



***St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran
Church & School***

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

709 Milton Ave., Janesville, WI 53545

Church & School Phone: 752-1304

James Janke, Pastor 563-4383

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www.stmatthewsjanesville.org

Worship for the 3rd Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

Opening Hymn: Today Your Mercy Calls Us CW 916

**1 Today your mercy calls us
to wash away our sin.**

**However great our trespass,
whatever we have been,
however long from mercy
our hearts have turned away,
your precious blood can wash us
and make us clean today.**

**2 Today your gate is open,
and all who enter in
shall find a Father's welcome
and pardon for their sin.**

**The past shall be forgotten,
a present joy be giv'n,
a future grace be promised,
a glorious crown in heav'n.**

**3 Today our Father calls us,
his Holy Spirit waits;
his blessed angels gather
around the heav'nly gates.**

**No question will be asked us
how often we have come;
although we oft have wandered,
it is our Father's home.**

**4 O all-embracing Mercy,
O ever-open Door,
what should we do without you
when heart and eye run o'er?
When all things seem against us,
to drive us to despair,
we know one gate is open,
one ear will hear our prayer.**

Invocation

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

C: Amen.

Confession of Sins

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

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

P: Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

**I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you
in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

P: O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament: 2 Samuel 12:1-13

So the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came and told him this: There were two men in a city. One was rich and one poor. ²The rich man had a large number of flocks and herds. ³The poor man did not own anything except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He raised it so that it grew up together with him and his children. It ate from his food and drank from his cup. It slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. ⁴When a traveler came to the rich man, the rich man was unwilling to take an animal from his flock or from his herd to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. So he took the lamb from the poor man and prepared it for the man who had come to him.

⁵David's anger flared up against that man. He said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this is as good as dead. ⁶In place of that lamb, he will restore four lambs, because he did this and had no pity."

⁷Nathan told David, "You are the man."

This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says. I anointed you king over Israel. I rescued you from the hand of Saul. ⁸I gave the house of your master to you, and I gave the wives of your master into your embrace. I gave you the house of Israel and the house of Judah. If this was too little, I would have added even more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in his eyes? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword. You have taken his wife as your own wife. You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰So now the sword will not depart from your house forever, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

¹¹This is what the Lord says. Look! I am raising up disaster against you from your own house. Right in front of your eyes I will take your wives and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie down with your wives in the sight of the sun. ¹²Because you acted in secret, I will do this in front of all Israel in broad daylight.

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan said to David, "The Lord himself has put away your sin. You will not die.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day (tune of CW 916)

♪ **Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
let not your souls distress;
your guilt the Lord will pardon
and cover by his grace.
He comes, for you procuring
the peace of sin forgiv'n,
his children thus securing
eternal life in heav'n.**

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 7:2-11

²Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one. We have corrupted no one. We have taken advantage of no one. ³I am not saying this to condemn you. In fact, I have said before that you are in our hearts—we died together and live together with you! ⁴I have great confidence in you. I am very proud of you. I am filled with encouragement. I am overflowing with joy in all our trouble.

⁵In fact, when we came to Macedonia, our flesh had no relief. Instead, we were troubled in every way—conflicts on the outside, fears on the inside. ⁶But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us with the arrival of Titus, ⁷and not only with his arrival, but also with the comfort he had received concerning you. He told us about your longing, your sorrow, and your serious concern for me. As a result, I rejoiced even more.

⁸For even if I caused you sorrow with my letter, I do not regret it (even though I did regret it, for I see that my letter caused you sorrow—yet only for a little while). ⁹Now I rejoice, not because you

were made to feel sorrow, but because this sorrow resulted in repentance. Yes, you were made sorry in a godly way. So you were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰In fact, godly sorrow produces repentance, which leads to salvation, leaving no regret. On the other hand, worldly sorrow produces death.

¹¹Yes, look what godly sorrow produced in you: what diligence, what eagerness to clear yourself, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what correction! In every way you proved yourselves to be pure in this matter.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Baptismal Waters Cover Me *CW 657*

**1 Baptismal waters cover me
as I approach on bended knee;
my Father's mercy here I plead,
for grievous sins of thought and deed.**

**2 I look to Christ upon the tree,
his body broken there for me;
I lay before him all my sin,
my darkest secrets from within.**

**3 Lord, may your wounded hand impart
your healing to my broken heart;
your love alone can form in me
a heart that serves you joyfully.**

**4 From your own mouth comes forth a word;
your shepherd speaks, but you are heard;
through him your hand now stretches out,
forgiving sin, destroying doubt.**

**5 Baptismal waters cover me;
Christ's wounded hand has set me free.
Held in my Father's strong embrace,
with joy I praise him for his grace.**

Sermon: Luke 13:1-9

At that time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²He answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered these things? ³I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all perish too. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse sinners than all the people living in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all perish too.”

