



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work.
Our hands.

Worship Services:

Sundays 9:00 am

Interim Pastor

Pastor Len Hoffmann

815-975-4740

prlen.hoffmann@yahoo.com

Church office hours:

Mon., Wed., Fri 6:00-11:00 AM

Parish Administrator

DJ Scott

prshadmin@gmail.com

Church Address:

PO Box 234 229 S First St

Pearl City, IL 61062

Church Phone:

815-443-2215

Building Hours:

The building will only be open
when the office is open

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

"Ever Loving, Caring Always"



First Sunday in Lent

Pastor Len Hoffmann presiding

February 22, 2026

Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.

Please join us for a time of fellowship after the worship service in Luther Hall. Refreshments will be provided.

Serving Us Today

Presiding Minister: Pastor Len Hoffmann **Acolytes:** Arianna Schoenhard **Organist:** Karen Bremmer **Lector:** Kathy Hillmer **Assisting Minister:** Lori Kempel **Greeter:** Mike & Lynda Palmer **Ushers:** Jeff & Linda Erbsen **Counters:** Kelly Lawler & Chris Kempel **Sacristan:** Kathy Williams, Kris Liebenstein, and Nancy Trampel

P Pastor

C Congregation

L Lector

A Assisting Minister

Introduction to the Day

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

PRESERVICE MUSIC

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.

C Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

CHILDREN LEAVE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL IN LOWER LEVEL

GATHERING HYMN

"I Want Jesus to Walk With Me"

ELW 325

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.

C Amen.

(Please be seated)

FIRST READING

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

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

L A reading from Genesis, the second chapter.

L The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, 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."

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?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 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.’ ” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 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. 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.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 32

L Let us say the Psalm responsively

L Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

C **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

L While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

C **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

L Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

C **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

L You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

C **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

L 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.”

C **Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

L Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING

Romans 5:12-19

Through Adam's disobedience, humanity came under bondage to sin and death, from which we cannot free ourselves. In Christ's obedient death, God graciously showers on us the free gift of liberation and life.

L A reading from Romans, the fifth chapter.

L 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 for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come. 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 gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. 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. For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(Please stand as you are able)

ELW Page 142

GOSPEL

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" 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.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if

you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ” Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

L The Gospel of the Lord

G Praise to you, O Christ

(Please be seated)

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“On Eagle’s Wings”

ELW 787

NICENE CREED

ELW PAGE 126

(Please be seated.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

(A brief silence.)

A God of all grace, grant faith to your church. Give to all the baptized the will to resist temptation and to worship and serve you alone. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A God of all creation, tend this earth. When human greed and disobedience threaten this planet and the life it contains, lead us by your Spirit into ways of reverence, awe, and gentleness. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A God of all nations, preserve us from trouble. Surround all living in places of violence with your steadfast love and give resilience to all who work for peace. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A God of all healing, mend our wounds. Bring wholeness to all who are sick, give peace to all who groan in grief, and send companions to all who are lonely or isolated. *(Especially we pray for . . .)* Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A God of all people, provide for our community. For any among us who hunger for bread, bring nourishment. For any among us who hunger for truth, speak your life-giving word. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A God of those not here, remember all who are confined to their homes and health care centers from our community and congregation. Today we pray for *Shirley Goldsmith, Richard Brinkmeier, Lori Miller, Janis Kampmeier, Mary Ellen Aurand, Verda Werkheiser, Carol Byers, Gina Boop, Jerry Harnish, Ron Fluegel, Louise Cuccio, Donna Freedlund, and Connie Melville.* Merciful God,

G Your mercy is great.

A God of all life, bring us to you. We thank you for your free and abounding grace, and for those who, by that same grace, now rest eternally in you (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Let us share signs of peace with one another.

(Please stand as you are able.)

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

DIALOGUE

ELW Page 144

PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW Page 144

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.



St. John's Giving page QR code

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.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

P Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

P With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

C Amen.

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

LORD'S PRAYER

ELW PAGE 154

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

*Communion instruction – as we gather for Holy Communion, you will come down the center aisle, receive the bread and cup, and return by the side aisle. Wine is the dark liquid and grape juice is the light liquid in the center ring. **If you wish to receive gluten free, it is available. Please ask.** If you wish to only receive a blessing, please come forward with your arms crossed. This is a time where all God's people find unity.*

RECEIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

P The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen.

COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A 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.

C Amen

BLESSING

P Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✝ bless you now and always.

C Amen.

SENDING SONG

“Go My Children, with My Blessing”

ELW 543

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

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tress Liturgies Annual License #28059

In order to strengthen relationships and make everyone feel known and welcome, Worship and Music has designed and made name tags for all members. Beginning, Sunday, February 22nd, the name tags will be hanging in the Narthex. We ask that you grab yours and wear it during worship each Sunday and return it to the peg board before going home.

The Healthy Wolves backpack ministry is very thankful for your continuing financial support. Without you, we would not be able to supply weekend meals for those in need. The number of students needing help is twice the amount of last school year. You are indeed a blessing to our community.

Don't forget that we are still playing dominoes on the first Tuesday of each month at 9AM. The next date is Tuesday, March 3rd. Cards and dominoes are still on for the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 1PM as well. The next date is Thursday, February 26th at 1PM!

Do you have a child/grandchild that is interested in taking his/her first communion? Do you know someone who does? Pastor Len is going to hold a **First Communion Class** for anyone interested during the month of March. The classes will be held right after worship on March 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. This class is aimed at children in grades three and below, but it is open to anyone who feels their child is ready. The child and parents should plan on attending each meeting right after worship in the conference room downstairs. If you plan on attending these classes, please contact Pastor Len or the office so materials can be made for each participant.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Interim Pastor
Pastor Len Hoffmann
815-975-4740
prlen.hoffmann@yahoo.com

Parish Administrator:
DJ Scott
E-mail: prshadmin@gmail.com

Church Office
815-443-2215
Box 234
229 S First St
Pearl City, IL 61062

Mon., Wed., Fri. 6:00-11:00 AM

St. John's Website
www.stjohnspearlcity.org

This Week at St. John's

Sunday, February 22, 2026

9a Worship

Monday, February 23, 2026

5:30p Girl Scout Meeting

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

9a PC School Tax Referendum meeting

10:30a Bible Study

12p Lenten Lunch at PCMC

4p PC School Tax Referendum meeting

Thursday, February 19, 2026

1p Cards and Dominoes

3:15p Healthy Wolves backpack packing

6p Cub Scout meeting

Sunday, March 1, 2026

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17

Women's Gathering invites the congregation/guests to eat out together. The next one will be on Sunday, March 1st at 11:30 AM at Route 20 Bar & Grill. Please sign up in the lobby by February 23rd! Car pooling will be set up!

Confirmation: Confirmation continues with the study of the Apostle's Creed. We are also studying the twelve apostles as well as bible verses. At this point, we only have four more meetings as our last meeting is May 3rd and we do not meet on Easter Sunday. Next year our study will be the Ten Commandments, the church service and the bible. I will be looking into how many new confirmands will be joining us for the 2026-27 year so that bibles can be ordered prior to our first meeting in mid-September.

Sunday School: Sunday school is going well, and the kids seem to really enjoy the videos as well as all the information they are learning from the lessons. The curriculum is working well. The final three months have been filled with teachers and if anyone cannot make it, Shawn will fill in as a sub. The last Sunday School will be May 10th which is Mother's Day and then we will resume in September. We will revisit the curriculum during the summer months. The computer and TV are working great and easy to use. A few supplies are needed so we will be purchasing some markers, colored pencils, tacky glue sticks, and pencil sharpener with the larger end. Theresa may have one at home but will check it out before we order. Sunday school will not be meeting on Easter or the week that the school has Spring Break.

Women's Gathering News ...

*Women's Gathering has dish cloths for sale. They are \$1.50 each. Contact the church office or Lynda Palmer if you are interested.

*Prayer Shawl Outreach will meet on Sunday, March 1st. Start a shawl/quilt or work on one already started. Someone will be available to help.

*The next bible study will be on Tuesday, March 17th at 9:45 a.m. - refreshments (served by Lynda Palmer and Lee Frey) 10 a.m. - bible study led by Karen Bremmer on The Promise of God's Name "I Am":. Bread, vine and light: Abiding in us. Sit N Sew will follow at 11:00. Bring a sack lunch.

