

Portal ght

the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

MARCH 2026

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West Portal Lutheran Church Website:

westportallutheran.org

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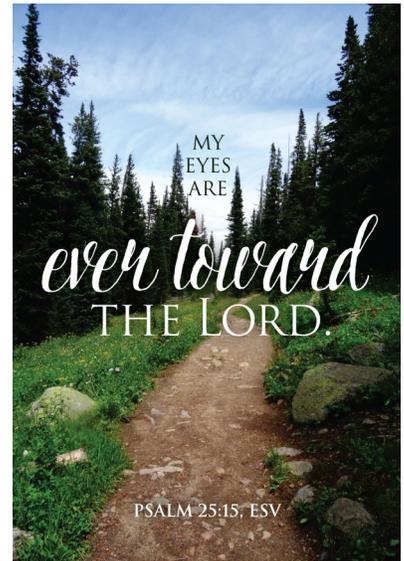
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From Pastor Swenson

"My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for He will pluck my feet out of the net." (Psalm 25.15 ESV)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Third Sunday in Lent, which falls on March 8th this year, is called Oculi, "My eyes." As with most of the titles in the Advent, Lent, and Easter seasons, the title comes from the first words of the Introit. We retain these titles because they help us retain the sense that the Lord speaks to us through His Word each Sunday. Although some parts of the service remain the same, other things change - including the readings. We hear different portions of God's Word each week as He speaks to us different things from His whole counsel. It's also for fun. Oculi just sounds more interesting to my ears than, "Third Sunday in Lent." With these Sundays having specific names, we also stand a better chance of remembering the readings or the hymn of the day.



Oculi falls at almost the midpoint of Lent. (The midpoint is actually Laetare, the next Sunday.) Lent is one of the seasons when we, especially, focus on the sufferings of our Lord on our behalf. We recommit ourselves to His Word, confessing our sins, and dedicating ourselves to increased devotion. When it comes to introspection, however, it can be easy to go too far. Martin Luther suggests in the Large Catechism that the devil delights to torment our conscience and suggest that, for our sins, we are outside the reach of God's mercy. Perhaps you have felt before that your sins were too great or too shameful or repeated too often for you to be forgiven. We should

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remember that the Lord told His disciples to let out their nets in the deep for a catch. He likes the hard cases.

King David wrote, **“My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for He will pluck my feet out of the net.”** This was something he sang at a time of great affliction. Something terrible was happening to him, and God was allowing it. Still, he remained confident in God’s mercy. He would not stand aloof forever. Rather, God would forgive David his sins and rescue him in His good time. He would pluck David’s feet from the net of sin and eternal death. The same is true for you. In this time when we are more thoughtfully considering our sins and what they brought our Lord, let us remember that He suffered for you that He might also pluck your feet out of the net. **“He who promised is faithful.”** (Hebrews 10.24) He will do it.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Swenson



Daylight Saving Time Begins March 8th

Don't forget to turn your clocks FORWARD one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 7th. You don't want to be late for



LET US PRAY TO THE LORD GOD for those who are ill, homebound, or recovering from recent hospitalization:

Elfriede Bonfert; Charlene Bruggemann-Wong; Angie Cheung, Helen Bok's sister-in-law; Margaret Choun, Elissa Choun's mother; Bill Eves, Virginia Ferry's cousin; Virginia Ferry; Mary Jo Fischl; Jimmy Fong, Evelyn Fong's father; Gilbert Mogyorossy; Bennette Nulph; Sigrid Rogge; Ruth Stresow; Ray Toloski; Nancy Tso; Elise Wen, Patrick Man's friend; Cheryl Wong; Marilyn Wong.

