

American Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the ELCA

March 2026

1512 Avenue G Gothenburg, NC 69138 308-537-3433 office@aleg.org

WORD OF LIFE

Sunday Lessons in March for your devotions

March 1

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17

March 8

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalms 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

March 15

Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

March 22

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalms 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

March 29

Sunday of the Passion/

Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14--27:66

«Route »

«Last Name», «First Name»

«Street»

«City», «State» «Zip»





Congregation Council
February 10, 2026
at 7:00 pm

Present: **Pastor:** Doug
Hjelmstad, **President:**
Amanda Rossell, **Vice Presi-**

dent: Kevin Boyd, **Secretary:** Tammy
McMichael, **Hospitality & Outreach:** Barb
Hicken, **Music & Worship:** Ernie Blecha,
Property: Glenn Finke, **Stewardship:** Kara
Kreis, **Parish Ed:** Erica Johnson.

Erica opened the meeting with devotions regarding John 13 verses 4-5. As humans, we all make mistakes. Grace is real and we should show grace through faith. We earn God's approval when we abide in God.

Open Comments: None presented.

Minutes: January minutes were read by Amanda. Motion by Glenn and Second by Ernie to approve the minutes. Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report was given by Amanda Rossell. All bills have been paid. Glenn reported that the Old Property Special budget entry is money given by congregation for church repairs, that CD 2694 budget entry is for cemetery expenses, and the foundation fund budget entry is the money received from the Noel Cover grant. Ernie reported that the Organ Fund budget entry is for the repair of the organ pipes. Motion by Kara and Second by Erica to approve treasurer's report. Motion approved.

Pastor's Report:

-Ash Wednesday is one week away. American Lutheran Church will be hosting Ash Wednesday Service along with the First Presbyterian Church.

-The Synod "On the Road Again" visit on Saturday, February 7, 2026 was a great experience with good attendance. American Lutheran Church is in a good place within the Synod. It was nice that Gretchen and Tim were able to worship with us Sunday morning.

-Synod Assembly will be held May 29-31, 2026. ALC has one female delegate that will be attending. A male delegate spot will need to be filled yet.

-ALC received a grant from the Trailblazer Community Investment Fund for \$2,613.00. Money from this grant can be applied to the Food Pantry.

-Pastor Doug will be traveling to Haigler, NE to visit his former congregation.

This will be his first time back since relocating to ALC. Kara and Steve Berke will run the church service that morning.

-Pastor Doug will be attending the St. Benedict Center retreat in Schyler March 8-13, 2026.

-Pastor Doug spoke of his time at ALC and the time that is yet to be. He spoke of his family, friends, his age and his health. Conversations will continue regarding his current time at ALC and future retirement thoughts and questions.

Hospitality and Outreach:

-Barb Hicken presented the report

-The community movie at the Sun Théâtre was well attended

-Working on a "Cookie Walk" where cookies would be brought by committee members/congregation. Those interested in buying cookies would be able to purchase a box of cookies with proceeds going to the food pantry and other ALC committee needs.

-Working on a project where snack bags would be given to students riding on buses to school activities. More to come with this.

Youth and Family:

The Super Bowl Pizza and Dip project went well this year.

Music & Worship:

-Ernie is hoping to receive updates regarding the organ pipe restoration project.

-Preparations are under way for Lent services and the Lenten meals.

-Palm Sunday – Crosses have arrived. ALC will have donkeys for the church service. Children will sing during the church service.

Property:

-ALC insurance is due 02/12/26. We will continue with current plan that supports 100% reimbursement.

-Work has begun on the men's restroom renovation. Congregational donations have been given towards this project.

-Glenn is hoping to receive updates on quotes and estimates for new balcony pews.

Stewardship:

-Nothing to report

Parish Education:

-Averaging 7.5 Sunday School children per week

-Ernie is doing music with the children

Memorial:

-The Memorial money account at Day Spring bank holds \$41,335.00 and collects 0.3% interest. Discussion was held regarding ways for this money to collect better interest. Motion made by Kevin and seconded by Ernie to move \$30,000.00 to a 3-month CD with 3.9% interest. The CD/account would be re-evaluated after three months. Motion carried.

