

St. Luke's United Methodist Church

Rev. Seok Nam Lim

Ministers- Every Member of the Congregation

March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday in Lent



We are the People of the United Methodist Church

Our Vision~ "Share Love and Give Hope"

March 15, 2026

10:00 am

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kathy Erndt, Liturgist

PRELUDE Traditional Irish tune on "Vision"

Leon Beaudin, Organist

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come into the light of God.

Christ's brightness will guide our way.

Come into the wisdom of God.

The Spirit's insight will reveal new truths.

Come into the praise of God.

Worship opens new doors in our hearts.

HYMN Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

UMH 127

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

God the Redeemer, you are the Shepherd of love. Guide our steps, open the eyes of our hearts, and fling wide the doors of our minds to perceive as you perceive. Open our lives to love as you love. Open our world to become the world you envision for your creation. In the light of your love in Christ, the Good Shepherd, we pray. Amen.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

A READING FROM THE PSALMS

Psalm 23

"NOISY" OFFERING & CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Seok Nam Lim

HYMN Savoir Like a Shepherd Lead Us

UMH 381

PASTORAL PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING

John 4:1-4

MESSAGE

Jesus's Ministry – Making Disciples

Rev. Seok Nam Lim

OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS

OFFERTORY

There is a Redeemer

Leon Beaudin

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 94

OFFERTORY PRAYER

All-seeing God, you see the gifts we have given and the offering we are giving: our treasure and our time, and our service and our lives. Help us perceive the value of your gifts and the ways our generous sharing brings your realm more closely to this earth. Bless our lives and our gifts, that they might become points of light to bring all of creation closer to you and to your love. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

HYMN

God, Make of All Disciples

UMH 571

SENDING FORTH

BENEDICTION

Rev. Seok Nam Lim

As Christ's light has led us here,
so now Christ's light leads us into the world
Go with Christ the Light, go to be light.
We will brighten the world with God's love.

POSTLUDE

Sortie in F Major

Leon Beaudin, Organist

Sermon Summary

Jesus's Ministry – Making Disciples (John 4:1-4)

Summary: The ministry of Jesus to baptize people is for discipleship; his ministerial concern is about making disciples. Baptism represents what discipleship is about, which is following Christ, the Lamb of God, and growing up through self-denial.

A. Jesus' Baptism is a Ceremony of Initiating the Life of Discipleship.

One of the unique things in the Gospel of John is a report that Jesus did the ministry of baptizing the people. After joining the Passover festival at Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples went outside of the city and moved through the countryside of Judah. What he did there was to baptize the people with his disciples (John 2:22).

Jesus' ministry of baptism was very successful and prosperous. People did not stop coming to him to be baptized (John 2:23). It is John the Baptist who began the ministry of baptism prior to Jesus. It is also John who baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. However, after he got baptized, Jesus began his own ministry of baptizing the people nearby where John did the ministry of baptism. All the people went to Jesus, not to John anymore. For this reason, the disciples of John the Baptist were so upset with Jesus and complained to their master, John, about Jesus: "Rabbi, you testified about Jesus and baptized him on the other side of the Jordan River the other day. He is now in our territory. Like you, he is doing the ministry of baptism here, and all the people are going to him" (John 3:26).

Not only the disciples of John the Baptist but also the Pharisaic group of leaders, the Sanhedrin, were very challenged by Jesus and his ministry of baptizing the people. They heard many people go to Jesus to be baptized by him; his ministry of baptism was more prosperous than John the Baptist's ministry. "The Pharisees had heard, 'Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John'" (John 4:1). A report about Jesus spread through the whole area of Judah, and he became so popular. His ministry of baptism proved his popularity and success.