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Rev. Jacob Swenson, Associate Pastor

May Luu, Administrative Assistant

Angie Holt, Church Secretary, PortalLight Editor

Sherise Lee, Principal

Amy Kao, Music Director

Weekly Worship Schedule

5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service-Lord's Supper
9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary
9:00 AM Sunday Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service-Lord's Supper

West Portal Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod & English District



Palm Sunday Service **March 29**

10:00AM Worship-Lord's Supper

Maundy Thursday **April 2**

7:00PM Worship-Lord's Supper

Good Friday **April 3**

8:30AM Sunset Campus Chapel

11:15AM Sloat Campus Chapel

7:00PM Tenebrae Service

Holy Saturday **April 4**

5:00PM Easter Vigil with Lord's Supper

Easter Sunday **April 5**

10:00AM Worship-Lord's Supper

Easter Brunch following Worship Service

Easter Egg Hunt on the church lawn following the Brunch

Easter Flowers

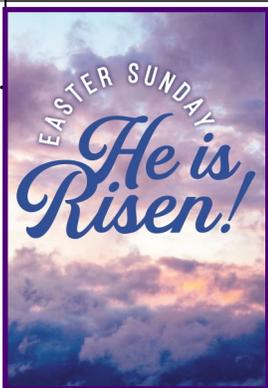
As we look forward to the celebration of Easter, the Altar Guild is again planning to have special floral arrangements around the Altar area. If you would like to help by donating to the flower fund, please complete this form and return it to the Church office by Sunday, March 29th. The suggested minimum donation is \$15.00. Please make the check payable to: Altar Guild-West Portal Lutheran Church.



Name of person(s) donating flowers

Name of person(s) honored or remembered.

If you have any Calla Lilies growing in your garden and would like to share some with us, please bring them on Wednesday Bible class, Maundy Thursday or on Good Friday. There will be containers in the office kitchen. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Celebrate Easter Sunday with Us!

at

West Portal Lutheran Church and School
200 Sloat Blvd. San Francisco, CA. 94132

Come join us Easter Sunday, April 5th, 2026 as we
celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ in worship and fellowship.



+ **Easter Sunday Service** with Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

+ **Easter Brunch** following the Easter Sunday Service

+ **Easter Egg Hunt** will follow after Easter Brunch. It will be located on the
church lawn and will feature our special guest, "The Easter Bunny"

For children ages up to 10 years old.

If attending the Easter Brunch and/or Egg Hunt, please kindly RSVP by Sunday,
March 29th with the names and number of people attending to May Luu at
may.luu@wplsfc.com or call 415-661-0242 x=221

(Each child should bring his/her own personal Easter Basket)

For more information, please contact the Church Office at 415-661-0242



Easter Egg Hunt

For children ages up to 10 years old.



Special guest: Easter Bunny

Easter Brunch

Following the Church service at the Church Fellowship Hall

Church Events

2-1-26 Class 4A with teacher Denise Fong



Violin Sherlyn Aung(6B)



Class 6B sang on 2-8-26 teacher Benjamin Chung



2-18-26 Ash Wednesday Chapel began our season of Lent!

2-21-26 2A Piano Accompanist Cayden Chang(2A) with Teacher Cynthia Chan



2-21-26 Cello Ivan Cheng(8A)



2-22-26 Nathan Kong 8A Piano Solo



2-22-26 6A Class with Abigail Piano Accompanist, teacher Andrew Middleton



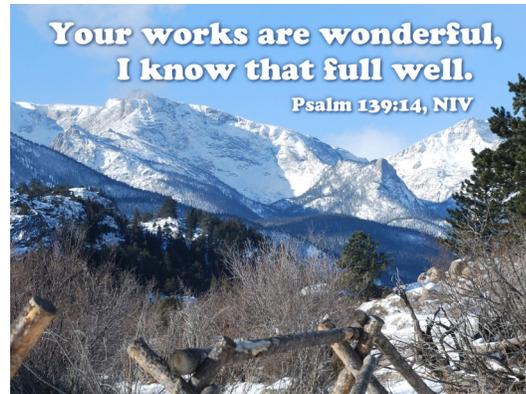
West Portal Lutheran School:
News from the Principal's Desk

Dear West Portal Family of Faith:

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. (Psalm 139:14)

Psalm 139:14 is a verse I share with the 8th grade class and parents at the beginning of each school year as an anchor for understanding the wonderful ways that God has made each one of us in His image. This is particularly important as we prepare to send our 8th graders into their next season of high school. We want them to know how deeply loved they are, not just by their community here at West Portal Lutheran, but more importantly by a God who will never leave or forsake them. Our response to recognizing God's great work of creating us each uniquely is declared by the psalmist in Psalm 139 as one of praise and confidence that sinks deep in our soul.

