



Dearest Friends,

## Pastor's Corner

This past month has felt like standing at a threshold. Lent has a way of doing that — of slowing us down just enough to notice what is stirring beneath the surface. Not loudly. Not dramatically. But persistently. In quiet conversations. In prayer requests that carry more than a few words can hold. In the way certain hymns seem to linger a little longer than usual. There has been tenderness in this season — some of it visible, much of it not. And yet, alongside that tenderness, there has also been movement. I see it in the way you show up for one another — meals shared, prayers offered, small acts of care that rarely make it into a report but shape who we are as a community. I see it in the way you lean into worship, even when it asks something of you — whether that is sitting in silence a little longer than feels comfortable, or holding space for a story that doesn't resolve too quickly. This is not accidental. This is the work of being the Church.

As we move now toward Easter, we are not leaving Lent behind as if it were something to “get through.” We are carrying it with us — the honesty, the questions, the places where we have noticed our need for grace more clearly than before. Because Easter is not a reset button. It is not a sudden shift into everything being bright and easy and certain. Easter is God meeting us right in the middle of what is real — and speaking life anyway. That matters, especially for those who come through our doors carrying skepticism, hurt, or the sense that the Church has not always lived up to what it proclaims. It matters for those who show up once a year, unsure of what they will find, or whether there is a place for them at all.

The resurrection does not belong only to those who have it all figured out. It is spoken into fear, into doubt, into grief, into places where hope feels fragile at best. Still — Christ is risen. Not because everything is perfect. Not because we are. But because God is faithful. That is the story we will tell together — not just with words, but with the way we welcome, the way we worship, the way we make space for people to come as they are, whether they have been here every week for years or are walking in for the first time in a long time. I am grateful for this congregation — for your willingness to be present to one another, for your openness to depth, for your trust as we continue to shape worship that is honest and alive. We are about to step into a story that has been told for generations, and once again, we are invited not just to hear it, but to live it.

Peace,  
Pastor Bunny



## Walking the Week That Changes Everything

Holy Week 2026 | March 29 – April 5

Holy Week is not just a series of services. It is one unfolding story — and it only makes sense if we walk it together. We begin on Palm Sunday, March 29, waving branches and singing “Hosanna.” It is a day of movement and sound, of hope and expectation. The crowd believes something powerful is about to happen. And it is — just not in the way they imagine.



From there, we move toward the table.

This year, we are placing special weight and intention on Maundy Thursday, April 2, with a dinner church service called *A Living Last Supper*. Instead of gathering in the sanctuary, we will meet in the fellowship hall and sit at tables for a simple meal — closer to how that night actually unfolded. During the meal, members of our congregation will rise and speak as the disciples — not as actors, but as witnesses. We will hear confusion, hope, ambition, tenderness, and betrayal. And in the middle of the meal, just as the Gospel tells it, we will share Holy Communion while we are still eating.

The service will be quieter than usual. There is no dessert. There is no closing blessing. We will leave in silence and carry the weight of the night into Good Friday.

Last year, much of our creative and emotional energy centered on Good Friday. This year, we are intentionally focusing our time and care on Maundy Thursday. Concentrating our attention in one place allows us to engage more deeply rather than spreading ourselves thin.

Good Friday, April 3, remains solemn and honest — a day to stand at the foot of the cross and tell the truth about suffering, grief, and love that does not turn away.

And then comes Easter Sunday, April 5. Easter is not a reset button. It is resurrection breaking into a world that has walked through betrayal, silence, and loss. We will gather to proclaim that death does not have the final word — that hope rises even when we least expect it.

Holy Week is one story told over several days. Each part deepens the next.

I invite you to walk the whole week — from palms to table, from cross to empty tomb. Come ready not just to observe the story, but to sit inside it.

## **Youth News:**

**Sunday School**— Our youth committee has come to the difficult decision to take a break from Sunday School. This decision was not an easy one, but due to a combination of poor attendance and loss of a teaching position, we feel this time may be better used for staff development, collaboration work with other congregations, and planning and visioning for what the future of Our Savior's youth looks like.

We want to assure the congregation that our commitment to the youth is as strong as ever. We certainly do not plan for this to be a permanent break but need some time to see if we can make it better for our kiddos. We understand Sunday School has been a fundamental foundation that many of us have very fond memories of, especially those who have been coming to Our Savior's from a very young age. I am forever indebted to JoAnn Kohl for the legacy she built in the youth here. We ask for patience and prayer as we navigate what's best for our kids. We also welcome your ideas - what would work for your family? What things would you like to see?

