



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

God's work. Our hands.



September 7, 2025

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

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.

THIS SUNDAY AT ST. JOHN'S

- ❖ **Today is the Thirteenth 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

- ❖ 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.

✠ GATHERING ✠

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

O, Blest the House

Gillam

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Merciful and loving God,
we are your stiff-necked people.

We trample on the needy.

We grumble about your grace to others.

We turn away from the poor.

Have mercy on us and forgive our sins.

Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.
Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.
You who were lost have been found.

In the name of ✠ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!
Amen.

GATHERING SONG

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

ELW #324



1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing, light and
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the



o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
love up - on my way, from the cross the
cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that



sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

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-passioned 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. Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

✚ WORD ✚

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

TIME FOR OUR YOUNGEST DISCIPLES

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

FIRST READING: DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

A reading from Deuteronomy.

¹⁵“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

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

PSALM 1

We read Psalm 1 responsively by verse.

¹Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path that sinners tread or sit in the seat of scoffers,

²**but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night.**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither.

In all that they do, they prosper.

⁴**The wicked are not so but are like chaff that the wind drives away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous,

⁶**for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.**

SECOND READING: PHILEMON 1-21

A reading from Philemon.

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To our beloved coworker Philemon, ² to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶ I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. ⁷ I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸ For this reason, though I am more than bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, ⁹ yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³ I wanted to keep him with me so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴ but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵ Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹ Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

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 14:25-33

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

²⁵ Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’ ³¹ Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

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

SERMON

The Rev. Matt Hansen

HYMN OF THE DAY

God's Work, Our Hands

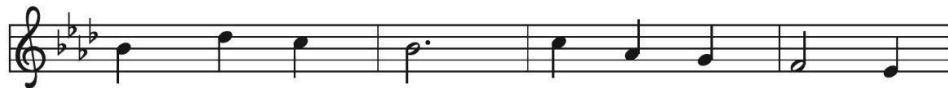
ACS #1000



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

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

Trusting God at work in and among us, we raise our hearts and voices in prayer for the needs of the world.

For your work in the church, we give thanks. Plant and tend relationships among faith communities, both ecumenical and interfaith, that in faithful listening, speech, and action, our hands work to bear fruit for the sake of all in need. God of grace, we pray, **hear us when we call.**

For your work among the nations, we give thanks. Direct leaders in paths of honest service, that both their words and actions are carried out on behalf of those whom they serve. God of righteousness, we pray, **hear us when we call.**

For your work in places of need, we give thanks. Sustain all who are wearied by unemployment or lack of adequate food or housing, that we advocate for relief and just policy. Bring healing to all who are sick through the skillful hands and compassionate hearts of physicians, nurses, therapists and caregivers. Be with those on our congregation's prayer list and those who we now name or in the silence of our hearts...God of restoration, we pray, **hear us when we call.**

For your work in our neighborhoods, towns and cities, we give thanks. Guide our common life together so that children, youth and adults of all ages flourish. Teach us to listen attentively to our neighbors, that any new endeavors consider those who may be left out or underserved. God of wisdom, we pray, **hear us when we call.**

For your work in this congregation, we give thanks. Bless the service project of this day and our congregation's service throughout the year. Foster deeper connections among those who serve and a spirit of accompaniment as we work alongside those in our community. Strengthen our faith, that we trust God moving in and among us. God of love, we pray, **hear us when we call.**

For your work among those who came before us, we give thanks. We remember those who have died, especially Ronald Hurlocker, and are held forever in your loving hands. Hold us in your presence now and always. God of heaven and earth, **hear us when we call.**

Receive these and all our prayers, gracious God. We pray in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

✠ MEAL ✠

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

If Ye Love Me

Raney

OFFERING SONG

We Give Thee but Thine Own

ELW #686



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,
3 The cap - tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,
4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be:



all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.
to teach the way of life and peace—it is a Christ-like thing.
what - e'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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

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

Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

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

BLESSING

God who sets forth the law of love, Jesus who fulfills the law for you, and the Spirit through whom you are called to love, bless you this day, that you may be God's hands and heart and voice at work in the world. Amen.

SENDING SONG

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

ELW #674



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!



Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are God's hands at work in the world! Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Go, Make Disciples

Hanson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Our final Paul-themed Bible study is tomorrow night. In September, we will explore *The Church: A Guide to the People of God* by Brad East. Books are available for \$7 in the church office.

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.

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 from 10 am to noon, 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/>

FALL CLASSIC RESTAURANT TRIP

Meal at the Classic Restaurant in Denton will be on October 5th. Sign up sheet will be in the Narthex.

WELCA FALL CONFERENCE

The Cabarrus/Stanny WELCA Fall Conference Gathering is set for Saturday, September 20th at Mt. Zion in Richfield. Registration begins at 8:30. Cost is \$12.00. See Susan to carpool.

PASTOR MATT IN CHICAGO

Pastor Matt is attending a conference in Chicago this week. For pastoral care emergencies, please reach out to the church office.

NEW DOOR CODE

There is a new code to access the Education Building. This includes the main office entrance, the side entrance, and the basement entrance to Goins Hall. If you need the new code, please reach out to the church office.

PRAYER LIST

Immediate Care Concern

Family of Ronald Hurlocker (Bereavement); Lynne Childers (Cousin of Vera Drye, Health condition);
Ellen Goodman (Recovery from surgery); Lisa Edwards (Health condition);
Lucy Thomas (Health condition)

Ongoing Care Concern

Roger Shoaf (Health condition); Judy Fisher (Health condition); Rick McRorie (Health condition)
Stan Parnell (Health condition); Al Sundling (Health condition); 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; Elaine Petrea

SERVING TODAY

The Rev. Matt Hansen	<i>Preaching & Presiding</i>
Catherine Ritch	<i>Organist</i>
Deane Moorehead	<i>Lector</i>
David Johnson, Jim Thinnes, Bonita Rowland	<i>Communion Assistants</i>
John Hartsell, David Ritchie, Jacob Sigler, Eddie Walters	<i>Ushers</i>
Connor Rowland	<i>Livestream Support</i>
Emily, Ryleigh, and Raegan Hartsell	<i>Nursery Attendants</i>
Etta & Bonita Rowland	<i>Altar Guild</i>
Larry Allman	<i>Teller</i>

CONTACT US

BY PHONE

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ONLINE

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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, <i>by appointment</i>.
↪ Please note: Pastor Matt observes Sabbath every Friday ↩	

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



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