

# The Good News

*A Publication of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church – Sayville, NY*  
February 2026

*For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers (1 John 3:11, 16).*

February is a month that often turns our hearts toward the concept of love as we prepare to observe Valentine's Day. Emotionally driven cards and beautiful candy adorn the shelves at the stores, restaurants are advertising Valentine's Day dinner specials, and the pressure is on for husbands and boyfriends to do something nice for their spouse or significant other. This is not meant to belittle this day at all. It is very good for us to offer up expressions of love to those around us, even as Paul himself suggested that the greatest thing we have in this world and the next is love (1 Corinthians 13:13).

As Valentine's Day comes and goes, however, so often do the expressions of love highlighted on this day. Red colors in stores quickly turn to green, nice dinners make way for corned beef and green beer, flowers given begin to fade and the heart-shaped candy starts to make room for egg-shaped ones. Perhaps this is because we don't fully consider what love really is, or don't always give it what is due for this powerful, and necessary gift that we have been given.

More than just shallow sentimentality, love is much deeper. It is not merely emotive, but is a deep and abiding care for another. Love looks out for the good of the other above the self, and love is sacrificial in many ways. As John suggests above, if we want to know what love is we need look no further than to the cross of Christ where love was, and is, on display for the whole world to see as Jesus lays down his life for us. There, the red of Valentine's cards is revealed in the blood shed for us to cleanse us of our sins. There we see a love so deep that it endured suffering and death to make sure that we were reconciled to God. There, in a strange way, we see the victory of Christ over sin, death, and the devil, and by his resurrection, we have life eternal in his name. Such precious gifts are things that do not come and go with a day or a season, but are our dearest treasures every day of our life here on earth until we are brought into the glory of the kingdom eternally.

February also brings us, this year, to the season of Lent, a time where we focus intently on the love of God for us sinners. It is a time of repentance, and it is a time of renewal for God's people as we keep our eyes ever fixed upon the cross of Christ and the salvation that he won for us. Take advantage of the opportunities to mark this blessed season, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 18. Make use of the extra services during the week, and use them as a means to prepare for that holiest of weeks where our Lord accomplishes our salvation through the cross and the empty tomb. This way we may come to Easter with joyful hearts, knowing the fulness of the love of God made known to us in Christ. He laid down his life for us so that we might live with him in his love for all eternity. Happy Valentine's Day, and have a blessed Lententide!

O love, how deep, how broad, how high,  
Beyond all thought and fantasy,  
That God, the Son of God, should take  
Our mortal form for mortals' sake ( LSB #544, st. 1)!

~ Pastor Noack

**1, 2, 3...** - Do you know how to count? Would you like to support the work of the Church using your counting skills? We are currently looking for some additional people (at least 2) to help with the count of our offerings. You would count once a month or so, and it doesn't take a huge amount of time. If you are interested, or would like more information, please speak to Chuck Scott or Pastor Noack.

**Service Help** – The signup sheet to assist with Lent and Holy Week services has been posted. Please take a look and help out where you can. Thanks!

**Golf Committee** – Do you love coordinating and planning events? Would you like to utilize that joy in assisting our Church to support the community? Consider joining the Golf Committee! We are currently looking for a new chair to help lead our merry band of volunteers. Knowledge of golf or ability to play is not required. If you are interested, or have questions, please speak to Charlie Erb or Pastor Noack. It is a lot of fun, so please consider joining us!

**Faith Renewal** – The next set of classes for new members, or as a refresher for current members, will begin on **Wednesday, February 25**, following the 7pm service each week through Lent. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board, or you may contact the Church Office, if you wish to participate. All are welcome!

**LCMS Atlantic District Festival of Workshops** – Save the date for this annual event to be held on **March 7** on the campus of SUNY Maritime. This is a great day of learning and networking with leaders and congregants from churches all over our district. More information will be forthcoming once registration is available, and plans for carpooling will also be arranged. Please consider joining us!

**Vacation Bible School Help** – In case you haven't heard, our Winter Break VBS is a go, February 17-20 from 9:30a-12 noon! As such, we could use some help with running the event. Teens and adults are welcome to assist. Please contact the church office if you are interested. A meeting will be held on **Sunday, February 15 after the 9:30 service** to go over the plans for the week and decorate the spaces. Additionally, we are also in need of snacks and juice. Individually wrapped items would be most beneficial (Goldfish, fruit snack, juice boxes, etc.) Items can be dropped off in the office, or the cloak room on Sundays. Thanks, in advance for your help!

**Trustees** – We are looking to reignite the Trustees, a group of people who help with the ongoing maintenance and repair of our building and houses. The goal is to create a pool of people who have skills in certain areas who would be willing to do some work around the church as needed. A list of projects would be made known on a regular basis, and if you are available and able to handle something, you could volunteer to do it when it is convenient for you. Or, it may be as simple as recommending a particular contractor that you have used in the past and think might do a good job for the church if the project is bigger than a Home Depot repair. If you are interested in being included in this group, please speak to Pastor.