Please know that a break from Sunday School is not a break from our youth. Our team is dedicated to continuing to serve our kids the best we can. I know this may cause some unease, but please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have. For now, the last day of Sunday School will be Sunday, March 29th. Hannah

### **Thank You!! Pies for Palms – March 29<sup>th</sup>!**

Thank you to everyone who baked pie, bought pie and ate pie! Thank you also to everyone who helped cut pie and serve pie and also a HUGE THANK YOU to Judy, Cindy and Evelyn who took our “extra” pie down to St. Luke’s Emergency Room so Hannah could share with her co-workers who were busy saving lives even on Palm Sunday. Thank you for what you do!

Thanks to our congregational generosity (and love for pie) our youth was able to collect over \$700 in donations for Vacation Bible School this summer. Thank you so much!!

### **Confirmation!**



## Annual Easter Breakfast!!



Join us from 8:00 – 9:30 on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> for the Annual Our Savior's Easter Breakfast! There will be a free will offering collected all of which will raise money for Vacation Bible School this summer!

Interested in volunteering? There's a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board! Thanks to all who donated food items!



## Lent Bingo!!



Each BINGO will be awarded a prize – see Hannah once you get a BINGO to claim your prize! You can get as many as possible throughout the Lenten season. The last day to claim a BINGO is Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> (Easter Sunday). The goal is to have fun and encourage participation from all ages! Please reach out to Hannah with any questions!

## Phil & Andy's Pantry

In April, we are requesting donations of simple dessert mixes and canned fruit.

Please consider donating cans of fruit such as peaches, pears, pineapple, fruit cocktail and simple dessert items like jello and pudding. Those in need will appreciate anything we are able to share. Thank you from your Stewardship Ministry Team.



## **New Series: Why We Do What We Do in Worship**

Over the coming months, we'll spend a little time exploring the different parts of our worship together—how they fit, what they mean, and why they matter. In the Lutheran tradition, worship has a beautiful shape: Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending. But within that shape are smaller moments that are just as meaningful.

Each month, we'll take one piece at a time—not to add rules or expectations, but to deepen our understanding and enrich our shared experience of worship.

We begin at the very beginning... with **the prelude**.

It's easy to think of the prelude as something that happens *before* worship begins—background music while we settle in, greet one another, and find our place.

But in the life of the church, and especially in the Lutheran tradition, the prelude is not “before” worship.

**It is the beginning of worship.**

The word *prelude* itself simply means “to play before,” but in the church it has taken on a deeper meaning over time. As early as the 1400s, musicians were playing short organ pieces to prepare for worship—testing the instrument, yes, but also shaping the atmosphere of what was to come. Over the centuries, especially in Lutheran contexts, these musical moments became more intentional: not just sound, but *theological preparation*.

By the time of the Reformation, Martin Luther spoke of music as second only to the Word of God in its power to move hearts and proclaim the gospel. Music was never decoration. It was proclamation. It was prayer.

And so the prelude became something more than an introduction.

It became an **invitation**.

When the prelude begins, something sacred is already happening. The space shifts. The noise of the week, the weight we carry, the conversations we bring with us—all of it begins to give way to something else. The prelude creates a threshold between the ordinary and the holy. It is the moment we are invited to arrive—not just physically, but spiritually.

Musicians choose this music carefully. It often reflects the themes of the day, the season of the church year, or the tone of the readings we will hear. It is meant to draw us in, to quiet us, to prepare us—not just individually, but as a community being gathered by God.

In Lutheran worship, we often talk about the shape of the service: **Gathering, Word, Meal, Sending**. The prelude belongs to that first movement—the Gathering. But even more specifically, it is the *very first act* of that gathering. Before a word is spoken, before a hymn is sung, God is already at work—calling us, centering us, drawing us together.

This doesn't mean the prelude must be silent or solemn in one particular way. Some preludes are reflective and quiet. Others are joyful and full. But all of them share the same purpose: **to help us become present to God**.

So as the prelude begins, consider this a gentle invitation:

**Pause.**

**Breathe.**

**Listen.**

Let the music carry you from wherever you've been... into this moment, into this space, into the presence of God.

## 40 Years of Light: Celebrating Our Stained Glass Windows



This spring we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the dedication of our stained-glass windows — a milestone that invites both gratitude and joy.

For four decades, these windows have shaped how we experience worship. They tell the story of Scripture in color and light. They frame our prayers. They catch the morning sun and remind us that faith is not only heard — it is seen.

On our anniversary Sunday, we will hold a special lessons-and-carols style service centered on the windows themselves. Rather than a traditional sermon, the windows will preach. Our youth will introduce each window, and detailed descriptions will be printed in the bulletin so that we can reflect more deeply on the theology and artistry woven into the glass.