-ALC received \$160,000.00 from the Noel Cover fund. This money was placed in a liquid fund that receives 2.2% interest. Motion made by Kevin and seconded by Barb to move \$150,00.00 to a 3-month CD with higher interest, with the remaining \$10,00.00 to be left in the liquid fund. The CD/account will be re-evaluated after three months. Motion carried. The Council will hold meetings concerning the use of this money.

Discussion items:

- Recap of the Synod "On the Road Again" event—as mentioned in Pastors Report
- Security protocols and trainings—Glenn has visited with Mark Montgomery regarding security needs for the church. Although the church has security cameras in place, many ideas, suggestions, and needs have been discussed. Glenn will work with our law enforcement regarding safety training and education classes for staff and congregation members.
- Preschool—Lori Kitzing will be retiring as preschool teacher at the end of this year. Discussion was held on the direction of the pre-school program and rooms

at ALC. It was motioned by Amanda and seconded by Kevin to stop the pre-school program at ALC at the end of this school year. Motion carried. Amanda will visit with Lori regarding these decisions.

- Cleaning Service input—Discussion held regarding what entries are placed under the Staff Support entry in the budget. More discussion will be held at the next meeting. Madison and Amanda will speak with Rhonda Putnam regarding job description and wages.
- South Parsonage—Amanda has prepared a PowerPoint for discussion regarding the south parsonage. This presentation will be presented 02/22/2026 during Linger Longer. A congregational vote will be taken on 03/01/2026 regarding the south parsonage.
- Discussion was held regarding a 2-year plan for Pastor Doug. How can we as the council and we as the church help Pastor Doug with his daily tasks? See Pastor report.

The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer at 8:40 pm.

Tammy McMichael, Secretary

Palm Sunday is March 29th. We will be having a procession with palms and a donkey. If you would like to participate in the procession around the block, **please be here by 9:45 a.m.**



Our Lenten Wednesday evening worship has begun. **Supper is from 5:45 to**



6:45 p.m. We do need people to provide soup, sandwiches, crackers, apples or carrots for the suppers on March 4th and March 25th. You can sign-up on the bulletin board in the parish hall. March 11th will be Cook's Surprise and the Youtherans will be providing supper on March 18th as a fundraiser.

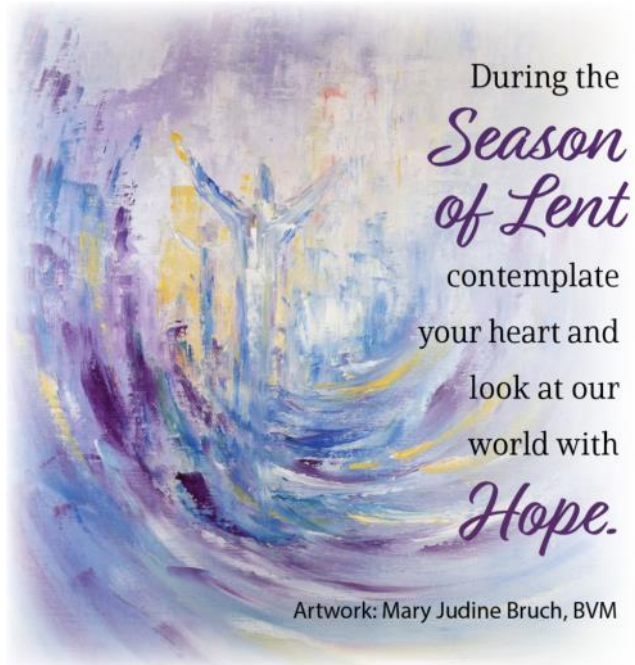


Daffodils and Easter Lilies will be available to purchase in memory or in honor of someone for \$15. Sign-up is on the Welcome Center Stand.



