



MARCH 2026 HAPPENINGS

Pastor Paul Thompson Cell: 507-273-8504 Email: pthomp821@gmail.com

Office Hours: 9:00 am–Noon (Monday & Thursday ... or by appointment) **Websites:** eaststolaf.org ...OR.... weststolaf.org

Gina Moser, Secretary: Office: 365-8222 Cell: 507-951-4964 Emails: eastwest@kmtel.com AND certainty@kmtel.com



March Worship Schedule

WEST: EARLY service at 8:30 am for March (*West coffee 9:30 am*)

JAM: 9:30 am at West for all parish students (*also West coffee*)

EAST: LATE service at 10:30 am for March (*East coffee after church*)

>>> LENTEN SERVICES with SOUP SUPPERS & PALM SUNDAY

Mar. 4: BOTH at WEST 6 pm soup supper (by JAM & LL), then 7 pm Lenten service

Mar. 11: BOTH at EAST 6 pm soup supper (by Sarah Circle); then 7pm Lenten service

Mar. 18: BOTH at WEST 6 pm soup supper (by West WELCA), then 7pm Lenten service

Mar. 25: BOTH at EAST 6pm soup supper (by East Council), then 7pm Lenten service

Mar. 29: PALM SUNDAY: WEST at 8:30am (9:30 JAM Easter Egg Hunt) EAST at 10:30am

OFFERINGS: Our congregational councils ask you to prayerfully continue your financial support church.

Please be sure to make your check out to "West St. Olaf Church" or "East St. Olaf Church" and mail to:

West members mail to: Dave Peterson 25378 720th St., Hayfield, MN 55940

East members mail to: Bryan DeCook at 7583 80th Ave. SW, Stewartville, MN 55976

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,



Who gets to determine weakness and strength? In John Irving's *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, the protagonist, Owen, is of small stature and has a damaged larynx. Even though he will never grow tall or have his voice deepen when he reaches adulthood, Owen firmly believes he has a purpose in life as an instrument of God. While Owen is not strong by worldly standards, he is strong in character. In sacrificing himself to save Vietnamese refugees in the United States, he fulfills what he believes to be his calling as "God's instrument."

We are all people with a purpose. We are put on this Earth to share life with one another, and care for all creatures as God's stewards. We are all people who sin. We do not love and share with one another as we are called to, and we do not take care of our planet as good stewards. Most of our Lenten disciplines will focus on making changes in ourselves; eating better, avoiding bad foods, reading our Bibles more, and the like. But our greater purpose is to make other people's lives better. *That is our purpose. That is why we are here.*

I pray that we all remember that we are called to follow Jesus' path of service and sharing with everyone. We will continue to learn how we are blessed, and continue to learn how to be blessings through a study of the Beatitudes this year, so we can get closer to being the people God created us to be.

With God's blessings,

Pastor Paul Thompson

Membership Updates, WELCA News, Serving Schedules

MEMBERSHIP INFO

BAPTISM

Walker Michael Jervis received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism Feb. 8, 2026, at West St. Olaf. His parents are Chase Jervis & Kenzie Gusa. Officiated by Rev. Paul Thompson. *God bless Walker.*

WOMEN OF EAST & EVENTS

Meeting 10am Sat. March 14 in the East church dining room.

Quilting & Sack lunch Tuesdays at 10:00 am at church.

MINUTES: EAST WOMEN

Women of East met January 10. Officer Elections were held and officers for 2026 are:

Co-presidents: Marylin Carlson and Amy Schwarz

Secretary: Dawn Evjen and Jane Williams

Treasurer: Diane Severson

Kitchen Manager: Marylin Carlson

The group went over the 2026 calendar and decided on dinners, fundraisers, and activities for the upcoming year. The list of dates, the information from the Annual Meeting, and Council information will be utilized to create the WELCA booklet for the 2026 year. The draft of the booklet will be finalized and approved at the February 14 meeting. *The change in communion Sundays may shift the order of who is serving Fellowship, and when. We continually listen and seek out new ideas to revitalize our activities.*

It was decided to keep the Meatball Dinner in November, as it is more manageable. Discussion about a congregational "shadow play" in December was talked about with Pastor Paul, and we are looking into that. *Think ahead...If you like being in plays, but not in front of people, then this might be right up your alley.*

Our March meeting will be Saturday, March 14 at 10:00am in the Dining Room of East St Olaf. All women of East are invited and welcome!

