

# St. John Lutheran Church and Preschool

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

*Oculi*

Divine Service Setting Three

MARCH 22&23, 2025



**St. John Lutheran Church and Preschool**  
**520 Paddock Avenue**  
**Meriden, CT 06450**

**Church Office 203-238-2331 Hrs. Mon-Wed: 9am-2pm**  
[office@saintjohnmeriden.org](mailto:office@saintjohnmeriden.org)

**Reverend Scott M. MacDonald 203-238-2332**

[Pastorsaintjohn@gmail.com](mailto:Pastorsaintjohn@gmail.com)

Matthew Bartlett, Music Director

[Matthewbartlett510@gmail.com](mailto:Matthewbartlett510@gmail.com)

**Preschool 203-630-3997**

**Church Website:** [www.saintjohnmeriden.org](http://www.saintjohnmeriden.org)

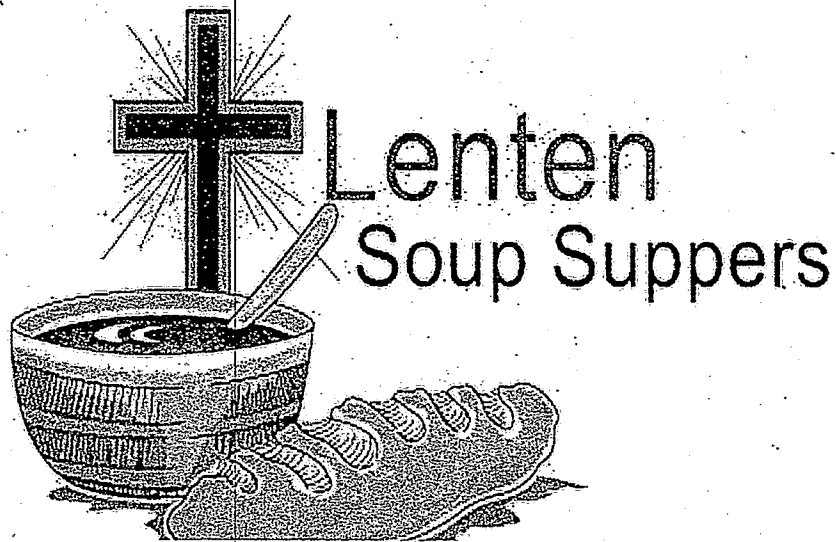
**Facebook: St. John Lutheran Church & Preschool**

**Holy Communion** *The Lord welcomes to his table all who repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior. In this meal the Lord is present by a mystery in his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. As the Lord's Supper is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar and lest any eat and drink unworthily, those who are not yet instructed as members or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Lord's Supper, are asked to first speak to the pastor. Those who are not communing but wishing to receive a blessing are also invited to come forward. Simply bow your head to indicate that a blessing is desired.*

**As we prepare for worship together please remember to set your phone to silent mode. Thank You!**

**Mission Statement: Growing a Christian Community rooted in Faith, Fellowship, and Service**

Cover Image: Fifth century mosaic of *Christ exorcising demons*, Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy.



# Lenten Soup Suppers

*Join us for Wednesday Lenten Soup  
Suppers and 7 pm Service.*

*5:45 - 6:45 pm*

Wednesday, March 12

March 19

March 26

April 2

April 9

April 16

Sign Up today to bring your favorite soup and dessert.  
Lenten Service begins at 7 pm. All are Welcome.

**March 22&23, 2025**     *As we gather for this service let us take time to lay aside our thoughts of other things as we prayerfully prepare for the worship of our Lord. Inside the front covers of your hymnal are Prayers For Worship. Additionally inside the back cover of your hymnal are the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds as well as the Lord's Prayer.*

**Bell tones and Prelude** – *At the Cross* – D. Wagner (*We reflect in silent prayer during the time of the prelude*)

**Hymn:**     *We All Believe in One True God*     **953**  
*(As the music begins, please rise to sing)*

**Confession and Absolution**     **p. 184**

**Introit:** *Psalm 25:1–2a, 15–16 (Mode II)*



Antiphon: Unto Thee, O LORD, do I lift / up my soul.  
O my God, I trust in Thee: let me / not be ashamed.

A: Mine eyes are ever / toward the LORD;  
for He shall pluck my feet / out of the net.  
Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy / upon me;  
for I am desolate / and afflicted.

**C: Glory be to the Father and / to the Son\***  
**and to the Ho-/ly Spirit;**  
**as it was in the be-/ ginning,\***  
**is now, and will be forev-/er. Amen.**

Antiphon: Unto Thee, O LORD, do I lift / up my soul.  
O my God, I trust in Thee: let me / not be ashamed.

**Kyrie - Lord Have Mercy**

**p. 186**

*(During the Season of Lent, the Gloria in Excelsis is omitted)*

**Salutation and Collect of the Day**

**p. 189**

**First Reading:** *Exodus 8:16-24*

In those days: The LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'" And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said. And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land. I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be." ' ' " And the LORD did so. Thick swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh, into

his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies.

A: This is the Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

**Epistle:** *Ephesians 5:1–9*

Brethren: Be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

P: This is the Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual:** *Psalm 9: 3, 19 Mode II)*

When mine enemies / are turned back,  
 they shall fall and perish / at Thy presence.  
 Arise, O LORD; let not / man prevail:  
 let the heathen be / judged in Thy sight.

**Lenten Verse:** *Psalm 123:1–3a (Mode II)*

Unto Thee lift I / up mine eyes,

O Thou that dwellest / in the heavens.

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of / their  
masters,

and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand / of her  
mistress;

so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that He have  
mercy / upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mer-/cy upon us.