Women's Lenten Bible Study

Bible study will meet each Monday night in March at 7 p.m. As always, people can come when they can, each week has it's own topic. The study we will be doing is called "**The Psalm on the Cross.**"



Prayer Requests

Remember in Prayer: Members: Gail Block, Elsie Cyriacks, Pam Gage, Jim Gonzales, Judy Hicken, Dennis McCain, Corey Stull, Lavonne Werkmeister;

Family & Friends of Members: Kristy Connelly, Lori Edwards, Keith Fickenscher, Chad Fuller, Kristy Henn, Rich Hillan, Mairik Holbein, Darcy Lenz, Arlan Ronnekamp, Tip Ronnekamp, Shirley Stombaugh, Chuck Taylor, Reese Tucker;

Service Members: Colton Bebensee, Sam Erb, Johanna Keiser, Brandon Reinke, Maggie Trenkle. *If you or a family member are ill or in the hospital, let us know so Pastor Doug can visit you and include you in our prayers or if a family member is on the prayer list and you feel that they no longer need to be included in them, please call the office at 537-3433.*



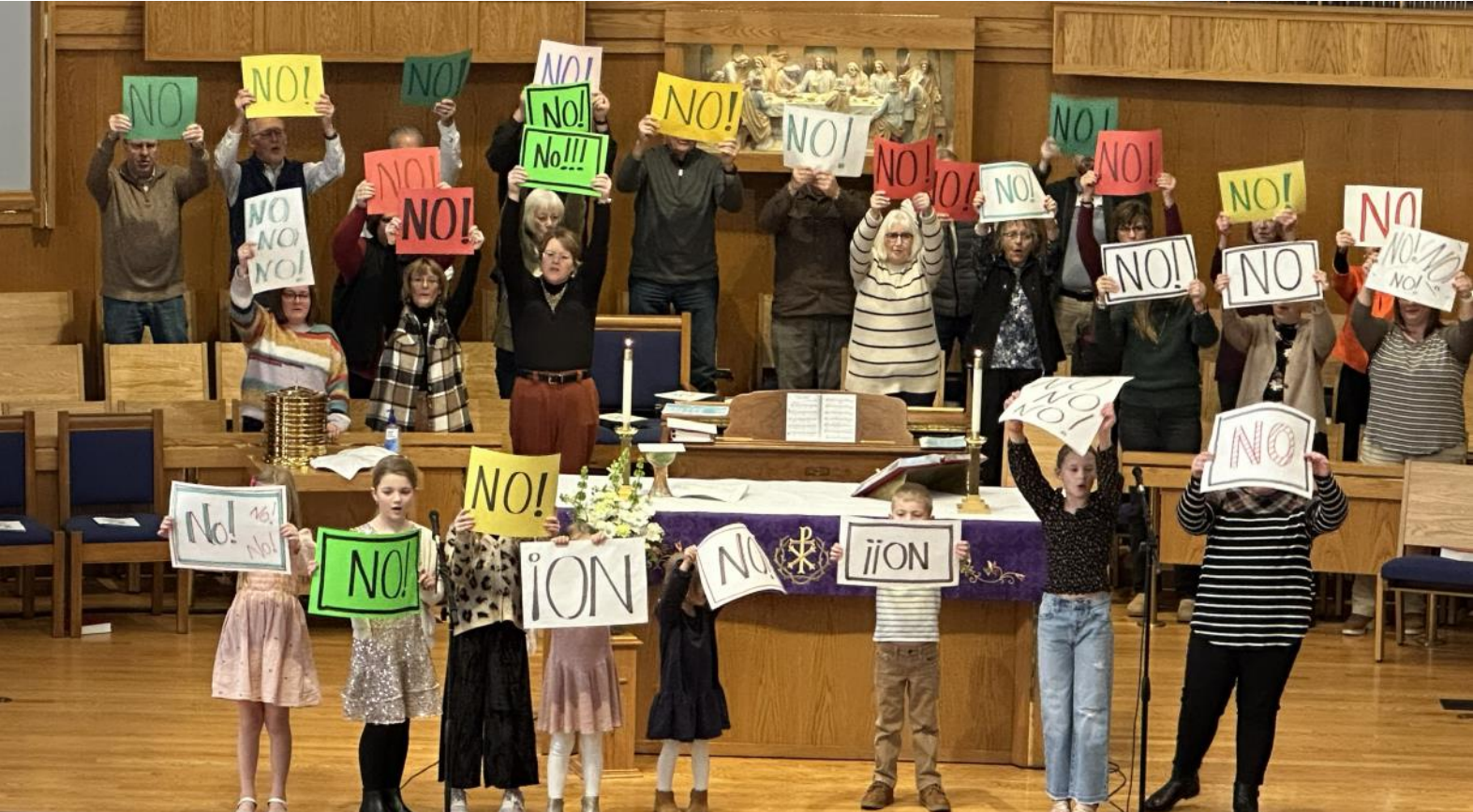
SPRING FORWARD

Set your clock an hour ahead

Don't forget to set your clock an hour ahead before you go to bed on **Saturday, March 7th.** You don't want to be an hour late for church!



The Sunday School kids sang during the February 22nd service. They performed "It is Written" with backup from the adult choir.



“Did You Know?”

The Advent Window

The six art glass windows on the east aisle of American Lutheran Church portray the major seasons of the church year. They represent a linear “calendar” that runs each year from the 1st Sunday of Advent (four Sundays before December 25) to the Last Sunday after Pentecost (toward the end of November).

These windows were designed by artist Ken Hosmer of North Platte. Ken is still active with his artistic endeavors, having taught watercolor workshops across the U.S. He is known for the distinctive use of color in his paintings, a characteristic which carries over well when the images are crafted in stained glass!

The window at the head of the aisle depicts a blacksmith whose hammer and anvil become the locus of an amazing transformation: the swords of war are being turned into the plowshares of peace. This is derived from the prophetic vision of Isaiah 2:2-4 (which is also found almost verbatim in Micah 4:1-3). Isaiah 2 is one of the many readings from the prophets which we hear during the season of Advent. Advent is a season of hope and longing (symbolized in the beautiful blue liturgical hangings which are commonly used during these weeks).

This is the text from Isaiah:

