



March 2026

# Tidings

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

*Committed to living a faith journey that is sacred, intentional, compassionate and inclusive.*

## Worship

Holy Eucharist  
Every Sunday  
9:30 am

Noon-Day Prayer  
Every Wednesday  
12:00 noon  
Historical Chapel

Compline Prayer  
Thursday's  
March 5, 12, 19 & 26  
6:00 pm via Zoom

## Special Events

Greg Wilson Men's BBQ  
Special Invitation  
Sunday, March 8  
5:00 pm

Lenten Soup Suppers  
Wednesday's  
March 4, 11, 18 & 25  
5:15pm Soup  
6:00 pm Study

Soul Kitchen  
Friday, March 27  
5:30 pm

## GREG WILSON MEN'S BARBEQUE SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



*WE INVITE THE WOMEN OF ST. JOHN'S TO  
JOIN THE MEN ON:*

**SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2026  
AT 5:00 PM**

**LET US DO THE COOKING.**

*RSVP BY SIGNING UP AT THE MINISTRY TABLE*

# March Calendar

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**Sunday, March 1** – 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist, Church

**Monday, March 2**

4:00 pm, Warden's Meeting

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor



**Tuesday, March 3**

10:00 am, Staff Meeting, Church

5:30 pm, Soup for the Soul, Narthex



**March 3 – 6: Rev. Betsy Out-Of-Town: EPN Conference**

**Wednesday, March 4**

12 Noon, Noon-Day Prayer, Chapel

5:15 pm, Lenten Soup Supper, Narthex

6:00 pm, Lenten Class, Narthex: Chapters 13-27 of *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi

7:00 pm, Choir Practice



**Thursday, March 5** – 6:00 pm, Compline Prayer, Zoom

**Saturday, March 7**

**Change your clocks before you go to bed – Spring Forward**

**Sunday, March 8** – Beginning of Daylight Savings Time

9:30 am, Holy Eucharist, Church

5:00 pm, Men's & Women's BBQ, Narthex



**Monday, March 9**

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor

**Tuesday, March 10**

10:00 am, Staff Meeting, Church

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor

**Wednesday, March 11**

12 Noon, Noon-Day Prayer, Chapel

4:30 pm, Music Staff Meeting, Narthex

5:15pm, Lenten Soup Supper, Narthex

6:00 pm, Lenten Class, Narthex: Chapters 28-42 of *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi

7:00 pm, Choir Practice



**March 11 – 15: Rev. Betsy Out-Of-Town: Conference**

**Thursday, March 12**

6:00 pm, Compline Prayer, Zoom



# March Calendar

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## Saturday, March 14

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor

## Sunday, March 15

9:30 am, Holy Eucharist, Church

5:00 pm, Pizza Church, Church



## Monday, March 16

10:00 am, Parkinson's Care Group, Chapel

Tuesday, March 17 – 10:00 am, Staff Meeting, Church



## Wednesday, March 18

12 Noon, Noon-Day Prayer, Chapel

5:15pm, Lenten Soup Supper, Narthex

6:00 pm, Lenten Class, Narthex: Chapters 43-53 of *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi

7:00 pm, Choir Practice

Thursday, March 19 – 6:00 pm, Compline Prayer, Zoom

## Friday, March 20

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor



Sunday, March 22 – 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist, Church

## Tuesday, March 23

10:00 am, Staff Meeting, Church

4:15 pm, Salvation Army Dinner Service, Hope Harbor

## Tuesday, March 24

12:15 pm, Vestry Meeting, Hospitality Room

## Wednesday, March 25

12 Noon, Noon-Day Prayer, Chapel

5:15pm, Lenten Soup Supper, Narthex

6:00 pm, Lenten Class, Narthex: Chapters 54-Epilogue of *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi

7:00 pm, Choir Practice

Thursday, March 26 – 6:00 pm, Compline Prayer, Zoom

## Friday, March 27

5:30 pm, Soul Kitchen Dinner, Church Narthex

## Sunday, March 29 – Palm Sunday

9:30 am, Holy Eucharist, Church

Tuesday, March 31 – 10:00 am, Staff Meeting, Office



# *Rector Reflections*

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## Why is Lent?

