

**March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2026**  
**Fifth Sunday in Lent, Tell Me Something Good**  
**9:00 a.m.**

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***St. John Immanuel Lutheran Church***

**Reverend Maggie Westaby**

**5304 N 44<sup>th</sup> Ave**

**Wausau, Wisconsin 54401**

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ELCA

**Office: (715) 675-6950**

**Office Hours:**

**Monday 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Thursday 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

## CALL TO WORSHIP

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

## OPENING DIALOGUE

Welcome to the weary and the worn.

**Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.**

Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

**Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.**

Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

**Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.**

Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

**This is God's house.**

You can make yourself at home here.

**Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!**

## CONFESSION

Jesus once said to a crowd, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone." Friends, none of us are without sin. None of us get it right all the time. None of us can get by without God's grace. In the Prayer of Confession, we acknowledge this truth. We put down our stones and we turn to God for forgiveness. Join me in this act of transformation. Let us pray:

**Holy God, we love to live our lives by our rules. We love clear answers. We love right and wrong. We love swift justice. We love to pick up stones, but you show us another way. You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation. You prioritize mercy over legality. You prioritize people over tradition. You prioritize love over everything. Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters. Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you. Soften our hearts. Root us in mercy and love. With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.**

## FORGIVENESS

Church family, Jesus saw a crowd ready to throw stones and invited them to choose another way. Jesus offered them grace, mercy, and compassion, and the same can be said for us. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel: Our God is a God of mercy. Our God is a God of compassion. Our God is a God of grace. We are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way.

**Thanks be to God for yet another second chance. Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN

### Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross



1 Je - sus, keep me near the cross, there's a pre - cious foun - tain;  
2 Near the cross, a trem - bling soul, love and mer - cy found me;  
3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes be - fore me;  
4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hop - ing, trust - ing ev - er,



free to all, a heal - ing stream flows from Cal - v'ry's moun - tain.  
there the bright and morn - ing star sheds its beams a - round me.  
help me walk from day to day with its shad - ow o'er me.  
till I reach the gold - en strand just be - yond the riv - er.



*Refrain*

In the cross, in the cross be my glo - ry ev - er;



till my ran - somed soul shall find rest be - yond the riv - er.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: NEAR THE CROSS, William H. Doane, 1832–1915

## **GREETING**

May 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.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy One, when you speak, we don't want to miss it. When you bend down and write in the dirt, when you move through the trees, when you wake with the dawn, when you tug on our heart, or whisper into our dreams, we don't want to miss it. So today we pray, clear out the cobwebs in our ears. Quiet the steady stream of thoughts marching through our minds. Open up space in our hearts so that we can receive your word for us today. With hope we pray. **Amen.**

## **READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

<sup>31</sup> The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. <sup>33</sup> But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

<sup>34</sup> No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more."

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 85:7-13

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

**Let me hear what God will speak, for God will speak peace to God's people, to those faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts.**

Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear God, that God's glory may dwell in our land.

**Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

**The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.**

Righteousness will go before God and will make a path for God's steps.

### Spirit, Open My Heart

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Spirit, Open My Heart'. It consists of three staves of music in a single system, all written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics 'Spir-it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of'. The second staff contains 'liv-ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing'. The third staff contains 'and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.' The music is written in a simple, accessible style with various note values including quarter, eighth, and half notes, and rests.

Spir-it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of  
liv-ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing  
and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.

## **GOSPEL: John 8:2-11**

The holy gospel according to John.

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>2</sup> Early in the morning Jesus came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. <sup>3</sup> The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, <sup>4</sup> they said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. <sup>5</sup> Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” <sup>6</sup> They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. <sup>7</sup> When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” <sup>8</sup> And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. <sup>9</sup> When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. <sup>10</sup> Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” <sup>11</sup> She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” The Gospel of The Lord.