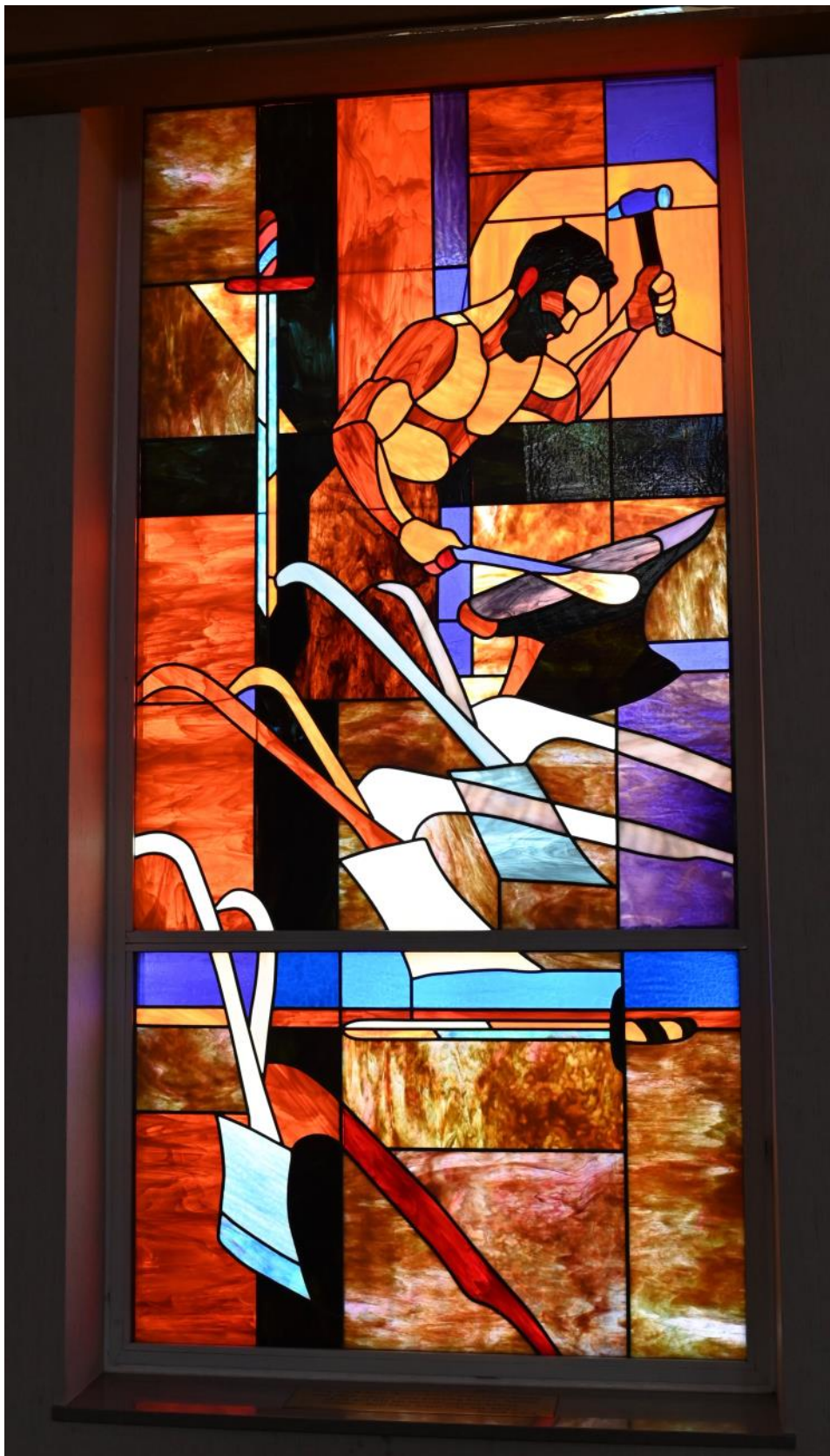
In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³ Many peoples shall come and say,
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.

Continued on next page



In our recent “Manna and Mercy” Bible class, we learned from noted professor Walter Brueggemann that the prophets may be understood as poets who “dared to dream.” This was not a dream just for the people of Israel, but for all nations, who will one day no longer be ruled by “anxious greed,” “because abundance is shared and all have enough.” (Manna and Mercy, p. 83). As Christian readers of the Hebrew Bible, we see this hope for “shalom/peace” coming to fulfillment in Jesus, who promises, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself” (John 12:32).

Steve Berke

Palm Sunday

Cookie Social



What: **Cookie Social** → Get 1 dozen cookies for \$15...Boxes will be provided

When: **Palm Sunday**, March 29th during Linger Longer

Where: **Parish Hall** (right after church)

Why: To raise funds for the **Bathroom Renovations**

The way it works. Cookies are spread out for you to walk from table to table gathering delicious cookies to create your dozen. Pick all the same flavor, or a different flavor for each cookie. Your selection is what YOU want!

If you have any questions, you can text Macy 308-529-1984



*Let your
sweet
tooth
guide you!*





March Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday

- 1 Caden Geiken
- 3 Todd Geiken
- 4 Ellie Franzen Seams
Carter Slonecker
- 5 Vera Wolf
Donna Schnackenberg
- 6 Deb Clark
- 7 Nancy Jobman
Thomas Hicken
- 8 Mary Monson
- 9 Latasha Howell
- 10 Marlene Fiese
- 12 Lisa Bihlmaier
Nathan Bihlmaier
- 13 Joslyn Zarek
- 14 Jessa Thompson
Dennis McCain
- 15 Sue Schmeckle
Carter Holmes
- 18 Mark Aden
Samantha Blasé
Scott Hillius
- 19 Larry Bihlmaier
- 20 Al Childers
Lexi Johnson
Craig Zarek

