

# St. John Lutheran Church

## March 2026 Newsletter

As a community of believers in Jesus Christ, inspired by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the mission of St. John Lutheran Church is to:  
**WORSHIP, WITNESS, LEARN, SERVE and SUPPORT.**

### Teri Talk March 2026 “Holy Lament in the season of Lent”

The season of Lent with its focus on repentance, self-reflection, and spending quiet time in prayer can open us up to feeling vulnerable and emotions we have pushed aside or have been avoiding can bubble to the surface, especially feelings of loss and grief. Allowing ourselves to lament, to cry out our pain, sorrow, and suffering to God, we can experience what it means to sit with our grief rather than try to push it aside. Many faithful believers have wrestled with grief, sorrow, and questions for God about why the innocent suffer. Lament one of the more faithful things we can do. When we approach God with honesty and humility, and we admit that some things are too big for our hearts to bear, we will find there not a disapproving God but one who weeps with us. We will find a God who can take our grief and disappointment and transform them into holy joy and renewed hope. We can lament not only for ourselves, but for others, even our world. Yet ultimately, Jesus’ death on the cross, the place to which the season of Lent leads us, is the reason we never mourn as those without hope.

As you read about what it means to lament and the suggested scripture readings, what comes to mind when you hear the word lament? Are you comfortable with the concept of lament and trying to make it part of your Lenten devotional time and prayer?

What is lament? The Bible is filled with examples of faithful people of God offering up sorrowful or even angry prayers to God. Even Jesus laments over Jerusalem and weeps at the death of a friend. To lament, to grieve, to weep, these are all part of the life of faith. Often, we are too quick to push aside the uncomfortable feelings of grief and loss. We have lost, in some ways, the spiritual discipline of lament: acknowledging the grief that is part of everyday life, holding it, and then placing it gently (or forcefully!) in God’s hands. The laments of God’s people are found in scripture throughout the Bible and we can learn from them the practice of the gift of holy lament. Read Lamentations 3:19-26.

We experience little laments, those things we grieve that, in the grand scheme of life, may feel small but still hurt. The truth about these supposedly little laments is that when they start to add up, they are no longer quite so little. Grief can be cumulative. One disappointment over the course of the year may well be within our ability to cope. Many disappointments, one right after another, may stretch our limits. It is also good to consider that the little things give us an opportunity to learn how to embrace and work through our grief and disappointment. When we offer our little griefs to the God of the universe, we discover that God has space even for non-earth-shattering hurts. As we sense God’s compassion in those moments, it prepares us to turn over the big laments as well, when those come along. Read Psalm 42.

The big laments that are a part of every believer's life. These are the times and situations in which we find our world turning upside down. Such times are disorienting and filled with deep grief. Some worry that our grief is too great for God or that it is inappropriate to share what is really on our hearts, especially when what is on our hearts is confusion and even rage. It is here that the scriptures can give voice to the deep stirrings of our hearts. Consider Psalm 88, a psalm of rage, lament, grief, and sorrow from beginning to end. It is raw. It is real. It ends in dust and shadows and loneliness. And this psalm made it into the Bible! This suggests that our big moments of grief and sadness are also held in God's loving hands. No grief, no sorrow is too great for the God who so loves this world. Read Psalm 88

In the Bible laments take many forms: they can be individual or communal.

An Individual lament is when we talk about a personal affliction or situation. Calling something an "individual lament" can be a bit of a misleading term, because when we grieve, we rarely do so in a vacuum. Even if a loss is deeply personal, those around us may still be touched by the sadness, disappointment, or loss. Although we grieve in different ways about different things, we find common ground when we acknowledge that lament and grief are a part of the life of faith. When we lament, it is good to do so in the company of others. God created human beings to be in relationship, a companionship that is meant to be enjoyed no matter what the circumstances. At its best, the Christian community is a place where we can laugh and sing together, and where we can mourn together as well. Read Psalm 13.