WEST WELCA NEWS

How wonderful to have a taste of spring weather in February! We know March weather is unpredictable, but we hope for an early spring.

The Lenten season is upon us with services on Wednesday nights at 7 PM and soup supper at 6PM.

WELCA will serve the soup supper on March 18. Please plan to join us for services and supper this Lenten season.

Our 2026 WELCA calendars are ready to be picked up at the chapel. Please sign your name and if you know of someone who would like one but can't get to the chapel, we would appreciate if you would take one for them too. Thank you to Gina for getting this ready for us and Sheryl for assembling them.

We thank Sandy Iverson for being our chairperson in February. Sheryl Wohlers is the chairperson for March. Thank you to Donna and Cindy S. for being on altar guild in February. Jane E. and Sheryl W. are our altar guild women for March.

We will quilt on March 10 and 11 with WELCA being at 1 PM on the 11th. Pastor Paul will lead the Bible study discussion and Jana Thompson will be our hostess. The last quilting until fall will be March **24 & 25 unless we feel we need to add some days in April to finish up some quilts.**

Palm Sunday is March 29.

Sisters in Christ, Sharon and Nancy



WEATHER-RELATED CANCELATIONS

To verify if there is a cancelation for worship OR a church activity, **please check: KTTC TV (channel 10), or online www.kttc.com** Click on the tab for *WEATHER* - then click on *Closings and Delays* or check office answering machine at 365-8222. *Decided by the*



SERVING SCHEDULES

WEST—MARCH

Ushers: Pete D. organizes

Deacon: Sue Hyland

Altar Guild: Jane Estby, Sheryl Wohlers

Acolytes: Ushers covering **Stewardship:**

1st Sun. — Luther League

2nd Sun. — JAM (or B.O.E.)

3rd Sun. — WELCA

4th Sun. — Church council

5th Sun. — Church council

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EAST—MARCH

Acolytes: Ushers covering **Altar Guild:** Darlene Myhre, Sonya Mansfield

Deacon: Terry Zieman

Coffee Servers:

1st Sun.— Quilting Sisters

2nd Sun.— Sarah Circle

3rd Sun.— OPEN: *Contact*

Marylin Carlson, if willing

4th Sun.— Circle 4

5th Sun.— Council members

BOTH: LENT, PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK, EASTER



ELCA Lutherans view Lent as a 40-day solemn, penitential season that began on Ash Wednesday, designed for self-examination, repentance, and preparation for Holy Week and Easter—focused on returning to baptismal grace, remembering mortality, and fasting or giving up comforts to focus on prayer & God's mercy.

SCHEDULE:

Mar. 4 (Wed.): at WEST with 6 pm soup supper (served by JAM & LL), and 7 pm Lenten service.

Mar. 11 (Wed.): at EAST with 6pm soup supper (served by Sarah Circle), and 7 pm Lenten service.

Mar. 18 (Wed.): at WEST with 6 pm soup supper (served by WELCA), and 7 pm Lenten service.

NOTE: Offering from this supper will go to Hayfield Food Pantry—Co-sponsored by Thrivent.

Mar. 25 (Wed.): at EAST with 6 pm soup supper (served by East Council), and 7 pm Lenten service.

Mar. 29 (Sun.): PALM SUNDAY: WEST at 8:30am, (9:30 JAM Easter Egg Hunt at West), EAST at 10:30am

APRIL



April 2 (Thurs.): EAST has 7 pm MAUNDY THURSDAY service

April 3 (Fri.): WEST has 7 pm GOOD FRIDAY service

April 5 (Sun.): EASTER!! EAST early service, WEST late service (*times to be determined*)

EASTER EGG HUNT at WEST PALM SUNDAY!!!



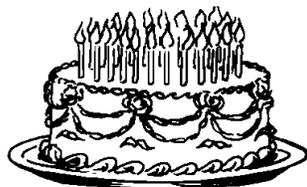
Palm Sunday at 9:30 am JAM kid's will enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt during JAM time at West—so bring your Easter basket!!!

NOTE: *Luther League teens are needed to hide eggs & help hold palm fronds that day.*

Mar. Birthdays: EAST

- 1 Kathleen Herness
- 1 Rachel Pyfferoen
- 1 Ryley Pyfferoen
- 5 Jerome Nelson
- 11 Brandi Bakken
- 12 Laural Bauer
- 16 April Nemechek
- 17 Pat Cahill
- 19 Landon DeCook
- 20 Julie Quinn
- 25 Lawrence Brandt
- 27 Elizabeth Carstensen

Happy Birthday!