An assistant to the bishop will join us to preside at Holy Communion, and the music will echo themes from the original dedication service — honoring our history while celebrating the present.

Following worship, we will gather for a reception designed to welcome former members, previous pastors and staff, donors, and friends of the congregation. This is not simply an anniversary of a building feature; it is a celebration of the faithfulness of a community that has gathered beneath these windows for 40 years.

The light that shines through the glass is the same light that has carried this congregation forward — through change, growth, challenge, and hope.

We hope you will join us for this meaningful and joyful celebration as we give thanks for where we have been and look ahead to where God is leading us next.

Volunteer opportunities for hospitality, decorations, setup, and reception support will be available soon. If you would like to help bring this celebration to life, we would love your participation.



## Wrapping the Synod in Peace

As our Southeastern Iowa Synod prepares for the 2026 Synod Assembly, congregations across the region are being invited to help embody this year's theme: "Peace Be With You."

One of the ways that peace will be made visible is through handmade prayer shawls, lap quilts, and small quilts — gifts of warmth and care created by hands throughout the synod. These pieces will surround the Assembly as tangible reminders of Christ's presence and the prayers of God's people.

Each shawl or quilt may become a keepsake for a voting member or participant, or it may be left behind and later shared with someone in need — extending peace beyond the Assembly itself.

If you knit, crochet, or sew — or if you've ever thought about beginning — this is a beautiful opportunity to participate in something larger than ourselves.

Suggested sizes:

- Prayer shawls: approximately 18–24 inches wide and 60–72 inches long
- Lap quilts: approximately 36 x 45 inches (wheelchair-sized)

If you are able to make one or two items, please let Pastor Bunny know. The synod office needs an estimated count in advance, so it is important that we know what is being created.

Please have finished items brought to church by May 10 so they can be gathered and delivered in time for the Assembly.

This is a simple act — thread, yarn, time, prayer — but together it becomes a visible sign of community and care. Let's help wrap our synod in peace!

## 2026 Financial Update

### Contribution results for the week ending 3/29/2026:

General Giving:	<b>\$1,360.00</b>
Total Giving:	<b>\$2,521.84</b>

### Weekly averages through 3/29/2026 (13 weeks)

Average Actual General Giving:	<b>\$ 3,547.94 (\$46,123.27 YTD)</b>
Average Actual General Expenses:	<b>\$ 4,354.27 (\$56,605.52 YTD)</b>

The averages reported above are the averages of "actual" general giving and general expenses, not the forecasts.

## Serving Our Congregation

Bunny Dillard – Head Pastor

Sue Clapp – Congregation President

David Sampson – Treasurer

Therese Plummer – Office Manager

Hannah Plummer – Children & Youth  
Ministries Director

Forrest Green – Music Director

Terri Hodge – Bell Choir Director

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### Readers

April 5 – Nancy Trout

April 12 – Ann Larson

April 19 – Sue Clapp

April 26 – Suzanne Schmitt

May 3 – Pastor Catherine Burroughs

May 10 – Ardy Erickson

May 17 – Nancy Greer

May 24 - Confirmation

May 31 – Evie Fiester

**\*\*Readers can pick up their reading in the “Reader” mailbox located between the offices in the back hallway.**

### Acolytes

April 5 – Evy Fiester

April 12 – Eric Strottman

April 19 – Mason Schmitt

April 26 – Parker Zeien

May 3 – Parker Zeien

May 10 – Eric Strottman

May 17 – Mason Schmitt

May 24 – Caroline Anderson

May 31 – William Anderson

### Assisting Ministers

April 5 – Sue Clapp

April 12 – Natalie Fiester

April 19 – Hannah Plummer

April 26 – Nancy Greer

May 3 – Hannah Plummer

May 10 – Sue Clapp

May 17 – Natalie Fiester

May 24 – none

May 31 – Nancy Greer

### Ushers

April 5 – D. Sampson, M. Houg, T. Zuber

April 12 – Strottman Family

April 19 – Mark & Suzanne Schmitt,  
Ann Larson, Beth Anderson

April 26 – Fiester Family

May 3 – Sue Clapp, Al Johnson,  
Bob Sindelar

May 10 - D. Sampson, M. Houg, T. Zuber

May 17 – Strottman Family

May 24 – Schmitt’s, A. Larson, B. Anderson

May 31 – Fiester Family

## Prayer for Pastor

April 5 – Laurie Strottman  
April 12 – Ann Larson  
April 19 – Diana Emig  
April 26 – Therese Plummer

May 3 – Ardy Erickson  
May 10 – Natalie Fiester  
May 17 – Lori Hayes  
May 24 – Confirmation  
May 31 – Arnold Strottman