*Thank you to the Women's Gathering for voting to give a \$100 donation to the PC Post Prom Committee.

*Lenten Lunches during Lent will be at the Methodist Church on Wednesdays at noon on February 28th, and March 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th. St. John's will provide the meal on Wednesday, March 18th and Pastor Len will give the message. The committee of Lee Frey, Lynda Palmer, Kris Eden, Kathy Williams, Doris Kness, and Karen Bremmer will be asking for cookie donations for dessert There will be a free will offering for the lunches. Women's Gathering receives the donations for March 18th.

*Prayer bead bracelets were made on February 15th. If anyone is interested in making one, please contact Karen Bremmer by March 15th so supplies can be ordered. On April 12th, another chance to make the bracelets will occur.

We are looking for one male member and one female member to attend the Northern Illinois Synod on June 12-13, 2026. It is being held at Augustana College in Rock Island Illinois. The cost of registration, meals, and lodging for the weekend is covered by the church. Please contact the office if you are interested in attending.

Pastor Len will be hosting a bible study discussing the book of John on Wednesdays during Lent. It will be held at 10:30 AM beginning on Ash Wednesday (February 18th) and continue every Wednesday through Lent. If you are interested in coming, please sign up in Luther Hall so materials can be made for each participant.

PEARL CITY HEALTHY WOLVES FOOD PROGRAM

Provides backpacks filled with nutritious meals and snacks for school aged children K-12 for the weekend. **We are currently sending 25 backpacks each week.** The cost of supplies runs about \$8.00 per backpack, per week. **Donations of financial support are needed.** Please contact Theresa Albers if you have any questions.

TO DONATE ONLINE: <http://www.stjohnspearlcity.org/giving> Scroll down to these instructions: **On-line Giving:** Click [here](#) to give now in the form of a credit or debit card to St. John's. This is a safe, secure and quick method to give to our ministries from anywhere at any time. On-line giving offers you the ability to do a onetime transaction or set-up a recurring transaction. This option allows members and non-members alike to give to the ministries of St. John's. You will be able to select "Healthy Wolves" for your gift designation.

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lector
Mar. 1	Bob & Marge Roiland	Tracy Downs family	April Eberle

Acolytes	Tech Support
Cara Brinkmeier	Welden Snetcher



Happy Birthday!

*Carrie (Boop) Baxter Kayla Niehaus Earl Heimerdinger Aaron Hass
Abigail Hass MacKenzee Bentz Aubrey Schubert Marsha Butson*

Grace Meal News. . .

A special thank you to everyone who helped with the February Grace Meal, Johnathan Barthel, Dennis Downs, Kris & Marion Eden, Randy Faust, Janet Ferguson, Hendrix Feld, Grace Heimerdinger-Baake, Jim Heimerdinger, Lois Hunsaker, Joan & Marvin Klatt, Doris Kness, Craig Lindquist, Angie & Wayne Niehaus, Marge Roiland and DJ Scott. We served a total of 269 meals, 35 deliveries, and 234 curbside pickups.

The March Grace Meal will be on March 15th. To reserve your meals for that day, contact St. John's Lutheran Church by Thursday March 12th (815-443-2215). Meals can be picked up between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on the 15th. The menu for the March Grace Meal will be lasagna, green beans, Italian bread and dessert.

The Grace Meal Committee would like to thank the congregation for stepping up and making financial donations to help the great ministry continue serving meals each month. If you think you can help prepare or serve a meal talk to Kris Eden, Marge Roiland, or Lois Hunsaker!

The Stephenson County Veterans Pantry in Lena is in need of canned ham, canned chicken, canned turkey, paper towels, mouthwash, body wash, and bath towels. Donations can be brought to Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10-11 AM. It is located at 316 W. Main Street in Lena. All donations are welcome!

There will be a celebration on life for Joyce Kempel on Saturday, April 11th from 1:00-3:00 PM in Luther Hall. Women's Gathering will be serving finger foods and drinks. Come and join us as we celebrate the life of Joyce and remember the good times we had with her!