



Sharing the Light

The mission of First Lutheran Church is to grow together in Christ through prayer, worship, and education and to spread the love of Christ to our community.

March 2026

Publication of First Lutheran Church, Temple City, CA

From the Pastor's Desk

Winter is on its way out and spring is getting ready to come in. Flowers are blooming and wildlife is welcoming new life--and through it all we are focusing on the cross and what our Savior is enduring: the final 40 days, his pain, his sacrifice, and what He has done and will do. How can we not give all because of what He gave for us? May the peace of our Savior wash over us.

Pastor Frank Matthews

What to Give Up for Lent?

by David H. Petersen, *Lutheran Witness Magazine*

Giving up some small pleasure for Lent, like chocolate or coffee, can be a nice way to remind ourselves throughout Lent that it is Lent. When we reach out for those things we remember that we are denying ourselves in commemoration of Our Lord's suffering.

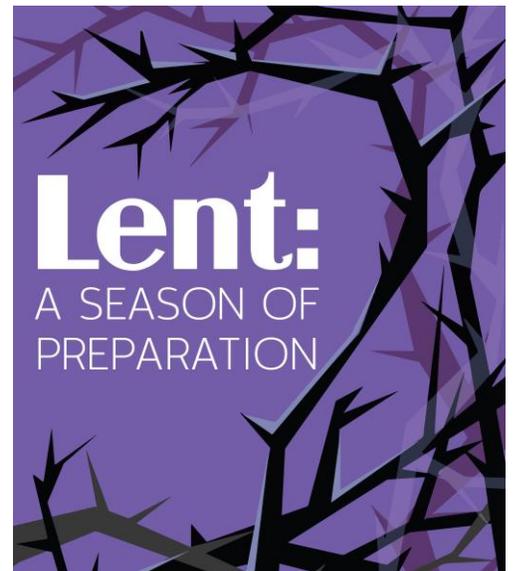
This isn't meant to please God or gain His favor. Nor can such a small denial make Lent more meaningful or increase faith. It is simply an attempt to keep ourselves mindful throughout the day that it is Lent. That is a valid Christian desire and discipline.

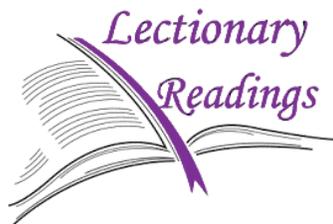
Curbing the flesh is always good. Cutting calories is probably appropriate for almost everyone reading this, and (though I hate to admit it) cutting caffeine would probably hurt few of us either. But Lent isn't ultimately about giving things up. Its purpose is not self-improvement in the conventional sense. Instead Lent is a season of preparation. We are preparing to celebrate Easter and the Church is always prepared in the same way: by repentance.

True repentance is not simply feeling sorry, and it certainly isn't an emotional frenzy of despair. Nor is it merely an outward discipline for the world to see. True repentance means turning away from sin in sorrow and also turning toward God in joy. That is to say, that true repentance is *faith*. It expects forgiveness. It trusts in Christ to give it. Judas was not truly repentant (Matthew 27:3-5). He was only remorseful. He did not think he could be forgiven. He did not trust Jesus to love him. In contrast, St. Peter was repentant (Mark 14:66-72). He was more than remorseful. He was sorry for his sins and ashamed of what he had done, but even more than this, he trusted in Christ to be merciful.

Lent is therefore not so much a time of "giving things up" as it is a time for adding things that increase our awareness of God's mercy in Christ Jesus. When Lent leads us to repentance, it isn't to make us sad or to

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These are the Lectionaries for the month of March.