We stray from the truth that we are each uniquely made by God as we succumb to the pressure to conform to the world around us. Even as an adult, this plagues me, and when I think of our children, we recognize that mental health challenges amongst our youth, according to the Surgeon General in the 2021 advisory on "Protecting Youth Mental Health" have risen to alarming levels in recent years. If what we are solving for are children who are positive, healthy, and whole,



we need to prioritize the work that we do together in community to see this happen - indeed, with the Lord's great help!

This month, our 8th graders learn their high school admissions decisions. This can be a nerve wracking time for them, and when I surveyed the students this past week, 40% of them rated their stress level as either a 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5). When asked how they can be supported during this time, they asked for reminders that everything would be okay and general words of encouragement (and some who asked for less homework as a means to help). As we root for our students, we also entrust their next steps to the Lord. Church, will you pray together with us as we ask God to strengthen their faith and trust in Him?

Blessings in Christ,
Sherise Lee
 Principal

Nominate West Portal Lutheran School as Best Private School (K-8)!

Let's make it a **THREE-PEAT** !

The journey to be voted **#1 Best Private School (K-8)** in the Bay Area begins today (February 17)! Nominate West Portal Lutheran School so that we can make the ballot to repeat for a 3rd year in a row as winners. If we make the ballot, the voting window will start April 14.

First step is to make the ballot, so please click on the link below to nominate us. Nominations can be made from February 17 - March 17. (NOTE: **You can nominate us once per day, per email address**).

<https://SFGate.secondstreetapp.com/og/800554d8-e723-406f-a825-d06ea490722c/gallery/525063611>



Who's the Best in the Bay?

SFGATE's Best of Bay Area Reader's Choice Contest returns for 2026!

*** NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN ***

You know the go-to spots. Now let's make it official! Nominate your favorite local Bay Area businesses from **February 17 at 2:00 PM through March 17 at 11:59 PM PST**. From neighborhood institutions and local businesses to the new place you won't stop recommending, this is your chance to put the businesses you love on the map. If it's worth the hype, or deserves the spotlight, write-in your favs. Don't forget you can nominate once a day, everyday during this round. Voting round starts: April 14, 2026.

School Events

Speaker Dasha Cohen from Christian Counseling Center spoke on collective action between home and school for our students in the digital age and afterwards parents shared together in small groups.



STEAM activities led by parents and 8th graders during our parent session



2nd grade parents sharing about their careers with our students



Kindergarten goes to the Bay Area Discovery Museum

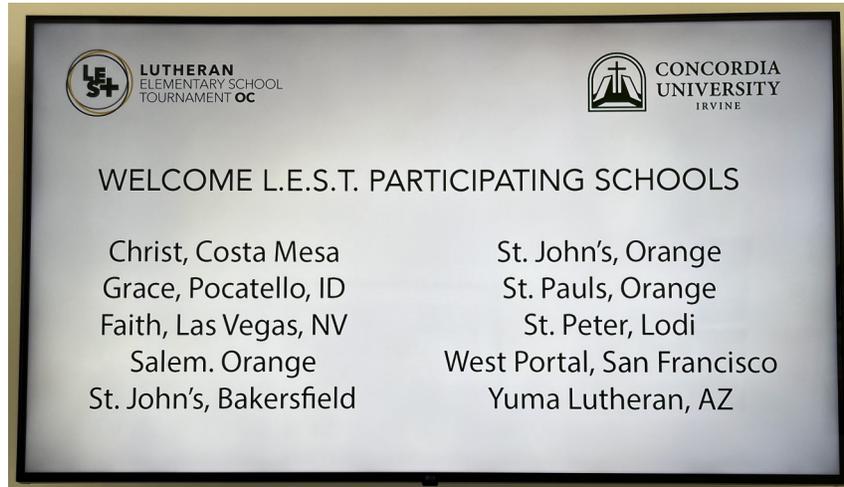


2nd grade finds the sun at the Japanese Tea Garden in the Golden Gate Park.



