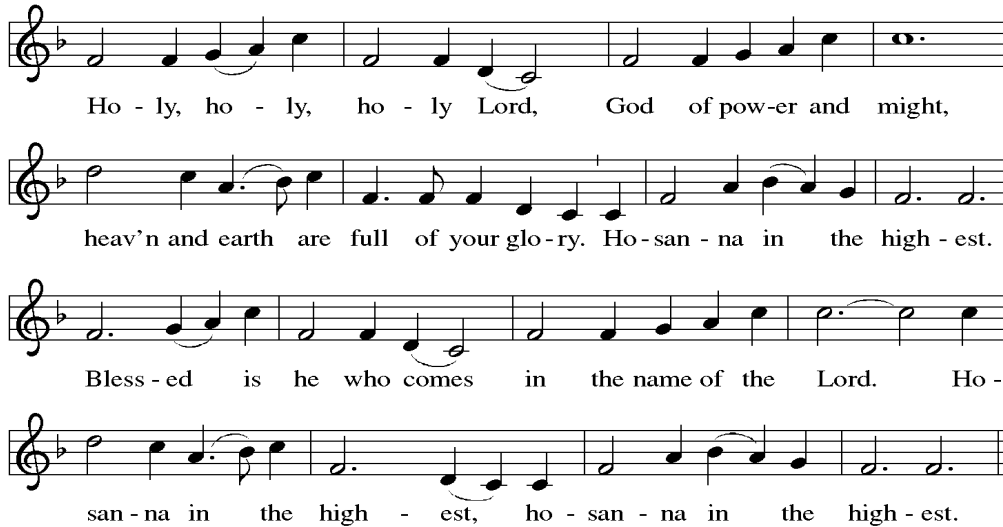
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

LORD'S PRAYER

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

COMMUNION HYMNS

Dearest Jesus, at Your Word

1 Dear - est Je - sus, at your word we have come a -
 2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est
 3 Ra - dianc - e of God's glo - ry bright, Light of Light from
 4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and

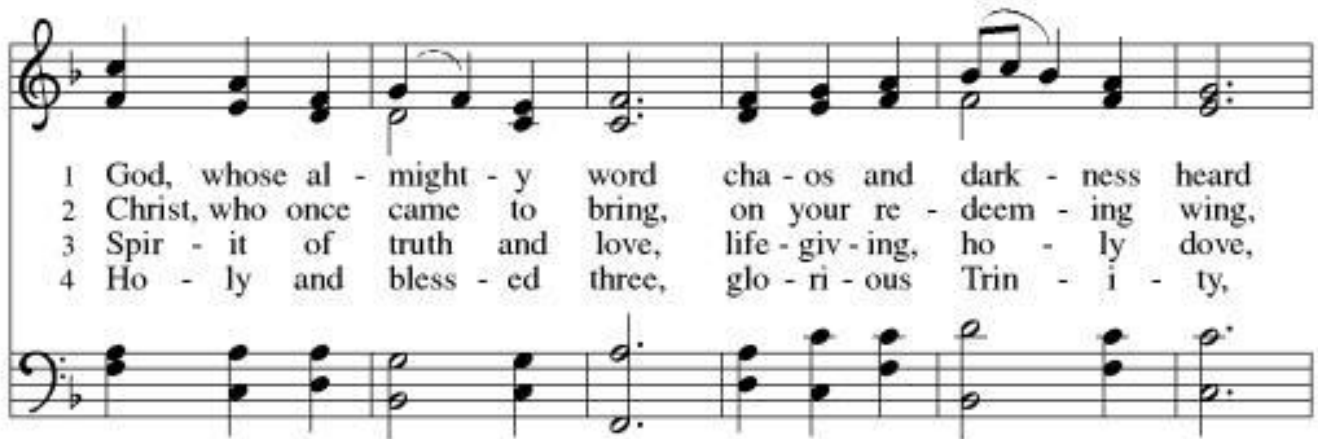
gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred
 dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks the night,
 God pro - ceed - ing, Je - sus, send your bless - ed light;
 ad - o - ra - tion! Grant us what we need the most:

and in glow - ing faith be near you as the prom - is -
 fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and
 help our hear - ing, speak - ing, heed - ing, that our prayers and
 all your gos - pel's con - so - la - tion while we here on