	<u>First Reading</u>	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>Epistle</u>	<u>Gospel</u>
<u>March 1</u> Second Sunday in Lent	Gen. 2:1–9	Psalm 121	Rom. 4:1–8, 13–17	John 3:1–17
<u>March 8</u> Third Sunday in Lent	Ex. 17:1–7	Psalm 95:1–9	Rom. 5:1–8	John 4:5–26
<u>March 15</u> Fourth Sunday in Lent	Isaiah 42:14–21	Psalm 142	Eph. 5:8–14	John 9:1–41
<u>March 22</u> Fifth Sunday in Lent	Ezek. 37:1–14	Psalm 130	Rom. 8:1–11	John 11:1–45
<u>March 29</u> Palm Sunday	Isaiah 50:4–9a	Psalm 118:19–29	Phil. 2:5–11	John 12:12–19

Worship Leader and Dates

Rev. Frank Matthews:
Sundays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Sunday School Time:

Every Sunday, 9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Ushers: Craig Boehne, Dave Lassanske, and Don Lammerts

Readers: March 1 and 15: Richard Swanson
March 8 and 22: Christine Geltz
March 29: Jo Tschopp

Greeters: March 1: Connie Kean March 15: Sharon Corey March 29: Sharon Corey
March 8: Diane Oberlander March 22: Norma Boehne



Daylight Saving Time starts on Sunday, March 8.

If you are unable to attend worship, you may:

- Listen to the Lutheran Hour sermon at any time you choose – Just go to lhm.org/guide.
- View Worship Anew at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays on DirectTV, Channel 377 from our Fort Wayne Seminary in Indiana. Or you can view it any time at <https://worshipanew.org/by-type/watch?>.
- Access and/or review First Lutheran sermons online by going to: <https://firstlutherantc.org/Media>.

Events

Mission Development Team Meeting
Load the Van to Friends in Deed
Monthly Soup & Sandwich Luncheon
Board of Directors' Meeting
Volunteers at Friends in Deed in Pasadena
Easter Egg Hunt

March 10, Tuesday, at 10:30 a.m.
March 6, Friday, at 8:00 a.m.
March 6, Friday, at noon
March 15, Sunday, at 11:00 a.m.
March 28, Saturday, at 8:00 a.m.
March 28, Saturday, from 2:30 to 3:30

News from the Mission Development Team

20 Heroes Gathered in Our Parish Hall on January 31

That's right! Every blood donor is a hero, helping to save someone's life. At our recent Blood Drive, 20 friends and neighbors came to be heroic donors in that life-saving process. Here are the stats:

20 donors came in

17 were able to donate

13 of them gave regular Blood Donations

4 of them gave Power Red Donations that count as two blood donations each

21 donations in all



A Power Red donation (or double red cell donation) is an automated process where a donor gives two units of concentrated red blood cells in one sitting, while plasma and platelets are returned to the body. It is highly efficient, allowing donors to help twice as many patients (especially trauma/surgical cases) and only requires donation 3 times per year. This process is specifically for donors with Type O, A negative, or B negative blood types. The process takes slightly longer than a regular donation, but provides twice the red cells.

Mission Development Team members walked the neighborhood distributing fliers the Sunday before to let everyone know about our upcoming events, in particular about the Blood Drive. Peter Dille booked and organized it with the Red Cross and Vickie Trepanier opened the Parish Hall for the Red Cross staff at 7:00 a.m. to prep for the 8:00 a.m. starting time and stayed to help with the event. Later that day Peter was one of the Power Red donors!

Our next Blood Drive: Saturday June 6, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – and six people have already signed up!



Need Help with Your Technology?

Have you ever had a question about how to get your cell phone, iPad, Chrome Book, Laptop, etc. to do something? Foothill Prep students and their teacher have begun providing free help with technology. Bring your devices such as smart phone, laptop, Chrome Book etc. You will be amazed at the knowledge and expertise these teenagers possess and are willing to share their skills. These sessions are open to the community and the church. Please RSVP to Pat Grabowski at (626) 285-2943. Bring your questions and your device to the Fellowship Room on these Fridays beginning at 2:30 p.m. March 6, 13, 27.

Chinese New Year Celebration



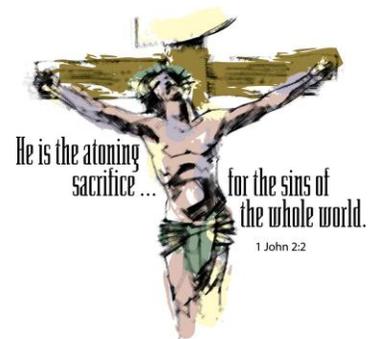
The recent celebration of Chinese New Year with Shin Dance Academy was a standing room only event. The audience especially loved the youngest dancers representing bunnies, with a carrot trying to fool them. The traditional meal was delicious.



