

February 22, 2026
First Sunday in
Lent

St. John's Lutheran Church,
Mahone Bay





St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (SJELC)
South Shore Lutheran Shared Ministry (SSLSM)
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Sunday February 22nd, 2026 – Holy Communion
First Sunday in Lent

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome Statement *(read by lector)*

We are honored to be worshiping here today in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People, and we acknowledge them as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land.

Here at St. John's, we intentionally welcome all to worship and participate in our community. We believe we are drawn together by the love of Jesus Christ, our care for each other, and our passion for our community. At St. John's, all people are welcome, and we seek to worship in a way that respects and inspires our diversity. We believe that all people are created in the image of God, that all people are of sacred worth, and that Christ died, and rose, for all people. We believe that God's radically inclusive love excludes no one. We welcome everyone without exception, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, family or socioeconomic status, educational background, political affiliation, physical or mental ability, faith history or life experience. We believe that the diversity of God's creation is part of what makes it beautiful. We are a church where it is safe to have differences and still remain united in the love of Jesus. No matter who you are, where you're from, or what you believe, you are always welcome at St. John's.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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.

Amen.

Opening Hymn ~ ELW 325
~ I Want Jesus

GREETING

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

KYRIE ~ p. 184

CANTICLE OF PRAISE ~ p. 187

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Amen.

WORD

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

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.

PSALM: PSALM 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

² Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

⁵ 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.**

⁶ Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;

you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;

I will guide you | with my eye.

⁹Do 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.”

¹⁰Great are the tribulations of the wicked;

but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.

¹¹Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;

shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING: Romans 5:12-19

¹²Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴Yet 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.

¹⁵But 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. ¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷If, 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.

¹⁸Therefore 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. ¹⁹For 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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ~ p.188

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 4:1-11

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.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: Pastor Annette

Hymn of the Day ~ ELW 808
~ Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song

NICENE CREED ~ p. 104

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

Who with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

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

A brief silence.

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.

Your mercy is great.

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.

Your mercy is great.

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. We pray for an end to violent conflict in Gaza, Palestine, and Israel; Iran, and Yemen; Sudan/South Sudan; the DRC and Somalia; Minneapolis, Venezuela, Greenland, Russia and Ukraine. Give wisdom to negotiators, sanctuary to refugees and protect the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land as they do Your work. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of our homeland, we remember before you those who have died in the shooting in Tumbler Ridge. We commend them to your eternal love. We ask your mercy on the person who fired the weapon, transform those who from malice or illness inflict violence on others and console their families. Grant healing and wholeness to the survivors who are wounded or traumatized and restore all whose spirits are maimed by such violence. Make us instruments of your peace, that we may serve as your arms of care to those in distress. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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 Jocelyn Wentzell, Florence Slauenwhite, Shelley Ernst, Donna Naugler, Jason Mailman, Wendy Keddy and Judy Verge. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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.

Your mercy is great.

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. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Sharing of the Peace with one another

Special Music ~ I Come to the Cross
~ Melinda Kerwin

OFFERING

Offering presented by our Greeters

OFFERTORY PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

MEAL

Great Thanksgiving ~ ELW p. 190

God be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise

PREFACE

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 Saviour Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and hosts of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS - Holy, Holy, Holy ~ ELW p. 190

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

O God triune, majestic is your name in all the earth. Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, A fragile tree of life. Here by your wisdom are both life and death, Growth and decay, the nest and the hunt, Sunshine and storm, darkness and light. Sustained by these wonders, We creatures of dust join in the ancient song: The earth is full of your glory.

The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer. In Christ you bring life from death; We remember his cross, we laud his resurrection. Broken like bread, he enlivens our body. Out poured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness. Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song: The earth is full of your glory.

The earth is full of your glory.

We praise you for the heart of Jesus, So filled with your love for this earth. 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. Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song: The earth is full of your glory.

The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you create the worlds, You uphold the living, you embrace the dead. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Strengthen us for our journey with this meal, The body and blood of Christ. Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth. Empowered by your promises, we rise from our deaths to praise you again: The earth is full of your glory.

The earth is full of your glory.

Amen, amen.

Amen, amen.

LORD'S PRAYER p. 191

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

LAMB OF GOD ~ ELW p. 191

COMMUNION

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

Communion Hymn ~ ELW 613
~Thy Holy Wings

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

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.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN~ ELW 624
~ Jesus, Still Lead On

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

**Jocelyn Wentzell, Florence Slauenwhite, Shelley Ernst, Donna Naugler, Jason
Mailman, Wendy Keddy, and Judy Verge.**

Remember to pray for all those who we know ~ family and friends.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Weekly services will be held in the Education Centre until Easter.

