

Our Savior's Lutheran Church—La Crosse, WI



Fifth Sunday in Lent

Sunday, March 22, 2026, 9:30am

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, ELCA
612 Division St. | La Crosse, WI | 608.782.3468

WWW.OURSAVIORSLUTHERANCHURCH.NET

**"Our mission is to make the love of Christ known
to all as we worship, serve and grow together."**

All are welcome in this church! The Good News of God's grace is for all, regardless of age, abilities, physical & mental health, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, education, income or strength of faith. There is nothing we do, have done or will do that can separate us from the love of God. God makes no exceptions, nor do we. Come join us in praise, prayer and the work of our Lord, including ongoing work for racial equity in our Church and in the world.

Joanne Richmond, Senior Pastor—pastor@oursaviorslutheranchurch.net
Lois Losby, Financial Secretary—finance@oursaviorslutheranchurch.net
Sandra Schultz, WCC Coordinator—wccloset@oursaviorslutheranchurch.net
Mary Ender Stutesman, Music Coordinator & Organist—stuteswoman@gmail.com
Jessica Zinniel, Associate Lay Minister—youthfamily@oursaviorslutheranchurch.net
Thomas Haag, Organist | Dr. Eddie Kim, Pianist | Colin Stiemke, Guitarist
Liz Bahr, Cantor | Judi Winkler, Custodian

Welcome, visitors! We're glad you are here! We hope your time with us is a blessing, and that you will come back soon.

We would like to be in touch with you! Visitors—please use the Live Stream 'Attendance Info Form (www.allarewelcome.org under the Live Stream tab) today. **Members**—you only need to fill them out once a year when you receive Holy Communion. **In addition**, use the form for prayer requests, hymn requests, to get the monthly newsletter, to give us address changes, or for any communication with the office or pastor.

If you need **hearing assistance**, ask in the church office for our special devices. If you need **assistance with the live stream**, please call 608.782.3468 or join us on the phone live stream at 1.877.552.3468 (toll-free).

+FOR OUR WORSHIP TODAY+

Presiding Minister: Pastor Joanne Richmond

AV Team: Asa and Fox Zinniel

Communion Assistant: Sue Staples

Cover Art: *Epilogue*; by T. Denise Anderson;
inspired by John 8: 2—11; 14'x18' acrylic on canvas

Guitarist: Colin Stiemke

Prayer Reader: Sue Staples

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome! We are delighted you have chosen to worship with us today.

We will share holy Communion; you are welcome to participate.

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome to the weary and the worn.

Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.

Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.

Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.

Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

This is God's house.

You can make yourself at home here.

Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Jesus once said to a crowd, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone."

Friends, none of us are without sin.
None of us get it right all the time.
None of us can get by without God's grace.

In the Prayer of Confession, we acknowledge this truth.
We put down our stones
and we turn to God for forgiveness.

Join me in this act of transformation.
Let us pray:

**Holy God,
we love to live our lives by the rules.
We love clear answers.
We love right and wrong.
We love swift justice.
We love to pick up stones,
but you show us another way.
You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation.
You prioritize mercy over legality.
You prioritize people over tradition.**

You prioritize love over everything.

Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters.

Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.

Forgive us. Soften our hearts.

Root us in mercy, justice, and love.

With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.

Church family,

Jesus saw a crowd ready to throw stones
and invited them to choose another way.

Jesus offered them grace, mercy, and compassion,
and the same can be said for us.

Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

Our God is a God of mercy.

Our God is a God of compassion.

Our God is a God of grace.

We are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way.

Thanks be to God for yet another second chance.

Amen.

Your Heart, O God, Is Grieved

Vieme to, Panez Bože náš

Leader



Otče nebeský, Svoritel' u sveta, Bo - že, zmi - luj sa nad na - mi.
 1 O God, Father in heav - en, have mer - cy up - on us.
 2 O Son of God, redeemer of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.
 3 O God, Holy Spir - it, have mer - cy up - on us.