Mar. Birthdays: WEST

- 1 Benjamin Alrick
- 3 Aloma Eastlee
- 4 Chad Thompson
- 4 Robert Christopherson
- 5 Heather Bamlet
- 5 Linnea Borland
- 9 Cynthia Stoppel
- 9 Erin Olson
- 11 Cassidy Thompson
- 11 Lillian Gulbransen
- 11 Elijah Gulbransen
- 21 Mary Bamlet
- 22 Brandon Schuck
- 22 Wilson Cahill
- 23 Diane Mittelstadt
- 24 McCayla Thoe
- 24 Katrina Thoe
- 25 Riley Phenix
- 27 Lana Martin
- 27 Lenora Bamlet
- 28 Jessica Lechnir
- 30 Denise Kylo
- 30 Lindsay Johnson
- 31 Jane Estby

**COMMUNION SUNDAYS**

Beginning in MARCH, communion will now take place on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at both churches (*not counting any special holiday dates when we may also do communion*).

**LILIES TO BEAUTIFY OUR CHURCHES FOR EASTER**

If anyone wishes to donate/share their Easter lily/lilies at church "*in-memory of*" and/or "*in-honor of*" someone... please email Gina Moser, (or at West: Sheryl Wohlers: 507-259-5974) by March 20, if you would like them listed in the Easter bulletin. **Please drop-off lilies at your church the day before Easter.**

**LENTEN SOUP SUPPER OFFERING ON MARCH 18**

The free-will offering on March 18 (*at the soup supper at West church*), **will go to the Hayfield Community Food Pantry** to help those less fortunate - the need is great. *This meal is co-sponsored by Thrivent.*

**LUTHER LEAGUE: PIZZA & SLEEPOVER AT CHAPEL ON MARCH 27**

Luther Leaguers: Join us Friday, March 27 at 6:00 pm. Pizza supper provided.

>> **Please bring:** 1.) your own bedding (sleeping bag, blankets, pillow 2.) a snack to share. *Breakfast provided in the morning as well—pick up time between 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.*

>> **RSVP to Alli at 507-398-7769** if you would like to attend.

**THRIVENT DESIGNATIONS:**

Thrivent "Choice Dollars" from 2025 can still be directed until March 31, by calling 800-847-4836. When prompted, say "Thrivent Choice"- then Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars. *A representative will work with you to direct your Choice Dollars.*

Spring Dinner

Ham and Scalloped Potatoes, Veggies, Fruit, Desserts
Palm Sunday, March 29: East and West Welcome!
 10:30 Worship at East... 11:30 Dinner Starts at East St. Olaf

\$10 per person, \$6 for 12 and under
 Hosted by Circle 4 at East St Olaf

BOTH EAST & WEST WOMEN: 2026 SYNOD WOMEN'S SPRING EVENT

The Zumbro River Conference Spring Event will be Saturday, APRIL 25, 2026 at Zumbro Lutheran Church (624 Third Avenue SW, Rochester, MN 55902). DEADLINE to register: Fri., April 10. Check with your WELCA presidents about cost & registration. >> **Please bring a love offering for Zumbro's Food Pantries.**

ITEMS NEEDED: Tuna or chicken pouches, ramen noodle cups, creamy peanut butter, "Hormel Compleats" shelf-stable microwave meals, and boxes of instant oatmeal packets.

8:00 -9:30 am: Registration, Coffee. **9:30 am:** Program & Worship— Speaker: Pastor Shelley Cunningham.