Practices:

- **Handbell Practice:** No practices until March 12th at 7:30
- **St. John's Cantata Choir Practice:** Thursdays at 6:15 p.m.

Upcoming Events:

- **Wednesday Walking Group:** Barn meet-up @09:30am, if inclement weather, stay for fellowship at The Barn.
- **Fundraising Meeting:** March 8th after service. Bring your awesome ideas!

Easter Season Worship in the SSLSM:

- **Midweek Services during Lent:**
 - "Lenten Café" at Zion: Wednesdays at 10:00am-12:00pm
 - "Bless this Night" at St John's: Wednesdays at 7:00pm
- **Maundy Thursday, April 2nd:**
 - St John's at 7:00pm;
 - St Paul's at 7:00pm
- **Good Friday, April 3rd:**
 - St James Anglican @1030am, Mahone Bay (Ecumenical)
 - St Paul's 7:00pm
- **Palm Sunday, March 29th:**
 - Easter Cantata @10:30a, St John's
 - Mount Calvary @10:30a, followed by potluck fellowship
- **Easter Sunday, April 6th:**
 - St. John's Service at 1:00pm
 - St Lukes/Mount Olivet joint Service @9:00am

Other:

- **Memorials for Easter** are graciously being accepted. Please provide your details and funds into the office by March 27th.
- **Charitable tax receipts for 2025** are ready for pickup. Please see Joanne.
- **The Survey link is still open** until Sunday Feb 22nd. Complete the online survey by visiting this link:

○ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M5ZGD9Y>

Or use the QR Code:



Happenings in our shared ministry life:

Date & Time	Event & Church	Description
February 22 2:00pm	Coffee Hour St Lukes, Rhodes Corner	Fourth Sunday Coffee and Conversation after 1pm service
February 24 1:30pm	Drop In: West Northfield Community Centre	Hosted by St. Andrews Lutheran Church on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month!
February 24 4:30-6pm	Fed & Nourished Mt Calvary	Pizza & Puzzles!
February 25 9:30am	Walking Group St John's, Mahone Bay	Meet at the Barn. Bad weather? Stay for fellowship at the Barn.

Contact Information South Shore Lutheran Shared Ministry

Pastor Annette Smith

emergency contact available 16-31st of each month

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Cell Phone: 902 605-0462

Pastor Victoria Featherston

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Cell Phone: 902 605-0461

Hilary Scott, Administrator for SSLSM

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Office days and hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

office email is ssism.info@gmail.com

Messages & Emails are checked daily

Website: ssism.ca

SSLSM Worship Schedule – Odd and Even Months

Odd Months Service Rotation		
January, March, May, July, September, November - times shown as time at location.		
Sunday	Pastor Annette	Pastor Victoria
First Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at Mt. Calvary, Upper Northfield • 11:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 1:00 pm at All Saints, Newcombville 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Andrew's, West Northfield • 11:00 am at Zion, Lunenburg • 1:00 pm at St. John's, Mahone Bay
Second Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. James, Branch LaHave • 11:00 am at St. John's, Mahone Bay • 1:00 pm at Zion, Lunenburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 11:00 am at Mt. Olivet, Upper LaHave • 1:00 pm at Zion, Lunenburg
Third Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Andrew's, West Northfield • 11:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 1:00 pm at St. John's, Mahone Bay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at Mt. Calvary, Upper Northfield • 11:00 am at All Saints, Newcombville • 1:00 pm at Zion, Lunenburg
Fourth Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at Grace, First South • 11:00 am at Zion, Lunenburg • 1:00 pm at St. Luke's, Rhodes Corner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 11:00 am at St. John's, Mahone Bay • 2:00 pm at St. James, Branch LaHave

Even Months Service Rotation		
February, April, June, August, October, December - times shown as time at location.		
Sunday	Pastor Victoria	Pastor Annette
First Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at Mt. Calvary, Upper Northfield • 11:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 1:00 pm at All Saints, Newcombville 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Andrew's, West Northfield • 11:00 am at Zion, Lunenburg • 1:00 pm at St. John's, Mahone Bay
Second Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. James, Branch LaHave • 11:00 am at St. John's, Mahone Bay • 1:00 pm at Zion, Lunenburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00 am at St. Paul's, Bridgewater • 11:00 am at Mt. Olivet, Upper LaHave • 1:00 pm at Grace, First South
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