However, Jesus did not use his baptism to gather the people around him. There was a condition that the people were obligated to satisfy before they were baptized by him: "Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John" (John 4:1): gaining disciples was done prior to baptizing them. Becoming the disciples of Jesus was the prior and necessary condition for being baptized by him. Their commitment to discipleship made them qualified to be baptized. Baptism is the ceremony to join the disciples of Jesus. It is a ceremony to initiate a new life of discipleship in Christ. Jesus gave us the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Mat. 28:19-20). In this commission, baptizing the people comes after making them disciples of Jesus. Baptism is crucial to the Great Commission as an introductory ceremony of Christian discipleship.

B. Jesus' Strategy of Mission to the World is to Make Disciples.

Jesus went through the suffering on the cross and then "presented himself alive to" his disciples (Acts 1:3). He taught them with the gospel of the Kingdom of God during his stay with them after resurrection. When he was lifted to heaven, about five hundred disciples remained on the earth. He prepared them for the ministry of God's Kingdom. After his ascension, on the Pentecostal Day, only about one hundred twenty people stayed in the upper room of Mark's house. They were the remnants of those who followed Jesus. These disciples were a very insignificant number of people compared to the whole population of the Roman Empire. But they never knelt to the power of the Jewish leaders and the Roman Empire, keeping the word of Jesus and not denying his name. They lived a life of patience following Jesus, the Lord, who suffered death on the cross, the most horrible and miserable punishment to people at that time or even today. The number of disciples was multiplied. They spread over the whole world and made it upside down. Their discipleship brought the world into transformation. Jesus' strategy of the ministry of making disciples was productive, transforming the world according to the gospel of the Kingdom of God. He knew that only the disciples would be able to engage in the ministry of the Kingdom of God and bring the world into the transformation according to his Kingdom gospel.

C. Jesus' Baptismal Ministry Represents Discipleship: Jesus' ministry of baptizing people represents what discipleship is about or what kind of people the disciples are.

1. Discipleship Means Obedience to Christ as the Lamb of God:

First, the baptism of Jesus is based on his person and authority as the Lamb of God. John the Baptist was “a man sent from God” (John 1:6). “He came as a witness to testify to” Jesus as the light to the world (John 1:7). John’s ministry of baptism was to testify to him as the Lamb of God, in whom all the sins of human beings are taken away; “I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel” (John 1:31). John’s baptism was based on the authority of Jesus, and its purpose was to prepare people for the ministry of Jesus, so that they may follow him.

Likewise, being baptized by Jesus or in his name means to accept his authority as the Lamb of God and put our life under his sovereignty. Jesus was lifted to the cross as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and in whom God is glorified and his glory is manifested to the world. Discipleship means not only to accept Jesus the Lamb of God as our justification and sanctification but also to participate in his suffering, living in justice and holiness. In Revelation 7:14 there is the description of the people of God: They have not only “washed their clothes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” but also come out of the great trials and difficulties. The disciples of Jesus are the people whose sins are taken away by Christ and whose life is participating in his suffering, getting through painful or even horrific experience. Our trouble and pain make us grow up as the disciple of Christ.

2. Discipleship Means Self-Denial. It Is to Live by the Faith in Christ, not Depending on Our Achievement but on Christ alone:

Second, unlike John the Baptist, Jesus never baptized anyone but his disciples baptized the people on his behalf and in his name: “Although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized” (John 4:2). No one was baptized by Jesus. Everyone who came to him for baptism was baptized by his disciples. Jesus did not give baptism ceremony to anyone, so that those baptized might not trust their bodies, but live in faith in Christ alone. We are saved by faith. We live by faith. Our faith makes us the disciple of Christ and invites us to the life of discipleship.

What kinds of people are the Pharisees? They are the people who had “confidence in the flesh”; they had many things to boast, their Abrahamic genealogy, the circumcision on their body, the Scriptures as the Word of God, their knowledge of God, Yahweh, and their enthusiasm for the Word of God (Phil. 3:3-6). They called themselves Jews, the chosen people of God, and believed themselves to be the light to the Gentiles and the instructors to the foolish and boasted their special relationship to God (Rom. 2:17). However, they failed to recognize Jesus as the Word of God, the light to the world, and the Lamb of God giving life to the world. They could not provide a place for Jesus to stay with them. They could not accept his baptism. They could not become his disciples. They could not see the glory of God in Jesus, the man from Nazareth, and the Lamb of God, in whom God’s grace and truth are fully revealed. They could not give up their righteousness, glory, honor, and power in the world. These kinds of people cannot live a life of discipleship.