⁶He told them this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it, but he did not find any. ⁷So he said to the gardener, ‘Look, for three years now I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and I have found none. Cut it down. Why even let it use up the soil?’ ⁸But the gardener replied to him, ‘Sir, leave it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put fertilizer on it. ⁹If it produces fruit next year, fine. But if not, then cut it down.’”

Repentance—The Only Tool You Need

I. And the call to repent is for everyone

II. And the time to repent is now

Apostles’ Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offering

Prayer of the Church

P: Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your dear Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

C: Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.

P: Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.

C: Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

P: Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

C: Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.

P: Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

C: Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

P: Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

C: Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

P: Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity.

Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

C: Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

P: We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

C: Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.

P: Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again, and hear us as we pray the prayer he taught us...

C: 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.

Hymn: As Surely As I Live, God Said CW 656

1 "As surely as I live," God said,
"I would not see the sinner dead,
but that he turn from error's ways,
repent, and live through endless days."

2 And so our Lord gave this command:
"Go forth and preach in ev'ry land;
bestow on all my pard'ning grace
who will repent of sinful ways.

3 "All those whose sins you thus remit
I truly pardon and acquit,
and those whose sins you do retain
condemned and guilty shall remain.

4 "What you will bind, that bound shall be;
what you will loose, that shall be free;
unto my Church the keys are giv'n
to op'n and close the gates of heav'n."

5 The words which absolution give
are his who died that we might live;
the minister whom Christ has sent
is but his humble instrument.

6 When ministers lay on their hands,
absolved by Christ the sinner stands;
he who by grace the Word believes
forgiveness, sure and sweet, receives.

7 Praise God the Father and the Son
and Holy Spirit, Three in One,
as was, is now, and so shall be
forever and eternally!

Prayer

P: Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Benediction

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: Fruitful Trees, the Spirit's Sowing CW 595

**1 Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing,
may we ripen and increase,
fruit to life eternal growing,
rich in love and joy and peace.**

**2 Laden branches freely bearing
gifts the Giver loves to bless;
here is fruit that grows by sharing,
patience, kindness, gentleness.**

**3 Rooted deep in Christ our Master,
Christ our pattern and our goal,
teach us, as the years fly faster,
goodness, faith, and self-control.**

**4 Fruitful trees, the Spirit's tending,
may we grow till harvests cease;
till we taste, in life unending,
heaven's love and joy and peace.**

Members, Visitors & Guests—Welcome to St. Matthew’s!

May God open our ears to hear and our hearts to respond to his call to repentance knowing that now is the time to repent!

If you are visiting our service, please sign a “care card” in the church pew or our guest book and come back to visit again soon.

Attendance Last Week— 185 (107, 78) Bible Study - 60

Offering Last Week—\$14,304.25 Sunday School – 14

(Meeting our 2025 Ministry Plan requires weekly offerings of \$15,324.00.)

“This is what the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, says:

If you repent and wait quietly, you will be saved.”

Isaiah 30:15

Announcements:

1. **Funeral** Dorothy Nolte was called to her eternal home on Saturday, March 15, 2025. A funeral service will take place on Saturday, March 29 at St. John’s Lutheran, 6802 W. Forest Home Ave., Milwaukee. For more information, please see the Schaff Funeral Services website. We extend our deepest sympathy to her loved ones. *May God comfort those who mourn with his precious promises in Christ Jesus.*
2. **Sunday Morning Bible Class** – Sunday morning Bible class will meet today in between services in the fellowship hall. We will continue study of the Lord’s Prayer. Please join us!
3. **The Women’s Bible Study** The Women’s Bible Study are currently studying Jacob returning with his family to Egypt and meeting up with Joseph. The women meet in the library at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday mornings. All women are welcome to attend!
4. **Sunday School** Sunday School will begin at 9:15 a.m. We will meet in the library for opening devotion. The children may be picked up in their classrooms at 10:15 am.
5. **Lenten Services** We observe this sacred season with special midweek Lenten services. Our fourth service will be on Wednesday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m. Our theme for this year’s Lenten services will be *“Prophecies Fulfilled in the Passion of Christ”*. *“A light supper is served prior to the service beginning at 5:00 p.m.*