All



Vie - me to, Pa - ne Bo - že náš, že sa na
 Your heart, O God, is grieved, we know, by ev - 'ry
 Your arms ex - tend, O Christ, to save from sting of
 O lav - ish Giv - er, come to aid the chil - dren



nás hrieš - nych hne - váš, sved - či o tom smrt'
 e - vil, ev - 'ry woe; up - on your cross - for -
 death and grasp of grave; your scars be - fore the
 that your word has made. Now make us grow and



ne - vin - ná Tvoj - ho je - di - né - ho Sy - na.
 sak - en Son our death is laid, and peace is won.
 Fa - ther move his heart to mer - cy at such love.
 help us pray; bring joy and com - fort, come to stay.

Text: Jiří Tranovský, 1591–1637; tr. Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919
 Music: ZŇAME TO, PANE BOŽE NÁŠ, *Tranoscius*, 1636
 Tr. © 1970 Concordia Publishing House

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

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

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy One,

when you speak, we don't want to miss it.

When you bend down and write in the dirt,

when you move through the trees,

when you wake with the dawn,

when you tug on our heart,

or whisper into our dreams,

we don't want to miss it.

Today we pray, clear out the cobwebs in our ears.

Quiet the steady stream of thoughts marching through our minds.

Open up space in our hearts, that we can receive your word for us today.

With hope we pray.

Amen.

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

The musical score is written on five staves in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The lyrics are placed below the notes on each staff. The first staff ends with a fermata over the final note. The second staff ends with a fermata over the final note. The third staff ends with a fermata over the final note. The fourth staff ends with a fermata over the final note. The fifth staff ends with a double bar line.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

Music: GOOD SOIL, Handt Hanson

Text and music © 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc., admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

GOSPEL: John 8: 2—11

The holy gospel according to Saint John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

² Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. ³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, ⁴ they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. ⁵ Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" ⁶ They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷ When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹ She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Joanne Richmond

HYMN OF THE DAY



Improbable Lead Sheet

Lyrics & music by Britt Kusserow | Arr. Rachel Hall

$\text{♩} = 90$

Tell me some-thing good Tell me some-thing true

5 Tell me what's be - hind the bea-ting hearts of me and you

9 Tell me what does jus - tice mean When the world just seems so cruel

13 Tell me that the love of God's sur - pri - sing Tell me some thing new

17 We are wel-comed in and asked to do the same

21 Here with-in these walls and an - y time we hear your - name

25 We are asked to trust When eve - ry-thing feels lost

©Britt Kusserow 2026 | Commissioned by A Sanctified Art, LLC | www.brittkusserow.com

 A Sanctified Art © a sanctified art | sanctifiedart.org

29 2

E♭ D♭

That the price of new-ness and of spring time is the frost Eve-ry thing's

34

A♭ E♭ Fm

pos-si-ble For a love that's im-prob-a-ble For a God that's un-stop-a-ble

39

E♭ D♭ A♭

Are you rea-dy to try When no-thing is per-man-ent Res-sur-rec-tion is

44

E♭ Fm D♭

imm - i - nent For a love that looks diff-e-rent Than the fear in their eyes

49

D♭ A♭ E♭ A♭

I am rea-dy to shine

57

D♭ A♭

Will you use your light To re-shape the world a - round

61

E♭ A♭

Will you stand in af - fir ma-tion of the love you found Will you let your-self

66

D♭ Fm E♭

be held Pro-TECT-ed just the same Will you speak with trem-bling voice to

71 3

D \flat A \flat

ban - ish hate and shame Be-cause no-thing's im - pos - si-ble

75

E \flat Fm

For a love that's im - prob-a - ble For a God that's un - stop - a - ble

79

E \flat D \flat A \flat

Are you rea-dy to try When hate is-n't per-man-ent Res-sur-rec-tion is

84

E \flat Fm D \flat

imm - i - nent For a love that looks dif-fer - ent Than the fear in their eyes

89

D \flat E \flat Fm

May the words of my mouth and the song in my heart Be much more than just

93

D \flat E \flat

please - ing to you May the things I pro - fess and the dreams that I

96

Fm G \flat

dream Be the home that I bring new worlds to Be-cause Eve-ry thing's

100

A \flat E \flat Fm

pos-si-ble For a love that's im - prob-a-ble For a God that's un - stop - a-ble

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a table-setting God
who always has a seat saved for you.

