



Christ the King Sunday

November 23, 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*.
 - ❖ 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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ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY IS CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

Hoping to celebrate the lordship of Christ in a world of increasingly secular and non-Christian empires, Pope Pius XI inaugurated in 1925 a Sunday dedicated to Christ as King. Originally Roman Catholics celebrated Christ the King on the last Sunday in October, to precede the feast of All Saints, yet also to counter the Protestant celebration of the Reformation. When Roman Catholics proposed the three-year lectionary after the Second Vatican Council, Christ the King was moved to the final Sunday of the liturgical year. The Revised Common Lectionary has retained the festival. Its emphasis on the eschatological majesty of Christ leads well into Advent.

WELCOME JUDITH FLETCHER!

Judith, a licensed lay preacher in the North Carolina Synod, will preach and lead worship while Pastor Matt is on vacation. For pastoral care emergencies this week, please call the office and leave a voicemail. On-call clergy will be available as needed.

ST. JOHN'S CHRISTMAS MARKET NEWS

The Christmas Market committee is excited to announce the following performers on Saturday, December 13 from 3:00-7:00 pm. Can't make it? We'll be live streaming the performances!

3:00 - 3:30 - St. John's Choir

3:30 - 4:00 - St. John's Preschool

4:00 - 4:30 - Flint Ridge Bluegrass

4:30 - 5:00 - Piedmont Choral Group

5:00 - 5:30 - Dance Trapp

5:30 - 6:00 - Cantamos Choir

6:00 - 7:00 - Carol Hinson, Catherine Ritch, and Sharon Ritchie music on recorder, piano, and organ

We also want to invite you to enjoy the craft market and food and beverages by Native Burger, Joy Coffee and Desserts, and Liquid Voyage!

Mark Your Calendar for Sunday, December 7 for a festive lunch and luminary assembly sponsored by the Shell Gardner Circle. Bring lots of can goods--we'll use those as the base instead of sand--and then donate to the Mount Pleasant Food Bank! Luminaries will illuminate the sidewalks during the Christmas Market! Sign up for the lunch is in the Narthex! We hope you will join us!

The Christmas Market committee needs your help! On Saturday, December 13, we need volunteers to help set up and put away tables/chairs/garbage cans/luminaries at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm. We also need parking attendants by the play ground to help handicap guests and bus drivers if we need to use the overflow parking by the fellowship hall for approximately 30-minute shifts. Please sign up in the Narthex or see Emily Hartsell or Susan Shuping.

SIGN UP SHEET

Sign up sheet in the narthex for the Congregational Meal/Assemble Luminaries on December 7th. Sign-ups will end on **December 3rd**.

BIRTHDAY BOOKS FOR ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOLERS

The Preschool Committee is excited to sponsor a Birthday Book Drive for our young disciples at St. John's Preschool! Giving young children books is one of the most meaningful ways to support their growth and development.

This small act of kindness from our church family demonstrates to our preschoolers that St. John's cares deeply for them. A birthday book given in love helps each child connect the church with kindness, generosity, and God's love in action.



Our goal is for every child in our preschool to receive a special book to keep on their birthday. View the Amazon wishlist by scanning the QR code!

THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

The Women of the Church hope you are making plans to attend our annual Thanksgiving Luncheon today after Worship in Goins Hall. Our offering will go to CCM, Hospice, and Meals on Wheels. We will be collecting boxed food items for the Mt. Pleasant Food Pantry: Cereal, Crackers, Oatmeal, Rice, Mac and Cheese, Pasta, Powdered Milk, Grits, Rice-a-Roni, Popcorn, Biscuit Mix, Cake Mix, Brownie Mix, Cornbread Mix. Let's enjoy some time together at this luncheon and focus our hearts on Thanksgiving.

MARGARET SHIPTON CIRCLE

The Margaret Shipton Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 10am in the meeting room behind the sanctuary. We will discuss upcoming events and begin planning for 2026. Note: MSC will provide the Advent meal on Wednesday, December 6th.

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.

Today's Focus: The Eighth Commandment

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

WHAT IS THIS? or WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.