The communal lament is one shared by many people. Sometimes disaster strikes not just one person or household but an entire community, even an entire nation. At such times we can find strength in coming together to mourn, raising our collective voices in a loud cry to God. Just as we need the support of the community when we face individual calamity, we also need one another in the face of a shared disaster. We need one another for strength, for courage, and to help us make sense of what is often senseless: destruction due to natural disaster, or destruction due to human violence. Read Psalm 44:1-10, 13, 17-26.

On Ash Wednesday we heard the prophet Joel call us to return to the Lord with all our hearts. Dear Lord, use this holy season of Lent to reorient our lives toward you. As we raise our voices in lament, comfort us and give us cause for hope. Bless our worship, our work, and our play. Guide us with your Spirit, that we may follow where you lead in confidence and trust. The Lord watches over your going out and your coming in. The Lord shields your joys and holds your sorrows. God bless you and keep you this day and always. Amen

Blessings,  
Pastor Teri

2026

MARCH

CALENDAR YEAR

CALENDAR MONTH

Pastor Teri's Calendar

SUNDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
01 Worship Service 8:15 & 10:30 AM, Communion, travel to Lenexa after church	02 Pastor out of town	03 Pastor out of town, Appt Branson, MO	04 Pastor out of town, RCAOC Lenten Lunch-St Mary's 12-1pm, Lent Dev Svc 6:00 pm-425 Youth Group Leading	05 Pastor out of town, No Bible Study	06 Pastor out of town, Sermon Writing Day	07 Worship Service 6:00 PM, Spring Forward Weekend - set clocks ahead One Hour! NO Communion
08 Worship Service 8:15 AM & 10:30 AM, NO Communion	09 Pastor's Day Off- day of rest & renewal	10 Quilters 1:30-4:00 PM, Exec Comm 5:30 PM	11 RCAOC Lenten Lunch - Trinity 12-1 PM, Lent Dev SVC 6:00 PM, 425 6:30, Choir 7:30 pm	12 Women's Group Bible Study 10:00 AM, Bible Study 1:30 PM, Sign Payroll, RCAOC 5:30 PM- Trinity	13 Pay Day, Pastor's Sermon Writing Day, Appt. 1:00 PM	14 Worship Service 6:00 PM Communion
15 Worship Service 8:15 AM & 10:30 AM. Agape Choir, Communion, Care Home Worship 2-4PM	16 Pastor's Day Off- day of rest & renewal	17 Quilters 1:30-4:00 PM, City Council Opening Prayer 4:30 PM, Happy St. Patrick's Day!	18 Lenten Lunch 12:00-1 PM St. John, Lent Dev Svc 6 pm, 425 Youth Group 6:30 pm	19 Bible Study 1:30 PM, Church Council Meeting 6:30 PM	20 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	21 Worship Service 6:00 PM NO Communion
22 Worship Service 8:15 AM & 10:30 AM Bells, NO Communion.	23 Pastor's Day Off- day of rest & renewal	24 Dr. Appt in Hays 10:45 am, Quilters 1:30-4:00 PM	25 Lenten Lunch 12:00-1 PM Emmanuel-Millberger, Lent Dev Svc 6 pm, 425 Youth Group 6:30 pm, Agape Choir 7:30 PM	26 Bible Study 1:30 PM,	27 Pastor's Sermon Writing Day	28 Palm/Passion Worship Service 6:00 PM Communion
29 Palm/Passion Sunday - Worship Service 8:15 & 10:30 AM Parade of Palms, Communion	30 Pastor's day of rest & renewal, Sign Payroll	31 Pay Day, Quilters 1:30-4:00 PM.	01 Lenten Lunch 12-1 pm First Congregational	02 Maudy Thursday Service 7 PM	03 Good Friday Service 7 PM	04 Easter/Vigil Worship 6:00 PM, Communion

### **Wednesday Evening Lenten Devotional Services**

Each Wednesday evening during Lent, a devotional service of prayer, scripture, and reflection will be held in the Chapel at 6:00 PM. We will take the opportunity to hear again the Gospel message from the prior Sunday to reimagine the conversations that take place between Jesus' friends and adversaries. Each service will be approximately 30 minutes.