### **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

### **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

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. Responding to "in your mercy," with "**receive our prayer.**"

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

In a world hungry for good news, God invites us to share in something good. Let us offer our gifts, trusting God to make it more than enough.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZEVO/home>

## ***GIVE THANKS***

**Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich," because of what the Lord has done for us. And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich," because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Gracious and Generous God,

We are amazed by the good gifts you bestow in abundance. Thank you for food that sustains us on our journey. Thank you for the company of saints to whom we are joined. Thank you for giving us your work to do on earth. We offer back to you a portion of all that we have received, setting down our baskets in celebration of your greatest gift, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

**Amen.**

## **PREFACE & GREAT THANKSGIVING**

With-us God, it is right, and it is good, to give you thanks and praise. In this Lenten season, we come carrying dust and questions, longings and laments. We come having heard so much bad news that our hearts ache for something true, something steady, something good. So tell us again the story of love that refuses to let us go. Tell us again of manna in the wilderness, of water from the rock, of mercy that meets us on the road. Tell us the good news that sounds like welcome and feels like home. For when the world feels harsh and divided, you draw near. When hope feels fragile, you remain faithful. When we wander, you do not abandon us. Instead, you send us Jesus. In him, we see the good news alive in the world—love embodied, mercy made flesh, hope refusing to die. So remind us that you are still on the move, living even here, in the words that Jesus said.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **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**

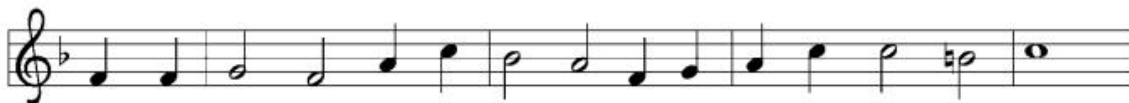
Beloved of God, in this season of Lent, we come hungry for good news. So hear this: Jesus Christ meets us exactly where we are — in our doubts and our courage, in our grief and our gratitude, in all that feels unfinished within us. Christ comes not because we have it all together, but because we are beloved. Here, the good news takes on flesh. Here, grace is given, not earned. So come and taste the good news, alive in this bread, alive in this cup, alive among us still.

### ***LAMB OF GOD (page 154)***

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.**

## COMMUNION HYMNS

### For the Bread Which You Have Broken



- 1 For the bread which you have bro - ken, for the wine which you have poured,
- 2 By this prom - ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re - stored,
- 3 With the saints who now a - dore you, seat-ed at the heav'n - ly board,
- 4 In your ser - vice, Lord, de - fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;



for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.  
by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord.  
may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord.  
in the world to which you send us let your king - dom come, O Lord.

Text: Louis F. Benson, 1855–1930, alt.

Music: OMNI DIE, *Gross Catolisch Gesangbuch*, Nürnberg, 1631

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## Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart



1 Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;  
2 I ask no dream, no proph - et ec - sta - sies,  
3 Have you not bid me love you, God and King;  
4 Teach me to love you as your an - gels love,



wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;  
no sud - den rend - ing of the veil of clay,  
all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?  
one ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame:



stoop to my weak - ness, strength to me im - part,  
no an - gel vis - i - tant, no op - 'ning skies;  
I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling.  
the bap - tism of the heav'n - de - scend - ed dove,



and make me love you as I ought to love.  
but take the dim - ness of my soul a - way.  
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!  
my heart an al - tar, and your love the flame.

Text: George Croly, 1780-1860

Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick C. Atkinson, 1841-189

## **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 touch the world with your love. **Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **BLESSING**

Beloved of God, in this holy season of turning and returning, when we are keenly aware of what is broken—in the world, in our communities, and in ourselves—we have been looking for something good.

So hear this: God's justice is deeper than our failures. God's mercy is wider than our wandering. God's faithfulness is stronger than our regret.

May the One who loves justice plant in you a fierce compassion that refuses to give up on this world.

May the One who delights in mercy lift the weight of shame from your shoulders and silence the voice that says you are beyond repair.

May the One who is forever faithful open before you the door of second chances—because grace is God's favorite gift to give.

In the name of the Father, † son, and Holy Spirit. One God. **Amen.**

## **SENDING HYMN**

## Sent Forth by God's Blessing

1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,  
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing,

the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave,  
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—

The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed  
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,

the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.  
em - brac - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race.