- 21 Garry Hicken
Landon Rosse
- 22 Gretchen Philpot
Rodney Aden
Austin Schlake
Bentley Christensen
Alisa Keiser
Elliot Block
- 23 Jeanne McCain
Ruth Rayburn
Coltin Bebensee
Jalisa Sabin
- 24 Linda Rodine
Lois Holbein
- 25 Michele Warner
Cressy Rossell
Turner Gundell
Jaxson Gundell
- 27 Delaney Harm
- 28 Ernie Blecha
Sam Aden
Erin Feather
- 29 Owen Geiken
- 31 Kayla Holmes

Anniversaries

- 2 Tom & Rhonda Jobman
- 3 Noel & Joni Jacobsen
- 15 Jim & Lori Long
- 23 Paul & Kathleen Stubbe

Sunday Volunteers



Acolytes -

March 1 - Cooper Roth
March 8 - Gretta McKim
March 15 - Hadley Ostergard
March 22 - Blake Brown
March 29 - Eli Erb

Ushers -

March 1 - Glenn Finke, Kurt Stevens
March 8 - Roger Koehler, Bob Ronnekamp
March 15 - Mary Finke, Scott France
March 22 - Lloyd Hicken, Ken Christensen
March 29 - Joyce Hudson, Pat Jobman

Communion Assistants -

March 1 - Macy Finke, Kim Kitzing,
LaMonte Schlake
March 8 - Eldon & Linda Rodine, Rick Zarek
March 15 - Jim & Lori Long,
Tammy McMichael
March 22 - TJ & Ashleigh Brown,
Kevin Boyd
March 29 - Carolyn Hicken, Noel & Joni
Jacobsen

Reader -

March 1 - Lisa Wagner
March 8 - Kara Kreis
March 15 - Kendra Boyd
March 22 - Carol Keiser
March 29 - Kevin Boyd

Welcome Center Host -

March 1 - Jonie Birnie
March 8 - Elaine Keiser
March 15 - Marlene Fiese
March 22 - Lisa Bihlmaier
March 29 - Jan Blecha

Greeters -

March 1 - Elaine Keiser, Lori Long
March 8 - Jonie Birnie, Larry Franzen
March 15 - Dave & Wenda Keiser
March 22 - Bob & Barb Hicken
March 29 - Dan & Sharise Scherer

Sound -

March 1 - Eldon Rodine
March 8 - Cressy Rossell
March 15 - Kurt Stevens
March 22 - Lindly Anderson
March 29 - Scott Aden

Offering Counters -

March - Marci Ostergard
April - Ernie & Jan Blecha

Communion Bread -

March 1 - Lisa Wagner
March 8 - Carol Keiser
March 15 - Michele Warner
March 22 - Carolyn Hicken
March 29 - Carol Wahlgren
April 5 - Karan Smith, Joni Jacobsen, Lisa
Wagner, Jan Blecha

Communion Support Person-

March 1 - Natalie Hengen
March 8 - Macy Finke
March 15 - Kendra Boyd
March 22 - Scout Bell
March 29 - Linda Rodine

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9a Property 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	2 7p Women's Bible Study	3 Pony Express Cluster Text Study	4 2:30-3:30p JAM 5:45p-6:45 Lenten Supper 7p Lenten Worship	5	6	7 Set your clock an hour ahead tonight
8 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	9 7a Men's Breakfast 1:30p Communion at Stone Hearth 7p Women's Bible Study	10 7p Congregational Council	11 NO JAM 5:45p-6:45 Lenten Supper 7p Lenten Worship	12	13	14
15 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	16 7p Women's Bible Study	17 Pony Express Cluster Text Study	18 2:30-3:30p JAM 5:45p-6:45 Lenten Supper 7p Lenten Worship	19	20	21
22 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	23 1:30p Communion at Stone Hearth 7p Women's Bible Study	24 Pony Express Cluster Text Study	25 2:30-3:30p JAM 5:45p-6:45 Lenten Supper 7p Lenten Worship	26 No Quilters this month	27	28
29 9:45 Donkey Processional 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	30 7p Women's Bible Study	31	<i>March 2026</i>			