**March 4, 2026 6:00-6:30 PM ~ Led by 425 Youth Group**

**March 11, 2026 6:00-6:30 PM**

**March 18, 2026 6:00-6:30 PM**

**March 25, 2026 6:00-6:30 PM**

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### **RCAOC Lenten Lunch Series**

During the Lenten Season, the Russell County Association of Churches will sponsor weekly devotional services with a meal during the noon hour. This year's theme is "*Come Journey with Jesus Christ to a deeper faith and closer relationship with God our Heavenly Father*" and each weekly devotional will explore a different topic related to our theme.

Below is the weekly schedule:

**March 4, 2026, 12:00-1:00 PM – St. Mary's Queen of Angels - Sacrifice**

**March 11, 2026, 12:00-1:00 PM – Trinity United Methodist Church - Temptation**

**March 18, 2026, 12:00-1:00 PM – \*St John Lutheran Church - Forgiveness**

**March 25, 2026, 12:00-1:00 PM – Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Milberger - Redemption**

**April 1, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 PM – First Congregational Church - Renewal**

**Good Friday Community Service – 12:00 PM First Congregational Church**

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### **Holy Week & Easter Services**

**Palm/Passion Sunday March 29, 2026 – 10:30 AM Sunday Worship Procession of the Palms & Children's Donkey Parade (all services this weekend will include Communion)**

**Maundy Thursday Worship Service April 2, 2026, with Communion, 7:00 PM**

**Good Friday Worship Service – April 3, 2026, 7:00 PM**

**Easter Vigil Saturday Evening Worship Service April 4, 2026, 6:00 PM**

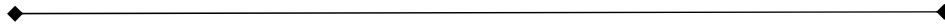
**Easter Sunday Worship Services, April 5, 2026, 7:00 AM & 10:30 PM**

**Easter Breakfast, April 5, 2026, 8:00 AM**

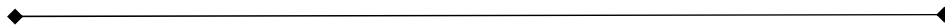


## March 2026 Worship Assistants

6:00 Sat	Greeter/Usher	Reader	Musician
Feb 28.....	Bob & Elaine Voos .....	Elaine Voos.....	Glenda Phillips
Mar 7.....	Kelvie Reeves and Jaden Nuss .....	Kelvie Reeves.....	Curtis Sander
Mar 14.....	Allen and Betty Funk .....	Jeremy Ulrich.....	TBD
Mar 21.....	Darold and Corine Gideon.....	Elaine Voos .....	Pat David
Mar 28.....	Galen and Rudene Niedenthal .....	Galen Niedenthal.....	TBD



8:15 Sun	Greeter/Usher	Lector	Musician
Mar 1.....	Katrine Kolder .....	Katrine Kolder.....	Juanita Flegler
Mar 8.....	Gordon and Cheryl Kraich.....	Cheryl Kraich .....	Juanita Flegler
Mar 15.....	Katrine Kolder .....	Katrine Kolder.....	Glenda Phillips
Mar 22.....	Kurt and Lois DeWald .....	Lois DeWald.....	Margaret Walter
Mar 29.....	Dick and Georganna McCary .....	Georganna McCary .....	TBD



10:30 Sun	Greeter	Usher	Lector
Mar 1....	Mike & Diane Waymaster(N); Margaret Finkbeiner(S)....	Mike & Diane Waymaster....	Gina Langhofer
Mar 8.....	Steve Masden (N); Carol Fritz(S) .....	Steven Masden.....	Judy Holmes
Mar 15.....	Ron and Ginger Tittel(N);Janella Eck(S) .....	Ron and Ginger Tittel.....	Cindy Ross
Mar 22.....	Mark and Alice Fae Johnson(N);Deloris Janne (S)....	Mark and Alice Fae Johnson....	Ruth Keil
Mar 29.....	Morris and Barabra Krug (N); Laura Biles(S) .....	Morris and Barabra Krug .....	Deb Kreutzer

