



St. John's

Second Sunday after the Epiphany
January 18, 2026

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 \dagger 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*.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Today's altar flowers are given to the glory of God by the people of St. John's.

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.

PRAYER LIST

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. in 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.*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME PASTOR CASSIE OVERCASH

Thank you to Pastor Cassie Overcash, Assistant to the NC Bishop, for preaching today while Pastor Matt returns from Egypt.

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.

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.

BACKPACK MINISTRY

The Sonshine Backpack Ministry is grateful to all who have purchased bottle lights during the past year. The proceeds from the bottle lights totaled \$1,256.00. This generous donation will feed 4 children for an entire school year. These hand painted lights were created with care and love. Many children and families in our community will benefit from this act of kindness and generosity. Thank you for shining your light for Jesus!

SPRING VIA DE CRISTO WEEKENDS

The Spring Via de Cristo weekends are coming up! The dates are as follows: Men's February 26- March 1, Women's March 5-8 and Mixed May 28 - 31. Several of our members are serving on teams this Spring. They are as follows: Gerald Cline, Vera Drye, Ellen Goodman, Carol Hinson, Melanie Hudson, Rathel Goodman, David Johnson and Bonnie Shoaf. If you are interested in more info, please talk to one of these folks. It is a wonderful gift you can give yourself!

LUTHERAN MEN AFTER CHRISTMAS PARTY - 6 PM January 27 in the Fellowship Building.

⊕ GATHERING ⊕

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

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

Muelle

CONFESSiON & 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

Cold December Fies Away

ELW #299



1 Cold De - cem - ber flies a - way at the rose - red splen - dor.
2 In the hope - less time of sin shad - ows deep had fall - en.
3 Now the bud has come to bloom, and the world a - wak - ens.



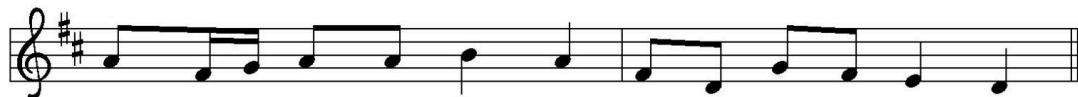
A - pril's crown-ing glo - ry breaks while the whole world won - ders
All the world lay un - der death. Eyes were closed in sleep - ing.
In the lil - y's pur - est flow'r dwells a won - drous fra - grace.



at the ho - ly un - seen pow'r of the tree which bears the
But, when all seemed lost in night, came the sun whose gold - en
And it spreads to all the earth from the mo - ment of its



flow'r. On the bless-ed tree blooms the red - dest flow'r. On the tree blooms the
light brings un - end - ing joy, brings the end - less joy of our hope, high - est
birth; and its beau - ty lives. In the flow'r it lives, in the flow'r, and it



rose here in love's own gar - den, full and strong in glo - ry.
hope, of our hope's bright dawn - ing, Son be - lov'd of heav - en.
spreads in its heav'n - ly bright - ness sweet per - fume de - light - ful.

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. Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by your Spirit hold us forever, that through your grace we may worship you and faithfully serve you, follow you and joyfully find you, 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 minister.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 49:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

¹ Listen to me, O coastlands;
 pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The Lord called me before I was born;
 while I was in my mother's womb he named
me.

² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
 in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
 in his quiver he hid me away.

³ And he said to me, "You are my servant,
 Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

⁴ But I said, "I have labored in vain;
 I have spent my strength for nothing and
vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the Lord
 and my reward with my God."

⁵ And now the Lord says,
 who formed me in the womb to be his
servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
 and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the Lord,

and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says,
 "It is too light a thing that you should be my
servant
 to raise up the tribes of Jacob
 and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
 that my salvation may reach to the end of
the earth."

⁷ Thus says the Lord,
 the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the
nations,
 the slave of rulers,
"Kings shall see and stand up;
 princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the Lord, who is faithful,
 the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen
you."

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

PSALM 40:1-11

We read Psalm 40 responsively.

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

² He drew me up from the desolate pit,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.

³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear
and put their trust in the Lord.

⁴ Happy are those who make
the Lord their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after false gods.

⁵ You have multiplied, O Lord my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts
toward us; none can compare with you.

Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
they would be more than can be counted.

⁶ Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,
but you have given me an open ear.

**Burnt offering and sin offering
you have not required.**

⁷ Then I said, "Here I am;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."

⁹ I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O Lord.

¹⁰ I have not hidden your saving help within
my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your
salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and
your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

¹¹ Do not, O Lord, withhold
your mercy from me; let your steadfast love
and your faithfulness keep me safe forever.

SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-9

A reading from Paul's first letter to the people of Corinth.

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, ² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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: JOHN 1:29-42

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

²⁹ [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³² And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.”

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹ He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

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

SERMON

The Rev. Cassie Overcash

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus Calls us; O'er the Tumult

ELW #696



1 Je - sus calls us; o'er the tu - mult of our
 2 As of old Saint An - drew heard it by the
 3 Je - sus calls us from the wor - ship of the
 4 In our joys and in our sor - rows, days of
 5 Je - sus calls us! By your mer - cy, Sav - ior,



life's wild, rest - less sea, day by day his clear voice
 Gal - i - le - an lake, turned from home and toil and
 vain world's gold - en store, from each i - dol that would
 toil and hours of ease, still he calls, in cares and
 may we hear your call, give our hearts to your o -



sound - ing, say - ing, "Chris - tian, fol - low me:"
 kin - dred, leav - ing all for Je - sus' sake.
 keep us, say - ing, "Chris - tian, love me more."
 plea - sures, "Chris - tian, love me more than these."
 be - dience, serve and love you best of all.

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.

OFFERTORY

Children, Go Where I Send Thee

arr. Hayes

OFFERING

You may give online, by visiting 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.

(hymn continued on next page)



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 - dols 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.

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.**

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all. By your powerful word you created all things. Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations. Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son. He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE *(continued)*

Remembering, therefore, his preaching and healing, his dying and rising, and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light. By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

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.

† SENDING †

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

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

That Boy-Child of Mary

ELW #293

Refrain

That boy - child of Mar - y was born in a sta - ble,
 a man - ger his cra - dle in Beth - le - hem.

1 What shall we call him, child of the man - ger?
 2 His name is Je - sus, God ev - er with us,
 3 How can he save us, how can he help us,
 4 Gift of the Fa - ther, to hu - man moth - er,

Refrain

What name is giv - en in Beth - le - hem?
 God giv - en for us in Beth - le - hem.
 born here a - mong us in Beth - le - hem?
 makes him our broth - er in Beth - le - hem.

5 One with the Father,
 he is our Savior,
 heaven-sent helper
 in Bethlehem.

6 Gladly we praise him,
 love and adore him,
 give ourselves to him
 in Bethlehem.

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

May the God of Hope Go with Us Every Day

Traditional Argentinian

SERVING TODAY

The Reverend Cassie Overcash *Presiding Minister*

Catherine Ritch *Organist*

Pam Walker *Lector*

Jim & Susan Hayes, Bonnie Shoaf *Communion Assistants*

Stan Parnell, Larry Allman, Bob Blackwelder & Gerald Cline *Ushers*

Rowland Family *Livestream Support*

Hartsell Family *Nursery Attendants*

Diane Miller, Anne Shuping *Altar Guild*

Carl Walker *Teller Lead*

CONTACT US

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ONLINE

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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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