6. **Mission Sunday and Mission Festival.** On Sunday, March 30th, St. Matthew's will host the Janesville Area WELS Mission Festival. The event will feature guest minister, Pastor Ross Chartrand of Cornerstone Lutheran Church, a home mission church outside of Bentonville, Arkansas, as well as mission displays, food, adult and teen presentations, and children's activities. Our Taste of Missions potluck will run from 11:30am-12:30pm, activities and sessions begin at 12:30pm, and displays will be available for viewing throughout the day. Let us know you are coming to afternoon sessions and activities by signing up on the St. Matthew's website.
7. **Taste of Missions Potluck** will be held on Mission Sunday, March 30th immediately following the 10:30am service. Do you have a special recipe for an international or ethnic dish or recipe specific to a region in the US? Maybe tacos from Mexico, cucumber salad from Thailand, sauerkraut from Germany, pasta from Italy, even local items, like cheese curds, pair perfectly with our Wisconsin home missions! Items can be entrees, side dishes, desserts, even drinks. Sign up on the narthex bulletin board.
8. **Easter Flowers.** 'To the glory of God' Easter flowers may be ordered. They will be available for \$20 each if a quantity of 25 are purchased. Envelopes are available on the lower bulletin board. Please fill in the needed information on the envelope and enclose payment. Checks may be made payable to St. Matthew's Evening Guild and placed in the offering plate or left in the office. **The deadline for ordering is April 9.** Thank you for your beautiful gift. Flowers may be taken home beginning on Easter Sunday after the 10:30 am service.
9. **Easter Orchestra** Anyone interested in putting musical gifts to work serving God and his people as part of an orchestra that will perform on Easter Sunday at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m., should speak with Jack Schroeder or sign up on the bulletin board in the lower hallway. You may contact him at 608-752-0922. **The band will rehearse in the balcony from 2:00 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 19.**

10. **Custodians Are Needed** We are looking for part time custodians to help with the cleaning of the school area. We are looking for someone to work 1-2 days per week for 2-3 hour shifts. If you are interested in this paid position, please contact Phil Fry at (608) 208-2178.

11. **SAVE THE DATE**—The LWMS spring rally is scheduled for **Saturday, April 26** at Good Shepherd in Beloit, WI. The itinerary for the ½ day rally includes registration and a light breakfast from 8-9 am, a devotion, mission presentation and business meeting, followed by lunch. Rev. Kevin Hundley and Staff Minister Julia Boggs from Hope Lutheran Church in Deerfield, WI will be the guest speakers. They will give us information on how the Good News of Christ is being shared in the Deerfield mission, with one emphasis being music for children Consider attending the rally to learn more about this mission's opportunities as well as its challenges! We will need to RSVP a head count to the ladies at Good Shepherd, so please either sign up on the sheet provided in the narthex or call Ann Janke (608) 563-4383 by **Wednesday, April 9**.

*If you are in need of childcare while at the rally, Good Shepherd is offering that service during the rally...just let Ann know so she can reserve you a spot!

12. **LWMS Mission Offerings**—Mission offerings can be given to Ann Janke at church or mailed to her. Checks should be made payable to St. Matthew's Evening Guild. They need to be given to our Rock River circuit treasurer by April 11, so please have your mission offering to Ann by Wednesday, April 9, as well. The offerings collected from our Rock River Circuit will be designated for 100 Missions in 10 Years (Home Mission) and Native American Missions (World Mission).

Please continue to pray for the spread of the Gospel through our WELS missionaries and mission opportunities!

13. **2025-2026 Preschool Enrollment** We will be accepting preschool enrollment forms for the coming school year. Our program for 3 year olds will meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00–11:15 a.m. Children must be 3 years of age by September 1st.

Our 4 year olds will meet on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 8:00-11:15 a.m. Children registering for this class must be 4 years old by September 1st. We are also offering wrap-around care for students after preschool is over. This new program started five years ago. We would like you to get the applications in by **May 23** so a spot can be reserved for you. Shortly after that we will begin advertising to the public that there are spots available for next year. If you have any questions about our preschool or would like an enrollment form, please contact Mr. Joel Sonntag or Mrs. Cathy Sonntag.