Shouldn't that be "what" is Lent? Well, if you want to know what Lent is, I invite you to pull out your *Book of Common Prayer* and read pages 264-265. The why is Lent is much deeper, as it gets us to why we do any of this 40-days of prayer, penitence, and fasting.

We often approach Lent through self-improvement projects like giving up chocolate, alcohol, meat, social media. Even good intentioned additions like reading the Bible or praying more can be about being improving ourselves to be a "better Christian." In my Ash Wednesday sermon, I shared a story from our Family and Children's service earlier that day. During that service, I asked what we called the special water of Baptism. Many of the children answered with great words like "holy, sacred, wet." Then, Maeve Langone looked at me and said "remember?" I had to stop for a moment and think about her answer. It was not the answer I expected, but it was the answer I needed to hear. Remember water. Yes!

The why of Lent is to remember. To remember who we are and to whom we belong. It is all about remembering (and strengthening) our relationship with God.

The prophet Jeremiah tells us that God says,

*When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me . . . (Jeremiah 29:13-14a)*

What we remember in Lent is our belovedness. That if we search for God, we will see that God is always there loving us, no matter how improved (or not) we are. We cannot be a "better Christian" or a "better version" of ourselves in God's eyes. What God wants is for us to remember that belovedness and then to respond out of it.

Once we understand the why, it can be easier to choose Lenten devotions that answer that why for us. For each of us, the things we need to help us remember and then the response we have in that remembering is deeply personal. It might be a 40-day devotion, a week-by-week devotion, a daily or event moment by moment devotion. What is it that you need to remember? When you do remember, how will you respond? (Our Baptismal Vows give a good structure and outline for thinking about how to respond.)

So, this Lent, I invite you to REMEMBER. In the end, you cannot fail at your Lenten devotion. Any act of remembering brings you back into your relationship with God and that is a good thing indeed!

~ Betsy+

## *From Your Senior Warden*

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During Lent, we're inviting everyone to come share in our Wednesday evening Soup Suppers and Lenten Book Study, running February 25 through March 25. We'll gather in the church narthex at 5:15 p.m. for a simple, cozy meal, followed by a discussion of this year's book, *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi.

I want to take a moment to personally encourage you to join us – whether you're able to come every week, drop in when your schedule allows, or simply read along on your own. This book is truly something special.

Jim has already finished it, and I'm making my way through it now. I can honestly say I haven't read such a tender, uplifting story in a very long time. Theo, the central character, radiates a kind of gentle kindness that stays with you long after you close the book. As he meets the people of Golden, you feel as though you're walking right beside him. It's an easy read, yet deeply rich – one of those rare stories that touches the soul and invites quiet reflection.

Lent itself is much like that. It's a gentle journey toward renewal. Yes, it begins with ashes, but it also begins with honesty – with remembering that we are human, beloved, and always welcomed back into deeper relationship with God. Lent isn't a sprint toward self-improvement; it's a slow turning, like the earth leaning toward spring. Much of the transformation happens quietly, beneath the surface, in the places where God is already at work.

And through it all, hope threads its way forward. Even in the wilderness moments, we walk with the promise of resurrection ahead of us. Lent doesn't end in ashes; it ends in alleluias.

Jim and I truly hope you'll join us for the suppers and book study. We're looking forward to listening, sharing, reflecting, and simply enjoying the gift of community together. May this season bring you clarity, compassion, and a renewed awareness of God's presence in your daily life.

Light and Peace,

Beth Elwood  
Senior Warden



# *Salvation Army News*

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## **Salvation Army Updates**

**Our Salvation Army committee is growing!** We extend our sincere thanks to **Debby Weberski** for graciously taking on the scheduling and reconfirming of our Hope Harbor dinner-serving volunteers, and to **Carol Bassett** for stepping into the role of coordinating our non-perishable food collection. Carol also plans to join me at monthly Program Committee meetings when she's able and will help lead promotional efforts for key Salvation Army fundraising initiatives throughout the year, including the School Supply & Backpack Collection, Angel Tree Christmas Gifts, and more.