## Lenten & Holy Week Services

## Passion History

In this worship series for Lent, we will explore the various scenes of the Passion narrative as drawn from a mix of all four Gospels. This is a wonderful way to meditate on the work of salvation that Christ has done for us, preparing us for the events of Holy Week and the joy of Easter. Please join us as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus and consider all that he has done to bring us life and salvation eternally.

<b>The Lord's Supper</b> (2/25)	noon & 7pm
<b>Gethsemane</b> (3/4)	noon & 7pm
<b>The Palace of the High Priest</b> (3/11)	noon & 7pm
<b>The Praetorium</b> (3/18)	noon & 7pm
<b>Calvary</b> (3/25)	noon & 7pm
<b>Palm/Passion Sunday</b> (3/29)	7:45am & 9:30am
<b>Holy Wednesday</b> (4/1)	7pm
<b>Maundy Thursday</b> (4/2)	noon & 7pm
<b>Good Friday</b> (4/3)	noon & 7pm
<b>Easter Sunrise</b> (4/5) @ Sayville Marina Beach Park	6:00am
<b>Easter Divine Service</b> (4/5)	7:45am & 9:30am

### **Official Acts at Saint John's (thru January 31):**

## Funerals:

Emily Teresa Finn Dec 1  
Doris Ritzmann Jan 7  
Edith Martha Birk Jan 24

With the return of *Coffee Hour*, there is more feedback about the hymns we sing. "Good hymns this morning", "people really sang out on *that one*", or sometimes, "that was really a doozy!" - thankfully, not heard too often!

What constitutes a "good hymn"? I'm currently serving on a panel for a hymn competition. The competition allows for submissions of a text, tune or a combination of both, intended for assembly song. The panel began by each finding our own guidelines along with our top 8-10 "best contenders" amidst the entries. Coming together for discussion, we shared and sought consensus on our guidelines and determined some points of agreement on the submissions. Next we were tasked to reconsider all of the submissions in light of our discussion to see what we might have missed previously.

For many, a "good hymn" is one that they know. It often has an emotional connection to a person, place or event. I dare say the connection of the hymn to an individual's faith often comes further down the list, but over time, moves up as it is recalled and gives voice to praise, prayers, and the comfort God's Word & teaching, set poetically, provides.

Among Lutherans, text is critical. Martin Luther wrote and used hymns for theological instruction. Hymn singing was a good and unifying way to involve congregants in worship and to implant God's Word and teachings in minds and, by the Holy Spirit, in hearts, as well. Connecting a text and tune increases memorability as each helps to recall the other.

A good hymn will "sing well" – not necessarily immediately, though that is a plus. What is the tune's "shape"? Does it go anywhere, melodically and /or harmonically? Does it return "home" (or does it need to)? Are the tessitura and vocal range ones that a congregation can negotiate? Can people sing the rhythm and phrases as "one voice", unifying the breath of the ensemble?

Do the text and tune work together? Hymn texts are most often poetic with a structured meter, but even with that structure, strong and weak syllables and beats need to align to enable a natural flow when sung. Those on the panel who are students of prose and poetry, challenged texts in ways that enlightened the reading of them, even as they were tempted to do so with red pencil in hand to "make corrections"; truth be told, I did the same, often from a musical perspective. There were cultural challenges to some submissions. There were theological challenges.

There was a conversation stopping (meant to shock/playing devil's advocate?) statement that one individual didn't believe we needed any new hymns; that we had plenty of good ones gathered over more than two millennia which already numbered many more that we could actually sing in our lifetime.

I had pondered the need for more settings of the "ordinary" (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus, etc. ). Did the submissions bring something to the table justifying the displacement of music already known, readily available and written on peoples' hearts? New settings can refresh the Divine Service, but would these do so? We rejected the challenge to forego all new music. I believe we can benefit from well-crafted, theologically sound and relevant, insightful new texts coupled with tunes that bring a fresh voice today, not to reject that which has stood the test of time, but to enhance the body of the church's hymnody with the best offerings of the gifts today's poets and musicians have to offer.

I'm hopeful that within the next year, we might have the opportunity to sing that which is determined to be the winning entry. I hope that there might be opportunity to share some of the others, as well, as they deserve to be heard. Judging to find a "winner" is not an easy task, but the honing of discernment that is required is a good exercise – one we might all glean from as we take in or seek to make art and music in its many forms; to find and engage with that which nourishes and feeds our souls! Choose wisely, choose prayerfully and intentionally – and enjoy the feast that awaits!

