



HOPEWELL NEWS GAZETTE
St. John Lutheran Church
(Hopewell Township)

March
2026

As I preached the Ash Wednesday sermon, I talked about the cross of ashes we receive and what the ashes are meant to remind us of. I talked about how the ashes remind us that we created people, made by God, like he made the first Adam. We are lifeless atoms assembled and given life. We remember that the Lord is God who alone has given us life, breath, and all things... and we are not.

I talked about the reminder of our mortality. The ashes are imparted with that phrase, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." We are reminded that sin has entered the world on account of us, and that a major consequence of our sinning is that we all die. One day, this mortal life will be ended, and we will face our God and Creator. We are therefore called to repentance of our sin and reminded of our need to turn to our Lord for mercy.

What I *did not* explicitly point out in that sermon was that the ashes are given in the shape of a cross! Of course, I talked about the cross of Christ and the forgiveness of sin... but I did not directly connect that to the ashes in the sermon.

That cross of ashes points us to our hope. It reminds us of two things.

First, we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ came to us and for us in our humanity. He took our "dust" on himself and became truly human. He has dwelt among us! Really lived with us and for us... and he knows and understands us. Not only that, but in carrying our human nature, he has carried us. My nature. Your nature. We can therefore say that what Jesus Christ has done, he has done for us, and because of the promise of baptism, he has included us in all he has done.

Second, we remember that, on through the cross, we have hope for both forgiveness of our sin and eternal life. Our Lord Jesus died for us, for our sin. And in baptism, so have we. We have died to our sin with him... and we can repent and turn to the Lord our God in forgiveness and hope. Our Lord Jesus has also been raised from the dead for us. And in baptism, so have we... and so will we! We have been given new life now as the forgiven and raised children of God, even amid this broken and sinful life. And we will, when our days of baptism, our days of continually dying to sin and being raised to new life... when our days of baptism are completed and we die the final time, so then we will be raised the final time to eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord!

All that, in a smear of oiled ashes.

May the Lord bless your Lenten journey of repentance and return to him these weeks of March!

Pastor Adam

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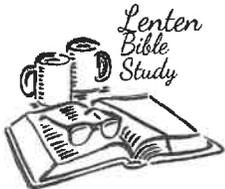
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Acolyte for the Month



Acolyte Schedule for the month of March—

1st	Aaron Sheets
8th	Caleb Poe
15th	Isaac Menchhofer
22nd	Elias Poe
29th	Bailee Menchhofer



Please join Pastor Adam as we continue the Lenten Season, Bible Studies on Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m. The series of studies will be held on March 1st, & 8th at Zion Lutheran Church (Chatt). The studies will continue at St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell) on March 15th & 22nd.



"Backpacker" Information: Our volunteers for the Backpack Program will be helping at the C.A.L.L. Food Pantry in Celina on Tuesday, March 3rd, 17th & 31st beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Noisy Offering: There will be a "Noisy" Offering on Sunday, March 1st, during worship; to benefit the Angel Tree. Thanks for your support!

Our benevolence contributions for the month of March will benefit Operation Christmas Child.

March Readers

March 1st	Scott Tribolet
March 8th	Cindy Canary
March 15th	Brad Carr
March 22nd	Pat Siebert
March 29th	Angel Forlow



The next monthly meeting of the St. John Church Council will be held on Wednesday, March 11th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All members of the church are always invited to attend the St. John Council meetings as guests.

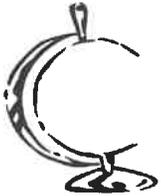
Copies of the minutes of the Church Council meetings will be on the table in the back of the sanctuary (when available).



Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 8th. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead 1 hour!



The Women of the Church will be meeting on Wednesday, March 4th at 1:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Michelle Tribolet will offer devotions and Pastor Adam will lead the Bible Study. The project of the month is the Henderson Settlement. There will be no Altar flowers for the month, due to Lent.



World Day of Prayer is on Friday, March 6th. Members of the church are encouraged to spend some extra time in prayer. The theme this year is "I Will Give You Rest: Come," based upon Matthew 11:28-30. The core message is an invitation to bring burdens—such as anxiety, poverty, and struggles—to God to find rest and strength. The WDP motto is "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action."



Catechism/Youth Group Information: Here is the schedule for March.

- 1) Sunday, March 8th, at Zion (Chatt) - Catechism Class at 5:00 p.m.
 - 2) Sunday, March 22nd, at St. John (Hopewell) - Catechism Class at 5:00 p.m.
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Don't forget! If you signed up to take the wine tasting/hanging basket planting class at Unique Roots, Celina that will be held on Thursday, March 12 at 7:00 p.m. There will be a flight of wine samples plus a glass of your favorite (or you can bring your own water or soft drink) plus a class on how hanging baskets are put together for the spring. Each participant will get to plant a hanging basket with flower plugs and then leave the basket at Unique Roots to grow until May, when you can then pick up your basket to enjoy.



The St. John Lutheran Men in Mission will be meeting on Thursday, March 19th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The Bible Study, "Fixing our eyes on the eternal" based on 2 Corinthians 4:1-18, will be led by Bob Miller. Russ Bensman will share the scripture and prayer. All men are invited to attend.



The Parish Board of Education will meet on Tuesday, March 31st at 7:00 p.m., in the Parish Hall.

MARCH 2026 CALENDAR -- St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell Township)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship with Holy Communion & "Noisy" Offering 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Lenten Bible Study at Zion (Chatt) 6:00 p.m.	2	3 Volunteers for the Backpack Program 9:00 a.m.	4 Women of the Church Meeting 1:00 p.m.	5	6 	7 
8 Daylight Savings Time Begins Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Catechism Class at Zion (Chatt) 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study at Zion (Chatt) 6:00 p.m.	9	10	11 Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	12 Hanging Basket Planting Class at Unique Roots 7:00 p.m.	13	14
15 Worship with Holy Communion 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Lenten Bible Study at St. John (Hopewell) 6:00 p.m.	16  Newspaper Articles are Due	17 Volunteers for the Backpack Program 9:00 a.m.	18	19 Lutheran Men in Mission Meeting 7:00 p.m.	20  Spring Begins	21
22 Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Catechism Class at St. John (Hopewell) 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study at St. John (Hopewell) 6:00 p.m.	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Palm/Passion Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m.	30	31 Volunteers for the Backpack Program 9:00 a.m. Board of Parish Education Meeting 7:00 p.m.				

† "No Flowers on the Altar During Lent"