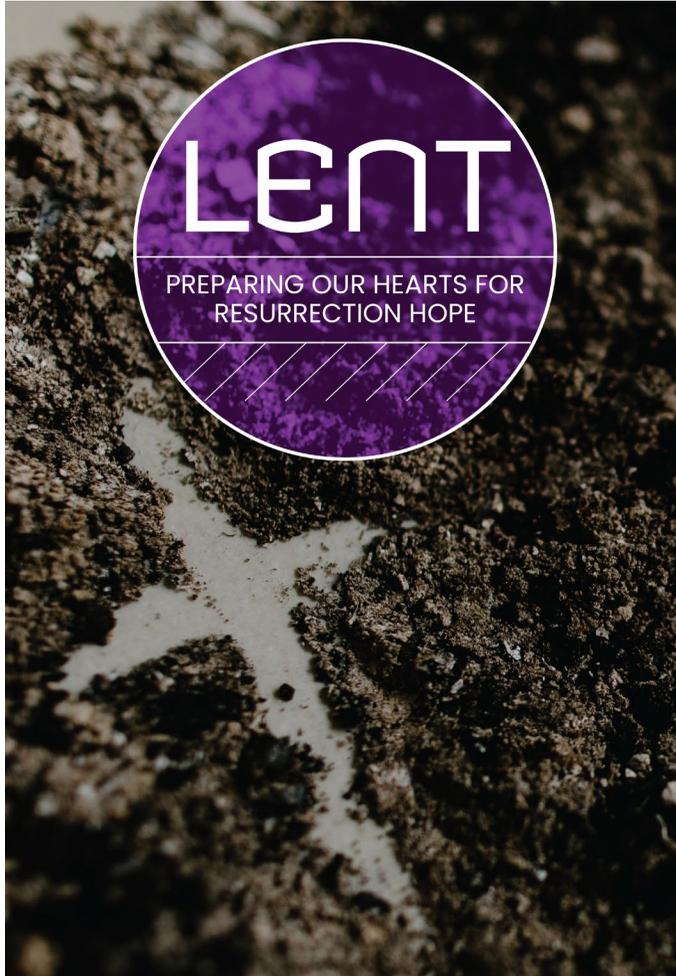


February 22, 2026
First Sunday in Lent
EXACTLY WHAT I NEED: A CHAMPION



EMMANUEL & St. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES
Wisconsin Synod
Mecan, WI & Montello, WI
Sunday Worship: 8:00 AM & 10:00AM

We pray that you are blessed by God's Word in worship today. **The order of worship** is printed here, is projected on the screen, and live-streamed at www.stjohnsmontello.org. **Restrooms** are located in the link way, out the church entryway, to the left and down the stairs. At Emmanuel, they are located in the Parish Hall. A **nursery changing station** is located in the lower level of St. John's.

EXACTLY WHAT I NEED (God Knows Even When I Don't)

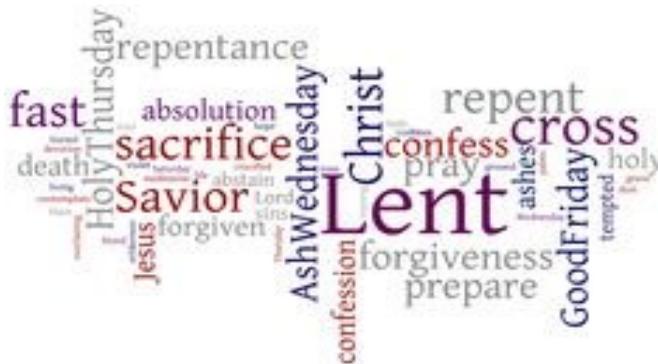
"I didn't know I needed that" is a common expression of surprise and realization. It suggests that something, whether it's a piece of information, a lesson learned, or a newfound understanding, has come to light and is now recognized as being essential or valuable, even if it wasn't previously apparent. Lent is the season of the Church Year when I recognize my greatest needs. During Lent, I realize that in Christ all my greatest needs are met. God knows what I need even when I don't have any idea. The Holy Spirit makes it clear, week after week, that if I lack Christ, I have nothing. But if I have Christ, I have exactly what I need.

A CHAMPION

I recognize my inability to defend myself against spiritual enemies. The world is against me, but I look for ways to imitate it. I try to master my own sinful flesh, but I recognize desires in myself that war against my soul. And when it comes to the devil, I fall into temptation again and again. My impending death proves that I have sinned. I realize that what I really need is a champion. God the Father realized it too. He sent his Son to be my Savior. Through the obedience of the Son of God, I have victory over my enemies.

Today's Worship Leader: Vacancy Pastor Bruce Hanneman

Today's Accompanist: Mrs. Donna Kuenn



Today's Order of Worship

At St. John's, CALA chimes play "Seek Ye First" by Lynne Hollander

OPENING HYMN: 556 All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall

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

Amen.

