



# St. John's

Baptism of Our Lord Sunday  
January 11, 2026

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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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### 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.
- ❖ Today's liturgy is **Setting Four** from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

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### ALTAR FLOWERS

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Today's altar flowers are given by Brandon, Patti, and Hailey Fletcher to the glory of God and in memory of Fred and Shirley Misenheimer and Pamela Rimer.

*Altar flowers are a meaningful way to glorify God and honor loved ones in worship. A gift of \$75 to the St. John's Flower Fund is encouraged. To sponsor altar flowers, please contact the church office.*

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### PRAYER LIST

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We invite you to join us in prayer for members and friends of St. John's. A printed prayer list is available in the Narthex and is emailed each morning at 4:30 a.m. through the Daily Cycle of Prayer.

*To add a name, please submit a request through our website or contact the church office.  
Scan the QR code below to view the current list.*



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### **WELCOME BACK JUDITH FLETCHER!**

We welcome Judith Fletcher, a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Mooresville and a NC Synod Certified Lay Preacher, who will lead our worship service today while Pastor Matt is in Egypt. Please remember to reach out to the church office if you have a pastoral care concern.

### **CONFIRMATION CLASSES RESUME JANUARY 25**

Our confirmands will kick-off 2026 classes at 8:45am on January 25. We will meet above the sanctuary. If you'd like to learn more about confirmation at St. John's, reach out to Pastor Matt.

### **A SPECIAL MONDAY NIGHT MEAL & BIBLE STUDY**

On January 26 at 6:30 p.m., we will gather in Goins Hall for a special meal and Bible study led by participants of our 2025 pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey. We'll enjoy food from Mykonos Grill, and trip participants will share Scripture passages read at historic sites, along with photos and reflections from the journey.

*Please let us know if you plan to attend so we can order enough food. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex, or you may contact the church office.*

### **PASTOR MATT'S MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY OFFICIALLY RESUMES IN FEBRUARY**

Pastor Matt's Monday Night Bible Study kicks off on Monday, February 9th at 6:30pm. We will be studying the book of Matthew. Please bring a Bible. If you'd like to purchase the newly released *Lutheran Study Bible*, reach out to the church office for a copy.

### **WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

We need volunteers to read, assist in Holy Communion, and help run our livestream. These roles are open to all ages. Please prayerfully consider volunteering in one of these areas. Livestream training is available for those interested. Reach out to Pastor Matt for more information.

### **HERITAGE CENTER COMMUNION SERVICE**

Pastor Matt will host a short service of Holy Communion at the St. John's Heritage Center on January 27 at 10am. All are welcome.

### **T-SHIRTS FOR SALE**

We have St. John's t-shirts for sale! These feature our new branding. Proceeds support the Growth & Outreach fund. The cost is \$35. To order, scan the QR code below or reach out to the church office.



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## ⊕ GATHERING ⊕

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

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### WELCOME

#### PRELUDE

*When Jesus Came to Jordan*

Walker

#### CONFSSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ⊕ one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors.** We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. **Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in ⊕ Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN

*Songs of Thankfulness and Praise*

ELW #310



1 Songs of thank-ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to thee we raise;  
 2 Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, proph - et, priest, and king su - preme;  
 3 Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole weak-ened bod - y, faint - ing soul;  
 4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, pres - ent in thy ho - ly word;



man - i - fest - ed by the star to the sa - ges from a - far,  
 and at Ca - na wed - ding guest in thy God-head man - i - fest;  
 man - i - fest in val - iant fight, quell-ing all the dev - il's might;  
 grace to im - i - tate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;



branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem in thy birth at Beth - le - hem:  
 man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, chang-ing wa - ter in - to wine;  
 man - i - fest in gra - cious will, ev - er bring-ing good from ill:  
 that we might be - come like thee at thy great e - piph - a - ny,



an - themes be to thee ad-dressed,  
 an - themes be to thee ad-dressed,  
 an - themes be to thee ad-dressed,  
 and may praise thee, ev - er blest,  
 God in flesh made man - i - fest.