What kind of people are the disciples? They are the people who “were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God” and also who are able to see the glory of God through Jesus, the Son of God, the crucified Lord (John 1:12-14). Their pride is in Christ. The most excellent thing in their life is Christ and the most valuable thing to them, which surpasses everything in the world, is the knowledge of Christ (Phil. 3:8). To gain Christ and to be found in him, they consider their righteousness and all things in their hands to be rubbish (Phil. 3:8). Their righteousness comes from the faith in Christ: It is “the righteousness from God based on faith,” not based on their achievement (Phil. 3:9). Their goal is to grow up to the full measurement of the knowledge of Christ. They live “in the power of his resurrection, and the sharing of his suffering by becoming like him in his death” (Phil. 3:10). Christian discipleship is Christological. Baptism is the ceremony for the beginning of a new life in Christ. Christ will show his power, glory, and honor through his disciples, who do not boast in their righteousness and power but in Christ alone.

The Families of

Gordon Casciano (the grandson of Phil and Eileen Casciano)
Crissa Redifer (the stepmother of Beth Redifer)

Pray For

Jean Killey
Charlie Parks (the son-in-law of Sharon VanEvery)
Lois Soltysiak
Beth (the daughter of Bob Davidson)
Donna Merrill
Ann Davis
Barb Meyer
Bob Davidson
Sandy Augustine
Gene Vandemark
William Kozuch (husband of Fritzi Stevenson)
Rachel Lochinski (daughter of Fritzi Stevenson)
Ho-Ok Lim (mother of Pastor Seok Nam Lim)
Tom Piotrowski (brother-in-law of Jan Deming)

Shut-ins

Ann and Frank Davis, Bob Davidson, Florence Decker, Sandy Gillam,
Marletta Gross, Susan Hendrickson, Jean Killey, Betty Martinek, Barb Meyer,
Phyllis Finn, Ruth Matherne, Lorane Peglow, Jane Russell, Jacky Sansburn, and Roger Trerice.

Please keep in prayer all who are suffering in our world—those living amid war, natural disasters, violence, hatred, poverty, and deep grief. Remember especially individuals facing mental health challenges, whose burdens may be unseen but are profoundly felt. Pray for unity within our nation and that the freedom we have in Christ will guide, steady, and strengthen us. Hold close the members of our St. Luke's family who are walking through illness, loss, or hardship. And ask God to bless the ministry of St. Luke's UMC, that we may serve with compassion, courage, and grace.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

(Psalm 23:4)

Requests will be kept on the list for 1 month. If you would like your prayer request to remain on the list or be re-added, please let us know. **SUBMIT YOUR PRAYER REQUEST** through our website, email office@stlulkesumcmi.org, by filling out a connection card, located on the pew backs, or the Prayer box located in front of the church.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Cards for Our Shut-Ins

Easter cards—one for each of our shut-ins—will be available in the Fellowship Hall following the worship service. Everyone is invited to stop by and add your signature and a brief message of care. Together, we'll make sure each shut-in receives a card filled with love from their church family.

Easter flower orders

Today is the final day to submit Easter flower orders. Please be sure to see Janie Good to place your order and make your payment. Prices are as follows: single-stem lilies are \$18, double-stem lilies are \$32, red tulips are \$18, mixed-color hyacinths are \$18, blue and purple hydrangeas are \$32 each, and daffodils are \$18. Plants may be taken home after the Easter service. If you would like your flowers shared with members receiving care at home or in residential care, please mark the donation box on your order form.

Make Some Noise for Heifer International!

