



St John's

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2026

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

- ❖ We are glad you are worshiping with us! If you're a visitor, please enter your name in the guestbook near the entrance and our pastor will reach out to you.
- ❖ 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 Ten** from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Today's altar flowers are given by Rick and Sharon McRorie to the glory of God and in celebration of their 54th anniversary on May 7th.

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.

HOLY COMMUNION

- ❖ 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.

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.



A NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR: ONE HUNDRED SUNDAYS LATER

Today marks 100 Sundays since my first service with you on June 9, 2024. Just short of two years — a small number in the long life of a 281-year-old congregation, but a meaningful mile marker for your pastor, and a good moment to pause and look back in gratitude.

It must be noted: **Gratitude is a spiritual practice, and one we sometimes neglect.** The day-to-day work of a church can crowd it out. Council stuff, meetings, and the ordinary friction of being human together. It's easy to lose sight of what God is quietly accomplishing in the middle of all the work. And yet: the Lord is most certainly working through us, Sunday after Sunday, week after week, often in ways we don't fully see until we stop and reflect. So allow me to do just that.



On my second day on the job, I forgot the key to the study and I took a detour, walking the cemetery, getting acquainted with the Saints of St. John's — the founders, the soldiers, the families — *your families!* Paul's words to the Corinthians were on my heart that day: "*We look not at what can be seen, but at what cannot be seen.*" One hundred Sundays later, those words still frame how I see this place. What can be seen has been a joy: a thriving and growing preschool that fills our property with the laughter of small children; an upgraded livestream that welcomes the homebound and the curious; a congregation that turned out 200+ strong for our first-ever Christmas Market; new pickleball courts and playground; a pastor-occupied parsonage; a pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey; Daily Cycle of Prayer emails; and soon, cemetery mapping software so that others can "get acquainted with the Saints" the way I did that first week on the job.

What cannot be seen is even more remarkable. Average Sunday attendance is up nearly 40% since that first service together. But the numbers are only hints of the real work — the quiet faithfulness, the prayers prayed, the gifts shared, and the grace extended. A grace that, as Paul says, "extends to more and more people" to the glory of God.

Thanks be to God for all of it — the visible and the invisible, the smooth and the hard. Thank you for 100 Sundays of welcome, patience, and partnership. I am honored — *still* — to be your pastor. *Here I am, Lord.*

I remain, *as always*,
Yours in Christ,

Handwritten signature of Matt

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLASSIC RESTAURANT OUTING

Today's the day! We will head to the Classic Restaurant in Denton. Thank you to Ted Ritchie for organizing!

CONGRATULATIONS RYLEIGH!

Ryleigh has been selected as a 2026 Junior Marshal at Mt. Pleasant High School!

FAITH NIGHT AT THE CANNONBALLERS

May 29th is Faith Night at the Cannonballers. We have a group of 20 tickets available. The cost for each ticket is \$13. Please let the church office know if you want tickets.

BREAKFAST WITH THE PASTOR

Let's meet for breakfast! If you'd like to get together for a casual breakfast at a nearby restaurant, please reach out to the church office or email me (matt@stjohnsconcord.com). *—Pastor Matt*

NC SYNOD GATHERING

The Synod Gathering is scheduled for Thursday to Saturday, May 28–30, at Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory. Church members and visitors, pastors, and deacons from across the synod will gather to develop community, grow in faith, and grow skills for building God's church. All are welcome. To register, visit the synod website.

VIRTUAL MOTHER'S DAY BOUQUETS

What better way to remember or honor a mom that you love, than with a virtual bouquet? Complete the form below and submit a donation of any size to the altar flower fund. Virtual bouquets will be listed in the bulletin on Mother's Day. Please submit forms no later than Tuesday, May 5th.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION

May 17th will be Senior Recognition Sunday. If you are a high school or college senior, please let the church office know.

‡ GATHERING ‡

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb! **Amen.**

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us; for Dutch Buffalo Creek, Cold Water Creek, and the Rocky River. Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

Lord, God, We Praise You

ELW #558



1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is o - ver, ac - tive and
2 Mon - arch of all things, fit us for your man - sions; ban - ish our
3 All - ho - ly Fa - ther, Son, and e - qual Spir - it, Trin - i - ty



watch - ful, stand - ing here be - fore you; sing - ing, we of - fer
weak - ness, health and whole - ness send - ing; bring us to heav - en,
bless - ed, send us your sal - va - tion; yours is the glo - ry,



prayer and med - i - ta - tion; thus we a - dore you.
where your saints u - nit - ed joy with - out end - ing.
gleam - ing and re - sound - ing through all cre - a - tion.

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



1 Come, let us join our cheer - ful songs with an - gels round the throne;
2 "Wor - thy the Lamb that died," they cry, "to be ex - alt - ed thus!"
3 Je - sus is wor - thy to re - ceive hon - or and pow'r di - vine;
4 Let all cre - a - tion join in one to bless the sa - cred name



ten thou - sand thou - sand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.
"Wor - thy the Lamb," our lips re - ply, "for he was slain for us!"
and bless - ings, more than we can give, be, Lord, for - ev - er thine.
of God who sits up - on the throne, and to a - dore the Lamb.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he 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 pastor.