14. **Easter for Kids!** Please consider volunteering for **Easter for Kids on Saturday, April 12, 2025**. In order to make this event successful we need your help! If you are interested in teaching, helping, or setting up please contact Cathy Sonntag at 754-3994 or sign up on the board in the lower hallway.
15. **Easter for Kids Registration has begun. Early registration is needed for planning.** Please sign your child (age 4 through 6th grade) up by Wednesday, April 9. Signup sheets are located in the narthex (next to the mailboxes) and you can also signup ONLINE at www.stmathewsjaneseville.org by clicking the link Event and following the directions. Please take extras (to give to neighbors & friends). Since this program is an outreach event, we strongly encourage invitation of your child's friends and neighbors. Enrollment can also be done by calling the church at 752-1304.
16. **Easter for Kids Cut Out Cookie & Snack Donations** We are in need of 18 dozen unfrosted cutout cookies and other snack items for Easter for Kids! A religious Easter theme will be used such as crosses, eggs, butterflies, and flowers for the cookies. Please check out the sign-up in the lower hallway to see if you can help. Thank you!
17. **Ways that you can help at St. Matthew's** Cleaning our church – Two families clean the church and narthex areas each week. Cleaning duties are listed on a sheet on the bulletin board coming up the ramp to church. You would be asked to clean about once every four to six months with another family. If you are available for cleaning, please contact Phil Fry at 608-208-2178.

Greeters - We are looking for volunteers to help greet at the beginning of first and second services. If you are interested, please call Dale Beutin at 608-774-5177.

18. **Ushers Needed** Many of our ushering teams are in need of help, especially in the second service. We will train you. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please text or email me. Leave your name and phone number and which service you prefer. Thank you for taking this opportunity to serve! Bob Williams 608-751-0731 alas52@yahoo.com

Assisting with Worship

Organist:

Tom May

Ushers:

8:00 a.m. – Doug McIlvain, Jeff Burandt, Nathan Wagner

10:30 a.m. – Steve Sage, David Johnson

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. – Tim Stirmel, Connor Stirmel

Next Week Ushers:

8:00 a.m. – Mark Schulz, Mike Lenser, Kevin Paasch

10:30 a.m. – Fred Shadoski, Russ Scott, Tim Graffin

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. – Rich Hatfield, Michael Borchardt,

Ryan Borchardt, Kyle Stade

CODS:

Sunday, March 23, 8:00 a.m. – Zach Pfaffenbach

Sunday, March 23, 10:30 a.m. – Brian Hartwig

Wednesday, March 26, 6:30 p.m. – Briton Peterson

Next Week CODS:

Sunday, March 30, 8:00 a.m. – Tim Stirmel

Sunday, March 30, 10:30 a.m. – Jim Daley

Wednesday, April 2, 6:30 p.m. – Trevor Sanchez

Greeters

Sunday, March 23, 8:00 a.m. – Bev Boughton

Sunday, March 23, 10:30 a.m. – John & Joanne May

Assisting with Worship (continued)

Next Week Greeters

Sunday, March 30, 8:00 a.m. – George & Jan Ehlers

Sunday, March 30, 10:30 a.m. – Karin Delong=Eichman

Church Cleaning:

March 29,2025 – Dale Beutin & Theresa Biele families

This Week at St. Matthew's

Sunday

Worship 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School/Bible Class 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday

Seedlings 8:15-9:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study 9:30 a.m.

Lenten Meal 5:00 p.m.

Sr. Choir 5:30 p.m.

Lenten Service 6:30 p.m.

Mission Sunday

Worship with Communion 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School/Bible Class 9:15 a.m.

Taste of Missions Culinary Sampler & Potluck (11:30-12:30)

Fellowship Hall

Festival Activities & Displays (12:30 – 1:30/2:00 p.m.) Gym Lobby

Celebration for Pastor Janke

Dear Members of St. Matthews,

You are cordially invited to join us in celebrating the 40th anniversary in the preaching ministry of Reverend James Janke. The celebration will be held on **Sunday, May 4, 2025** with a church service at 10:00 a.m. and a catered meal to follow. (Please note, there will be no service on Thursday, May 1.) We ask that you please RSVP no later than April 14 to Lori Sage at lsage@stmatthewsjanesville.org, or by phone at 608-752-1304. A card and best wishes box will be set out in the Narthex on Sunday, April 27 and Sunday, May 4. Please plan on attending!

St. Matthew's Fellowship/Outreach Committee