



**St. James Evangelical
Lutheran Church
March 23, 2025
3rd Sunday in Lent**

**Worship every Sunday
10 AM**

Welcome

We welcome all visitors who come to worship with us today. We are delighted that you have come to share in the prayer and praise of our Lord and invite you to return and add your voice to ours in holy celebration. If you have a special need or prayer write it on the prayer card in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. Before you leave us today, we ask that you please sign our guest book.

**Pulpit Supply: Jay Buchanan
Church Organist/Choir Director: Patricia McConnell
Administrative Assistant: Tim Surkovich**

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St. James Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament by the Holy Spirit.

Announcements: If you cannot read the hymns, you can turn to the hymn in the red ELW hymnal in the pew racks.

Prelude: Aria Stanley E. Saxton

(We take this time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship)

PLEASE STAND

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

An extended silence may be kept.

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.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, and Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

We Gather

*GATHERING SONG: Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

ELW 807

NEXT PAGE

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing'. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line in the treble clef and a piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home;
let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan - d'ring heart to thee.

While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.

teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1735–1790, alt.
Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

***GREETING:**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

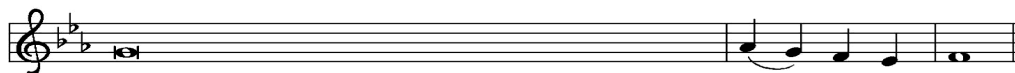
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



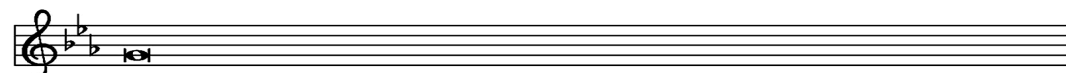
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



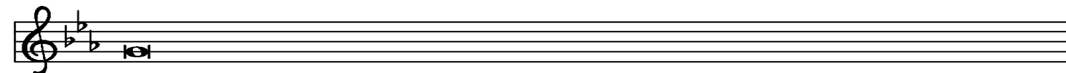
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: Let us pray.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We Listen to the Word

First Reading:

Isaiah 55:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

⁷ let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

¹ O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

² **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might behold your power and your glory.**

³ For your steadfast love is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise.

⁴ **So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your name.**

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

⁶ **when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches.**

⁷ For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

⁸ **My whole being clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵

Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

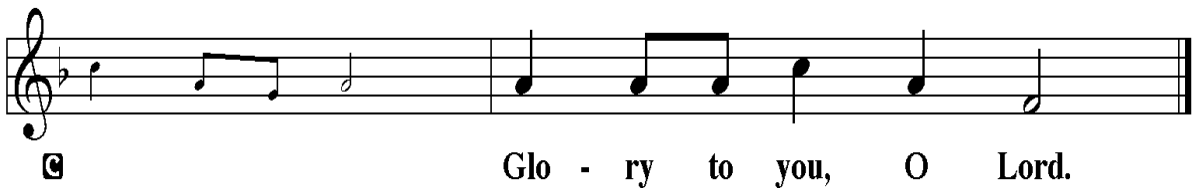
***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



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, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

***GOSPEL:**
The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Luke 13:1-9



¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?”³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did.⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’

⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.



We Respond to the Word

*Hymn of the Day:

ELW 777

Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty

1 "Come to me, all pil-grims thirst - y; drink the wa - ter I will give.
2 "Come to me, all trav-'lers wea - ry; come that I may give you rest.
3 "Come to me, be - liev - ers bur - dened; find re - fresh-ment in this place.
4 "Come to me, re - pen - tant sin - ners; leave be - hind your guilt and shame.

If you knew what gift I of - fer, you would come to me and live."
Drink the cup of life I of - fer; at this ta - ble be my guest."
Come, re - ceive the gift I of - fer, turn to me and seek my face."
Come and know di - vine com - pas - sion, turn to me, I call your name."

Refrain

Je - sus, ev - er - flow - ing foun - tain, give us wa - ter from your well.

In the gra - cious gift you of - fer there is joy no tongue can tell.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844; arr. *Selected Hymns*, 1985

Text © 1992, 1996 Sisters of St. Benedict, 104 Chapel Lane, St. Joseph, MN 56374.

Arr. © 1985 Augsburg Fortress.

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***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.**

***Sharing of the Peace**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

We Offer Our Gifts

***Offering Prayer:**

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the One who gave Himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion (*especially*). Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict (*especially*). Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended (*especially*). May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

Amen.

