

MARTYR MONTHLY

MARCH 2026

**You have
fixed all the
bounds of
the earth;
you made
summer
and winter.
Psalm 74:17**



Worship at St. Stephen the Martyr

Saturday 5:00pm

Sunday 9:30am*

Sunday School 9:30am

Midweek Lenten Services - Wednesdays 6:30pm

**Indicates worship services streamed on Zoom,
for Zoom information please contact the church office.*

Pastor's Page



Dear Faith Community,

Yesterday (February 11) Bonnie entered the church office and said, “Happy first day of baseball, pitchers and catchers report today.” Baseball beginning is certainly a sign of springtime to come. And many are looking forward to spring. The current short days of sunlight are difficult and it seems like we have woken up in the morning a lot this year with 1-2 inches of snow on the ground. And yet there is hope in the springtime to come.

Our church season called Lent continues through the month of March. During midweek services we continue to learn about different Celtic Saints and how their message still resonates with us today.

Lent sometimes feels like spring. Easter is on the horizon, and yet we're still in the midst of our Lenten disciplines. We may struggle to be more reflective, and to value the good and let go of what is unhealthy. And we may wonder if there will ever be a payoff. It is kind of like the child in the backseat saying, “Are we there yet?”

Many are experiencing challenges and uncertainties, and it might feel like you and neighbors can't catch a break. The "to do" list gets longer, the bills pile up and we might opt for the path of least resistance. And it is hard when loved ones fall ill, and we see injustices taking place.

As we journey from winter to spring, I know that hope is on the horizon. I know that shoots of green will soon appear from the ground. Slowly flowers will start to bloom, and there will be some yellow daffodils sprouting up in front of my house. *Hope springs eternal.*

Warmer days are ahead. As we continue through Lent, perhaps we should start looking for those small signs of hope in our own lives. They are different for each of us, of course, but they all point to a future of warmth. For we need only look to the cross for a sign of the coming resurrection of Easter.

As we continue through Lent, I remind you about a midweek respite in gathering as community on Wednesdays at 6:30pm for Holden Evening Prayer.

Peace, Pastor Brian

Music & Worship

We are in the midst of our Lenten journey, Holden Evening Prayer will be on Wednesday evenings all the way to Holy Week at 6:30pm. The handbells and choir are busy with all the music to enhance our worship services.

Spring flower orders are available until March 8th. All flowers are \$15. Please make sure you have your orders in by the 8th, payment can be at the time of flower pickup (after the 9:30am service Easter Sunday).



We will continue to have communion around the altar the 2nd Saturday/Sunday of the month. For those who have difficulty with the individual wine glasses, a chalice for intinction is available on the Baptismal Font.

Easter and Holy Week Worship Schedule

The Passion of Our Lord/Palm Weekend
Saturday, March 28th at 5:00pm and
Sunday, March 29th at 9:30am

Maundy Thursday
Thursday, April 2nd at 6:30pm

Good Friday Cross Walk 2:00pm
Ecumenical Worship at St. Lukes in the Village 3:00pm

Good Friday
Friday, April 3rd at 6:30pm

The Easter Vigil
Saturday, April 4th at 5:00pm

Easter Sunday, April 5th
Sunrise Worship at 7:00am
Easter Breakfast at 8:15am
Worship at 9:30am



Human Concerns

Human Concerns is always busy, especially working to supply our partner parishes with what they need. Below is a quick reference guide to let you know what they are up to in March. Thank you for your generosity, especially for extra contributions to the Tippecanoe meals this past winter.

HUMAN CONCERNS -AT A GLANCE- MARCH 2026			
Dates	Ministry	Details	Contact Person
March 1-31	Monthly Food Ministry Collection: Faith Santa Fe	Place items in collection bins or use envelope from Giving Board for monetary donations	Nancy Payne
Wed. March 4	Unity Soup Lunch- volunteers	Sign-up sheet on office bulletin board. Assist with baking at 1 PM or serve and clean-up 5:30-7 PM	Shelly Rosenstock
Wed. March 11	Unity To-Go Bag Lunches- volunteers	Sign-up sheet on office bulletin board. Assist with food prep and assembly at 1 PM	Shelly Rosenstock
Wed. March 18	Unity Hot Meal- volunteers	Sign-up sheet on office bulletin board. Assist with serving and clean-up 6-7 PM	Shelly Rosenstock
March 1-31	Unity- donate items for guests	The Unity clothing closet is always in need of new men's underwear and socks (any size) and hygiene items, such as soap, deodorant, toothpaste and brushes, shaving supplies, toilet paper, wipes, etc.	Shelly Rosenstock

Thrivent Choice Dollars

If you have any Thrivent Choice Dollars to designate, this should be done by March 31st

Direct your
Thrivent Choice
Dollars
Today!