CONFESSION

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Silence for meditation and reflection

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

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

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

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 mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

♪ **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

♪ **Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Mighty God and Father, our Lord Jesus walked into the wilderness to face the devil's temptations, but he did not succumb to Satan's lies or falter in his resolve to save the world from the prison of hell. Bolster our faith by his mighty victory that we may battle against the forces of evil with courage and confidence; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FIRST READING: Genesis 3:1–15

God promised to send a champion to do what I could not, defeating my greatest enemy
¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. ⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the

garden. ⁹But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." ¹¹And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" ¹²The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." ¹³Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." ¹⁴So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 46 from CW93

Refrain



The might-y Lord is with us; the God of Ja-cob is our for-tress.

Psalm tone



God is our refúge and strength,*
an ever-present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the éarth give way*
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

though its waters róar and foam*
-and the mountains quake with their súrging.

Refrain

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,*
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

God is within her, she will not fall;*
God will help her at break of day.

“Be still, and know that I am God;*
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Refrain

At St. John's, Little Lambs and CALA kids sing: "So Much! So Worth It!" by Dale Witte

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 4:1–11

The champion of demons and the champion of mankind do battle. Jesus wins.

¹Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” ⁴Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” ⁷Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹“All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” ¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” ¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY: 836 I Walk in Danger All the Way

SERMON: Romans 5:12-19. "Lent: A Season to Refocus" 1. Turn Away from Whatever We Have Done 2. Rely Completely on What Christ Has Won

¹²Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—¹³To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. ¹⁵But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! ¹⁸Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING & PRAYERS

THE SACRAMENT

The Lord be with you.

♪ **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

♪ **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

♪ **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

♪ **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts: heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you. As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

♪ **O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace. Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: 842 Jesus, Still Lead On

Following Worship at Emmanuel & St. John's: WLA will give a brief update on the building project on the new campus.

Acknowledgments

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Intercessory Prayers

Keep in your prayers Emmanuel member Paul Weldon (in hospice care) and St. John's member Gloria Tucker, who is nearing the end of her time of grace. Both are in the Randolph Care Center. *If you wish to be included in our intercessory prayer list, please contact the pastor or the church.*



Midweek Lenten Devotions

We have Lenten devotions at Emmanuel, 3:30 and St. John's, 6:30...Continue to find time to worship this Lenten season. Pastors Dolan, Hanemann, and Heise (Camp Philip) will lead these Wednesday devotions.

***Jesus, Refuge of the Weary ... Dare We Pass
Your Cross Unheeding ... !***

LENTEN SUPPERS are being planned for between the two services and will be served here at St. John's. This week, the Men's Saturday Study Club will be serving a choice of soups, cheese and crackers.

Divine Calls Made!

Emmanuel/St John's has called **Pastor Stephen Helwig** to be our pastor. He is 53 years old and has been a pastor for 26 years. He is presently serving two congregations, Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Omaha NE, and Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Fremont NE. His wife's name is Carrie (nee Milbrath). They have six children with two at home. Sophie age 22 and James age 16. Pastor Helwig is described as a dedicated and personable man with the heart of a soul doctor. He works well with people of all ages and backgrounds. He has a heart for outreach, preaching, and teaching adult Bible and youth Bible class. He is a strong leader and administrator.

Contact information: Pastor Stephen Helwig/Phone: 402-708-5843 (cell) 402-493-2550 (work) Email: pastorhelwig@gethsemanelutheran.com Address: 16228 Western Ave, Omaha NE 68118-2410

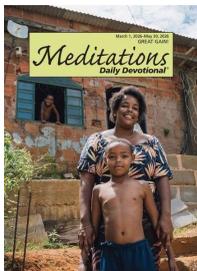
Please pray for him and his family as he deliberates where he can best use his gifts to promote the saving Gospel.

John Niebuhr was called to be principal of our elementary school. He is presently teaching at St. Mark's Lutheran in Eu Claire, WI. He is completing his third school year and is being mentored to be a future principal in the Principal Training Program. He is married to Briana who is a social worker and they have one child.

Also, **Mrs. Emily R. Symons**, is serving at St. Peter's, Sturgeon Bay, WI was called to be our lower grade teacher for the 2025-26 School year. She is married to Andrew, who is a special education teacher in the public school. They have two small children.

Keep these called workers and their respective ministries in your prayers.

Let's all ask God to help us trust him to do his will in this process. It is his church and his ministry, and he will always do what is best for his Church – even when we do not always see it. Ask God for patience and help to hold the course and keep his Word.



Meditations

The new series of devotions from *Meditation* begins on Sunday, March 1st. You can pick up a copy today. Get one for yourself and one to share with a family member or friend who could use good daily dose of God's Word!! Some kind of personal devotional life is essential to the spiritual health of the believer. Do not neglect this part of your life with God. The *Meditations* is a good, simple way to do it.