**Volunteer sign-ups for serving dinner at Hope Harbor Shelter are now available for April - June!** <https://volunteersignup.org/QWEFJ>

**Won't you join us?** Our faithful outreach work has touched more lives than you may ever realize. Thank you for showing up with compassion, humility, and a heart that reflects Christ's love so clearly. Because of your dedication, people in our community feel seen, supported, and valued. We are deeply grateful for the time, energy, and care you pour into this ministry. **Volunteer opportunities with the Salvation Army offer flexibility to fit YOUR schedule throughout the year.** Contact me for more details: 209-483-8736.

May you be encouraged knowing that your service is making a real and lasting difference in our community. Thank you - Thank you - Thank you!

Beth Elwood



## *Creation Care News*

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In February 22, St. John's Creation Care welcomed Ector Oliveras from the Environmental Justice Program at Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton. Ector presented information concerning air quality and pollution levels in neighborhoods, both in Lodi and in Stockton. In sharing statistics, he brought to light the harms to health and the well-being of residents of impacted neighborhoods. We were able to hear about partner organizations that together are promoting healthy places filled with economic opportunity for all. The on-the-ground work of "loving our neighbors as ourselves", inspires us to find ways to stay informed. Prayerfully we ask God's direction for ministering to those in need of good decisions made at the local levels of government. Looking into a membership with Interfaith Power and Light, is a step forward. Check out this website! <https://www.interfaithpower.org/>

**Plant of the Month:** Monardella Villlosa, Coyote Mint.



Coyote mint is another of the plantings in the St. John's native garden. Coyote Mint is a spreading subshrub distinguished by its fragrant mint-scented foliage and delicate lavender flowers. During the summer blooming season, the flowers are attractive to bees and especially butterflies. In traditional medicine, the leaves are made into a tea that treats upset stomach and other ailments.

For more information about Creation Care at St. John's contact Barbara Kregel: [barbarakregel@gmail.com](mailto:barbarakregel@gmail.com)



# *Lenten Soup Suppers*

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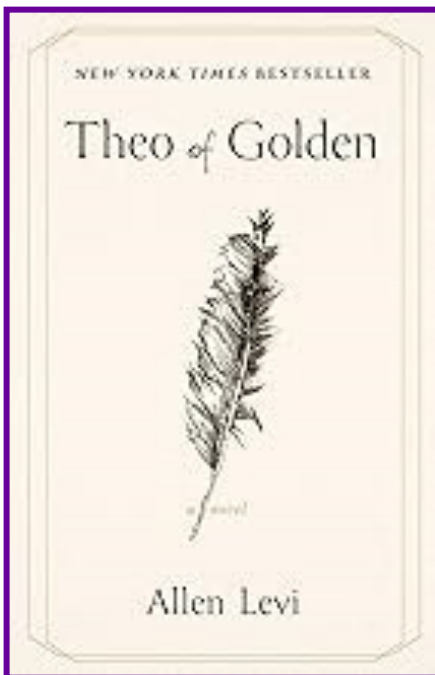


## **Wednesdays in Lent**

**5:15 pm to 7:00 pm**

**March 4, 11, 18 & 25**

**5:15 p.m. Soup Supper — Church Narthex**  
**6:00 p.m. Lenten Class — Hospitality Room**



This Lent, we will travel with Theo, a mysterious stranger who arrives in the fictional southern city of Golden. After visiting a coffee shop with portraits on the wall, he embarks on a mission to find and gift them to the rightful owners.

As we work our way through this beautifully crafted story, we will explore the Lenten themes of attention (seeing and being seen), generosity, compassion, transformation and hope shaped by pain, and resurrection and new life.

### Sessions

February 25: Prologue and Chapters 1-12

March 4: Chapters 13-27

March 11: Chapters 28-42

March 18: Chapters 43-53

March 25: Chapters 54-Epilogue

We have a few copies still available in the office for purchase (\$15).  
They may also be found online and in bookstores.

## *Parish Life*

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### **Soup for the Soul Tuesday, March 3, 2026 5:30 pm**



This is a small group of parishioners that gather the 1st Tuesday of each month. We have all experienced a loss in our lives. We gather to share a simple meal and conversation.