## 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.**

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE

*Refrain*  
Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

*Let us pray.* O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **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 minister.*

## FIRST READING: ISAIAH 42:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup>Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
    my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.  
<sup>2</sup>He will not cry out or lift up his voice  
    or make it heard in the street;  
<sup>3</sup>a bruised reed he will not break,  
    and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
    he will faithfully bring forth justice.  
<sup>4</sup>He will not grow faint or be crushed  
    until he has established justice in the earth,  
    and the coastlands wait for his teaching.  
<sup>5</sup>Thus says God, the LORD,  
    who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
    who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people upon it  
    and spirit to those who walk in it:  
<sup>6</sup>I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;  
    I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
    a light to the nations,<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
    from the prison those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup>I am the LORD; that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.

<sup>9</sup>See, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 29

We read Psalm 29 responsively.

<sup>1</sup>Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,  
ascribe to the Lord glo ry and strength.

<sup>2</sup>**Ascribe to the Lord the glory due God's name;**  
**worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup>**The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;**  
**the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.**

<sup>5</sup>The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

<sup>6</sup>**the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf,**  
**and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup>The voice of the Lord  
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

<sup>8</sup>**The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;**  
**the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.  
And in the temple of the Lord all are crying, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup>**The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;**  
**the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.**

<sup>11</sup>O Lord, give strength to your people;  
give them, O Lord, the blessings of peace.

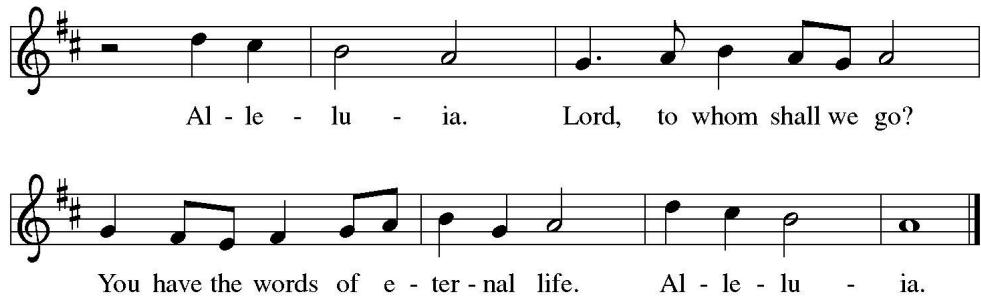
## SECOND READING: ACTS 10:34-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

<sup>34</sup> Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Word of God, word of life. **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.

