



The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Homecoming
September 21, 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.

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.
 - ❖ Today's liturgy is Setting Eight from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.
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A NOTE FROM PASTOR MATT HANSEN

People of St. John's:

Happy Homecoming Sunday! We are delighted to welcome back Pastor Cassie Overcash, assistant to the bishop of the NC Synod, as we celebrate this special day at St. John's.

Homecoming is a cherished tradition at St. John's. Though we no longer gather under the stately pines, we give thanks for the opportunity to celebrate one more year of ministry in this place and take time to look back at all God has done for us over the years.

The gospel lesson for us this morning is especially relevant. All that we are and all that we have belong to God, and we are invited to steward these good gifts wisely and with gratitude.

We have so many wonderful gifts right here. Today we give thanks and celebrate.

The Lord be with you,



ANNOUNCEMENTS

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

We continue exploring *The Church: A Guide to the People of God* by Brad East. We still have books available for \$7 in the church office. Our next session will bring us through page 70 as we explore God's covenant and the church.

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!

FALL CLASSIC RESTAURANT TRIP

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

YOUTHQUAKE 2025

October 4th @ St. John's, Salisbury (3rd-5th Graders) Youthquake is a gathering for youth in the 3rd-5th grade from across the NC Synod for fellowship, learning, service, and worship. This year our theme is all about what it means to be "the Church", including learning what a "Synod" is. Cost will be picked up by St. John's and includes lunch and a t-shirt.

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/>

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Blessing of the animals will be Sunday, September 28th at 4 pm at the labyrinth.

The Altar Flowers are given today by Bob and Anne Shuping for the Glory of God and in honor of Susan Shuping, Davis Dorton and Sheryll Garfola on their September birthdays and in celebration of St. John's 280th Anniversary.

✠ GATHERING ✠

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Canticle of Love

Martin/Angerman

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

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

ELW #719



1 Where cross the crowd - ed ways of life, where sound the
2 In haunts of wretch - ed - ness and need, on shad - owed
3 From ten - der child - hood's help - less - ness, from hu - man
4 The cup of wa - ter giv'n for you still holds the



cries of race and clan, a - bove the noise of
thresh-olds dark with fears, from paths where hide the
grief and bur - dened toil, from fam - ished souls, from
fresh - ness of your grace; yet long these mul - ti -



self - ish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man.
lures of greed, we catch the vi - sion of your tears.
sor - row's stress, your heart has nev - er known re - coil.
tudes to view the strong com - pas - sion in your face.

- 5 O Master, from the mountainside
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide;
oh, tread the city's streets again;
- 6 Till all the world shall learn your love,
and follow where your feet have trod;
till glorious from your heav'n above
shall come the city of our God.

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. God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, 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: AMOS 8:4-7

A reading from Amos.

⁴ Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵ saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
and practice deceit with false balances,
⁶ buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and selling the sweepings of the wheat."
⁷ The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

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

PSALM 113

¹ Praise the Lord!
Praise, O servants of the Lord;
praise the name of the Lord.
² **Blessed be the name of the Lord
from this time on and forevermore.**
³ From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the Lord is to be praised.
⁴ **The Lord is high above all nations
and his glory above the heavens.**
⁵ Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated
on high,

⁶ **who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?**
⁷ He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,
⁸ **to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.**
⁹ He gives the barren woman a home,
making her the joyous mother of children.
Praise the Lord.

SECOND READING: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

A reading from 1st Timothy.

¹First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For

there is one God;

there is also one mediator between God and humankind,

Christ Jesus, himself human,

⁶who gave himself a ransom for all

—this was attested at the right time. ⁷For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

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 16:1-13

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

¹ Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ² So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ ³ Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ ⁷ Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ ⁸ And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

¹⁰ “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹ If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

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

SERMON

The Rev. Cassie Overcash

1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;
 2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,
 3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;
 give free - dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.
 for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.
 your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.

The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,
 Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;
 Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,
 the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.
 on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.
 our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home - land bright - ly gleams.

Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;
 O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;
 In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;
 a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.
 dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.
 your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

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.**

✠ 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

We Will Feast in the House of Zion

arr. Larson

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.

