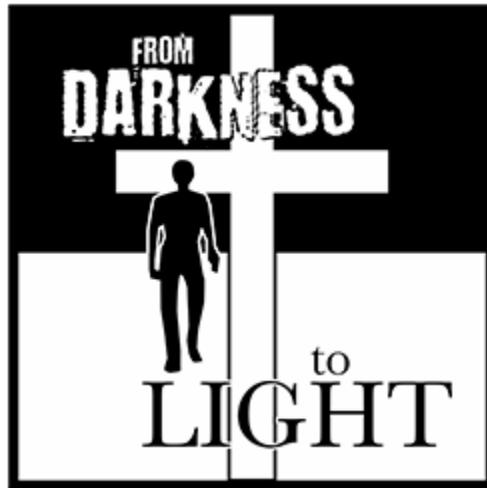


**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda NY
March 15th, 2026**



AS WE GATHER

The Lord is grieved by the spiritual blindness of His people, but He does not forsake them. Instead, He promises to turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground (Isaiah 42:16). The Lord does not give up on His servant, Israel, but sends another Servant who is the light of the world (John 9:5). Jesus' light comes to us in His Word, His water, and His Supper. These are His means for opening our eyes to see and to live as children of light (Ephesians 5:8). Baptized into Christ, we look forward to the day when these words will come pass: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you" (Ephesians 5:14).

****The Lord's Supper will be celebrated at this service, Communion is offered to Lutheran members in Altar & Pulpit Fellowship only, we believe based on Scripture and the "Book of Concord", (The Lutheran Confessions) that only those who share the same faith and teaching of Doctrine should Commune together. **Acts 2:42, 1 Cor. 10:17, 1 Cor. 11:26 and Rom. 16:17** is where we find this written, if this is your first time at St. Matthew, and would like to take Communion, please talk to the Pastor before the service. If you are taking Communion, please fill out the Communion Registration form. ****

Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you're a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshiping with us today.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

**TLH 151 vv. 1-4 Christ, the Life of All the Living
INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

With my voice I cry out to the LORD;
with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD.

Silent reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

Most merciful God, we confess that we were born in utter sin. To this day and by nature, we have eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear. We have trusted in the things we have made rather than You. Our thoughts, words, and actions have been unfruitful and dark. We have been blind to our sin, but You have seen it. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, open our eyes. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. Jesus is the light of the world and your salvation. He has enlightened you with His gifts and given you ears to hear Jesus' words. It is He who is speaking to you. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Introit

My eyes are ever toward the Lord
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my
life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his
temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me
high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all
around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of
joy;

I will sing and make melody to the Lord

***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen.***

Kyrie

***Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us, Lord
have mercy upon us***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new
every
morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive
us as

Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul.
Grant that
we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give
thanks for
all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through
Jesus
Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and
the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Isaiah 42:14-21

¹⁴For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant.

¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation;

I will turn the rivers into islands,^[a] and dry up the pools. ¹⁶And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground.

These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. ¹⁷They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, “You are our gods.” ¹⁸Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! ¹⁹Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one,^[b] or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰He

sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear. ²¹ The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

******Choir: Once Upon A Tree******

Epistle Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39

The Holy Gospel according to St. John the ninth chapter

Glory be to Thee, O Lord

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. ¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among

them. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”^[a] ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise be to Thee, O Christ

Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,**

**being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down
from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin
Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the
Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the
living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped
and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic
Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of
sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.
TLH 304 An Awe-Full Mystery Is Here**

Sermon Offertory

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

Offering

Prayer of the Church

As children of light, we cry out to the Lord who sees us and
hears us, and
deals bountifully with us in our time of need: Lord of Light, in
Your Son
You brought light into this dark world. Bless all pastors and
church
workers, especially those who minister to those who are deaf
and blind,
that they faithfully point us to all that is good and right and true,
and that
we discern what is pleasing to You. Lord, in Your mercy,
shine on us.
Loving Father, You claimed us as children in Holy Baptism,
bringing us out of darkness and into Your marvelous light. Help
us to walk as children of light, that Your works be displayed in
us while it is still day. Lord, in Your mercy,
shine on us.
Patient Lord, in the face of deep darkness, You remain slow to
anger and abounding in steadfast love. Give us Your patience in

our encounters with the darkness, that we graciously and fearlessly lead those who are blinded by sin back to You. Lord, in Your mercy,

shine on us.

Sovereign Lord, You are our refuge and portion in the land of the living. Strengthen our leaders, our government, and all You have put in place to protect us. Open their eyes to see the needs of Your people and Your creation. Help them to establish laws that are good and right and true. Lord, in Your mercy,

shine on us.

Merciful Lord, You deliver those who cry to You from the darkness of pain, sickness, and grief. Visit all who are in need and struggling to see beyond what is before them, [*especially* . . .]. Bring them Your light and Your peace. Hide them in Your shelter and restore to them the joy of being Your children. Lord, in Your mercy,

shine on us.

Believing that Jesus truly is the light who overcomes all darkness, we trust that You hear and answer us according to Your good and gracious will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many that with cleansed hearts we might be prepared joyfully to celebrate the Paschal Feast in sincerity and truth. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabbath; heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy are You, O God. With thanksgiving and praise, we bless You for having sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, to give Himself as a perfect sacrifice for us so that our lives may know that true peace and joy that is ours to share as we proclaim Your lordship of life. We bless You for the vision of eyewitnesses to Your glory that inspires and encourages us on our journeys of faith. Invited by Your grace, we come to Your Table with thankful hearts. Strengthen us through Christ's body and blood that we may live lives of confident

hope, awaiting the eternal feast with all the saints in glory everlasting.

Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD’S PRAYER

*Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name*

*Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.*

PAX DOMINI

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

AGNUS DEI

*O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of
the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of
God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy
upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away
the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.*

Distribution / 151 vv 5-7 Christ, the Life of All the Living

Nunc Dimittis

*Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace
according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy
salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all*

people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Thanksgiving

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
and His mercy endureth forever.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

TLH 54 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah