



The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost  
August 31, 2025

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## WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*Founded by German immigrants in 1745, St. John's Lutheran Church is one of the oldest congregations in the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are part of a rich heritage that now spans 184 congregations and 45,000 Lutherans in North Carolina, nearly 3 million ELCA members across 65 synods in the United States, and a global communion of 78 million Lutherans through the Lutheran World Federation. From a humble meetinghouse in 1745 to our place in the global body of Christ, St. John's continues to share God's love far beyond our own walls, living into the promise of the communion of saints.*

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### THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

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- ❖ **Today is the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.** The Season after Pentecost (the long, green season also commonly known as Ordinary Time) begins following Pentecost Sunday and ends on Christ the King Sunday, November 23, 2025. This season focuses on discipleship and the teachings of Jesus. Our Gospel texts come from Luke.
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### SERVICE NOTES

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- ❖ A printed cross ✝ is an invitation to make the sign of the cross on your forehead or body. We make the sign of the cross to remember our Baptism and the promise: "You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever."
- ❖ **Bold print** indicates a speaking part for the whole assembly.
- ❖ Restrooms are located in the Narthex to the right of the front door and through the doors behind the choir to the left.
- ❖ A nursery is available for your use. Ask an usher for directions.
- ❖ You are welcome to receive Holy Communion. If you would prefer to receive a blessing instead, please come forward during the distribution with your arms crossed.
- ❖ The homemade communion bread is gluten free. If you prefer a wafer, please indicate by raising a finger as you approach the pastor. Grape juice, instead of wine, is also available.
- ❖ Today's liturgy is Setting Eight from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.
- ❖ Have questions? Ask the pastor. He is happy to discuss the movements of our worship service and why we do what we do as Lutherans.

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## A NOTE FROM PASTOR MATT HANSEN

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People of St. John's:

Most of us can remember school lunchrooms, where perhaps there was the “cool kids” table, and then there were all the other tables. Some of us were desperate to be invited over. Some of us never stood a chance.

In this week's Gospel text, Jesus steps into that same dynamic. He notices how people angle for the seats of honor, the ancient version of the “cool kids’ table.”

At Christ's table, however, things are a bit different. Popularity and pride fade. The only requirement is need. And the truth is, we *all* need Jesus. Martin Luther's dying words say it perfectly: “We are all beggars. This is true.”

In Holy Communion, we come forward not because of our status or accomplishments, but because Christ welcomes us into this feast of forgiveness.

So let's take our place, not with pride but with humility, knowing that in Jesus, the tables have turned, and there's room for everyone. Rankings matter not. We all need Jesus.

The Lord be with you,



*Altar Flowers are given today by Deane Moorehead to the Glory of God and in Honor of Dr. Bern Moorehead on his birthday, August 29th.*

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**✝ GATHERING ✝**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

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**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

*All My Hope in Thee Is Founded*

Neander

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Merciful God, you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.

You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.

You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. **Amen.**

You belong to Christ Jesus and you are God's children through faith. In the cross of ✝ Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation. **Amen.**

## GATHERING SONG

### *Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty*

ELW #533



- 1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty, Zi - on, let me en - ter there,
- 2 Gra - cious God, I come be - fore thee; come thou al - so un - to me;
- 3 Here thy praise is glad - ly chant-ed, here thy seed is du - ly sown;
- 4 Thou my faith in-crease and quick-en, let me keep thy gift di - vine;
- 5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done in - deed;



where my soul in joy - ful du - ty waits for God who an - swers prayer.  
where we find thee and a - dore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.  
let my soul, where it is plant-ed, bring forth pre - cious sheaves a - lone,  
how - so - e'er temp - ta - tions thick-en, may thy word still o'er me shine  
may I un - dis - turbed draw near thee while thou dost thy peo - ple feed.



Oh, how bless-ed is this place, filled with so - lace, light, and grace!  
To my heart, oh, en - ter thou, let it be thy tem - ple now!  
so that all I hear may be fruit - ful un - to life in me.  
as my guid-ing star through life, as my com-fort in all strife.  
Here of life the foun - tain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## KYRIE

*Refrain*



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the  
 2 That we may live out your im - passionate re - sponse to the  
 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for  
 4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for  
 hun - gry and the poor; that  
 friends and fam - i - ly; for  
 wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,  
 we may live out . . . . . truth and jus - tice and grace,  
 life and for love, . . . . . for our work and our play,  
 nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,



*Refrain*  
 let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

*Let us pray.* O God, you resist those who are proud and give grace to those who are humble. Give us the humility of your Son, that we may embody the generosity of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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✠ WORD ✠

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

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**TIME FOR OUR YOUNGEST DISCIPLES**

*Children are invited to come forward for a conversation with the pastor.*

**FIRST READING: PROVERBS 25:6-7a**

A reading from Proverbs.

<sup>6</sup> Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence  
or stand in the place of the great,  
<sup>7a</sup> for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"  
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 112**

*We read Psalm 112 responsively by verse.*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!  
Happy are those who fear the LORD,  
who greatly delight in his commandments.  
<sup>2</sup> **Their descendants will be mighty in the  
land; the generation of the upright will be  
blessed.**  
<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches are in their houses,  
and their righteousness endures forever.  
<sup>4</sup> **They rise in the darkness as a light for the  
upright; they are gracious, merciful, and  
righteous.**  
<sup>5</sup> It is well with those who deal generously and  
lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

<sup>6</sup> **For the righteous will never be moved;  
they will be remembered forever.**  
<sup>7</sup> They are not afraid of evil tidings;  
their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD.  
<sup>8</sup> **Their hearts are steady; they will not be  
afraid; in the end they will look in triumph  
on their foes.**  
<sup>9</sup> They have distributed freely; they have given  
to the poor; their righteousness endures forever;  
their horn is exalted in honor.  
<sup>10</sup> **The wicked see it and are angry;  
they gnash their teeth and melt away;  
the desire of the wicked comes to  
nothing.**

## SECOND READING: HEBREWS 13:1-8, 15-16

A reading from Hebrews.

<sup>1</sup>Let mutual affection continue. <sup>2</sup>Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup>Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. <sup>4</sup>Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers. <sup>5</sup>Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he himself has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." <sup>6</sup>So we can say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not be afraid.

What can anyone do to me?"

<sup>7</sup>Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. <sup>8</sup>Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. <sup>15</sup>Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. <sup>16</sup>Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



## **GOSPEL: LUKE 14:1, 7-14**

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely.

<sup>7</sup> When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. <sup>8</sup> “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, <sup>9</sup> and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place.

<sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. <sup>11</sup> For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

<sup>12</sup> He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. <sup>13</sup> But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. <sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

The Rev. Matt Hansen

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*As We Gather at Your Table*

ELW #522



1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,  
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;  
3 Gra-cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.  
where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;  
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;  
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.  
may we still be - hold your im - age in the world you died to save.  
as we join with saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole Church, we confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the ✠ resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

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## ✠ MEAL ✠

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

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### OFFERING

You may give online, by visiting [www.stjohnsconcord.com/give](http://www.stjohnsconcord.com/give) or by texting “give” to (704) 706-2115.

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*The Servant Song*


Schwoebel

### OFFERING SONG

*One Bread, One Body*

ELW #496

*Refrain*



One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all; one cup of  
bless-ing which we bless, and we, though man-y  
through-out the earth, we are one bod - y in this one Lord.  
1 Gen - tile or Jew, ser - vant or free,  
2 Man - y the gifts, man - y the works,  
3 Grain for the fields, scat-tered and grown,  
*Refrain*  
wom-an or man, no more.  
one in the Lord of all.  
gath-ered to one for all.

### OFFERING PRAYER

*Let us pray.* Almighty God, in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful. Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

Exalted above all is your name, God of Jacob...as we join the unending hymn.

## SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -  
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Great is the mystery of faith. Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

## LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The kingdom of God is set before you. Eat and rejoice.

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*Let us pray.* Almighty God, you gathered us to your table and we drank deeply of your grace. Send us out by your Spirit to love our neighbors as ourselves and proclaim your love in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

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## ✠ SENDING ✠

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

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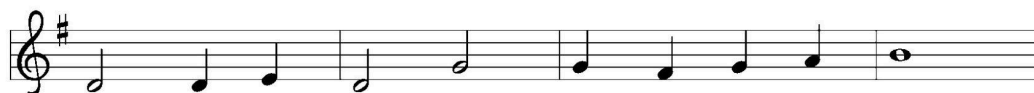
### BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

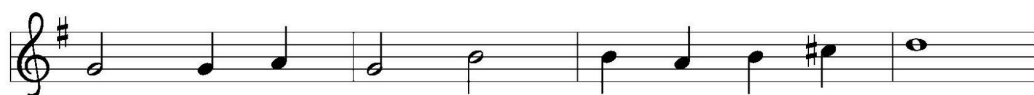
### SENDING SONG

*Savior, Again to Your Dear Name*

ELW #534



1 Sav - ior, a - gain to your dear name we raise  
2 Grant us your peace up - on our home - ward way;  
3 Grant us your peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;  
4 Grant us your peace through - out our earth - ly life,



with one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;  
with you be - gan, with you shall end the day;  
for us trans - form its dark - ness in - to light.  
our balm in sor - row, and our stay in strife;



once more we bless you ere our wor - ship cease,  
guard all the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,  
Keep us from harm and dan - ger till the dawn;  
then, when your voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



then, low - ly bend - ing, wait your word of peace.  
that in this house have called up - on your name.  
your eve - ning pres - ence prom - ise to your own.  
call us, O Lord, to your e - ter - nal peace.

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit. **Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

*In Christ Alone My Hope Is Found*

Camp & Moore

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### **GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS SUNDAY NEXT WEEK**

On September 7, following worship, we will participate in a congregation-wide service project in support of Sonshine Backpacks. On God's Work, Our Hands Day, over 8,500 congregations across the ELCA engage in community service work. We are grateful to have this vital community ministry housed in our Fellowship Building.

### **CALL TO DUTY!**

In another few weeks, the Nominating Committee will be looking for volunteers to be placed on the ballot for new Congregation Council members. Per the constitution, they will be looking for 8 church members to be placed on the ballot in November, with 4 being elected for a 3-year term starting in December. As mentioned previously from the pulpit, the existing council members wish and hope that each of our members will prayerfully consider to be a part of the church leadership team. St. John's has some new enthusiasm and excitement going after some very slow years with little active growth (and no full-time pastor). And the church can use some leaders that will continue to press on with the growth. The Congregation Council will present the Nominating Committee names to the congregation in September. They will be the ones to contact with interest as a volunteer. Otherwise, they will be on the phone asking for members to be on the ballot. Let's not make the phone calls necessary. Again, prayerfully consider stepping up and being one of the leaders of St. John's Lutheran Church as we continue to move forward.

### **MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY**

Beginning September 15, we will explore *The Church: A Guide to the People of God* by Brad East. Books are available for \$7 in the church office.

### **HOMEcoming MUMS**

Orders are being taken for mums to be placed in the church for Homecoming Sunday on September 21st. The cost for each mum is \$6.50 (wrapped and bowed in a 6" pot). They may be placed in memory or honor of someone. Please fill out the form found in the Narthex and return to the church office with your payment by Sunday, September 14th.

### **CHRISTMAS MARKET**

Celebrate the magic of Christmas on Saturday, December 13 from 3:00-7:00 pm with a craft market, entertainment, food trucks, and tours of the heritage museum at St. John's Christmas Market Celebration! Come enjoy the season or sell your handcrafted items!

### **MISSION DELIVERY**

There will be a truck at the Church on Saturday, September 20th, for a Kentucky Mission Delivery. Catherine will leave following Worship on September 21 to take our items.

## HOMEcoming ON SEPTEMBER 21

The Rev. Cassie Overcash, Assistant to the NC Bishop, will preach at 10am. Wanda Casey and Jeannie Thornton from Cabarrus Hospice will lead a special Sunday School in the Sanctuary at 9am. A covered dish meal will follow worship in the Fellowship Building.

## BACK TO THE BASICS: TEN WEEKS WITH THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

October is the tenth month of the year, and we will begin ten weeks exploring all Ten Commandments. In 1529, Martin Luther published the *Small Catechism* so households could explain to their children in simple terms the basics of the faith: The Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, and simple prayers for daily living. If you don't have a copy of the *Catechism*, we will begin distributing the pocket editions in the church Narthex over the next few weeks. To support this effort, consider a gift to the Christian Education fund. Additionally, the *Small Catechism* is found in the back of the ELW (red hymnal) and can be downloaded, in app form, for free:  
<https://catechism.augsburgfortress.org/>

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### PRAYER LIST

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#### *Immediate Care Concern*

Ronald Hurlocker (*Health condition*), Ellen Goodman (*Recovery from surgery*)

#### *Ongoing Care Concern*

Lisa Edwards (*Health condition*), Judy Fisher (*Health condition*),  
Rick McRorie (*Health condition*), Roger Shoaf (*Health condition*), Stan Parnell (*Health condition*),  
Al Sundling (*Health condition*), Lucy Thomas (*Recovery from surgery*), King Walters (*Health condition*), Pr.  
Bob Young (*Health condition*)

#### *Residents in Care Facilities*

Larry & Faye Cline (*Trinity Oaks*), Pr. Don Deal (*Trinity Oaks*), Betty Ritchie (*Trinity Oaks*), Amelia  
Ritchie (*Terra Bella*), Martha Suther (*Brookdale Concord*), Joy Waddell (*Mt. Pleasant House*),  
Kay Walker (*Brookdale Concord*)

#### *Homebound*

Pat Blackwelder, Gloria Casper, Nancy Deal, Judy Fisher, Elaine Petrea

#### *Community & Outreach*

Please keep our Preschool students, teachers, and families in your prayers as they begin school on  
September 2nd.

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## SERVING TODAY

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**The Rev. Matt Hansen** *Preaching & Presiding*  
**Catherine Ritch** *Organist*  
**Rathel Goodman** *Lector*  
**Peggy Clontz, Steve & Vera Drye** *Communion Assistants*  
**Larry Allman, Bob Blackwelder, Gerald Cline, Stan Parnell** *Ushers*  
**Rowland Family** *Livestream Support*  
**Kristin & Connor Rowland** *Nursery Attendants*  
**Peggy Clontz** *Altar Guild*  
**Janet Lentz** *Teller*

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## CONTACT US

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### BY PHONE

**Melinda Redding, Church Office** (704) 436-6081  
**Admin Assistant's Mobile** (704) 213-0784  
**Pastor Matt's Mobile** (612) 704-2828

### ONLINE

**Office Email** office@stjohnsconcord.com  
**Pastor Matt's Email** matt@stjohnsconcord.com

### ON-SITE

**Address** 100 St. John's Church Rd, Concord, NC 28025  
**Admin Assistant's Office Hours** Mon-Thu, 8am-1:30pm; Fri, 8am-Noon  
**Pastor Matt's Office Hours** Mon-Thu, *by appointment*.  
↪ *Please note:* Pastor Matt observes Sabbath every Friday ↩

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*The mission of St. John's Lutheran Church is to share God's love through revitalization, community, and outreach.*



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