2026 Special Envelopes

Each year included in our special envelopes are colorful special envelopes for the various observances throughout the year. It has been the tradition at SSM that funds received in these envelopes, or marked as being intended for these special observances, are shared with various ministry partners. 60% of the funds received go to a designated ministry and 40% stays at SSM to continue to fund our ministry here. This year the special envelope designations are as follows:

- Ash Wednesday - ELCA Disaster Response
- Lent (an envelope for each Wednesday) - Outreach for Hope
- Palm Saturday/Sunday - Lutheran Social Services
- Maundy Thursday - E:CA World Hunger
- Good Friday - Bread of Healing Clinic (Cross Lutheran Church)
- Easter - Mbaaseny Parish
- Thanksgiving - Hunger Task Force
- Christmas - 1/2 Unity Lutheran Church
- Christmas - 1/2 Faith Sante Fe Lutheran Church

These envelopes or contributions for these observances are welcome any time, it is never too late or too early to support these ministries.

Valentines Day Wedding Vow Renewal



On February 14th 8 couples renewed their wedding vows. Couples ranged in years married from 11 to 54 years, totaling 299 years altogether. One couple was married by Pastor Brian. Congratulations to all.



Stewardship

“Take my life and let be, concreted Lord to thee”



These are the words to a well-known hymn. It expresses the knowledge that our lives are what God wants; that Christ sacrificed his life for; and that ultimately, we are the Lord's. In our human experience this is a big ask. Our human experience has taught us that we are “our own man or woman”. This is the foundation of the story of the Garden of Edon. In that story humans took charge of their own lives and the results were not what they wanted or expected. Yet God never gave up.

Jesus taught that we need not worry about what we will wear or what we will eat, as God arrays the lilies of the field and feeds the birds of the air, God will provide all that we need.

In this year, beginning with Lent, we look to build and increase our trust in God's goodness, and God's providence. Perhaps to increase our faith and trust in God's presence in the truly difficult times of our lives and also give ourselves to our loving God in the good times.

May the almighty presence of God be known in your days.

Rev. Dr. Kipp W. Zimmermann, Stewardship



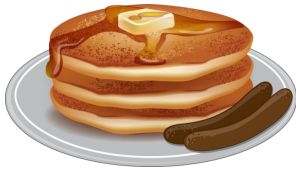
High School Youth Group

The high school youth group will gather at Big Putts on March 7th at 6:30pm. Drop off and pick up will be at Big Putts (4251 S 27th St, Greenfield, WI) There is great fun to be had at this indoor mini golf course. We will most likely finish up by 8pm.

Black Holocaust Museum Visit



America's Black Holocaust Museum Visit - Saturday March 14. Meet at the museum at 10am. Join us for a docent-led tour of exhibits on the harmful legacies of slavery and Jim Crow in our country. Learn the stories of those who have fought for racial justice. Tickets are \$10 for a guided tour (we must have at least 10 people for a guided tour). Please sign up if you are interested! Please indicate if you are interested in carpooling from church when you sign up.



Easter Breakfast

Join us for Easter Breakfast, April 5th! Relax and let us make you breakfast with a menu of ham and rolls, pancakes and sausage, and more. Share a time of fellowship with the SSM community between the Easter worship services. Breakfast will be served from 8:15 to 9:15. There is no cost, but donations are encouraged. All proceeds will support the youth mission trip to Montgomery, Alabama. Please sign up on the bulletin board (or email the office) so we have a good estimate.

Easter Breakfast Volunteers Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist with various breakfast responsibilities, including set-up in advance of Easter Sunday. Please see the bulletin board for ways you can help.