This Week of February 22-March1 :

February 22-28 Christian Education Week

MON 23rd Joint Choir Practice 6:30pm

TUES 24th: Joint Worship Meeting at St. John's, 6:30pm

WED 25th: CALA Joint Campus Day at Montello

Lent Worship: Emmanuel 3:30pm, St. John's 6:30pm

Lenten Supper at St. John's, hosted by ???, 4:30pm

Public School Catechism Class 5:00pm

THU 26th: CALA Spelling Bee at Princeton Gym, 6:00pm

GriefShare at St. John's, 6:00pm

SAT 28th : Men's Breakfast & Study Club at St. John's 8:00am

Art For Dinner at Princeton, preview of baskets and silent auction items
3:30-5:00pm; Dinner 5:00pm

Next Sunday, March 1st: *Second Sunday in Lent.* Our Worship Leader will be Retired Pastor Bill Runke, and our accompanist will be Mr. Robert Mateske, Jr.

Men's Breakfast & Study Club is Saturday, Feb. 28th in the lower level of St. John's at 8:00am. We will have a hearty breakfast, and continue our study on the Smalcald Articles. Men of all ages are welcome to join us, and dad's feel free to bring your kids! Hope you'll join us for food, fellowship and study!

GriefShare is held at St. John's on Thursdays at 6:00pm. If you have questions call Mark Emond 608-697-1600 and leave a message if no answer. *GriefShare* is a safe, welcoming support group where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. In this 13-week program, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. There are no neat, orderly stages of grief, but you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief in all its unpredictability and gain solid support each step of the way.

Easter Flowers sign up sheet is in the information room at St. John's. Orders must be made by March 22.

Parsonage Clean-Up Day is set for Saturday, March 14th. We are in need of some help to get the parsonage tidied up after the construction recently done. If you are able to come and help that day, please contact Jacob Jaster, or Mr. Matt in the office.

CALA is looking to create a new part-time position of Financial Secretary.

This position would report to the Treasurer and the School Board. Duties include recording bank activity into Quickbooks, issuing payments to vendors, coordinating the monthly payroll with an outside accounting firm, recording journal entries, maintenance of the chart of accounts, creating the monthly financial statements and assisting with the annual budget process. Interested individuals should contact Lucas Wolter, President, 920-279-1151 and Don Warnke, Treasurer, 920-471-5137.

Thank You to Those Who Serve as Ushers at St. John’s!

Thank you to today’s ushers who are Jerre Duerr, Kevin Kaul, Mike Kempley and Grayson Kempley. The ushers for March 1 & 4 are: Ben Jaster, Jacob Jaster, Jeff Reimer, Mark Emond.

Worship Attendance from Last Week

Emmanuel

St. John’s 72

Ash Wednesday: Emmanuel 54 St. John’s 54

St. John’s Financials

	Budget	Offerings	All Income	Expenses
January	\$33,436.46	\$22,407.48	\$35,127.13	\$32,092.22
Year to Date	\$234,055.19	\$160,645.51	\$246,971.00	\$212,319.84

Some 2025-26 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026) Highlights

Budgeted Expenses: \$401,238 (\$33,436/month; quarter-time pastor)

Projected Income: \$431,240 (\$35,937/month)

Projected Net Income: \$30,002

Checkbook balance dropped from \$79,716 end of December to \$63,076 end of January. Member offerings of \$151,917 continued to run about 13% under the budgeted \$175,000. Total income of \$246,971 was about 5% under \$258,901 budgeted. Expenses of \$212,320 were about 9% under \$234,055 budgeted. Net income of \$34,651 was ahead of \$24,846 budgeted.

Prayer to Rekindle Our Love of Worship

Heavenly Father, Sundays are sacred. Nevertheless, it's easy for us to approach worship with ho-hum hearts. We see the same people, sing the same songs, pray the same prayers, and hear the same Scriptures. We see it all as so monotonous and mundane. Forgive us! How shallow we are for ever giving your Word such shabby treatment. Have mercy on us! How wrong we are to shortchange your sacraments by viewing them as nothing more than a lengthy add-on to the service. Rekindle in us the love of worship. Draw us to delight in being in your presence. Let our ears and our hearts perk up when your Word is read, and move our mouths to joyfully sing songs of praise. May we glorify you in a worthy manner with our worship, even as you edify and feed us through it. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



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Mr. Martin Raasch - Grade 6-8 mraasch@christalonelutheranacademy.net
Miss Beth Barenz - Grade 3-5 bbarenz@christalonelutheranacademy.net
Mrs. Elizabeth Wolter – K-2 ewolter@christalonelutheranacademy.net
Miss Rachel Huebner - Little Lambs Teacher -littlelambs@stjohnsmontello.org
Mrs. Sylvia Straschinske - Little Lambs Director -lladmin@stjohnsmontello.org
Mrs. Jorgia Kempley – CALA Secretary -
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