## Greeters

April 5 – Marv Gerjets  
April 12 – Bob Sindelar  
April 19 – Sue Clapp  
April 26 – Suzanne Schmitt

May 3 – Marv Gerjets  
May 10 – Ann Larson  
May 17 – Beth Anderson  
May 24 – Therese Plummer  
May 31 – Sue Clapp

## Children's Sermon

April 5 – Hannah Plummer  
April 12 – Pastor Bunny  
April 19 – Hannah Plummer  
April 26 – Beth Anderson

May 3 – Anna Peterson  
May 10 – Hannah Plummer  
May 17 – Pastor Bunny  
May 24 – Beth Anderson  
May 31 – Hannah Plummer

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## A Pastoral Note on Scams and Staying Safe

Dear friends,

There has been an increase in scam messages where someone pretends to be a pastor or church leader and asks for help. These messages are not from us, but they are designed to sound urgent and personal—and they often target kind, generous people.

You might receive a message that says, “Can you do me a quick favor?” followed by a request to purchase gift cards, send money, or keep the request confidential. Sometimes the email or phone number looks almost correct, but not quite.

Please know this clearly: **our church will never ask for gift cards, money, or personal information through a private text or email like this.**

If you receive a message that seems unusual:

- Pause—urgency is a red flag
- Check the sender carefully
- Do not send money or gift cards

When in doubt, contact the church office or speak with me directly

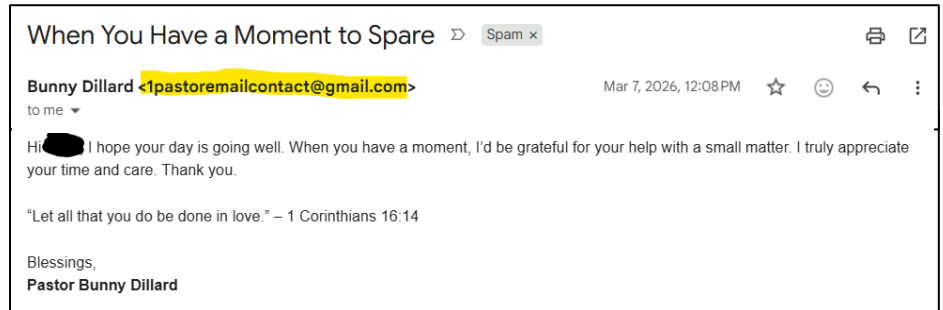
When our church has a financial need, we communicate it openly—in worship, newsletters, or official emails—and giving always happens through our normal, transparent channels.

If you receive a suspicious message, please let us know. Sharing that information helps protect others in our community.

We are a generous people, and that is a gift. Staying attentive helps ensure that generosity is shared in ways that truly bless others.

Peace, today and always,  
**Pastor Bunny**

*Actual spam email to an OSLC member that would probably elevate to scam if replied to*



## Meeting Minutes—Special meeting of the OSLC congregation Sunday, March 15, 2026

Purpose of meeting-congregation to vote on recent council decision to contract with Nesper Sign to design, construct and install a digital sign in the front yard of the church.

Quorum was achieved with 30 members of the congregation signing in for the meeting.

Sue Clapp called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

The purpose of the special meeting is to have the congregation vote on the recent council decision to contract with Nesper Sign to design, construct and install a digital sign in the front yard of the church.

A recap of the project was given by Al Johnson. Points shared included:

- Nesper designed and installed sign - \$48,401.00 plus tax
- Nesper 3 year labor warranty (extended 2 years for OSLC)
- Watchfire 7 year parts warranty (extended 2 years for OSLC)
- Setting sign post – work done by Al Johnson and sons
- New sign will be installed very near the site of the current sign.
- Electrical – provided by electrical contractor – Approximately \$3500.00
- Project covered by memorial funds and pledged donations

The following motion was read by Sue Clapp. *It has been moved the congregation of Our Savior's approve the outdoor digital sign project. Existing sign to be removed. Digital sign to be constructed and installed by Nesper Sign Company. Electrical work to be done by an electrical contractor. Acceptance of Proposal to be signed with Nesper Sign Advertising, Inc. Project to be funded through memorials and other pledged donations.* Therese Plummer seconded the motion.

There were no questions or comments from the congregation.

Therese Plummer and Arnold Strottman distributed paper ballots to the congregation.

Ballots were counted by Therese and Arnold. 27 yes votes, 2 no votes, 1 ballot was not returned.

Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

# Images from Palm Sunday 3-29-26





Picture of Cindy & Evelyn at St. Lukes delivering left-over pie to Hannah and her co-workers.