If this sounds like it fits you or you have any questions, please contact Penny in the office at 209-369-3381 or email at [stjohnslodi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stjohnslodi@sbcglobal.net)

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### **Compline Prayer Thursdays During Lent March 5, 12, 19 & 26 at 6:00 pm via Zoom**

Please join us for Compline Prayer every Thursday at 6:00 pm during the season of Lent. We gather via Zoom. Here's the link for the Thursday, 6:00 PM, Compline service.

Topic: Compline

Time: 6:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82473384767?pwd=7xJY6MbaOLFjrnINWm41nZPDJIT87T.1>



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### **Pizza Church The 3rd Sunday of Each Month 5:00 pm**



This is a simple, family-friendly, hands-on service. We start with a "Casual Eucharist" at 5:00 pm followed by a "Pizza Dinner" at 5:30 pm. All are welcome. If you have questions, please contact Penny in the office at 209-369-3381 or email at [stjohnslodi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stjohnslodi@sbcglobal.net)

**2026: March 15, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 18, November 15, December 20**

## *Parish Life*

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### **Noon-Day Prayer Every Wednesday March 4, 11, 18, & 25**

Join us every Wednesday at 12:00 noon for Noon-Day Prayer in the Historic Chapel. It is about a 20 minute service in our beautiful chapel. If you have any questions, please speak with the office at 209-369-3381.

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### **Daylight Savings Time Begins Sunday, March 8**



**Daylight Savings Time begins, Sunday, March 8 – We Spring Forward 1 hour!** Remember to reset your clocks Saturday night before you go to bed!

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### **Monthly Vestry Meeting Tuesday, March 24 6:00 pm**

### **Soul Kitchen Friday, March 27 5:30 pm**



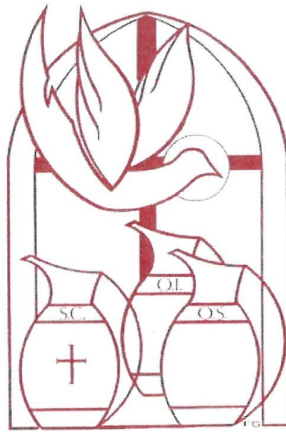
Join us on the last Friday of each month from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. A free and nutritious meal is served here at St. John's. Please join us. If you have questions, you may contact the office at 209-369-3381

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### **Garden Of Gethsemane Watch 7:00 pm to Midnight on Thursday, April 2**

After the Maundy Thursday Eucharist on April 2, you are invited to sign up for "The Watch." The Garden of Gethsemane, created by the Designers Guild, will be set up in the church Narthex. Everyone is invited to sign up to pray for one hour, reminiscent of Jesus' invitation to "watch and pray." Sign up at the Ministry Table.

# Diocesan News



Sierra Pacific Synod

## Chrism Mass & Renewal of Vows

March 31, 2026

11am

St James Cathedral, Fresno

*During this liturgy, the priests, deacons and representatives of both the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin and the Sierra Pacific Synod gather around the Bishop, who bless the Holy Oils for use in the coming year.*

*This liturgy is also a key moment in which the unity of the bishop with their priests and deacons is manifested and renewed. During the liturgy, the priests and deacons of the diocese and synod renew their vow of obedience to the Bishop and their commitment to serve all Gods' people.*

*At the end of the Chrism Mass, the Holy Oils are brought back to congregations of the diocese for use in the coming year.*

*Presider: The Rt. Rev. Jeff Johnson, Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod, ELCA*

*Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Gregory W. Kimura, Bishop-elect, Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin*

RSVP to: [canonanna@diosanjoaquin.org](mailto:canonanna@diosanjoaquin.org)

All laity are welcomed and encouraged to attend!

You are invited to bring a sack lunch for fellowship following the service.

Clergy: alb & red stoles

# *Preparing for Easter*

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## **Special Musicians, Music, & Flowers at Easter**

Our Easter liturgies are adorned with memorial flowers and guest musicians. If you remembered loved ones and blessings last year at this time and would like to repeat your memorial message, please initial the list on the ministry table and put your donation of \$25 or more in the plate during the offering.

If you have not participated in this ministry before and would like your memorial included, please fill out the form below and return it to the office. The deadline to turn in your form is March 23.

Your message will appear in the Easter bulletin.