*(Please rise for the Gospel after the Lenten Verse)*

**Holy Gospel:** *Luke 11:14–28*

P: The Lord be with You.

**C: And with your Spirit.** *(Spoken)*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

At that time: Jesus was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom

of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters. When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

**Nicene Creed** p. 191

**Hymn of the Day:** *Lord of Our Life* 659

**Sermon**

**Offertory Music** *What Wondrous Love Is This*  
– D. Wagner (Sunday)

**Offertory** *Create in Me A Clean Heart* p. 192

*(As the music begins, please rise to sing)*

**Prayer of the Church**



<b>Preface</b>	p. 194
<b>Sanctus - <i>Holy, Holy, Holy</i></b>	p. 195
<b>Prayer of Thanksgiving 1</b>	
<b>The Words of Our Lord</b>	p. 197
<b>Lord's Prayer</b>	p. 196
<b>Pax Domini – <i>The Peace of the Lord</i></b>	p. 197
<b>Agnus Dei - <i>Lamb of God</i></b>	p. 198
<b>Distribution</b>	p. 199

*The Lord welcomes to his table all who repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior. In this meal the Lord is present by a mystery in his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. As the Lord's Supper is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar and lest any eat and drink unworthily, those who are not yet instructed as members or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Lord's Supper, are asked to first speak to the pastor. Those who are not communing but wishing to receive a blessing are also invited to come forward. Simply bow your head to indicate that a blessing is desired.*

**Communion Prayers** *Prayers are provided for before and after communing inside the front cover of the hymnal under "Prayers for Worship". Please make use of these prayers or your own prayers during the time before, during and after communion*

<b>Post Communion Collect</b>	7 p. 201
<b>Salutation and Benedicamus</b>	P. 201
<b>Benediction</b>	p. 202
<b>Closing Hymn: <i>Rise! To Arms! With Prayer Employ You</i></b>	668

*(We reflect in silent prayer following the closing hymn)*

**Postlude**

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**Offerings for God** The offering box continues to be available in the narthex for our giving.

**Church Attendance**

Wednesday.....	19
Saturday .....	20
Sunday .....	60

**Assisting with our service:** Assistant: Paul Patnoad (Sat) Paul Patnoad (Sun), Lead Deacon: Gary Poulin (Sat) Chris Dougan (Sun), Reader: Beth Johnson (Sat) Marcia Gregory (Sun), Altar Guild: Cathy Poulin (Sat) Joanne Outlaw (Sun)

**Ladies Book Study:** If you are interested in attending a ladies' Christian book study, please text or call Wendy at - 860-759-4039. Dates and times TBD.

**Church Directory Pictures:** We will be taking updated Church Directory photos starting on the weekend of March 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The camera studio will be in a determined location coming soon.

**Lunch Bunch:** Join the St John Lunch Bunch on Tuesday April 15<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon in the church lounge. For more information contact Laurie at - [snowjay456@yahoo.com](mailto:snowjay456@yahoo.com).

**Pancake Breakfast:** is happening on March 29<sup>th</sup> from 8am - 10am in the Fellowship Hall! Apple Fritters will be for sale!

**Easter Memorials:** Easter Memorials are available in the narthex. The plant deadline is April 6<sup>th</sup>, and monetary memorials are due by April 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Bible Verse Bulletin Board:** Do you have a favorite Bible Verse? Fill out the Favorite Bible Verses handout either in the narthex or on the insert!

## News At St. John Church

**The Season of Seeking:** As we enter this season called Lent additional worship opportunities are offered. Each **Wednesday night at 7:00 PM** we will meet in the sanctuary for the Vespers evening service followed by a brief Divine Service with Communion. Toward the end of Lent **Compline devotional services** will also be offered in the Saint John Chapel on Sunday nights, **March 30<sup>th</sup>, April 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.**

**The Season of Seeking – Absolution:** This will be offered again this year. Personal confession to another can be comforting and necessary. A time will be set aside for private **Confession and Absolution** in the church sanctuary on **Saturdays, April 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 PM.** Members can also make an appointment to meet with Pastor anytime. **Anointing of the sick** will be offered **Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup> and Sunday March 23<sup>rd</sup>** following each of the services.

**The Season of Seeking:** Finally during this season of seeking we would like to make available additional **opportunities for prayer at our facilities.** Members are invited to make use of our church sanctuary or the Saint John Chapel for prayer. The church office is open Monday through Wednesday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Please come anytime and you will be let through the office side of the building. Outside of these times please contact Pastor to make arrangements. The Lord bless this season of seeking!

**We Welcome Our New Members!:** *Lewis and Denise Balsizer, Donald Andersen, Mary Alling, Stephanie Twining, and Alexander Pelletier, Anne Levix*

## **Jesus Overcomes the Strong Man**

Jeremiah was charged with speaking evil when he spoke the Word of the Lord (Jer. 26:1–15). So also, Jesus is accused of doing evil when in fact He is doing good. He casts out a demon from a mute man so that he is able to speak (Luke 11:14–28). But some said Jesus did this by the power of Beelzebub, Satan. Like Pharaoh of old, their hearts were hard (Ex. 8:16–24). They did not recognize the finger of God, the power of the Holy Spirit at work in and through Jesus. Jesus is the Stronger Man who overcomes the strong man. He takes the devil's armor of sin and death and destroys it from the inside out by the holy cross. He exorcizes and frees us by water and the Word. We were once darkness, but now we are light in Christ the Lord (Eph. 5:1–9). As children of light, our tongues are loosed to give thanks to Him who saved us. ([Lcms.org/worship](http://Lcms.org/worship))