We continue to invite the congregation to support Heifer International's mission to end hunger and poverty through Easter. Throughout Lent, everyone is encouraged to bring spare change for this special offering. Our children will gather your coins from the congregation and return them to the altar. For quieter gifts, please use a pew envelope and write "**Heifer International**" on it. Together, let's collect enough change to provide barnyard animals and make a meaningful difference in the lives of families around the world

St. Patrick's Day Parade – Come Support Our Youth!

St. Luke's Youth will be participating in the Bay City St. Patrick's Day Parade, which begins at 2:00 p.m. We'd love to see our church family along the route, cheering them on as they represent St. Luke's in our community. Wear your green, bring your enthusiasm, and come show your support! If you take any photos, you're welcome to share them with Sheila Good so we can celebrate the moment.

Missions Meeting | March 17 | 6pm

Join us for a Missions Team meeting on Tuesday, March 17 at 6:00 pm in Esther's Parlor. Whether you're curious about upcoming outreach or simply feel called to serve our community, all are welcome to come, listen, and get involved.

Worship Team Meeting | March 19 | 5pm

Join us for a Meet & Greet on Thursday, March 19, 2026, from 5:00–6:00 PM as we welcome Lisa Foster, our new worship team leader. This meeting is for all who serve in worship roles, including liturgists, ushers, communion volunteers, altar guild, and ministry team members. Connect with others, meet Lisa, and discuss our ongoing work together. We hope to see you there. — *Janie Good*

Spring Bazaar – Volunteers & Baked Goods Needed!

Join us for our **Spring Bazaar on March 21, 2026, from 9:00 AM–3:00 PM.**

We're currently looking for volunteers to help in the kitchen with **set-up and clean-up:**

- **Set-Up:** Friday, March 20 • 5:00–8:00 PM
- **Clean-Up:** Saturday, March 21 • 3:00–6:00 PM

If you can help, please see the sign-up board. Thank you!

Baked Goods Needed for the Bazaar!

We're also collecting delicious homemade treats—**bread, cookies, brownies, and more**—for the Bazaar's bake sale. **Drop-off:** Friday, March 20 • 5:00–8:00 PM • Fellowship Hall
All proceeds support **VBS and Crew 206.** Questions? Contact **Janie Good.**

Easter Egg Hunt & Candy Donations

Join us on Saturday, March 28th at 10:00 am for our annual Easter Egg Hunt! Arrive a little early to find a good spot, bring a basket for collecting eggs, and don't forget your camera. Stay afterward for activities and refreshments. Volunteers can sign up on the bulletin board. To prepare, we're asking for **help filling the Easter eggs**. Stop by the display to pick up empty eggs and a bag to take them home. Fill the eggs with individually wrapped candy and return them by Sunday, March 22. Monetary donations to help purchase candy are also welcome. Thank you for supporting this joyful tradition for our kids!

Missions Opportunity - Salvation Army Soup Kitchen

Sign up to help at Matthew25 Cafe' on Saturdays, 10:30 am–1:00 pm (410 10th St, Bay City). Tasks include prep, cooking, serving, and clean up. We need 3 volunteers for each of the following dates: March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20. See the sign-up board or register online at <https://www.stlukesumcni.org/calendar>. For more information see our Missions coordinator: Kathy Erndt.

Golden Friends

The next Golden Friends event will be on April 6th at the Ponderosa Steakhouse, 2861 Wilder Rd. starting at 12:00 pm. The registration sheet is available on the "Sign-Up" bulletin board across from the Fellowship Hall, with a deadline of March 29th. For more information, please reach out to Judy or Joe Fleming.

Spaghetti & Game Night | April 10 | 5:30–9:00 PM

Join us for a fun evening of spaghetti and games! PLEASE sign up on the bulletin board so we know how many to plan for and what you would like to donate for the meal.

Donations needed:

- 6–8 jars of Ragu spaghetti sauce (plain)
- Garlic bread or toast
- Parmesan cheese
- Desserts
- Punch ingredients

Thank you for helping make this a great night!