Lord remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

*The 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.**

We Are Sent

*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. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Sending Song: In the Cross of Christ I Glory

ELW 324

NEXT PAGE

*Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Recessional

There Is A Green Hill Far Away

George C. Stebbins

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the

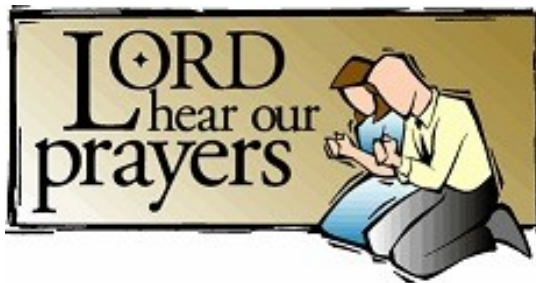
o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
love up - on my way, from the cross the
cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that

sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
ra - diancance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN THE CASE OF A PASTORAL EMERGENCY,
In the event of a Pastoral Emergency, please contact Pastor Eli Hess
Work: 814-943-3972

The church office email is stjamesaltoona@gmail.com The church's
website is www.stjamesaltoona.org
On Facebook—St. James Lutheran Church—Altoona, PA



Our Prayer List:

Tim Surkovich	Jeff Bickel	Bill Wilt
Staff Sgt John Hiles	Donna Foster	Donna Wilt
Carolyn Feather	Bill Dambeck	Judy Dambeck
The soul and family of Debbie Thomas		The soul and family of Debra Morgan

(Names for inclusion on our parish prayer list can be submitted to the church office. The name will remain on the list for one month. At the end of that period please advise the church office, if you would like the name to be continue for another month.)

Those serving in our military.

Homewood:

Sylvia Malsatzki

In their own homes:

Deborah Manbeck



UPCOMING MEETINGS, EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES:

Sweets and Treats	Apr 6 10 AM
Council Meeting	Apr 7 5:30 PM
ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH	Apr 10 12 PM
* Hosted by St James Lutheran	
Held 2nd Wednesday of each month in the	
St James Social Hall	
Allegheny Chorale Spring Concert	Apr 27 3 PM

REMINDER: Worship Service will move to the Sunday School Room from January 5th to March 23rd!



SWEETS



TREATS

SWEETS AND TREATS

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF
EACH MONTH.**

**OUR NEXT SWEETS AND TREATS WILL
BE: April 6, 2025**

Provided By: Diane Shultz

* We are always looking for volunteers to sponsor Sweets and Treats. If you're interested there is a sign up sheet in the Sunday School Room. Your support is appreciated!



NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 7, 2025

5:30 PM





Maundy Thursday– April 17th 7:00PM

“Lord make our sad divisions soon to cease; draw us all closer, each to each, we plead, by drawing all to you, O Prince of peace.” (ELW 463)

On this sacred night, we remember the final night which Jesus gathered with the original twelve disciples sharing with them the commandments of Love and Grace through meal and the washing of feet. This is a night which we give thanks for the gift of communion as we are mere hours away from his death on the cross.

The altar is stripped as we remember Jesus being stripped of his freedom as we hear the words of Psalm 22 preparing us for Good Friday.



Good Friday– April 18th 2:00PM

(Communion will not be celebrated)

We gather at the foot of the cross to hear the words of Jesus’s agonizing death for us and for our salvation. In this service of remembrance we ponder his trial, his torture, his carrying the cross, his crucifixion and burial through the use of Scripture and hymns. We also hear the final words of Jesus by candlelight and leave in darkness and silence this night.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD (EASTER SUNDAY) April 20th 10:45AM



It has finally arrived!! If you ever wonder if there was a day in which the world was changed, the first Easter was that day. We gather to celebrate Christ being Raised from the Dead!!! Death, sin, fear, cruelty, injustice, and evil no longer have the final say in our lives because the final words belong to Jesus. Christ

is risen and we celebrate that freedom! The church will be decorated to celebrate this momentous occasion.



COMMUNITY LUNCH



ST LUKES COMMUNITY LUNCH

April 10 12 PM

- Hosted by St James Lutheran Held 2nd Wednesday of each month in the St James Social Hall



Allegheny Chorale

∞ Anniversary ∞

*Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 3pm
St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Altoona*

*Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 7pm
First Presbyterian Church, Tyrone*



*St. James Evangelical
Lutheran Church*

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.