*Altar flowers today are given by Cindy Sutton for the glory of God and
in honor of Larry Miller and in memory of Linda Miller.*

✠ GATHERING ✠

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sheryll Garfola

PRELUDE

Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face

Beck

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

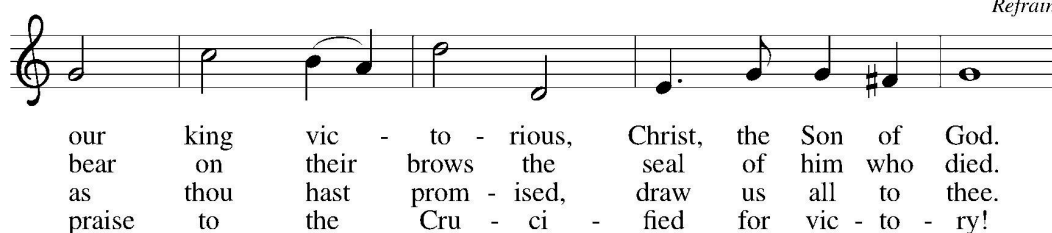
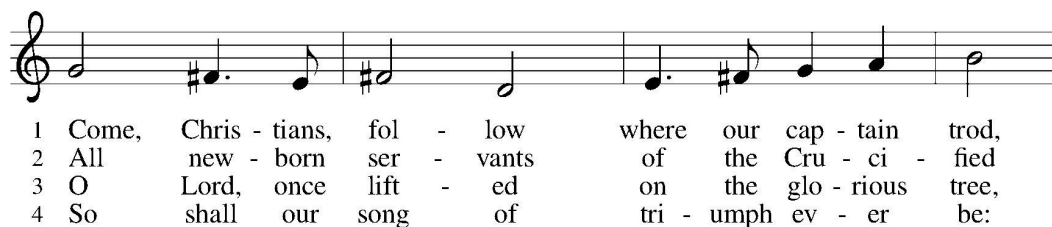
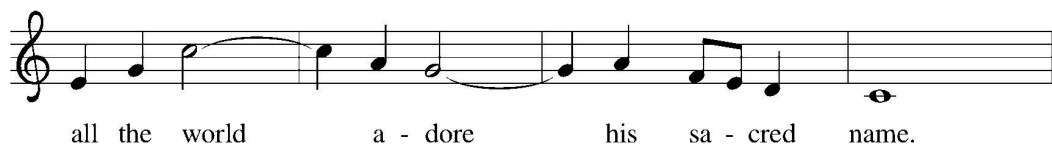
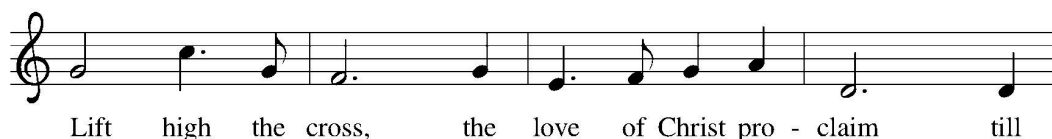
Faithful God, you have shown us the ways of your heart, yet we stray from your paths. We are stuck in sinful systems of oppression and do not embrace the freedom of your faithful promises. We ignore our neighbors. We exploit the earth. We reject your abundance, trusting our impulses instead of your steadfast love. Repair our relationships, restore what we have broken, renew our hearts, and bring us to new life. **Amen.**

Hear the good news: God the Faithful One loves you, ✠ in Christ Jesus your sins are forgiven, and by the power of the Holy Spirit you are set free. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

Lift High the Cross

ELW #660



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. O God, our true life, to serve you is freedom, and to know you is unending joy. We worship you, we glorify you, we give thanks to you for your great glory. Abide with us, reign in us, and make this world into a fit habitation for your divine majesty, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **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 minister.

FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 23:1-6

A reading from Jeremiah.

¹ Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³ Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

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

PSALM 46

¹ God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
² **Therefore we will not fear, though the
earth should change, though the mountains
shake in the heart of the sea,**
³ though its waters roar and foam, though the
mountains tremble with its tumult.
⁴ **There is a river whose streams make glad
the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.**
⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be
moved; God will help it when the morning
dawns.

⁶ **The nations are in an uproar; the kingdoms
totter; he utters his voice; the earth melts.**

⁷ The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

⁸ **Come, behold the works of the Lord; see
what desolations he has brought on the earth.**

⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰ **"Be still, and know that I am God! I am
exalted among the nations; I am exalted in
the earth."**

¹¹ The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of
Jacob is our refuge.

SECOND READING: COLOSSIANS 1:11-20

A reading from Colossians.

¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

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 23:33-43

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

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ [[Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.” ⁴³ He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

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

SERMON

Judith Fletcher

HYMN OF THE DAY

Rejoice, for Christ Is King

ELW #430



1 Re - joice, for Christ is king! Your Lord and king a - dore;
2 Our Sav - ior Je - sus reigns, the God of truth and love;
3 His king - dom can - not fail; he rules o'er earth and heav'n;
4 He sits at God's right hand till all his foes sub - mit



re - joice, give thanks, and sing, and tri - umph ev - er - more:
when he had purged our stains, he took his seat a - bove:
the keys of death and hell are to our Je - sus giv'n:
and bow to his com - mand and fall be - neath his feet:

Refrain



Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; re -



joice, a - gain I say, re - joice!