What to Give Up for Lent? *Continued from page 1*

somehow get God's attention. It is to strengthen our faith. Part of that strengthening includes an increased awareness of our great need — and yes, that often means a stern preaching of the Law. But that is not the real mark or purpose of Lent. For Lent also includes, and is mostly focused on, the solution to that need: the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our redemption.

The Rev. David H. Petersen is the pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Ft. Wayne, Ind.



Community Prayer Box Update

By Jo Tschopp

A week ago, we received a prayer request from someone asking for us to pray for employment. Please join us as we pray that people actively seeking employment would receive employment using their particular God given talents and skills. Pray that all employees would do their work as if they are doing it for the Lord. *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”* Colossians 3:23



New Selections in Our Little Free Library

Have you ever wanted to know how the stock market works? Someone has donated several “how to” books on the market. Women’s History Month is celebrated all March. In our Little Free Library is a book titled “Wise Women a Celebration of Their Insights, Courage, and Beauty.” The well-known photographer presents 80 portraits of women aged 65 to 100, who comment on their experiences of ageing. It is a book you can look at and then return so others can enjoy it. Don’t forget you can share your books by giving them to Jo Tschopp or putting them in the library.



A Quarter of a Ton—Now That’s Well Done! FLCTC Donations to Friends in Deed in January

Our faithful First Lutheran supporters of Friends in Deed supplied 550 pounds of food to the food pantry in January. The need is great as those effected by the Eaton Fire continue to be assisted by Friends in Deed. Make it a habit to put several items in your shopping cart earmarked for the pantry each time you visit a grocery store. Recently Ralphs had soup on sale: 8 cans for ten dollars, which is \$1.25 each. You can buy ten cans and donate some to the pantry.



Concordia Seminary Choir Performing in SoCal

The St. Louis Concordia Seminary Choir will be performing at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in Yorba Linda on March 15, 12:30. Join them for an uplifting choral concert that points toward the hope we have in Christ, His resurrection and His return. The premier choir of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, *Laudamus*, will perform as part of its 2026 tour. Enjoy the choir of seminarians during this special concert — free and open to the public. Their program this year is “Lamb of God, Who Takes Away the Sin of the World,” under the direction of Dr. Samuel Eatherton, Kantor and the Kreft Professor for Music Arts. More details are available on the Seminary’s website at csl.edu/laudamus.

Rideshare: Jo Tschopp plans to go and has room in her van for 5 others. Perhaps other car pools can form. Contact Jo for further information at (626) 238-4022.



News from Our Missionaries in New Guinea

Through our tithe and prayers, our congregation supports missionaries Matt and Emily Terhune's work in Papua New Guinea with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Dear Friends: We hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year's - Is it too late to say that!? We have been doing well - other than some illness - and want to share a few things with you.

First, thank you! We never forget that we are here because of you. We are continuing to do our work here - Matt in his IT and management roles, and I (Emily) am still homeschooling Elijah and working part-time in Scripture Use. The start of 2026 added something else to our radar - our furlough isn't too far away! We plan to return to the US in September, and come back to PNG early 2027. We are looking forward to connecting with many of you and we will reach out as our plans continue to solidify. *[Editor's note: I have invited Emily and the family to visit us in the fall—and she said they would plan on it! So you can meet these dedicated missionaries in person.]*

There have been several Bible dedications throughout the country. [Here at right you can see people receiving the Bible for the first time in their language, Kwomtari.](#) We are so thankful that the Onobasulu New Testament was also dedicated, despite many hardships with transportation! (Photo Credit: Amy Evers)



Prayer Requests

- We seem to catch every single infection that goes around here, It's exhausting and frustrating. Please pray for our health.
- Emily and a friend, Dianne, continue to share the Gospel with people waiting at our clinic every Friday morning. Please pray that they will be touched by God's Word!
- Pray for our translator friends who are in need of support to be able to stay in Papua New Guinea.
- Please pray for a local friend whose house burned down in a village fight. Her family continues to be in the middle of ongoing conflict. Please pray for peace, both physical and spiritual.
- Pray for the language groups including the Onobasulu, who have had recent Bible dedications – Pray that God's Word would impact their lives!