12:00 pm: Lunch served

MARCH

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
<p>1</p> <p>8:30 am WEST Worship, <u>Comm</u> </p> <p>9:30 am JAM classes West Coffee</p> <p>10:30 am EAST Worship, <u>Comm.</u>  East coffee after svc</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p>JOINT Council Meeting at EAST church 6pm—Individual 7pm—Joint mtg.</p>	<p>4</p> <p></p> <p>BOTH @ WEST 6pm—Soup Supper by JAM & LL 7pm—Lent Service</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Pastor day-off</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p><i>Daylight Saving Time begins</i></p> <p>8:30 am WEST Worship</p> <p>9:30 am JAM classes West Coffee</p> <p>10:30 am EAST Worship, East coffee after svc</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p>10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p>1:00 pm WEST WELCA Meeting Host: Jana Thomp. Study: Pastor Paul</p> <p></p> <p>BOTH @ EAST 6pm—Soup Supper by Sarah Circle 7pm—Lent Service</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Pastor day-off</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10:00 am Women of EAST meeting in East church dining room—All East women invited.</p>
<p>15</p> <p>8:30 am WEST Worship, <u>Comm</u> </p> <p>9:30 am JAM classes West Coffee</p> <p>10:30 am EAST Worship, <u>Comm.</u>  East coffee after svc</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch</p>	<p>18</p> <p></p> <p>BOTH @ WEST 6pm—Soup Supper by West WELCA (offering to Hayfield Food Pantry—Thrivent co-sponsors) 7pm—Lent Service</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p> <p>7:00 pm <u>Deadline to submit info for the next newsletter</u></p>	<p>20</p> <p>Pastor day-off</p> <p>First day of Spring!!!</p> <p>7:00 pm <u>Deadline to submit info for Donated Lilies</u></p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>8:30 am WEST Worship</p> <p>9:30 am JAM classes West Coffee</p> <p>10:30 am EAST Worship, East coffee after svc</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p>10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:00 am West Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p></p> <p>BOTH @ EAST 6pm—Soup Supper by East Council 7pm—Lent Service</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p> <p>NEWSLETTER DAY at the OFFICE 9:10- print 9:25- fold 9:35- collate</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Pastor day-off</p> <p>6:00 pm  Luther League PIZZA PARTY & SLEEPOVER at West Chapel! Pizza served >>Bring snack to share AND all needed bedding.</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>PALM SUNDAY >> NO Communion</p> <p>8:30 am WEST Worship</p> <p>9:30 am at West JAM Easter Egg Hunt (L.L. helps) West Coffee</p> <p>10:30 am EAST Worship</p> <p>11:30 am—BOTH invited to SPRING DINNER at EAST!!!</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9:00am-Noon Pastor office</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10:00 am East Quilt/sack lunch</p> <p>>>DEADLINE to Designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars</p>	<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #ffffcc;"> <p>HOLY WEEK</p> <p>Apr. 3 at 7pm: BOTH Maundy Thursday at East</p> <p>Apr. 4 at 7pm: BOTH Good Friday at WEST</p> <p>April 5: EASTER DAY:</p> <p>EAST has early service. WEST has late service.</p> <p>Times to be determined at Joint Council meeting.</p> </div>			



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EAST OFFERINGS

(02/01/26) Current \$1,085, Benevolence \$25, Cemetery \$6,380. In Honor of Harvey & Kent Boysen & Jessica Ryan \$5,000 cemetery fund. In memory of Patricia Viker \$1,380 cemetery fund.

(02/08/26) Current \$840.

(02/15/26) Current \$1,400.

EAST St. Olaf Council Minutes - February 3, 2026 6pm

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order.

Members Present: Randy Robinson, Pastor Paul Thompson, Jane Williams, Jeff Beaver, Bruce Peterson, Pete Exe, Terry and Danny Zieman, Gary Kearns, Mel Schultz, Jen Briske

Devotions: Pastor Paul

Pastor's Report: Planned conference was missed due to weather, Fieldcrest services were held and February Prairie Meadows planned. The Zumbro Conference annual meeting is coming up. The church is invited to send 4 participants (2 men/2 women). Please let Paster know if interested.

Secretary's Report: January minutes were read and approved.

Financial Secretary's Report: Gary presented financial updates. The benevolence fund has been dispensed. The garbage bill has been paid for the year, as well as bills paid for pest control and Culligan, Memorials were reviewed.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was read and approved.

Deacon's Report: During Lent planning for a reach out to those under 18 who have been baptized at East St. Olaf. A book will be sent to the babies/toddlers and peds, based on age. A cart will go out to older children above 12. All will include a letter written to them from Pastor.

Trustees Report: The trustees welcomed Jeff Beaver to the group. Furnace filter was changed and salt dropped off for sidewalks. Search for a painter for the Narthex continues.

Education Report: No report this month.

Parsonage Report: Nothing to report.

Old Business: Parsonage proposal – The board reviewed the proposal submitted and post-review a motion to vote on the proposal as it stands with a yes/no vote was made by Pete Exe, Randy 2nd motion. Randy called vote all in favor of the proposal was 0 and all those opposed was unanimous.

