



St. Mary's Lutheran Church ~ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
2001 80th Street ~ Kenosha, WI 53143 (262)658-3555

www.stmaryslutheran.org

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026
6:00pm**



PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

God loves the field mouse.

God loves the crows that take flight when church bells ring.

God loves the baby, cooing in the back pew.

God loves the child who rocks and claps.

God loves the one with wrinkled hands and soft eyes.

God loves the bumblebees and the tabby cats.

God loves those who walk, crawl, and roll.

**God loves the giant oaks and the evergreens,
standing strong over all of us.**

God loves the young, the impressionable, and the earnest.

There is no bit of creation that God does not love.

So let us worship this good-news God!

Amen!

OPENING HYMN #565 *"All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night"*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

God said, "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them."

Holy God, we confess, we have mistreated the immigrants in our land.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

We confess, we have clung to guns and war more than we have pursued peace.

God said, "When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow."

**We confess, we have hoarded our resources and failed to care for
our neighbors.**

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them."

We confess, we have gatekept the good news in unfair ways.

Fortunately for all of us, God also said,

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine."

**By God's grace, despite our sin and shortcomings,
we are redeemed, claimed, forgiven, and loved.**

May this good news change our lives!

Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 19:13-15

Then children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them, but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

POEM / REFLECTION:

"UNWRITTEN AGREEMENT"

We have this unwritten agreement,
us members of humanity.
When the toddler at the coffee shop runs round
the corner,
when her mom, at the register, looks up in panic,
we, the adults in the room, will pledge,
with quick smiles and silent head nods, to keep watch.
We will lean out of our seats.
We will put down our phones.
We will stand at the ready
to scoop up,

to offer words of comfort,
to make silly faces,
to keep an eye on the door.
And we will do this,
because we cannot ignore the instinct to care.
We will do this,
because we cannot ignore the child right in front of us.
We will do this,
because love always includes the least of these.

SCRIPTURE READING: Deuteronomy 24:21-22

"When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.

POEM/ REFLECTION:

"THE THINGS THAT MATTER MOST"

I wrecked the family car, an old gold minivan
that had traveled every inch of I-95. It had worn
cushions
and an old school map in the glove box.
It held a folder full of mix CDs under the passenger
seat
and every memory of every family trip,
and I wrecked it.
I called the tow truck while the engine
hissed and smoked. I called my dad,

my own apologies tripping over themselves
to get to the front of the line.
I expected to be grounded.
I expected a "How could you?"
But when I got home that night,
my dad held me close and said,
"A car is just a car, but you are my child.
The only thing that matters is that you are okay."
And I knew it for what it was.
It was mercy. It was love.
It was the thing that mattered most.

HYMN OF THE DAY #781 "Children of the Heavenly Father"

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

**It sounds like welcome
and feels like home.**

**It sounds like laughter
and feels like mercy.**

**It sounds like love
and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

I have seen it alive in the world.

**And even when my heart aches,
even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach,**

**I remember the one who
welcomed the children
and led with nonviolence.**

**I remember the one who
cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.**

**I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world.**

Thanks be to God! Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jesus of Nazareth, [...] In hope, we now join our voices together to pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying

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.

Please stand in body or spirit.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

SENDING HYMN *"Singing Promise on the Way"*

BENEDICTION

As you leave this place,
when you meet anger, speak with love.
When you meet fear, speak with hope.
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.
But no matter what, speak this good news.
For the good news of the gospel is
love and justice for all.
It is joy that surprises,
and nonviolence that transforms.
The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,
so go forth speaking.
For if you won't, then who will?
Thanks be to God
for this good, good news.

Amen.

SANCTIFIED ART TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD—WORDS FOR WORSHIP FOR LENT-EASTER. Written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed; "Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC " sanctifiedart.org."

Thank you for participating in worship tonight:

The Rev. Dr. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick—Pastor
Kevin Larsen—Assisting Minister & Reader
Deb Black—Musician

Please join us next week on March 25 for our final service, when Pastor Jordan will lead this worship service along with an assisting minister, and musician. *The good news is ...rooted in justice, mercy, and faithfulness.*

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES SCHEDULE

(all in our sanctuary unless otherwise noted)

- ⇒ Saturday Worship—March 28 @4pm—Holden Evening Prayer (no communion)
- ⇒ Palm Sunday—March 29 @ 9am—Brass, Bells & Choir w/Communion
- ⇒ Maundy Thursday—April 2 @ 6:00pm
- ⇒ Good Friday—April 3 @ Noon at St. Paul's Lutheran Church
8760 37th Ave, Kenosha, WI 53142
- ⇒ Youth Led Good Friday Service—April 3 @ 7pm
- ⇒ Saturday Easter Vigil—April 4 @5:00pm Carthage College Siebert Chapel
(no worship at SMLC on 4/4)
- ⇒ Easter Sunday Morning—April 5 @9:00am