

HOLY EUCHARIST  
THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT  
FEBRUARY 22, 2026 | 10:30AM

# ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

**ALL ARE  
WELCOME!**



**Parish Office:**  
[parishoffice@sjlcstamford.com](mailto:parishoffice@sjlcstamford.com)

**Pastor Martha:**  
[MMcCreight@sjlcstamford.com](mailto:MMcCreight@sjlcstamford.com)

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[www.stjohnelca.org](http://www.stjohnelca.org)

884 Newfield Ave., Stamford, CT

We are delighted to have you with us today! To help us keep track of our cherished visitors, we kindly ask that you sign the visitor book located in the Narthex. This small gesture allows us to connect with you and offer any assistance you may need. Additionally, our ushers are more than happy to provide guidance and answer any questions you might have during worship. Whether you're here for the first time or returning, we hope you feel welcomed.



Join us for  
**Godly Play**  
Every Sunday at 10:30

Busy bags are in the Narthex for your little ones to enjoy. These bags are thoughtfully prepared to keep children engaged during the service. Additionally, we invite you to explore and make use of the Godly Play area at the back of the Nave, designed to provide a welcoming and enriching environment for our young attendees. We hope these resources help create a meaningful and enjoyable experience for your family.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**All are welcome! We share Christ's love, grow in faith, and serve others.**

Welcome to St. John's. We invite you to join us as an active participant in the worship of God.

**PRELUDE**

**THE PRELUDE SIGNALS A TIME OF SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION.**

*We stand.*

**CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.*

Blessed be God:  Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen**

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

**His mercy endures forever.**

Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart, and confess our sins unto God our Father, asking him, in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to you, that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against you by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring your grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**O most merciful God, who has given your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy on us, and for his sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of you and of your will, and true obedience to you Word, that by your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

**THE GREAT LITANY**

*Sung by all.*

**HYMN 238**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*We sit.*

## WORD

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### OLD TESTAMENT READING

GENESIS 2:15-17; 3:1-7

A reading from Genesis.

**T**HE Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

<sup>16</sup>And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

<sup>1</sup>Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; <sup>5</sup>for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Here ends the readings.

*Sung by the choir. Music by Sarah MacDonald (contemporary)*

<sup>1</sup> Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, \*  
and whose sin is put away!

<sup>2</sup> Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, \*  
and in whose spirit there is no guile!

<sup>3</sup> While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, \*  
because of my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup> For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; \*  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

<sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you, \*  
and did not conceal my guilt.

<sup>6</sup> I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” \*  
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; \*  
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

<sup>8</sup> You are my hiding-place;  
you preserve me from trouble; \*  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

<sup>9</sup> “I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; \*  
I will guide you with my eye.

<sup>10</sup> Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; \*  
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,  
or else they will not stay near you.”

<sup>11</sup> Great are the tribulations of the wicked; \*  
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; \*  
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

A reading from Romans.

**T**HEREFORE, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned—<sup>13</sup>sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup>Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to

come. <sup>15</sup>But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup>And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup>If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all.<sup>19</sup>For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*We stand.*

SEQUENCE

SING VERSE 1

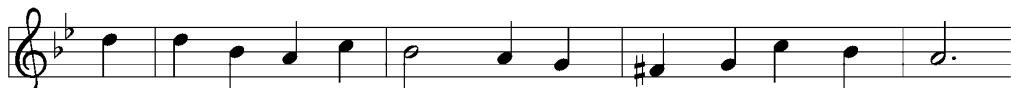
HYMN 326



1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,  
 2 Bless so - journ-ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;  
 3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.  
 your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus-tains the day.  
 We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun-tain round,  
 We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;  
 but wait-ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.  
to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.  
Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

## GOSPEL

MATTHEW 4:1-11

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the fourth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**T**HEN Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.<sup>2</sup> He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” <sup>4</sup>But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” <sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, “saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” <sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SEQUENCE

SING VERSE 2

*We sit.*

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

## SERMON

THE REV<sup>D</sup> MARTHA MCCREIGHT

*We stand.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*A mighty fortress*

HYMN 505

## APOSTLES' 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.

*We kneel or sit.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*We stand.*

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*We sit.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

# MEAL

## OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Walk in love, as Christ loved us  
and gave himself for us,  
an offering and sacrifice to God.



## OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Let nothing ever grieve thee* BRAHMS

*We stand.*

## HYMN AT THE PRESENTATION CREATE IN ME

HYMN 188

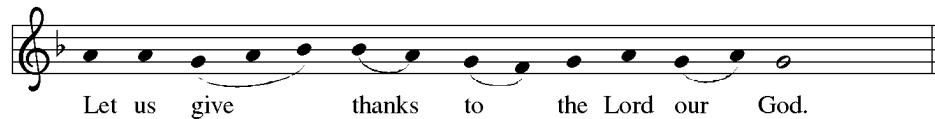
A musical score for a hymn. The music is in common time with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score consists of five lines of music with corresponding lyrics.

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right  
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your  
pres-ence, and take not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-  
store un-to me the joy of your sal-va-tion,  
and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

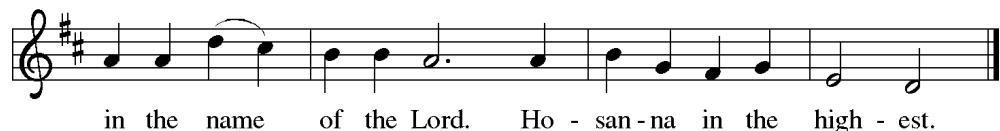
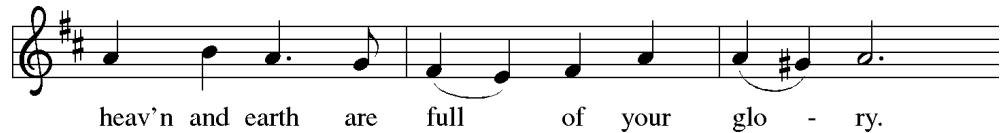
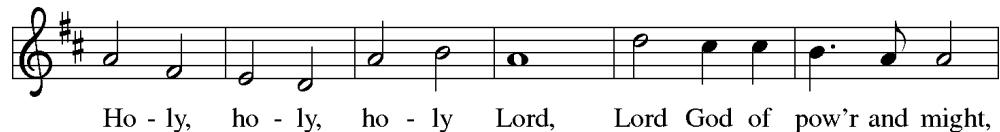
## GREAT THANKSGIVING

A musical score for the Great Thanksgiving. The music is in common time with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score consists of two lines of music with corresponding lyrics.

The Lord be with you. And al-so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.



It is indeed salutary . . . *Here the minister continues with the preface for the dox concluding:*  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,  
his life-giving passion and death,  
his glorious resurrection and ascension,  
and the promise of his coming again,  
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,  
not as we ought but as we are able;  
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving  
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,  
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,  
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ  
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,  
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,  
may be formed to live as your holy people  
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.  
To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

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

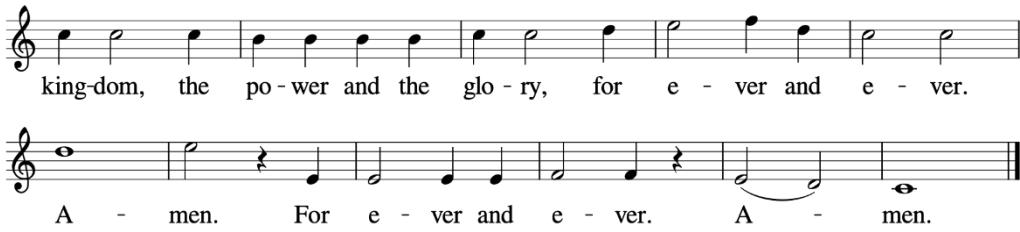
Our Fa - ther who art in hea - ven, Ha - llow'd be thy Name;

Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in hea - ven.

Give us this day our dai - ly bread. And for - give us our tres-pass-es as

we for-give those who tres - pass a - gainst us. And lead us

not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - li - ver us from e - vil. For thine is the