New Business:

Communication Weeks – currently at 1st and 4th, WSO is at 1st and 3rd. Motion by Jane to move to 1st and 3rd to align with WSO starting in March. Terry 2nd the motion. All in favor unanimous.

Adjournment: Danny made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Gary seconded. We ended with the Lord's Prayer.

NEXT MEETING (First Tuesday of the month): **JOINT MEETING at EAST St. Olaf on March 3rd**,
6:00PM individual meetings, then joint meeting begins at 7:00PM

Respectfully Submitted by Jen Briske

BOTH: ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES & CHURCH LEADER LIST

Copies of the annual meeting minutes and 2026 completed ballots (for list of church leaders), are available to pick up on the table in the entryway. *These minutes will be approved at the next annual meeting.*



WEATHER-RELATED CHURCH CANCELLATIONS: To verify if there is a cancellation for a church service or church activity, **please check: KTTC TV (channel 10), or online at www.kttc.com** and click on the tab for **WEATHER** - then click on **Closings and Delays**. Decisions are made by council presidents and pastor.

WEST St. Olaf Council Meeting Minutes, February 9, 2026

Attendance (X = Present)

Pastor Paul	X	Dave Peterson	X	Deb Schuck	X	Ben Horejsi	X
Will Laxen	X	Sheryl Wohlers	X	Clay Hazelmann		Billie Jean Smetana	
Hans Estby		Mary Brandt		Greg Brandt			
Cindy Stoppel	X	Sue Hyland	X	Chad Thompson	X		
Jenny Twaddle	X	Carma Bjornson	X	Del Senjem	X		

Meeting called to order by Will Laxen and devotions led by Pastor Paul.

Motion to approve agenda made by Deb and seconded by Carma, motion carried.

Secretary's Report: Report read, motion made to approve by Deb and seconded by Sheryl, motion carried

Financial Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Reports reviewed and discussed. Motion made to approve both reports by Carma and seconded by Cindy, motion carried

Pastor's Report: Report reviewed.

Boad of Education Report: JAM: January snowtubing event was canceled due to the cold weather. Palms for use during Palm Sunday service have been ordered, and the kids plan to sing. VBS is still being planned. LL: February activity will be a service project for the church (cleaning church pews and chapel chairs). March activity of a sleepover at the chapel is still being planned so it is not definite.

Deacon's Report: Cards sent: Birthday to Gloria Pew, Pete Danielson, & Wilma Kylo; Thinking of you to Ashely Hazelman & Ginny Hyland. Annual meeting & potluck was well attended, thank you to those that helped prepare and serve at coffee hour & the potluck. Many enjoyed the wonderful food and fellowship. Thank you to new and returning council officers. Wednesday February 11 will be the LL service project event with food provided. Quilting on February 10, 11, 24, & 25 and the WELCA meeting is 1pm on the 11th. Thank you to Deb as January's deacon and February will be Carma.

Trustees Report: Nothing to report

Old Business: Dave was contacted by the bank about renewing the line of credit. Deb made a motion to renew the line of credit, seconded by Carma, motion carried.

New Business: Don Alrick has stepped down from the Parsonage Committee and he nominated Norm Senjem. Norm accepted the nomination. Del made a motion to accept Norm as a member of the parsonage committee, seconded by Dave, motion carried.

Motion to adjourn: Motion to adjourn made by Dave, and seconded by Carma, motion carried and we closed with the Lord's prayer.

Submitted by: Cindy Stoppel, West St. Olaf council secretary

Next Meeting: **JOINT MEETING at EAST** on Tuesday March 3, 2026 at 6pm; with joint meeting at 7:00pm

BOTH: ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES & CHURCH LEADER LIST

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East & West St. Olaf Lutheran



6200 County Road 3 SW
Byron, MN 55920

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Pastor Paul Thompson

Cell: 507-273-8504 Email: pthomp821@gmail.com

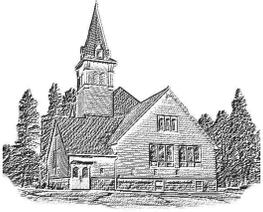
Church Office Hours: 9:00 am - Noon

Mon. and Thur. or by appointment

Office: 507-365-8222 Secretary: eastwest@kmtel.com

Websites: eaststolaf.org OR weststolaf.org

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HAPPENINGS



Living in God's amazing grace since 1856