Easter Breakfast/Youth Fundraiser



Our annual SSM Easter/Youth trip fundraiser will take place on March 24, 2026 at **Billy Sims BBQ** located at 7358 West Rawson Avenue in Franklin. Billy Simms will donate 10% of **all** sales that day to SSM. Make sure you tell your friends, co-workers and family to come on out. Sales include carry-out orders as well as dining in. Join us for some great eats! Hope to see everyone on the 24th and remember to bring your appetites.

Can Collection Will Begin Again - No Foolin'

Package up your beverage cans from your Olympic TV watching, or Basketball or Baseball. April 1st is coming soon. Aluminum can recycling will begin again on the 1st of April, no "foolin'". With Easter being the 5th, you may want to wait until after that before bringing them to the church garage. The monies received are sent to our food pantries who surely need our help.

Bob and Karen Rasmussen - Can Coordinators





March 2026

<i>2nd Weekend in Lent</i>		
Saturday, 2/28	5:00pm	Worship
Sunday, 3/1	9:30am	Worship
		Sunday School
Wednesday, 3/4	9:30am	Men's Bible Study
	5:30pm	Handbell Rehearsal
	6:30pm	Worship - Holden Evening Prayer
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, 3/5	1:00pm	Quilting - Cut & Sew - until 3:00p,
	6:30pm	Confirmation Class
<i>3rd Weekend in Lent</i>		
Saturday, 3/7	5:00pm	Worship
	6:00pm	Youth Gathering at Big Putts Mini Golf
Sunday, 3/8	9:30am	Worship
		Sunday School
	10:45am	Coffee Hour
Tuesday, 3/10	6:30pm	Mega/Council Meeting
Wednesday, 3/11	10:15am	Women's Bible Study
	5:30pm	Handbell Rehearsal
	6:30pm	Worship - Holden Evening Prayer
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal

<i>4th Weekend in Lent</i>		
Saturday, 3/14	10:00am	Black Holocaust Museum Outing
	5:00pm	Worship
Sunday, 3/15	9:30am	Worship
		Sunday School
Monday, 3/16	1:00pm	Quilting - Layering - until 3:00pm
Wednesday, 3/18	9:30am	Men's bible Study
	5:30pm	Handbell Rehearsal
	6:30pm	Worship - Holden Evening Prayer
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, 3/19	6:30pm	Confirmation Class
<i>5th Weekend in Lent</i>		
Saturday, 3/21	5:00pm	Worship - Children's Christian Theatre
Sunday, 3/22	9:30am	Worship
		Sunday School
	10:15am	Coffee Hour
Wednesday, 3/25	10:15am	Women's Bible Study
	5:30pm	Handbell Rehearsal
	6:30pm	Worship - Holden Evening Prayer
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
<i>Passion/Palm Weekend</i>		
Saturday, 3/28	5:00pm	Worship
Sunday, 3/29	9:30am	Worship
		Sunday School
Monday, 3/30	6:30pm	Book Club

Explore the Journey of Martin Luther in Germany

Plans are coming together for our trip to Germany, scheduled for October 13–23, 2026. This adventure will take us through key locations connected to Martin Luther's ministry in the early 1500s while also showcasing the beauty and culture of Germany.

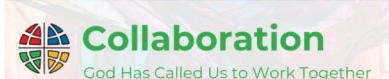


Highlights include: a scenic cruise on the Rhine; a visit to Nuremberg and Berlin, visiting castles and cathedrals along the way; a stop in Eisenach, where Luther spent his exile translating the New Testament from Greek into German; and a visit to Wittenberg to see the famous Castle Church door.

Printed itineraries and brochures are available at the church. For more information, please contact Pastor Brian Hooper at pastorbrianhooper@gmail.com or 414-421-3543.



Collaboration: God Has Called Us to Work Together



Congregations throughout the Greater Milwaukee Synod will gather at the annual Synod Assembly in May. Each year, SSM sends two lay (non-pastoral) voting members to the assembly. Would you like to serve your congregation in this way?

The event is scheduled for Friday, May 29, 4:00-8:30 pm and Saturday, May 30, 8:30 am-4:00 pm at the Brookfield Conference Center. The agenda includes stirring speakers, meals and fellowship, discussions of church business, and an inspirational worship service. For more information, check out the event website at milwaukee-synod.org/event/synod-assembly-2026.