	Acolytes	Musician
Mar 1.....	(8:15 am) Maybelle and Emily Olson .....	Juanita Flegler
.....	(10:30 am) Karrsyn Ross and Rush Brown .....	Juanita Flegler
Mar 8.....	(10:30 am) Rogan and Collins Dumler .....	Juanita Flegler
Mar 15.....	(8:15 am) Bryson Feil and Wesley Johnson.....	Glenda Phillips
.....	(10:30 am) Karrsyn Ross and Sasha Robbins .....	Glenda Phillips
Mar 22.....	(10:30 am)Layken Eck and Campbell Loflin.....	Margaret Walter
Mar 29.....	(8:15 am).....	
.....	(10:30 am) Sasha Robbins and Wesley Johnson ...	TBD



**Bulletin Delivery**

- Mar 6: Denise Guth
- Mar 13: John Boxberger
- Mar 20: Teresa Hilbrink
- Mar 27: Carol Fritz
- Mar 29: Margaret Finkbeiner

**Altar Guild**

Deb Karst - Chair  
 Brenda Yoder- Saturday  
 Lois DeWald, Pam Gudenkauf,  
 Gina Langhofer, Sherri Stoppel



## **St. John Ringers Bell Choir and Agape Choir Schedules**

### **Practices**

<b>Date</b>	<b>St. John Ringers</b>	<b>Agape Choir</b>
March 4 .....	6:30 pm .....	7:30pm
March 11 .....	6:30 pm .....	7:30pm
March 18.....	6:30 pm.....	N/A
March 25 .....	6:30 pm .....	7:30pm



### **Performances**

<b>Agape Choir</b> .....	10:30 am, March 15 .....	Meet in Sanctuary at 9:45 am
<b>St. John Ringers</b> .....	10:30 am, March 22 .....	Meet in Sanctuary at 10:00 am

## **OUR CHURCH RECORDS**

### **Worship Attendance**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>Early</b>	<b>Late</b>	<b>Total</b>
Feb 7 & 8.....	28 .....	20 .....	47 .....	95
Feb 14 & 15.....	18 .....	16 .....	67 .....	101
Ash Wednesday ...	.....			93
Feb 21 & 22.....	21 .....	19 .....	63 .....	103

\*Feb 28 & Mar 01~\* Information not available

### **Offering**

Feb 7 & 8.....	5851.00
Feb 14 & 15 .....	4045.00
Feb (Ash Wednesday).....	1686.00
Feb 21 & 22.....	4535.00
*Feb 28 & Mar 01 ~ * Information not available	

### **425 Youth Group**

~Thank you and job well done to the St. John 425 Youth Group and Chef Jason Krug for hosting the Ash Wednesday Soup Supper on Wednesday February 18, 2026. Through your generosity the 425 Youth raised \$944.00.

~The 425 Youth express their gratitude for the additional donations received from members that helped purchase the supplies and groceries needed for the dinner. Your support means a great deal to us and we are very grateful and thank God for you!

~425 Youth Easter Breakfast Sunday, April 5, 2026 ~ 8:00 am St. John Lutheran Church Parish Hall Enjoy Easter morning fellowship and breakfast (served until 9:15 am or until all the goodies are gone). A free will donation will be accepted to offset costs associated with 425 Youth ministries and activities.

~ 425 will NOT meet over Spring Break

## **Sunday School News**

~USD 407 Spring Break starts after school on Friday, March 13 and classes resume Monday, March 23. Sunday School and Confirmation Classes will NOT be held the first Sunday of Spring Break (Sunday, March 15). Sunday School classes will resume Sunday, March 22, 2026.