Bus Trip to UM Community House

Join our Church Family & Friends for a bus trip to the United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids on May 6, 2026, for a day of touring, fellowship, and light volunteer work. We will depart from Meijer on Wilder Road in Bay City at 7:30 am and return at 4:30 pm. The cost is \$50 per person (includes ride, driver tip, and lunch) and is due at sign-up. You may give your payment to Gloria Gonzales, Becky Scott, or Brenda Scramlin—or mail checks payable to United Women in Faith to St. Luke's UMC, 206 Scheurmann St., Essexville, MI 48732. Please sign up by March 31, 2026.

Temporary Office Update

I will have hip replacement surgery on April 2 and will be off for 6–8 weeks while recovering. I will continue working from home with office calls forwarded to my cell phone during work hours, but I will not be able to do any printing or update the e-sign remotely, and others will handle printing the worship service documents I prepare. I also have a second surgery scheduled for July with another 6 weeks of recovery. Because I will not be in the office, please do not leave announcements or event information on my desk or in my mail slot; anyone needing details about how to submit information may contact me directly. Thank you for understanding. Healing prayers are appreciated. — *Sheila Good, Office Manager*



“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

- MATTHEW 25:35



UMCOR SUNDAY

Today is UMCOR Sunday

UMCOR Sunday is one of the United Methodist Church's Special Sundays, dedicated to supporting the **United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)**—the church's disaster response and humanitarian relief agency.

Why it matters:

Gifts to UMCOR Sunday fund the administrative and operational backbone that allows UMCOR to respond quickly and compassionately when disasters, conflict, or hunger strike. This support ensures trained staff, reliable systems, and the capacity to act immediately—long before designated disaster funds arrive.

If you wish to contribute, you may place cash or a check made out to St. Luke's UMC with "UMCOR Sunday" in the memo line into the Special Offering Envelope. Ushers will collect these with the regular offering. You may also give online through St. Luke's giving portals or at UMC.org/SSGive. Thank you for your generous support of this vital ministry.

The Lenten Banner is designed as a unique countdown marker for Lent. Every Sunday, as well as Good Friday, an additional patch will be placed on it, marking the approach toward Easter's celebration. Throughout the six weeks of Lent, the banner presents symbols encouraging reflection on Christ's suffering as we anticipate the joy of Easter.

1. The first symbol represents the sacrament of Communion and the beginning of Lent and Christ's sacrifice of body and blood.
2. A rooster to remind us of Peter's denial of his relationship with Christ and our occasional unfaithfulness.
3. The gavel of the Jewish leaders, denouncing Christ and sending Him to the Romans to be killed.
4. The dice, used by the Roman soldiers to gamble for Christ's clothes. While he was suffering and dying on the cross above them.
5. The crown of thorns, cruelly pounded onto Christ's head, causing extreme pain. The thorns are a representation of the pain that our sins caused our Savior.
6. The palms of Palm Sunday. To start off the sorrow and suffering of Holy Week, we stop to celebrate Christ's joyous entry into Jerusalem.
7. The cup, to represent the Last Supper and the gift of Holy Communion that Christ told us to "DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME".
8. The spikes, pounded into the hands of Christ, to hold him on the cross. The cross where he suffered and died for us and our salvation.



Upcoming

Online calendar: <https://www.stlukesumcmi.org/calendar>

Mon Mar 16, 2026

7pm Crew 206 Youth group

Tue Mar 17, 2026

10:30am Needleworkers
5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 50560
6pm Missions Meeting

Wed Mar 18, 2026

10:30am Wednesday Weavers

Thu Mar 19, 2026

6:30pm Thursday Bible Study: "Psalms"
7pm Narcotics Anonymous

Fri Mar 20, 2026

5pm Spring Bazaar setup

Sat Mar 21, 2026

7am Spring Bazaar setup
9-3 Spring Bazaar (cleanup following)

Mon Mar 23, 2026

2pm Fellowship Hall reserved-Bonnie Johnson funeral meal
6:30pm Governance Board Meeting
7:30pm Crew 206 Youth group