**Coming up – March 7 is the LCMS Atlantic District Festival of Workshops.** This year Rex Holden and St. John's Eagle Eye Ringers will present a workshop that is one of many practical, interesting and potentially useful offerings you can attend that day at the (beautiful!) SUNY Maritime College. Meet, greet, converse, listen to, and eat with others to find out what people within our church's District are doing!

**Advanced notice: mark your calendars for Sunday, April 19 at 3pm when the Long Island Brass Guild returns to St. John's for our annual fundraising program for ***Mercy Haven, Inc.*** - serving the less fortunate in our communities. We'll welcome several new players who have replaced those who have retired as the Guild continues to evolve. Underway is the writing of some new arrangements of works that will be premiered that afternoon for brass & organ! Plan to join us and invite a friend or neighbor, too!**

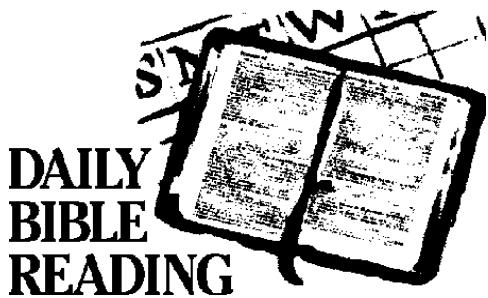
**Chancel Choir** welcomed its newest member, **Jack Flannery** in January, adding a needed tenor to the ensemble. The choir could especially use some additional ladies at the present time, either sopranos or altos. If you are interested, please contact Cindy Holden ([music@stjohnsayville.org](mailto:music@stjohnsayville.org)).

*Meet Jack Flannery:*



**Souper Bowl of Caring** – The weekend of February 8, 2026 the Mary Martha ladies will be holding a “SOUP POT” to collect money for our local soup kitchen in Sayville – Sharing a Meal. Sharing a Meal serves a hot meal and provides some extra bags of sandwiches to help those who are their guests. Our collection will help with their expenses and enable them to continue to do what they can to benefit those in our community. Our blessings and thanks for whatever you can give. If donating by check, please make the check out to Mary Martha Guild. For more information contact Pam Kennard, President of the Mary Martha Guild at 631-678-3246.

**Thrivent Associate Membership** - Some of you have asked about Associate Membership Forms. I have these forms available for you every Sunday at church. Although you might not want to purchase a product, you might want to consider being an Associate Member for \$20 a year. This would enable you to be part of Thrivent's Generosity Program, which allows you to be able to be part of doing one Action Team and receive \$250 to spend on a project per year. Additionally, you would be eligible to obtain a Water Filter Kit or a Solar Kit free of charge that would help someone in another part of God's world to have a better life. It is what we can do with all the benefits that God has given us. I am happy to help you with this or any questions you might have about Thrivent.  
- Honey Pabst, Thrivent Champion



# DAILY BIBLE READING

## February 2026

Sun	1	Zechariah 11:4-17; 2 Timothy 4:1-18
	2	Zechariah 12:1—13:9; Titus 1:1—2:6
	3	Zechariah 14:1—21; Titus 2:7—3:15
	4	Job 1:1-22; John 1:1-18
	5	Job 2:1—3:10; John 1:19-34
	6	Job 3:11-26; John 1:35-51
	7	Job 4:1-21; John 2:1-12
Sun	8	Job 5:1-27; John 2:13-25
	9	Job 6:1-13; John 3:1-21
	10	Job 6:14-30; John 3:22—4:6
	11	Job 7:1-21; John 4:7—26
	12	Job 8:1-22; John 4:27-45
	13	Job 9:1-35; John 4:46-54
	14	Job 10:1-22; John 5:1-18
Sun	15	Job 11:1-20; John 5:19-29
	16	Job 12:1-6, 12-25; John 5:30-47
	17	Job 13:1-12; John 6:1-21
	18	Job 13:13-28; John 6:22-40
	19	Job 14:1-22; John 6:41-59
	20	Job 15:1-23, 30-35; John 6:60-71
	21	Job 16:1-22; John 7:1-13
Sun	22	Job 17:1-16; John 7:14-31
	23	Job 18:1-21; John 7:32-53
	24	Job 19:1-12, 21-27; John 8:1-20
	25	Job 20:1-23, 29; John 8:21-38
	26	Job 21:1-21; John 8:39-59
	27	Job 30:16-31; John 9:1-23
	28	Job 31:1-12, 33-40; John 9:24-41



## LWML ATLANTIC DISTRICT 27<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONVENTION

MAY 1 - 2, 2026

*Crowne Plaza Hotel  
3 Executive Blvd, Suffern, NY 10901*

[Click Here for More Information or to Register](#)



### **Mission Goal of \$90,000 Reached**

*God is good- Say So!*  
By God's grace and your support we have  
reached our \$90,000 Mission Goal for  
2024-2026!