## GOSPEL: MATTHEW 3:13-17

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

<sup>13</sup> Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

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

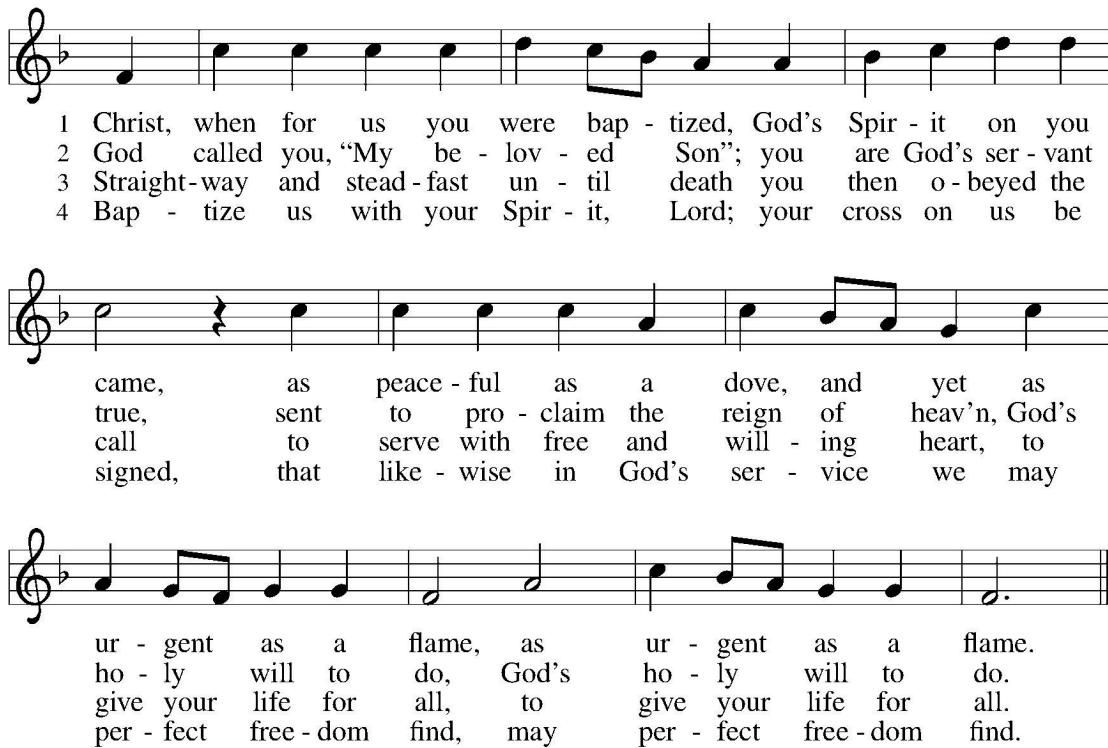
## SERMON

Judith Fletcher

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized*

ELW #304



1 Christ, when for us you were bap - tized, God's Spir - it on you  
2 God called you, "My be - lov - ed Son"; you are God's ser - vant  
3 Straight-way and stead - fast un - til death you then o - obeyed the  
4 Bap - tize us with your Spir - it, Lord; your cross on us be

came, as peace - ful as a dove, and yet as  
true, sent to pro - claim the reign of heav'n, God's  
call to serve with free and will - ing heart, to  
signed, that like - wise in God's ser - vice we may

ur - gent as a flame, as ur - gent as a flame.  
ho - ly will to do, God's ho - ly will to do.  
give your life for all, to give your life for all.  
per - fect free - dom find, may per - fect free - dom find.

## 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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs. Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill, especially those we now name out loud or in the silence of our hearts ... Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

## 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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### OFFERTORY

*Shine on Us*

Smith/arr.Schrader

### OFFERING

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

### OFFERING HYMN

*Spirit of Gentleness*

ELW #396

*Refrain*

Spir - it, Spir - it of gen-tle-ness, blow through the wil-der-ness  
call-ing and free; Spir - it, Spir - it of rest-less-ness,  
stir me from plac-id-ness, wind, wind on the sea.



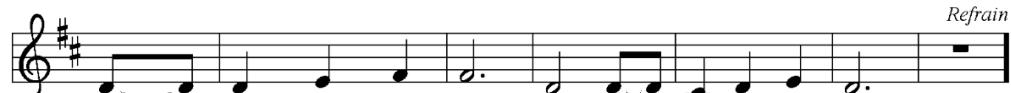
1 You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the deep,  
2 You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the sand,  
3 You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a hill,  
4 You call from to - mor - row, you break an- cient schemes.



then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the val - leys of sleep;  
and you goad - ed your peo - ple with a law and a land;  
then you whis - pered in si - lence when the whole world was still;  
From the bond - age of sor - row all the cap - tives dream dreams;



and o - ver the e - ons you called to each thing:  
and when they were blind - ed with i - dolls and lies,  
and down in the cit - y you called once a - gain,  
our wom - en see vi - sions, our men clear their eyes.



"A - wake from your slum - bers and rise on your wings."  
then you spoke through your proph - ets to o - pen their eyes.  
when you blew through your peo - ple on the rush of the wind.  
With . . . bold new de - ci - sions your peo-ple a - rise.

*Refrain*

## OFFERING PRAYER

*Let us pray.* God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

## 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 together. Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

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## ⊕ SENDING ⊕

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

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### BLESSING

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise ⊕ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

### SENDING HYMN

*Baptized in Water*

ELW #456

1 Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, cleansed by the  
2 Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, dead in the  
3 Bap - tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the

blood of Christ our king: heirs of sal - va - tion, trust-ing his  
tomb with Christ our king: one with his ris - ing, freed and for -  
sign of Christ our king: born of the Spir - it, we are God's

prom - ise, faith-ful - ly now God's praise we sing.  
giv - en, thank-ful - ly now God's praise we sing.  
chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

*Hail to the Lord's Anointed*

Hofkepelle

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## SERVING TODAY

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**Judith Fletcher** *Licensed Lay Preacher*  
**Catherine Ritch** *Organist*  
**Anne Shuping** *Lector*  
**Rathel & Ellen Goodman** *Communion Assistants*  
**Stan Parnell, Larry Allman, Bob Blackwelder & Gerald Cline** *Ushers*  
**Hartsell Family** *Livestream Support*  
**Jennifer Suther and Family** *Nursery Attendants*  
**Diane Miller, Anne Shuping** *Altar Guild*  
**Carl Walker** *Teller Lead*

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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](mailto:office@stjohnsconcord.com)  
**Pastor Matt's Email** [matt@stjohnsconcord.com](mailto: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 ←

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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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