DISTRIBUTION

- ❖ *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.*

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

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

O God in Heaven

ELW #748



1 O God in heav - en, grant to your chil - dren mer - cy and
2 Je - sus, re - deem - er, help us re - mem - ber your pain and
3 Spir - it un - end - ing, give us your bless - ing: strength for the



bless-ing, songs nev - er ceas - ing, grace to in - vite us, peace to u -
pas - sion, your res - ur - rec - tion, your call to fol - low, your love to -
wea - ry, help for the need - y, hope for the scorn-ful, peace for the



nite us— O God in heav - en, au - thor of love.
mor - row— Je - sus, re - deem - er, sav - ior, and friend.
mourn - ful— Spir - it un - end - ing, com - fort and guide.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do not lose heart. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

"Toccata" from Suite Gothique

Boëllmann

REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

In memory of Archie & Daisy Fisher
and Wilson & Margaret Casper
Given by Sandy Fisher

In memory of Carl & Nan Ellington
Given by Troy & Diane Miller

In memory of Charles & Lorene Fortune
Given by Rick & Sharon McRorie

In memory of Chloe & Burton Walkup
Given by Bob & Cindy Blackwelder

In memory of Frank & Christine Hopkins
Given by Ken & Etta Rowland

In memory of Gary Ritchie
Given by Emily Hartsell

In memory of George & Marie Goodman
Given by Rathel & Ellen Goodman

In memory of Gerald & Bernice Ferguson
Given by David & Angela Ferguson

In memory of Janie Moose
Given by David & Angela Ferguson

In memory of John & Rosa Rowland
Given by Ken & Etta Rowland

In memory of King & Louise Miller
Given by Troy & Diane Miller

In memory of Leon & Ann Ensley
Given by Ken & Etta Rowland

In memory of Linda Miller
Given by Troy & Diane Miller

*In memory of Luther & Mary Lou Ritchie
Given by David Ritchie & Cynthia Ritchie
Hinson*

*In memory of Mary Jo Ritchie
Given by David Ritchie & Cynthia Ritchie
Hinson*

*In memory of Maxine & Richard
Blackwelder
Given by Bob & Cindy Blackwelder*

*In memory of Nathan & Stella Miller
Given by Brenda, Wesley & David Miller*

*In memory of Rether & Ollie Frick
Given by Brenda, Wesley & David Miller*

*In memory of Turner & Edna Shinn
Given by Rathel & Ellen Goodman*

*In memory of Vance "Gene" Miller
Given by Brenda, Wesley & David Miller*

*In honor of Amelia Ritchie
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team*

*In honor of Betty Ritchie
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team*

*In honor of Chris Hansen
Given by Pr. Matt Hansen*

*In honor of Connor, Kristin, Claire &
Carter Rowland
Given by Ken & Etta Rowland*

**In honor of Pr. Don Deal
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Elaine Petrea
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Gloria Casper
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Joy Waddell
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Judy Fisher
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Kay Walker
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of King Walters
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Larry & Faye Cline
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Lucy Thomas
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Martha Suther
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Nancy Deal
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Pat Blackwelder
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Phil & Judy Fisher
Given by Sandy Fisher**

**In honor of Rick McRorie
Given by Pr. Matt &
The Communion Visitation Team**

**In honor of Ryleigh & Raegan Hartsell
Given by Emily Hartsell**

**In honor of Sharon Ritchie
Given by Emily Hartsell**

PRAYER LIST

Immediate Care Concern

Susan Hayes (*Recovery from surgery*),
Lynne Childers (*Cousin of Vera Drye, Health condition*),

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
(*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, Judy Fisher, Elaine Petrea

SERVING TODAY

The Rev. Matt Hansen	<i>Presiding Minister</i>
The Rev. Cassie Overcash	<i>Guest Preacher</i>
Catherine Ritch	<i>Organist</i>
Rathel Goodman	<i>Lector</i>
David Johnson, Jim Thinnes, Bonita Rowland	<i>Communion Assistants</i>
John Hartsell, David Ritchie, Jacob Sigler, Eddie Walters	<i>Ushers</i>
Rowland Family	<i>Livestream Support</i>
Victoria Gardner, Courtney Johnson (SJPS)	<i>Nursery Attendants</i>
Etta & Bonita Rowland	<i>Altar Guild</i>
Larry Allman	<i>Teller</i>

CONTACT US

BY PHONE

Melinda Redding, Church Office	(704) 436-6081
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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, <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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