The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls  
With your feast you feed us, with your light now

reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.  
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.

Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us  
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing

to work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.  
give hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.  
Music: THE ASH GROVE, Welsh folk tune  
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## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you. **Thanks be to God.**

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*Welcome to all! Please remember to silence pagers and cell phones.*

**To those who are visiting:** Welcome to St. John Immanuel and thank you for joining us! You are welcome to sign our registry in the narthex.

**Holy Communion** is celebrated every Sunday. All are welcome to Christ's Table.

**Reminder!** If you are in need of Pastoral care, or if you or a loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit from Pastor Maggie, please contact St. John Immanuel (715) 675-6950

**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 *Shopping Cart* next to the main entrance.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Join us for Lent!** Lenten dinners will be served from 5-6 pm. Worship starts at 6:30. *\*Any money that is raised from the Lenten Dinners will go towards community outreach support, such as community dinners and the Marty Bus*

**Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 a.m. - Annual Easter Egg Hunt** - All children are welcome! Weather permitting, the egg hunt will be outdoors so please dress accordingly.

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## **Holy Week 2026**

**Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday & First Communion  
Worship Service.**

**Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Good Friday Worship Service.**

**Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Worship Services.**

**9:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast.**

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**Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Easter Escape Room** - Last year's game focused on the crucifixion. This year we're "Finding the Resurrected Christ!" Players will answer Bible study questions and decode mystery messages about John 20 in an effort to discover the secret lock combination that will unlock the vault! But BEWARE! Answering questions incorrectly will force players to complete various team-building detour challenges! For middle and high school students. Sign-up in the Narthex.

**Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> Noisy offering!** bring your coins (bills also accepted 😊). This noisy offering will go to: Northcentral Technical College Food Pantry. Noisy offering will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Money will be raised and donated quarterly.

**Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** – Book Club will meet for a discussion on the book “The Measure” by Nikki Erlick.

**Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**-Adult Study class will discuss Luke 19:27-24

**Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:00 a.m.** – Bring Your Tractor to Church / Spring Clean-Up! We'll be doing outdoor work around the church grounds, and we'll also need volunteers to help clean and organize inside the church.

**Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> Save the Date!** - Mark your calendar to celebrate our church's 160th anniversary. The theme will be "**Celebrating Our Past, Present, and Future**". Watch for more details next month!

**June 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Synod Assembly in Oshkosh.** We have space for one more delegate to attend. If you are interested, please let Pastor Maggie know.

**Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> – Friday July 17<sup>th</sup> Mission Trip to Duluth, MN**

**Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** - Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering in Des Moines. Sign up by April 15. Contact Marilyn at 920-362-5746 or [marilynn.quirk@gmail.com](mailto:marilynn.quirk@gmail.com). More information posted in the Narthex.

**Every Second Saturday of the month @ 8:00 a.m.** – Men's Bible Study at LC's Restaurant in Marathon WI – 304 Main St. Marathon City, WI 54448 – See Eugene Dehnel for details.

**Endowment Committee** - We are looking for 2 members to join the Endowment Committee. The committee is responsible for monitoring investments and reviewing requests for money from the Endowment Fund. We should only need to meet 2 - 3 times per YEAR. Meetings can easily be held on Sunday morning. Please contact Patti Busche ([busche1240@msn.com](mailto:busche1240@msn.com)) if you are interested in joining us.

**Kwik Trip Gift Cards Sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or on our website!** Help support St. John Immanuel with Kwik Trip gift cards!

**Live Streaming and Photography Notice.** When you enter a St. John Immanuel 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 Immanuel March 22<sup>nd</sup> - March 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Today - Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

- 9:00 a.m. Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Coffee Hour / Sunday School – The Great Commission

**Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**

- 8:30 a.m. Quilters Meet
- 5:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner
- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Worship – Confirmation - Mandatory Attendance

**Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>**

- 5:30 p.m. Bells Practice – Come try the bells! No experience needed.

**Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**

- 9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Coffee Hour / Easter Egg Hunt
- No Sunday School