- Check here if you participated last year and want your entry to remain the same. Fill in only your name on this form. Finally, put your donation money and this form in the offertory plate or mail to the parish office.
- Check here if you want to change last year's wording, or if you are doing this for the first time. Please fill out this form completely, place it and your donation money in the offertory plate or mail to the parish office.

A minimum donation of \$25.00 is requested. All paid adornments will be published in the Easter bulletin. Thank you!

### *ADORNMENT FORM FOR EASTER*

Adornment in thanksgiving for / in honor of / in memory of: (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Given by: (print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Annual Easter Egg Hunt Sunday, April 5, 2026 Help Needed!**

We are in need of 2 to 3 people to oversee, set up and run the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 5 following the church service. Please see Penny in the office.

We are in need of plastic eggs and toys to stuff in these eggs. Our Annual Easter Egg Hunt for elementary school age children and younger will be held after the 9:30 am service on Easter Sunday, April 5th. We would appreciate donations of plastic eggs, small toys, stickers and wrapped candy for the hunt. Thank you!

## *Holy Week Information*

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# Holy Week

**March 29-April 5, 2026**

**Sunday, March 29**

9:30 am

**Palm & Passion Sunday**

Procession & Passion Reading

**Tuesday, March 31**

11:00 am

**Chrism Mass**

St. James Cathedral, Fresno

**Wednesday, April 1**

12:00 Noon

**Noon-Day Prayer**

Historical Chapel

**Thursday, April 2**

6:00 pm

7:00 pm to Midnight

**Maundy Thursday Foot washing**

Eucharist, Stripping of Altar

Garden of Gethsemane Watch

**Friday, April 3**

12 Noon

4:00 pm

**Good Friday**

Ecumenical Service at First United Methodist

Way of the Cross – All Age Interactive Service

at St. John's, Lodi

**Saturday, April 4**

7:00 pm

**Easter Vigil**

Historic Chapel & Church

**Sunday, April 5**

9:30 am

**Easter Sunday**

Holy Eucharist, Reception

& Children's Egg Hunt

**The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist**

The Rev. Betsy McElroy, Rector

Worship: Sundays 9:30 a.m.

## *March Adornments & Celebrations*

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**We are grateful for these donors whose gifts provide the sanctuary light for March.**

- March 1    Ida Mae Lobb, in loving memory of her husband Joe for his birthday, March 3
- March 8    None
- March 15    Penny Wilson, in loving memory of my parents Ron & Donna Tompkins
- March 22    None
- March 29    Dick and Janie Williams, in memory of her father, L.F. (Jerry) Christesen on his birthday, March 28.
- Bob & Patsy Gorczyca, in loving memory of Bob's mother Stella for her birthday, March 29.



*If you have a loved one to remember or an occasion to celebrate or remember please contact The church office at (209) 369-3381 with requests.*

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|--|---|
| <p>2: Kathleen Bell</p> <p>4: Brandon Stevens</p> <p>6: Claire Lima</p> <p>8: Steve Woodard</p> <p>9: Paula James</p> <p>10: Margaret Meyers</p> <p>11: Peter Krengel</p> <p>12: Amada Cardwell</p> <p>14: Carol Bassett</p> <p>          Allison Dooley</p> <p>16: Stuart Krengel</p> <p>17: Ron Buck</p> | <p>20: Andee Zetterbaum</p> <p>23: Taylor Franklin</p> <p>24: Elsie Jackson</p> <p>25: Dee Mayfield</p> <p>          Charles Hernandez</p> <p>          Devin Landreth</p> <p>26: Kimberly Bronson</p> <p>          Rosemary Reynolds</p> <p>27: Linda Harkins</p> <p>          Annabelle Goodwin</p> <p>          Karen Olds</p> <p>29: Bob Gorczyca</p> |
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| <p>21: Lauren San Juan &amp; Hugo Silva Medeiros</p> <p>29: Patsy &amp; Bob Gorczyca</p> |
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# Looking Ahead

*Dear Gentle Reader,*

*Please accept this announcement to attend the*

**St. John's High Tea**

*May 2, 2026*

*Tickets go on sale March 14*

*All ages are welcome.  
Invite your friends and family.*

*Attire inspired by Downton Abbey, Bridgerton,  
or garden party encouraged.*

*See the ministry table for details beginning March 7.*