We believe in an inviting God
who leaves the porch light on and a hand extended.

We believe in a radically welcoming God
**who eats with the overlooked and the outcast,
the hungry and the downtrodden.**

We believe in the good news of the gospel,
**which reminds us that all are welcomed,
all are celebrated, all are loved, and all are claimed.**

Pull up a seat at God's table.

There is good news to be shared here. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH *The Spirit Intercedes for Us* ELW #180

Loving God, you know all of us. You know our fears and our dreams, our hopes and our longings, our grief and our joy. You know the words that are on our tongue before we can even say them, so today we come to you unfiltered. Today, we bring you our full honesty, trusting that you meet us here with grace and love.

Holy God, we admit that mercy, justice, and faithfulness often get tangled up in our minds.

We want to do the right thing, which feels like justice. However, sometimes we go about justice with a blunt sword, failing to practice mercy.

**The Spirit intercedes for us
with sighs too deep for words to express. Oh, oh.**

We want to be merciful, but our anger and hurt can get in the way. Too often, we find ourselves casting stones. We want to be righteous, but we often forget that righteousness must impact our relationships, not only our words or our actions.

God, we admit that mercy, justice, and faithfulness often get tangled up in our minds. Like Jesus did with the crowds that day, help us to root ourselves in the best of these practices. Untangle these threads of our faith and show us how to hold them all.

**The Spirit intercedes for us
with sighs too deep for words to express. Oh, oh.**

Spark a fire in our hearts for justice—
justice for the oppressed,
justice for the overlooked,
justice for our neighbors,
justice for those not given a voice.

Spark a fire in our hearts for mercy—
mercy for the sinful,
mercy for the hurt,
mercy for the ones who are doing their best with what they have.

Spark a fire in our hearts for righteousness.
Call us up to a higher moral ground.
Remind us that our faith invites us to love as you love,
and to forgive as you forgive.

Show us how to put down our stones.

**The Spirit intercedes for us
with sighs too deep for words to express. Oh, oh.**

Show us how to forgive ourselves for our own wrong.
Show us how to empathize with the other, putting ourselves in their shoes.

If we can do that, then maybe there will be a day when there is less stone
throwing, less mob building, less violence toward our neighbor. Maybe there
will be a day when all can gather at the table. Maybe there will be a day
when we can all break bread together. Maybe there will be a day when
justice, mercy, and righteousness feel like a mighty flowing stream.

**The Spirit intercedes for us
with sighs too deep for words to express. Oh, oh.**

Until that day, we will continue to look for your words in the dirt.

We will continue to listen for your deep truth.

Until that promised day, we will continue to bring you our unfiltered honesty.

Until that promised day, we will continue to pray for our neighbor.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

NOISY OFFERING

DIALOGUE

The Lord 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

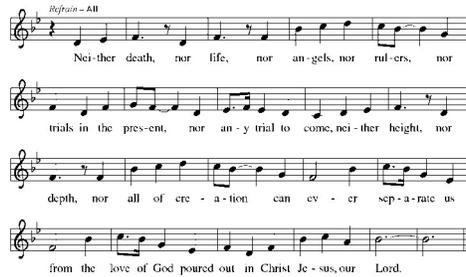
God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Neither Death nor Life

Refrain - All



Nei-ther death, nor life, nor an-gels, nor rul-ers, nor
trials in the pres-ent, nor an-y trial to come, nei-ther height, nor
depth, nor all of cre-a-tion can ev-er sep-a-rate us
from the love of God poured out in Christ Je-sus, our Lord.

Leader or All



1 Dwell in the one who raised Christ from the dead; though your
2 All who are led by the Spir-it shall live as
3 All of the suf-f'ring we now must en-dure is
4 All of cre-a-tion a-waits the new birth, the
5 Who can sep-a-rate us from the love of Christ? Will
bod-y shall die, in Christ you shall rise through the
chil-dren of God, and heirs with Christ Je-sus, God's a-
noth-ing to the glo-ry so soon to be re-vealed when cre-
ful-ness of re-demp-tion, through la-hor pains of love, and
hard-ship or dis-tress, per-se-cu-tion or fam-ine, or

Refrain

Spir-it who brings you to life,
Refrain
dopt-ed and cho-sen and loved,
Refrain
a-tion it-self is set free,
Refrain
so we wait in pa-tience and hope,
Refrain
na-ked-ness or per-il or sword?