[adlwmi.org](http://adlwmi.org)



# February 2026

February 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7					
	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14					
	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21					
	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28					

March 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Feb 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4th Sunday after the Epiphany 7:45am Divine Service 8:30am Bible Study 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Divine Service	7:00pm Boy Scouts	6:00pm First Communion Class 7:00pm Elders Meeting 7:00pm Judo/12 Step	11:00am Bible Study 12:30pm N/A 6:00pm Confirmation Class 7:00pm Divine Service 7:45pm SoLI	6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12:30pm N/A	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5th Sunday after the Epiphany 7:45am Divine Service 8:30am Bible Study 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Divine Service	7:00pm Boy Scouts	6:00pm First Communion Class 7:00pm Judo/12 Step	12:30pm N/A 6:00pm Confirmation Class 7:00pm Divine Service 7:45pm SoLI	6:30pm Bells 6:30pm Finance Meeting 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12:30pm N/A	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Transfiguration of Our Lord 7:45am Divine Service 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Divine Service	7:00pm Boy Scouts	9:30am VBS 7:00pm Judo/12 Step	Ash Wednesday 9:30am VBS 12:00pm Divine Service 12:30pm N/A 7:00pm Divine Service 7:45pm SoLI	9:30am VBS 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Chancel Choir	9:30am VBS 12:30pm N/A	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
First Sunday in Lent 7:45am Divine Service 8:30am Bible Study 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Divine Service	7:00pm Boy Scouts	6:00pm First Communion Class 7:00pm Council Meeting 7:00pm Judo/12 Step	7:30am Faith Renewal 12:00pm Divine Service 12:30pm N/A 6:00pm Confirmation Class 7:00pm Divine Service 7:45pm SoLI	6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Chancel Choir	12:30pm N/A	

## February Divine Service Assistant Schedule

<b>February 1</b>	<b>Sunday 7:45am</b>	<b>Sunday 9:30am</b>
Communion Stewards	*Robert Bayley	Leo Rigaud
Ushers	Charlie Erb Jim Farrell	Jane Emmel & Kristin Noack
Reader	Jim Farrell	Dorothy Bauer
<b>February 8</b>	<b>Sunday 7:45am</b>	<b>Sunday 9:30am</b>
Communion Stewards	Robert Bayley	Al Coppola
Ushers	Brian & Christine Kirschenheiter	Chuck & Judy Scott
Reader	Christine Kirschenheiter	Treva Kopf
<b>February 15</b>	<b>Sunday 7:45am</b>	<b>Sunday 9:30am</b>
Communion Stewards	Greg Calvano	Paul Erath
Ushers	Marcus & Annie Habeeb	Pat Arrigo
Reader	Jim Farrell	Paul Erath
<b>February 22</b>	<b>Sunday 7:45am</b>	<b>Sunday 9:30am</b>
Communion Stewards	Charlie Erb	Al Coppola
Ushers	Steve & Janet Lindfors	Kevin Paul & Barbara Dahlgren
Reader	Pastor	Al Coppola

If you are unable to serve where assigned, please find someone you can switch with or someone who can take your place. Please let the Church Office know of any changes you make. Thank you.

### February Readings

Feb 1: Micah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31  
 Feb 8: Isaiah 58:3-9a; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12  
 Feb 15: Exodus 24:8-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21  
 Feb 22: Genesis 3:1-21; Romans 5:12-19

## ***Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church***

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**Cindy Holden, Director of Music**

E-mail: [music@stjohnsayville.org](mailto:music@stjohnsayville.org)

**Whitney Dale, Office Administrator**

E-mail: [admin@stjohnsayville.org](mailto:admin@stjohnsayville.org)

**Carolyn Holtz, Bookkeeper**

E-mail: [bookkeeper@stjohnsayville.org](mailto:bookkeeper@stjohnsayville.org)

**Tom Keller & Steve Lindfors, Facilities Management**

### **Saint John's Divine Service Schedule**

**Sunday 7:45am & 9:30am**

**Wednesday 7:00pm**

**Church Office Hours:**

**Tuesday - Friday, 9:30am-2:30pm**

**Bookkeeper Hours:**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays 11am-3pm**

### **Our Mission**

**Rejoice in God's grace. Live as disciples. Love one another.**

### **Our Purpose**

The family of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, gathered around Word and Sacrament, enhanced by liturgy and music, exists to encourage its members in a life of discipleship in Christ Jesus and fellowship with one another. Utilizing the gifts that God has entrusted to us, we engage in acts of mercy, attending to the spiritual and physical needs within our congregation and community. We bear witness to the Grace of God through living in His Word thus demonstrating the love Christ has shown us.

**A Congregation of  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod**

**The Good News** is published by the church office of Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church to keep its members and friends informed of church news and activities. Newsletter deadline for the March 2026 issue will be February 15th.