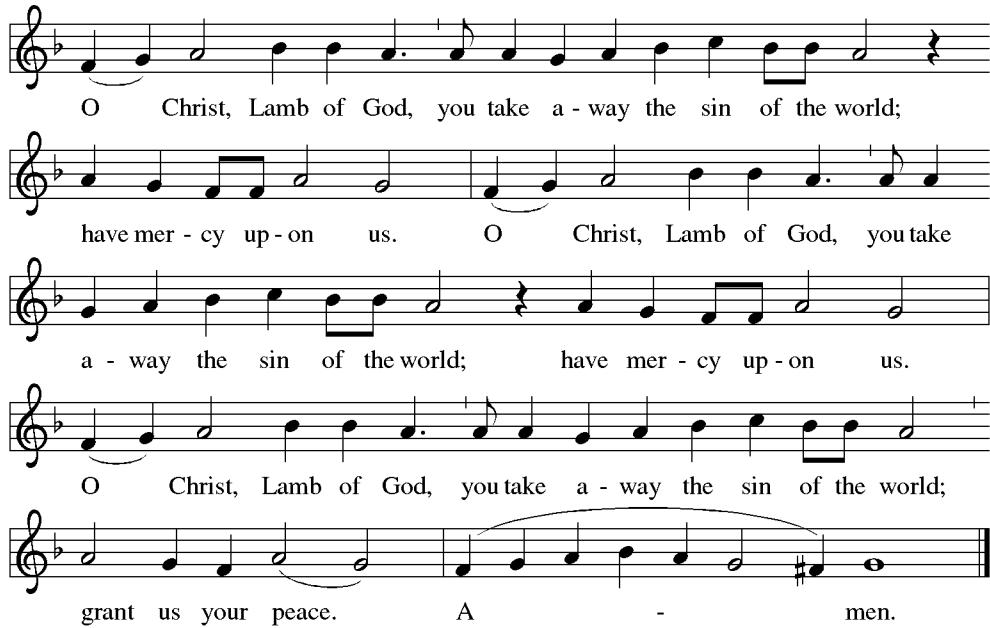
### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast.

*All who believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine, forgiving sin and promising eternal life, are welcome to the Table of the Lord. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.*

### LAMB OF GOD



*We sit.*

### MUSIC AT THE DISTRIBUTION

HYMN

*Thy holy wings*

HYMN 613

*We stand.*

## POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## SENDING

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### BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, **☩** Son,  
and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### HYMN AT THE PROCESSION

*O Lord, throughout these forty days*

**HYMN 319**

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### POSTLUDE

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*The Lord's Prayer, trad. Afrikaans, arr./translated by Marnus Lively-Greyling*

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## WORSHIP LEADERS TODAY

Celebrant & Preacher	The Rev. Martha McCreight, Pastor
Organist	Cantor Nathan Lively-Greyling
Worship Assistant	
Reader	David Hendrickson
Communion Assistants	Eric Lane
Acolytes	
Usher	
Altar Committee	Eva Jakubek, Cheryl Milukas
Counters	Noel Bartels, David Hendrickson
Coffee Hour	
Little Free Pantry	Cathy & Mike Mahler

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

### Tuesday, February 24

- 6:15 pm Executive Committee Meeting
- 7:15 pm Church Council Meeting
- 7:00 pm Sneak Peek Bible Study



UPCOMING

EVENTS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Wednesday, February 25

- 11:15 am First Weekly Lenten Lunch and Bible Study
- 12:00 pm First Weekly Lenten Eucharist in the Nave
- 12:15 pm First Weekly Lenten Organ Meditation

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## -AROUND THE PARISH-

If you're **interested in joining St. John's**, reaching out to the church office is a great first step. The church office can provide information on membership, upcoming events, and the various ministries and programs you can get involved with. Whether you're looking to deepen your faith, find a spiritual community, or volunteer, the church office is there to support and guide you. Don't hesitate to contact them with questions or to schedule a visit to learn more about what St. John's offers.

Join us for our **First Holy Communion classes** for children in grades 1-5. Classes will begin in February, offering thorough and engaging preparation for this important sacrament. The First Communion is scheduled for Maundy Thursday, April 2, at 7 PM. This marks a significant milestone in your child's spiritual journey, and we are excited to be part of it. For more information or to enroll your child, please contact our office. We look forward to guiding your child through this sacred experience.

**Baptisms** will take place at the Easter Vigil this year on April 4 at 7 PM. This sacrament marks a new beginning and a spiritual rebirth. Those interested in being baptized, or parents wishing to have their child baptized, are encouraged to reach out to Pr. Martha, for more information and to make necessary arrangements.

On March 8 at 5 PM, Beckie Davy, the **renowned organist** from Bruton Parish Church in Colonial Williamsburg, VA, will perform a concert at St. John's. Beckie is celebrated for her expertise in early music and commissioning new works, especially by female composers.