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 DUET

In Christ Alone

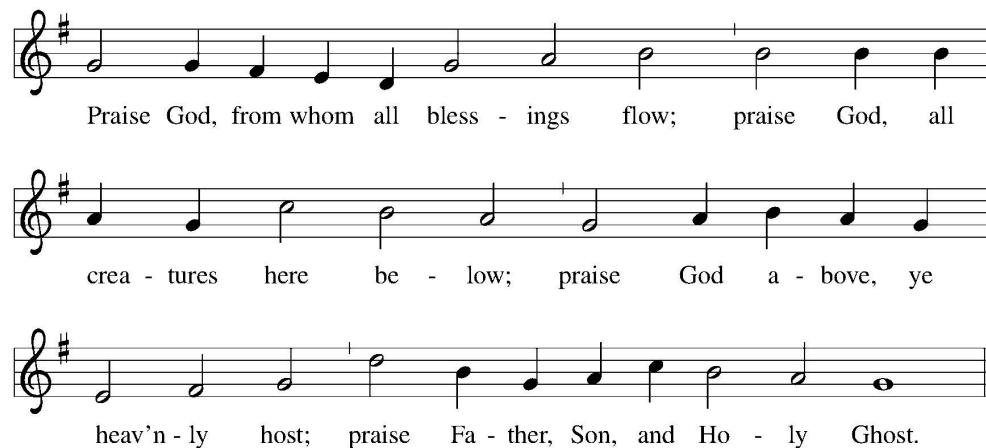
Carol Hinson & Pam Walker

Pethel

OFFERING SONG

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

ELW #885



OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of healing and hope, you bless those who are hungry, promising to fill them with good things. **Fulfill that promise through us and these your gifts. Nourish us with the abundance of your feast and unite us into the blessed body of Jesus Christ our Savior, now and forever. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION FROM THE RESERVED SACRAMENT

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.**

When our congregation last gathered in worship, we heard again of God's mighty acts and the love shown to us in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We shared in the holy meal of the Lord's supper. Now we bring to you this word of life, and this bread and cup of blessing, so that you may share in these same gifts and be strengthened in communion with all the people of God.

Gathered at the Lord's table, our congregation remembered with thanksgiving that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. This same bread and cup, shared in our community of faith, are here given for you.

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

There is a place for you at the table of God. Come, receive the food that does not perish, a taste of life eternal.

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.*
- ❖ ***Please note: The homemade communion bread is gluten, dairy, and nut 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. God of field and flower, wheat and grape, you have nourished us with the bread of heaven that gives life to the world. Strengthened by the body and blood of your Son, send us out to gather your good gifts for all who hunger and thirst, and embolden us to love and serve in Christ's name. Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

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

BLESSING

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SENDING SONG

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

ELW #502



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
love he sought me, and on his shoul - der
Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thine unction grace bestoweth;
and, oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so, through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the harvest. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Toccata on "Jesus Shall Reign"

Martin

PRAYER LIST

Immediate Prayer Concerns

Nathan Moose (Health Condition)
Lori Jones (Kristin Rowland's Mom, Health condition)

Ongoing Prayer Concern

Bob Blackwelder (Health condition)
Catherine Carriker (Health condition)
Lisa Edwards (Health condition)
Judy Fisher (Health condition)
Susan Hayes (Health condition)
Sandy Hickman (Health condition)
Rick McRorie (Health condition)
Sandy Moldovan (Health condition)
Anne Moose (Health condition)
Stan Parnell (Health condition)
Roger Shoaf (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
Nancy Deal
Elaine Petrea

SERVING TODAY

Judith Fletcher	<i>Guest Preacher & Worship Leader</i>
Catherine Ritch	<i>Organist</i>
Pam Walker	<i>Lector</i>
Ellen & Rathel Goodman, Gerald Cline	<i>Communion Assistants</i>
Bob Cavalline, Rick McRorie, Ken & David Rowlands	<i>Ushers</i>
Ryleigh Hartsell	<i>Livestream Support</i>
Ellen Goodman & Teka Sigler	<i>Nursery Attendants</i>
Rathel & Ellen Goodman	<i>Altar Guild</i>
Bob Cavalline	<i>Teller Lead</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
Church 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* ↩

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



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