FIRST READING: ACTS 7:55-60

A reading from Acts.

⁵⁵ Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ “Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

Christ is risen! This is the Word of life. **Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 31:1-5,15-16

We read a portion of Psalm 31 responsively.

¹ In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;
do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.

² **Incline your ear to me;**
rescue me speedily.

Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.

³ You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
for your name’s sake lead me and guide me;

⁴ **take me out of the net that is hidden for me,**
for you are my refuge.

⁵ Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

¹⁵ **My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.**

¹⁶ Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.

SECOND READING: 1 PETER 2:2-10

A reading from First Peter.

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,” ⁸ and

“A stone that makes them stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

Christ is risen! This is the Word of life. Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: JOHN 14:1-14

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

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

SERMON

The Rev. Matt Hansen



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings,
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love;
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring



in praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has
 there - fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has
 set heart and will on things a - bove that we
 and with the heav'n - ly bless - ed sing: "Christ has



tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of
 tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Now still he
 con - quer through your tri - umph; grant grace suf -
 tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the



an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry
 comes to give us life and by his pres - ence stills all
 fi - cient for life's day that by our lives we tru - ly
 Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest, most ho - ly



here: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 strife. "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

THE NICENE CREED

With the whole Church, we confess our faith.

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

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.

OFFERING SONG

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together. Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

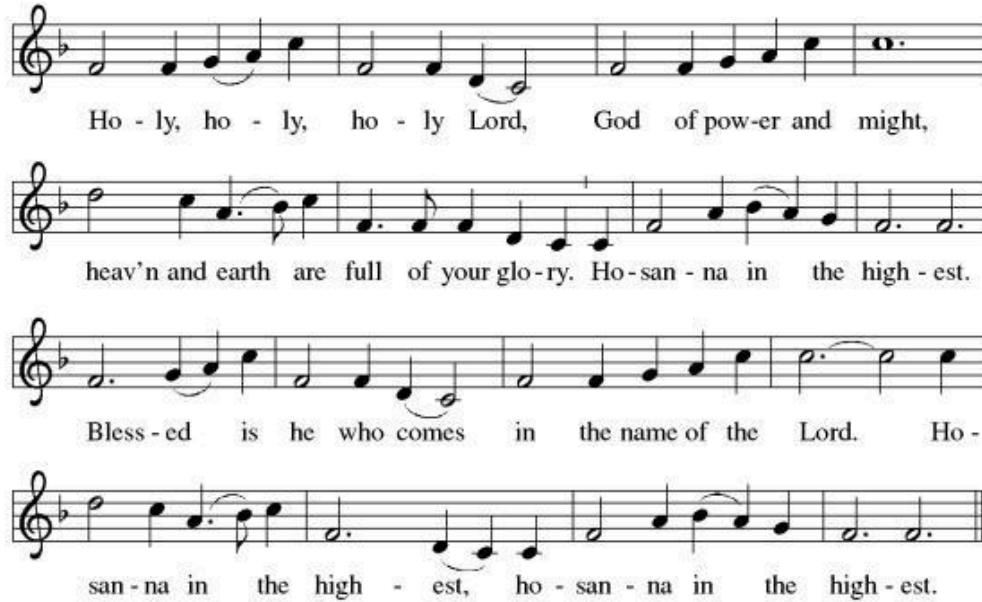
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

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, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer. We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was handed over, 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.

Great is the mystery of faith. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE *(continued)*

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world. Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ. 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

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray together. Holy God, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. **Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, Amen.**

✠ SENDING ✠

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

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing

ELW #389



1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands
2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant
3 In ev - 'ry in - sult, rift, and war, where col - or,
4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the
5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to



emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,
scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet
Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the
this and ev - 'ry age, till earth and sky and



prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.
here and now, and touch - ing ev - 'ry place and time.
loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.
life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.
o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia! **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE

SERVING TODAY

The Reverend Matt Hansen *Pastor*
Carol Hinson *Guest Musician*
Deane Moorehead *Lector*
Diane Miller, Dianne McCord, Jennifer Suther *Communion Assistants*
John DeVitto, Kevin Edwards, Charles Eudy *Ushers*
Livestream Support
Patti & Hailey Fletcher *Nursery Attendants*
Diane Miller *Altar Guild*
Janet Lentz *Teller Lead*

CONTACT US

BY PHONE

Church Office (704) 436-6081 *(Please leave a voice message)*

ONLINE

Office Email office@stjohnsconcord.com

Bulletin Announcement Email announcements@stjohnsconcord.com

ON-SITE

Address 100 St. John's Church Rd, Concord, NC 28025

Church Office Hours Mon-Fri, 8am to 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.