Registration costs are covered by SSM. If you are interested in representing SSM at this transformational event, please talk with Pastor Brian or Denise Sanders.

2026 Rummage Sale



We are thinking about holding another church rummage/lemonade sale/brat fry in mid to late April. In order to do so I need to try and get an idea of how many donors and volunteers we might have for the event. At this time, I just need to know if you **might** be interested in volunteering for set-up, sales, or take-down. This would

be between Wednesday and Saturday. This is not any sort of commitment at this time, just to see if there may be enough interested volunteers to hold the event and then to set a date. Last year the volunteers were amazing. Look for rummage interest/sign-up sheets on the bulletin board or feel free to email me directly if you are interested. Please sign up if you think you might be able to help out. If it turns out later that you can't that is fine. Thanks for your consideration.

Lorin - lorinschu@gmail.com



Loose Ends Lunch

The Loose Ends Lunch ladies will go to the Olive Garden on March 25th for their monthly outing. Olive Garden is located at 4760 S. 76th St. Please consider joining this group of ladies for conversation, food and fun. They go to a different restaurant on the 4th Wednesday of every month (except July and August), meeting at noon.

2026 Vacation Bible School

Mark Your Calendars Now
For Vacation Bible School 2026
Monday, June 22nd to
Thursday, June 25th



"Weird Animals, Where Jesus' Love is one-of-a kind"



Adam Mildren	02
Pat Schroeder	03
Shirley Lieske	07
Elliot Burgmaier	07
Orlando Dean	10
Marc Manning	13
Jennifer Myszkowski	15
Peyton Weber	15
Amy Ashmore	18
Sally Kolowski	19
Phoebe Mildren	20
Delaney Stuedemann	21
Keri Whitmore	22
Nicol Manning	22
Annika Tanke	26
Hannah Tanke	27
Betty Kroll	28
Pamela Rothwell	28
Mike Wholean	29
Eleanor Salb	30
Sherry Magner	30
Alexis Jajtner	30

Coming
this month

The Christian
Children's
Theatre

Saturday, March 21
5:00pm



MISSION SUPPORT: WHAT DOES MY OFFERING DO?



Finally, **39% STRENGTHENS AND SUSTAINS THE MINISTRY and MISSION** of the whole church, enabling us to:

- Offer ministry resources and opportunities to lay leaders for networking.
- Develop social messages of the ELCA as topical documents to focus attention and action on timely, pressing matters of concern to church and society.
- Sustain ecumenical and interfaith relations.
- Partner with congregations and ministries across the church as they explore new, innovative ways of being church in a constantly changing world.
- Invest in technology and communications.
- Engage in research and strategic planning.
- Create and share resources for faith, discipleship, prayer, stewardship and worship.



Thank you for your ongoing support and faithful partnership!

For stories of your impact,
visit
LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA
To find additional Mission Support resources,
visit
ELCA.org/SOFIA

Your **MISSION SUPPORT** funds a variety of churchwide ministries.



38% BUILDS CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES in the United States by enabling us to:

- Plant and support hundreds of worshiping communities.
- Revitalize congregational ministries and reach out to their surrounding communities.
- Promote leadership opportunities, discernment and education through leadership initiatives.
- Support the work of seven ELCA seminaries and 27 ELCA colleges and universities.
- Host events and leadership opportunities for youth and young adults.
- Support regional work through directors for evangelical mission as well as candidacy and



Another **23% GROWS THE GLOBAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** and addresses issues around the world, enabling us to:

- Accompany new Lutheran churches, expand ministries and train leaders and evangelists.
- Send missionaries to accompany communities around the world.
- Address social inequities and work for justice.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with 149 other churches through the Lutheran World Federation to strengthen the church and its global work.
- Foster relationships between ELCA synods and 65 companion churches, for a total of 127 official relationships.
- Work with leaders and members of our African-descent, American Indian, Alaska Native, Arab, Middle Eastern, Asian, Pacific Islander and Latiné communities.



Scan the QR Code to view the new Mission Support Video “What Does My Offering Do?”