Tune: Marty Haugen, 1930, based on Remains of
Melchior SEIBER, DEATH NOR LIFE, Marty Haugen
Tune and music, © 2011 GIA's Publications, Inc., 746 N. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60606, www.gia.com, 800.423.1336.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.
Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

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.

DISMISSAL

As you leave this place,
when you meet anger, speak with love.
When you meet fear, speak with hope.
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.
But no matter what, speak this good news.
For the good news of the gospel is love and justice for all.
It is joy that surprises, and nonviolence that transforms.
The good news of the gospel is alive in the world!

Thanks be to God for this good, good news.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Liturgy adapted from the Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.
Reprint and podcast licensing through One License. License A-729110 and CCLI License # 21825636

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A Special Congregational Meeting will be held **Sunday, April 19, 2026, immediately following worship** to consider two building projects: **replacement of the boiler pumps and motors** and **updates to the church's exterior entry doors**. The church council will bring recommendations for consideration. Please plan to attend.

SPARE GAS CANS NEEDED

Our church assists neighbors with gas vouchers when they are in need. Sometimes, however, they don't have a safe way to transport the gasoline. If you have any clean, spare gas cans you're no longer using, please consider donating them to the church so we can pass them along when needed. Donations may be left at the church office. Thank you for helping us care for our neighbors in practical ways.

MARCH DONATION DRIVE—A JAR OF JOY

During March, we're collecting **jam and jellies** to share with our neighbors in need. These small but tasty staples help bring a bit of sweetness to breakfast and everyday meals. All flavors are welcome! Please place your donations in the grocery cart in the narthex.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF PERSONAL CARE KITS

Collecting now through Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to our Personal Care Kit collection! Thanks to your generosity, we've reached **about one-third of our goal of 75 kits**.

There's still time to help us get the rest of the way there. You can **complete a full kit** or **bring individual items** to help finish the kits already started. Every towel, bar of soap, or toothbrush brings us one step closer to sharing comfort, dignity, and hope with families facing crisis around the world.

Each Personal Care Kit includes:

- ☐ **1** light-weight, dark-colored bath towel (20" x 40" to 52" x 27")
- ☐ **2** bath-size bars of soap (in original wrapping)
- ☐ **1** adult-size toothbrush (in original packaging)
- ☐ **1** metal nail clipper
- ☐ **1** sturdy comb

Thank you for helping turn simple items into powerful signs of care and compassion.

PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST

Eat, Enjoy, Support Youth & Family Ministries!

Join us after worship on **Palm Sunday, March 29**, for a delicious breakfast and fellowship! All proceeds benefit Youth & Family Ministries, supporting programs, events, and activities for our young members. Come enjoy good food, great company, and celebrate our youth together. Everyone is welcome!

HELP MAKE OUR PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST A SUCCESS

We need your help to make our Youth & Family Ministries Palm Sunday Breakfast a hit! Donations of food, drinks, or supplies are greatly appreciated. Sign up **on the bulletin board next to the church office** to share what you can contribute. Thank you for supporting our youth!

CELEBRATE HOLY WEEK WITH US

Experience the journey of Jesus from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday:

- **Palm Sunday, March 29** – Wave palms and celebrate His entry!
- **Maundy Thursday, April 2** – Remember the Last Supper.
- **Good Friday, April 3** – Reflect at the cross.
- **Easter Sunday, Apr 5** – Rejoice in the resurrection!

All are welcome—come share in the hope and joy of this sacred week!



Epilogue

by T. Denise Anderson

Inspired by John 8:2-11
14"x18" Acrylic on canvas

I often wonder about the backstory of the woman from John 8:2-11. What were her circumstances? How did they “catch” her in the act of adultery? *In flagrante delicto*?¹⁸ Was it less graphic than that? Was she allowed to explain herself? Did she protest? If she was about to be stoned, what happened to the person with whom she was accused? Was this a loving relationship? Was it even consensual?