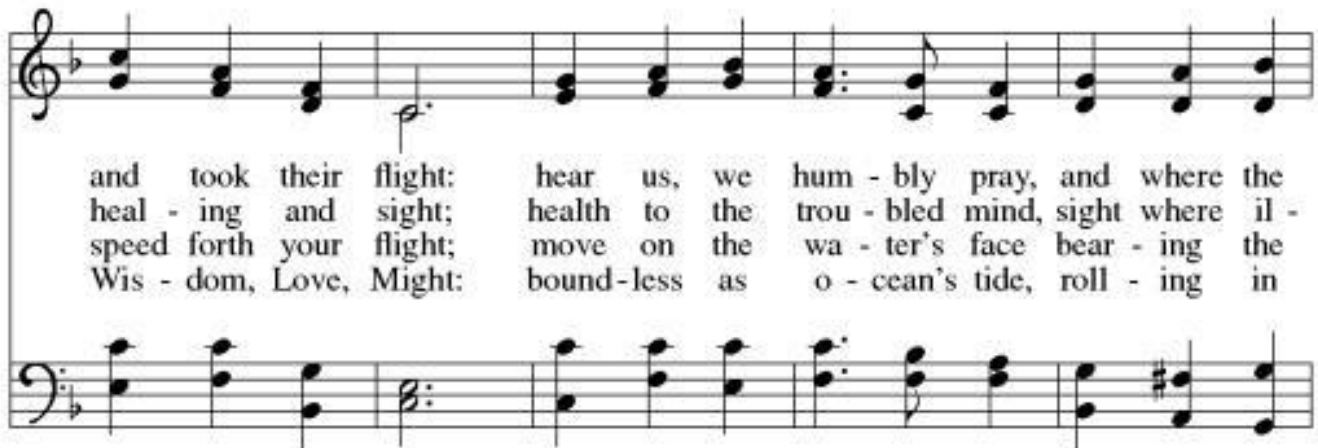
es here giv - en draw us whol - ly up to heav - en.
 all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.
 songs may please you, as with grate - ful hearts we praise you.
 earth a - wait you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

Text: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619–1684, sts. 1–3; Georgheuch, Berlin, 1707, st. 4; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, adapt.
 Music: LIEBSTER JESU, WIR SIND HIER, Johann R. Ahle, 1625–1673

God, Whose Almighty Word



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
 2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
 3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
 4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
 heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -
 speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
 Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.
 lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man - kind let there be light.
 lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.
 full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

Text: John Marriot 1780-1825, alt.
 Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716-1796

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Embodied God,

At your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and care for the world with your love in our hearts.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the love of God pursue you,

May the light of Christ enfold you,

May the peace of the Holy Spirit keep you,

And may you dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In the name of the Father, † Son and Holy Spirit

Amen.

SENDING SONG

Christ, Be Our Light



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.



Refrain
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

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Welcome to all! Welcome to worship. May God's Word help us each see something or someone in a new way today.

God, as I encounter others at worship today, help me look on their hearts, as you do. Then lead me to share a caring word.

Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones during services.

To those who are visiting: Welcome to St. John and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex. May God bless you today and all days.

Reminder! If you are in need of Pastoral care, please contact St. John's at (715) 675-6950

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to share the Lord's Supper with us.

Food Basket. Each week you are invited to bring non-perishable grocery items to be given to a local food pantry. Place your gift in the *Food Basket* next to the main entrance.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Easter Egg Hunt: St. John's Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be on Sunday, April 2nd following worship! All children are welcome! We will gather for Fellowship, read the Easter story, make a craft, and end with a candy-filled Easter Egg Hunt!

Fellowship help needed! There are a lot of open Sundays. If you are able, please sign up. A sign-up sheet for the month of March is in the Narthex. Thank you!

March Newsletter. Pick up your March Newsletter in the Narthex, or access it on our webpage <https://stjohnwausau.org/more/newsletter/>

St. John Email. If you have not received any emails from Pastor Maggie, please email her to be added to the St. John Email List.

New Pictorial Directory. Say cheese! We are excited to announce a new church directory will be coming soon and hope to see all your beautiful smiling faces in the directory! There are 3 days you can schedule a session to have pictures taken. The dates are April 10th, 11th, and 12th from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the church parish hall. You are welcome to bring pet/s to be photographed with you. We hope all will schedule a no sales pressure session. Photo examples and a pricing brochure are in the narthex. You can schedule your picture taking session, using the QR code located on the sign in the narthex, or through the link on the home page of our church website www.stjohnwausau.org For those who do not have electronic means to schedule a session or for anyone who may have questions please contact Jan Mueller at dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com. For those who are unable to have pictures taken at the dates and times listed above, you may submit a photo for the directory. There is a \$15 charge to submit your photo, please contact Jan Mueller for more information. Smile!

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Lutheran Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children's sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.

Coming This Week @ St. John March 19 – March 26

Today

9:00 a.m. Worship

March 20

9:30 a.m. Visitation for Patricia Poeske's Service

11:00 a.m. Celebration of Life for Patricia Poeske

Noon Newsletter Articles due to Church office.

March 21

8:30 a.m. Quilting

9:00 a.m. Pr. Maggie @ Pr. Meeting

March 22

5:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner

6:30 p.m. Lenten Service

March 26

9:00 a.m. Worship