Tue Mar 24, 2026

10:30am Needleworkers
5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 50560

Wed Mar 25, 2026

10:30am Wednesday Weavers
6:30pm Needleworkers

Thu Mar 26, 2026

6:30pm Thursday Bible Study: "Psalms"
7pm Narcotics Anonymous

Fri Mar 27, 2026

5pm Fellowship Hall & Ether's parlor in use
Easter Egg Games and refreshments set-up

Sat Mar 28, 2026

10am Easter Egg Hunt & Activities

Sun Mar 29, 2026

10am Palm Sunday Service

Tue Mar 31, 2026

10:30am Needleworkers
5:30pm Girl Scout Troop 50560

Wed Apr 1, 2026

10:30am Wednesday Weavers

Thu Apr 2, 2026

7pm Maundy Thursday Service

Fri Apr 3, 2026

7pm Good Friday service

Sat Apr 4, 2026

9am U.M.M Breakfast @ Kryzsiak's

Sun Apr 5, 2026

10am Easter Sunday Service

Mon Apr 6, 2026

12pm Golden Friends at Ponderosa Steakhouse
7:30pm Crew 206 Youth group

Tue Apr 7, 2026

10:30am Needleworkers

Wed Apr 8, 2026

10:30am Wednesday Weavers
6:30pm Needleworkers
6:30pm UWIF Meeting Gardens of Hope Central Bay District Initiative (find the need) – Fellowship Hall

Thu Apr 9, 2026

6pm Girl Scout Leader's Meeting in Room 1
6:30pm Thursday Bible Study: "Psalms"
7pm Narcotics Anonymous Meeting

Fri Apr 10, 2026

5:30 Spaghetti & Game Night

Holy Week Services

Mar 29	Palm Sunday	10 am
Apr 2	Maundy Thursday	7 pm
Apr 3	Good Friday	7 pm
Apr 5	Easter Sunday	10 am

Volunteers

Serving This Sunday

Liturgist

Kathy Erndt

Children's Church

Sheila Good

Becky Scott

Ushers

Henry Roeder, Joe Fleming
and others

Counters

Eric Yagiela

Brenda Kemp

Serving Next Sunday

Liturgist

Brian Scramlin

Children's Church

Karla Morgan (L)

Becky Scott

Henry Roeder - Acolyte training

Ushers

Henry Roeder, Joe Fleming
and others

Counters

Eric Yagiela

Char McGrath

To Sign up for our E-newsletter

<https://stlukesumcmi.org#newsletter-subscribe>

Newsletter for March 12, 2026

<https://bit.ly/newsletter-2026-mar-12>

Acolytes

(varies week to week)

Connor Yagiela, Lauren Yagiela,
Jazzlyn Jones, Kyliana Green,
Myles Sullivan

✿ Altar Flowers ✿

*If you'd like to offer altar flowers in honor or celebration of someone or something meaningful,
please add your name to the sign-up board for an upcoming Sunday.*

February Financials	Amount
General Fund	\$12,362.00
Income/Contributions	
General Fund Expenses	\$18,298.00
Shortfall	-\$ 5,936.00

Stay Connected



Address

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Essexville MI 48732



Phone

Church: 989-893-8031
Parsonage: 989-894-2453



Office Hours

Tue & Wed 9-3, Thu 9-12



Email

office@stlukesumcmi.org

Website

<https://www.stlukesumcmi.org>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stlukesumcmi>

YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/@stlukesumcmi>

Staff

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Christian Education Coordinator

Janie Good
christianed@stlukesumcmi.org

Adult Sunday School

Fall, Winter, Spring
9:00 am in Esther's Parlor

Children's Church:

Following Children's Message
in Classroom 3

Youth Group

Mondays at 7:00 pm

Get our App

<https://bit.ly/stlukesumcmi-app>



Online Giving

<https://www.stlukesumcmi.org/give>