Whatever her story, the Pharisees bring her to Jesus expecting him to uphold the law’s punitive prescription. Jesus knows it’s a trap. If he concurs with the law, he initiates and must bear witness to an act of extreme brutality that would traumatize anyone who had to watch. If he counters the law,

he’s a heretic and should probably be stoned himself. But he outsmarts them and turns their self-righteousness and rage back onto them.

In what should have been the end of her life’s story, this woman now finds herself standing. Whole. Alive. Freed to a new future. And through it all, Jesus is just drawing on the ground—like you do!

I wanted to show this woman standing in her wholeness, right after the crowds have dispersed and right before Jesus rises to meet her as an equal. She’s backlit in a way that suggests the sun has set, indicating the end of a saga. What will she do at the end of a nightmare with a new life ahead of her? What decisions do we face at the dawn of a second chance? —Rev. T. Denise Anderson

Look

Contemplate the woman in the image. What do you imagine is her backstory? What do you dream for her future?

¹⁸ This is a Latin phrase often used in legal contexts that can be translated to: “in the very act of committing an offense.”

OUR SAVIORS THIS WEEK

POST ON A FRIG, NEAR A PHONE, ON AN ALTAR AND ANY OTHER SACRED PLACE

CALENDAR

Sunday, March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:30am Worship/HC
10:15am M-M's Prayer Club
10:15am Coffee Fellowship
6:30pm Y.E.S. A.A. mtg.

Monday

9am—1pm Office Open
10am—12 noon Gas Vouchers

Tuesday

9am—1pm Office Open
1—5pm WCC Open
4pm CFS Doors Open
4:15—5:15pm CFS Meal Served
5:15—5:30pm CFS Carry Outs

Wednesday, March 25

Fifth Wednesday of Lent

9am—1pm Office Open
12 noon Worship
5:30pm Soup Supper
6pm Worship

Thursday

9am—1pm Office Open

Friday

Pastor/Staff Sabbath

Saturday

9am—1pm WCC Open
10am—12 noon Breakfast Set-Up

Sunday, March 29, 2026

Palm Sunday

9:30am Worship/HC
10:15am Palm Sunday Breakfast
6:30pm Y.E.S. A.A. mtg.

PRAYER CONCERNS

HEALING AND PEACE

Ardelle Ender, **Athena** Burg, **Bev** Hanson, **Casey** Kanter, **Cassie**, **Cathy** Ofte, **Cindy** Moe, **Dan** Odenbach, **Danielle** Sorenson, **Dave** Kjos, **Debe**, **Erik** Rudrud, **Esther** Harman, **Eugene** Herold, **Gabe** Centanni, **George**, **Jane & Michael** Speer, **Jean** Koll, **Jeannie** White, **Jeff** Kent, **Pastor Joanne**, **Jon** Zinniel, **Joshua**, **Jim** Garson, **Jim** Radatz, **Juliana** Andrews, **Karen** Geoglein, **Katie** White, **Lane C.**, **Lois** Horne, **Kelly** Olson, **Mary** Covey, **Monica & Jack** D., **Morris** Buros, **Pamela** Mathis, **Peggy** Kneifl, **Roger** Loing, **Rose** Sabotta, **Roxanne** North, **Ruth** Rose, **Sandy** Kjos, **Sonja** Simonson-Schrag, **Pastor Steve** Minnema, and **Tom** Cade

GRIEVING FAMILY & FRIENDS OF

Vera Wensole

MEMBERS & FRIENDS IN ARMED FORCES

Ricky Macon, and **Tom** Rudrud

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mary Rathgaber March 22
DeLoris Malmberg March 23
Brittany Taylor March 24
Virginia Bentzen March 29
Jeff Franko March 29
Louise Temte March 30
Jenifer Bahr March 31
Colleen Cartwright March 31

Calendar Notations:

HC—Holy Communion
M-MPC—Moo-Moo's Prayer Club
CFS—Come For Supper
WCC—Women's Clothes Closet