Council Minutes, January

Present: D Sanders, S Wesolowski, K Zimmermann, E Sanders, J Starks, C Jackett, J Covert, L Stasiewski, Pastor B Hooper, L Schuchardt, K Whitmore, K Knipple, A Dollar, J Miller T

Called to order by D Sanders at 6:30pm. Devotion by J Miller.

December meeting minutes were approved as amended.

Financial Reports: Financial Secretary's Report Some pledges for 2026 have been given. We performed well for 2025. Donations for 2025 are less than expected, but some end of the year donations should help erase the deficit. **Treasurer's Report** Jason is reviewing the Benevolence report which had a distribution of \$50,499 in 2025. Cash balance is strong with some pledges for 2026 included. No concerns there. Larry will need his own Menards credit card: Jim's was replaced after expiring. In 2026 we plan to open a new CD. Financial reports approved.

Pastor's Time: A Blue Christmas service with around 20 participants was held on 12/20. We do a great job with youth activities. Curious how we can build on this momentum and activities with St. Luke's. What would it look like to have a part time youth person on staff at SSM? • A Valentines Day Wedding vow renewal service is being planned for 2/14. Fund raisers for the youth trip to Montgomery Alabama this summer being planned to include the Easter Breakfast and a chili cook off. Planning meetings are being held for a trip to Germany October 18 – 23, 2026.

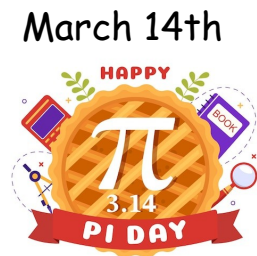
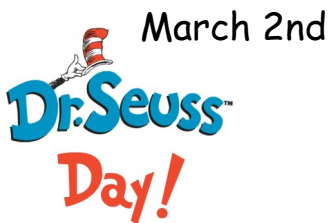
Action Items: **Annual Meeting** Agendas for the budget meeting 1/18 and the Congregation meeting on 1/25 were finalized. The 2025 Annual Report will be printed and distributed by Jan. 9, 2026. **Budget Discussion:** Proposed budget has undergone a comprehensive final review and was approved by the Council and will be presented at the 1/18 budget meeting and the 1/25 Congregational Meeting.



Council Minutes, Continued

Committee Reports: Human Concerns The assistant to the bishop of the Meru Diocese received scholarship funding from the Zwires Scholarship fund and will complete his PhD at the end of 2026. (He formerly was our partner pastor and is currently in a different position). **Christian Education** The book club will be meeting every other month starting in January. All are still welcome to join. **Youth and Family** Planning an overnight Lutherdale elementary outing for February 7, 2026. **Evangelism** Postcards have been sent out in time for Christmas Services. Next year we need more time to send out to others beyond the congregation. Should start working on them in September. Kristy thanked Julie Starks for helping. **Fellowship** At this time no rummage sale is planned for spring. Committee will meet to plan and possibly schedule for later in the year. **Music and Worship** The committee has many things to review after Christmas and is planning to meet in January. **Finance** No report. **Stewardship** Starting to plan for 2026. **Property** The fire cabinet is ready for installation, featuring doors designed to close automatically for enhanced safety.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm. Pastor Brian offered a closing prayer. Next Council meeting Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
Respectfully submitted Carol Jackett Secretary



OFFICE HOURS

9:00-2:00 Monday - Thursday

9:00-12:00 Friday

SSM STAFF

Brian Hooper, Pastor

Tabitha Moldenhauer, Music Director

Mark Breutzmann, Saturday Musician

Jim Hennessy, Church Maintenance

Bonnie Zimmermann, Ministry Assistant

SSM Website: www.ssmelca.org

Facebook:

<https://m.facebook.com/SSMELCA/>

Email: office@ssmelca.org

Phone: 414-421-3543

Sunday School email:

sundayschool@ssmelca.org

St Stephen the Martyr ELCA

6101 S. 51st Street

Greendale WI 53129

(414) 421-3543

WORSHIP AT SSM
SATURDAY AT 5:00PM
SUNDAY AT 9:30AM*
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30AM

MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP
HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER
WEDNESDAYS 6:30PM*

****INDICATES WORSHIP SERVICES
STREAMED ON ZOOM, FOR ZOOM
INFORMATION PLEASE
CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.***



March 2026



Welcoming all, Worshiping God, Serving others