7th grade got hands on at the Exploratorium

A tradition since 1962, the **Lutheran Elementary School Tournament (L.E.S.T.)** is now hosted at Concordia University Irvine. The Tournament is an invitation to compete against other Lutheran Elementary Schools in nearly 13 different events. West Portal Lutheran had 22 students represented at the event, which gives them the opportunity to steward and showcase their God-given talents in events such as basketball, handbells, chess, art, and science.





Lunar New Year was celebrated on Feb. 25th at the Sunset Campus



Our World Language program sponsored our Lunar New Year assemblies featuring skits, songs, and dances on Feb. 26th Happy Year of the Horse!





- 1 Dave Garrett
- 3 Alexis Chinn
- 4 Jennifer Ohmura
- 5 Chris Brase
- 7 LaSaundra Gutter
- 8 Phuong Cooc
- 8 Nami Shiozaki
- 8 Karen Street
- 9 Dan Wang
- 10 Naomi Ray
- 11 Matthew Wong
- 11 Michele Wong
- 14 Antonella Demartini
- 14 Gail Frey
- 15 Alex Nulph

- 15 Iddhikorn Hutachinda
- 16 Steven Wood
- 16 Sio "Cathy" Chan
- 17 Milton Lau
- 17 Fernando Robleto
- 17 Dorothy Bridgeman
- 19 Garrett Wong
- 19 Andrew Lee
- 20 Yugin Lam
- 21 Amir Parnian
- 24 Timothy Esposto
- 24 Melissa Fung
- 24 Thomas Gonsalves
- 24 Zachary Concepcion
- 25 Abraham Go
- 26 Rajan Edwards
- 28 Carole Leung
- 30 Beverly Presley-Nelson
- 30 Alexandra Wu



- 3 Tim & Cortney Shadel
- 12 Ping-Yee & Judy Law
- 27 August & Sarah Stofferahn

"Pray for one another" (James 5:16)

Let us follow this command of God's Word. Use the birthdays and anniversaries list each month to hold up one another to the Lord in prayer. You may wish to keep this list on your refrigerator, in your Bible, in your Portals of Prayer, or in some convenient place. What strength we receive from Almighty God when we sincerely pray for one another! And in these "interesting times," a call to a member wishing him/her birthday or anniversary greetings would probably be appreciated. It's particularly important that we keep in contact with each other when we're unable to meet in person.

Altar Flowers

Flower Charts for the year 2026 are now posted in the Narthex. This is a very special way to help decorate the Altar, and to commemorate events or to remember loved ones. Flowers may be taken home or are delivered to our sick and shut-in members. Please call May Luu or Angie Holt in the church office, 415-661-0242, if you have any questions. The cost of a floral arrangement is \$60.00. We encourage you to sign up for the new Flower Chart.

Your tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of West Portal Lutheran Church. If you wish to make an online donation, please use the QR code below. PayPal covers all transaction fees. You are donating to PayPal Giving Fund, a 501C(3) charity. Your donation is tax-deductible.





Sunday, 3/1	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Church Library
Sunday, 3/1	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 3/1	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Wednesday, 3/4	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Wednesday, 3/4	7:00 PM	Lenten Midweek service
Saturday, 3/7	10:00 AM	Quilt Class-Fellowship Hall
Saturday, 3/7	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Partner's in Faith-Class 2B Singing
Sunday, 3/8	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Church Library
Sunday, 3/8	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 3/8	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 3/8	11:15 AM	Voters' Assembly
Sunday, 3/8	12:30 PM	Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, 3/11	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Wednesday, 3/11	7:00 PM	Lenten Midweek service
Saturday, 3/14	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 3/15	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Church Library
Sunday, 3/15	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 3/15	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Wednesday, 3/18	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Wednesday, 3/18	7:00 PM	Lenten Midweek service
Saturday, 3/21	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 3/22	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Church Library
Sunday, 3/22	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 3/22	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 3/22	11:15 AM	Altar Guild Meeting
Wednesday, 3/25	11:00 AM	Midweek Bible Class
Wednesday, 3/25	7:00 PM	Lenten Midweek service
Saturday, 3/28	5:00 PM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 3/29	9:00 AM	Sunday School-Church Library
Sunday, 3/29	9:00 AM	Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 3/29	10:00 AM	Worship Service-Lord's Supper