~Palm Sunday celebrates the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem! On Sunday, March 29, St. John Sunday School Students will celebrate Palm Sunday by presenting a donkey processional at the beginning of the 10:30 service. All families are encouraged to attend this festive service!

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**~VBS Save the date May 03, 2026 “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” Psalm 118:24~**

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## **We Gather As One**

We will be celebrating our 2026 graduates on Sunday, May 3, 2026 during the 10:30 am Worship service. Additional details to follow. The last day of Sunday School classes for Spring 2026 will be Sunday, April 26. Stay tuned for more details about events taking place that day!

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The St. John Back-To-School Giveaway is open to Russell area students from preschool through twelfth grade. Donations of new socks and undergarments, and new or gently worn clothing and shoes in all sizes will be collected starting June 1

**(please do not bring donations before June 1).** All styles of clothing and shoes are accepted – casual, dressy, work appropriate (including scrubs). Specialty items are also accepted including sports uniforms and gear.

## **Election Results from Annual Meeting**

– Council members and officers, Philanthropic benevolence – so sorry but the information on the selection options for Global were not accurate and the council is offering a revote with clarified and verified options. This vote will take place immediately following worship on Sunday, March 29, 2026 (Palm/Passion Sunday.) This will be a very quick process, but we do not feel it is in good faith to not re-do the voting to ensure the choice represents the opinion of the congregation. We are including the options from the congregational meeting and have added one other choice.

**~ Meals on Wheels America**

**~ Lutheran Disaster Response (U.S.)**

**~ Ashland Fire Relief**

• **2026 Annual Meeting** congregation action results:

- By Congregational vote, the following individuals were re-elected to serve a second three-year term on Council. DJ Klema and Lee Keffer
- By Congregational vote, the following individuals were elected to serve a three-year term on Council. Paul Phillips, John Dumler, Amber Ruggels and Mark Johnson

- By Congregational vote, the following Individuals were elected to serve on the Altar Guild: Deb Karst, Carol Fritz, Pam Gudenkauf, Tammy Nuss, Janet Peerman, Carol Krug, and Susan Lorenc.
  - By Congregational vote, the 2025 Philanthropic Funds (total of \$1627.80) were distributed as follows: Dream Theater (local) and Meals on Wheels Kansas (global). The funds will be distributed equally between the two organizations. We will be revoting on the global selection.
  - **February 2026 Council Meeting** office and committee election/appointments:
    - The following individuals were elected to serve as Council officers: Lee Keffer (President), Gaylon Walter (Vice-President), Mark Johnson (Secretary), and Amber Ruggels (Treasurer).
    - Current council members include: Afton Brown, D.J. Klema, Melinda Olson, Heather Pohlman, Pastor Teri Sutherlin, Hadlee Brown, Alex Krug, Mark Johnson, Amber Ruggels, Lee Keffer, Gaylon Walter, John Dumler and Paul Phillips
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It's time to **SPRING FORWARD!**  
When you go to bed **Saturday, March 8,**  
**2026** set your clocks **ahead** one hour!



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**~Lenten Devotionals available~**

A printed devotional is available in our information racks and online on our website.

**~National Quilting Day – March 21~**

Thanks to compassionate people who have put their faith into action and planned, sewn, assembled, and shipped quilts for people in need around the world, Lutheran World Relief has distributed over 28 million quilts. These gifts of love make life brighter, softer, and a bit more comfortable for our neighbors around the world struggling with chronic poverty, illness, natural disaster, and conflict.