## **Large Print Bulletins Available!**

Large print bulletins are now available for anyone who needs them. If you or someone else needs a copy, please visit the narthex and ask an usher for help. Thank you for helping us ensure everyone can fully participate in our service!

We are updating our **church photo directory**! To ensure it accurately reflects our vibrant community, we kindly ask you to contact the parish office with your updated photo, phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses. This update will help us stay connected and support each other better. Please reach out at your earliest convenience to share your information.

## **WE NEED YOU!**

### **ACOLYTE SIGN-UP**



### **WORSHIP ASSISTANTS, COMMUNION ASSISTANTS, READERS, USHERS, COFFEE HOUR, AND LFP SIGN-UP**



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## **PRAYER LIST**



Pastor Emeritus Dennis Albrecht, Beryl, Charlotte, Diane, Robert, and Valerie, Dom and family and friends of Pr Nick, unspoken, Gary, Br. Ian, Pr Harv Weitzel, Trish, Pam, Robert, Charlotte, Paul, Becky, Donna, and family of Ron Meyer.

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If you have someone to add to the prayer list, please email the parish office.  
Contact Pr Martha for pastoral needs.

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## Lent, Holy Week, and Easter 2026 @ St. John's

### Lenten Wednesdays at St. John's

11:15 PM Book study and brown bag lunch  
12 PM Noon Eucharist  
12:15 PM to 12:45 PM Lenten Organ Meditations

### Mid-lent choral evensong | *March 15*

5pm at St. Francis Episcopal  
Father Andrew Kryzak from St. John's Episcopal is preaching.  
Combined choirs from St. John's Lutheran, St. John's Episcopal,  
and St. Francis.  
*\*This service will be livestreamed for those who don't wish to travel to St. Francis.*

### Palm-Passion Sunday | *Sunday, March 29*

10:30am single service in St. John's Lutheran Nave

### Maundy Thursday | *April 2*

First Holy Communion | 7pm  
Altar of Repose | 8pm to Midnight in St. John's Lutheran Chapel  
Reading of the St. John Passion | midnight in St. John's Lutheran Chapel

### Good Friday | *April 3*

Stations of the Cross | 12:15 PM  
Good Friday Concert | 7:30pm at Fish Church, Stamford

### Great Easter Vigil | *Saturday, April 4*

First Mass of Easter at 7 PM | with a combined choir and brass

### Easter | *Sunday, April 5*

Holy Communion | 8:30am & 10:30am  
9:30am Easter Egg Hunt

# LENTEN ORGAN MEDITATIONS

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN  
STAMFORD, CT

FEBRUARY 25  
MARNUS LIVELY-GREYLING

MARCH 4  
JAN LUCIE

MARCH 11  
LIYA PETRIDES

MARCH 18  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF  
PENNSYLVANIA ORGAN DEPT

MARCH 25  
NATHAN LIVELY-GREYLING



Join us each  
Wednesday for  
30-minute  
meditations from  
12:15pm-12:45pm



# Melodies of Renewal

A Springtime Organ Celebration



**REBECCA DAVY**

Organist at the historical Bruton Parish Church  
Colonial Williamsburg, VA

**Sunday, March 8 | 5PM**

St. John's Lutheran Church

Stamford, CT





## *Veilng the Cross*

Christ's resurrection. Whether veiling occurs throughout Lent or only during Passiontide, it enhances our spiritual journey by building anticipation for the joy and clarity of Easter, as the disciples did when they recognized Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

**Veiling the cross during Lent** is a powerful tradition that highlights the season's penitential tone. Just as we avoid using the word "Alleluia," veiling acts as a visual and sensory fast, reminding us of our separation from God caused by sin. This practice echoes ancient customs of penitent Jews who used sackcloth and ashes to signify repentance. It also mirrors the biblical story of Moses veiling his face after meeting God's glory, emphasizing the limited understanding we have in this earthly life. The Apostle Paul expresses this idea in his letters, suggesting that our current view is like looking through a dim mirror. Yet, at Easter, the veil is removed, symbolizing the revealing of

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## INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church, Stamford, CT, is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee Lenape, Schaghticoke, Mohican, and Wappinger peoples. We give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial and wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.