Astronauts Find Faith in Space

By Sophia Gliwa – *God Reports*, January 16, 2026 [Article excerpt]

As they orbited in space or walked on the moon, some astronauts recently marveled at God's splendid creation. "In the age of science in the 1600s, the 1700s, you had names like Kepler, Isaac Newton, Bole, Maxwell — all those guys were believers," says Col. Jeffrey Williams. "They were driven in their calling in scientific endeavor by their understanding of the Bible and convinced that God provisioned His creation in an ordered way. There was a mathematical order to it, a chemical order, a physical order that makes science possible." Williams spent a record 5345 days in space. Each day in space, he orbited the earth 16 times. "The biggest wow for me is the grandeur of this place that we call home which God created and uniquely provisioned for our habitation that we call earth," Williams says.

Read full article at www.godreports.com/2026/01/astronauts-find-faith-in-space/



Col. Jeffrey Williams reading his Bible in space

Time is Running Out to Direct Your 2025 Choice Dollars

By Chad Fix, *The Lutheran Layman*, Winter 2026

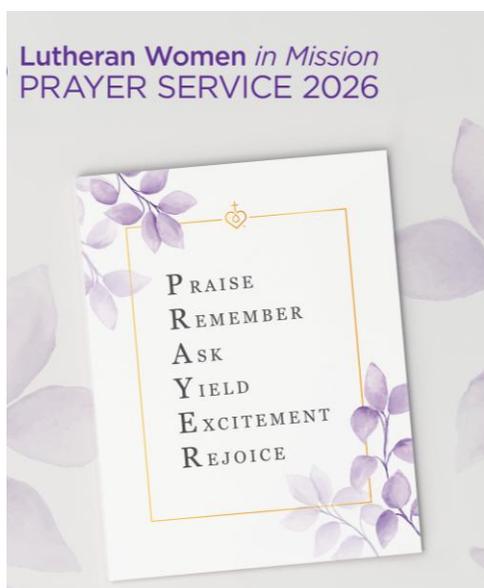


Eligible Thrivent clients with membership have a unique opportunity to help shape how Thrivent distributes its charitable outreach funding each year through the Thrivent Choice program. Since 2010, nearly \$620 million has been directed to churches and nonprofit organizations doing vital work.

Act now: If you still have 2025 Choice Dollars available, they must be designated by March 31, 2026, or they will expire. Don't miss this opportunity to put your Choice Dollars to work for God's mission at First Lutheran Church in Temple City.

Directing your Choice Dollars is quick and easy: Visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call Thrivent at 1-800-847-4836 to direct dollars to First Lutheran Church of Temple City.

Eligibility is based on insurance premiums and contract values. Please note: You must go through the gift direction process each time you are notified that Choice Dollars are available. Thank you for acting today to help share Christ's love with the world through Thrivent Choice.



**You're invited to this service of prayer and devotion.
Invite a friend! Bring along your prayer requests!**

Saturday, April 18

9:00 a.m. Registration • 9:30 a.m. Breakfast
Cost: \$5.00

This will be a special morning of worship and fellowship. Proceeds of Opportunity Drawings will go toward Mite Box offerings. Based on the Biblical account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4), the Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of "mites" — offerings above and beyond the support given to the congregation and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

**St. John Lutheran Church
304 E. Covina Blvd., Covina CA**

Not Receiving Email Special Announcements and/or Prayer Requests?

Email Newsletter: If you would like to receive the newsletter and prayer requests by email, please share your email address with Christine Geltz, Newsletter Editor, at cgeltz@firstlutherantc.org. You may also send her news and story ideas at that address.

Printed Newsletter: If you prefer to have a newsletter hard copy mailed to you, please call Kathy Janetzke at (626) 437-2509.

Pastoral Care: Please contact Pastor Frank Matthews at (213) 247-8838 or no1redder@gmail.com.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
9123 Broadway
Temple City, CA 91780

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL
March 2026

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FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Temple City, CA 91780
Office Phone: (626) 287-0968

E-Mail: admin@firstlutherantc.org
Website: <https://firstlutherantc.org>

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
Holy Communion every first & third Sunday
9:45 a.m. Sunday School / Bible Study
Every Sunday