You may participate in this ministry even if you cannot come during the “official” gathering time on Tuesday afternoons. If you like to sew, there are quilts packs available that can be assembled at home or help assemble the quilt packs from our large selection of fabric by cutting 10 ½ inch squares for use in the quilts. Donations to support this ministry are always welcome and are used for the purchase of batting, supplies, and postage for sending the quilts to LWR.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry provides crocheted and knitted blankets to bring comfort to people in times of illness, recovery and grief. Anyone who enjoys knitting or crocheting can participate in this ministry even if you are unable to attend the group gathering time on Mondays at 10:00 am. Yarn is supplied by this ministry and the making of the prayer shawls can be done at home.

**Candle and Lily forms ~ Forms Available Online on the Front Page of our Website**

You are invited to remember or honor loved ones during the Easter season by donating a lily or sponsoring a candle to be used to decorate the sanctuary and chapel Easter weekend. Lilies and candles may also be presented to the Glory of God.

A limited number of candle sponsorships are available for \$20.00 each, and are available on a first come, first served basis. Donated lilies may be delivered or brought to St. John no earlier than Friday, April 3 (Good Friday).

Completed donation or sponsorship forms must be submitted to the office – no lily or candle requests will be accepted over the phone. Lily donation and candle sponsorship forms will be available in early March, and will be located on the bulletin board in the main hall or in the church office. Please note: there are TWO forms – one for lilies and one for candles.



To be included in the Easter weekend bulletins, forms (and payment, where appropriate) must be received no later than March 23, 2026.

Lilies may be picked up Tuesday, April 7 from 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm. Lilies remaining after Friday, April 10 will be disposed of.

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**Day and Date change on Council**

– In March the Executive Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 5:30.  
The Church Council will begin meeting on the third Tuesday of the month starting in April. In March the Council will meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30 PM.  
Tuesday April 14, 2026 Executive Council 5:30  
Tuesday April 21, 2026 Church Council 6:30

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**~Ladies Meeting takes place the second Thursday of March (March 12, 2026) in the Parish hall at 10:00 A.M.~**

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Camp Tomah Shinga Annual Auction and Open House takes place April 25, 2026 from 4:00pm to 9:00pm

Visit their website for details

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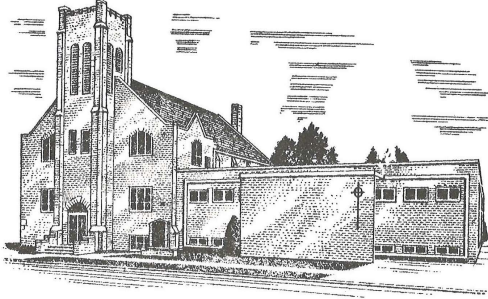
There is a **Card Shower** in honor of Jan Jack for her 90th birthday. Let's fill her day with love, memories, and warm wishes by sending a card to help make this celebration extra special.

If you'd like to send her a card, please send your card by

March 10, 2026.

Address: 1416 N. Culp St.

**St. John Lutheran Church  
425 N. Main Street  
Russell, KS 67665**



## **March 2026 Newsletter**

**St. John Lutheran Church  
Pastor Teri Sutherlin**

785-483-5358  
[stjohn@ruraltel.net](mailto:stjohn@ruraltel.net)  
stjohnrussell.com

Worship Services

6:00 pm Saturday  
8:15 and 10:30 am Sunday

**\*\*NEW Office Hours\*\***

**Monday through Friday  
\*\*1:30 pm to 5:00 pm\*\***

**St. John Lutheran Church**

***Clergy and Staff***

Pastor Teri Sutherlin ([pastor@ruraltel.net](mailto:pastor@ruraltel.net))  
Kelvie Reeves, Administrative Assistant  
Shayla Peck, Bookkeeper  
John Kreutzer, Custodian

***Church Council***

President: Lee Keffer  
Vice President: Gaylon Walter  
Secretary: Mark Johnson  
Treasurer: Amber Ruggels

Members: Afton Brown, Hadlee Brown, D.J. Klema, Alex Krug, Melinda Olson, Heather Pohlman, Pastor Teri Sutherlin, John Dumler and Paul Phillips



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America