



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
October 25, 2026

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-2192 www.stjohnlcsandusky.com
Sanctuary Worship 10:30 a.m.

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

October 25, 2026 Reformation

Welcome to Worship! Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. We celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the celebration of Holy Communion as he is God with us. Christians of all denominations are encouraged to come to the Lord's table. We commune children of any age who have received communion instruction at St. John or another Christian church. Children who have not yet received communion instruction will receive a blessing. Both red wine and white grape juice are offered to accommodate various traditions. Gluten free wafers are provided for those with dietary restrictions. Please make the pastor aware of your need.

We welcome and thank Pastor Phil Gardner for leading our worship today and thank Linda Stauffer for sharing her music. If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Prelude

Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering

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

Please stand

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,

let us confess our sin.
Compassionate God,
**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.
Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✝ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

ELW 504

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

3 Though hordes of devils fill the land
all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand;
they cannot overpower us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

2 No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
through life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Celebration of God's Word

Hymn

"God's Word Is Our Great Heritage"

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Ole G. Belsheim, 1861–1925, alt.

Music: Martin Luther, 1483–1546 Public Domain

Verse on pg. 4 of bulletin

**God's Word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever;
to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way, in death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure, we keep its teachings pure
throughout all generations.**

Please be seated

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:34

A reading from Jeremiah.

The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the LORD means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the LORD will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other,

“Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

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

Psalm 46 (Read responsively)

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
- ² **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;**
- ³ though its waters rage and foam,
and 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 shaken;
God shall help it at the break of day.
- ⁶ **The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth melts away.**
- ⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
- ⁸ **Come now, regard the works of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up on the earth;**
- ⁹ behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.
- ¹⁰ **“Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”**
- ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Second Reading: Romans 3:19-28

A reading from Romans.

Paul’s words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ’s death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹ Now we know that, whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

²⁰ For no human will be justified before him by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

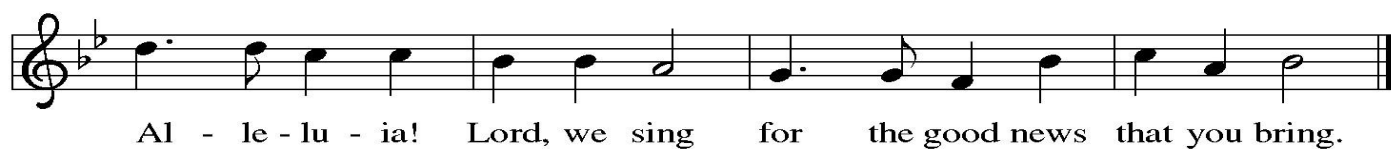
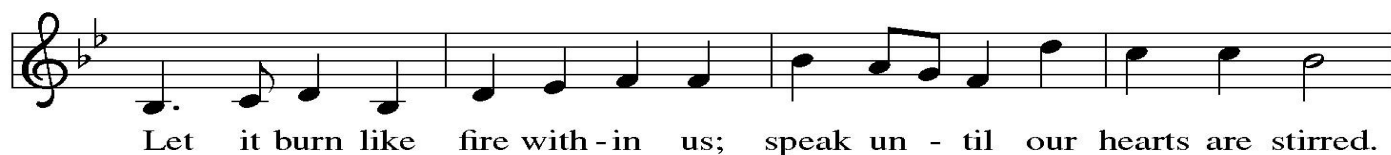
²¹ But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed and is attested by the Law and the Prophets, ²² the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ it was to demonstrate at the present time his own righteousness, so that he is righteous and he justifies the one who has the faith of Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? That of works? No, rather through the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

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

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: John 8:31-36

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

³¹ Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

³³ They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to

anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free?'"

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶ So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

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

Please be seated

Youth Time

Pastor Phil Gardner

Sermon

Pastor Phil Gardner

Please stand

Hymn of the Day

"Sing, My Tongue"

ELW 356

Music © 1967 Concordia Publishing House

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle;
tell the triumph far and wide;
tell aloud the wondrous story
of the cross, the Crucified;
tell how Christ, the world's redeemer,
vanquished death the day he died. | 2 God in mercy saw us fallen,
sunk in shame and misery,
felled to death in Eden's garden,
where in pride we claimed the tree;
then another tree was chosen,
which the world from death would free. |
| 3 Tell how, when at length the fullness
of th'appointed time was come,
Christ, the Word, was born of woman,
left for us the heav'nly home,
blazed the path of true obedience,
shone as light amidst the gloom. | 4 Thirty years among us dwelling,
Jesus went from Nazareth,
destined, dedicated, willing,
did his work, and met his death;
like a lamb he humbly yielded
on the cross his dying breath. |
| 5 Bend your boughs, O tree of glory,
your relaxing sinews bend;
for a while the ancient rigor
that your birth bestowed, suspend;
and the Lord of heav'nly beauty
gently on your arms extend. | 6 Faithful cross, true sign of triumph,
be for all the noblest tree;
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit your equal be;
symbol of the world's redemption,
for your burden makes us free. |
| 7 Unto God be praise and glory;
to the Father and the Son,
to th'eternal Spirit honor | now and evermore be done;
praise and glory in the highest,
while the timeless ages run. Amen. |

The Apostles' Creed

**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.**

*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

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.

Please be seated

Choir Offering

"Refuge" Tom Fettke

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Please stand

Offertory

"As the Grains of Wheat"

ELW 465

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Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.

1 As this cup of blessing is shared within our
midst, may we share the presence of your
love. Refrain

2 Let this be a foretaste of all that is to come
when all creation shares this feast with you.
Refrain

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

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:

Holy, Holy, Holy



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

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.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated

Distribution



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Distribution Hymn:

"We All Are One in Mission"

ELW 576

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1 We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.
A single great commission
compels us from above
to plan and work together
that all may know Christ's love.

2 We all are called for service,
to witness in God's name.
Our ministries are different;
our purpose is the same:
to touch the lives of others
with God's surprising grace,
so ev'ry folk and nation
may feel God's warm embrace.

3 Now let us be united,
and let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel
for God's redeeming Word.

We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.

Distribution Hymn: *"For the Bread Which You Have Broken"*
Text © 1925 Robert Jeffreys Jr., admin. Augsburg Fortress

ELW 494

1 For the bread which you have broken,
for the wine which you have poured,
for the words which you have spoken,
now we give you thanks, O Lord.

2 By this promise that you love us,
by your gift of peace restored,
by your call to heav'n above us,
hallow all our lives, O Lord.

3 With the saints who now adore you,
seated at the heav'nly board,
may the church still waiting for you
keep love's tie unbroken, Lord.

4 In your service, Lord, defend us;
in our hearts keep watch and ward;
in the world to which you send us
let your kingdom come, O Lord.

Please stand

Post Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

Amen

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Sending

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

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen

Sending Hymn

"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"

ELW 729

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1 The church of Christ, in ev'ry age
beset by change, but Spirit-led,
must claim and test its heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.

2 Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live before they die.

3 Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.

4 For he alone, whose blood was shed,
can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

5 We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord;

to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating word.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"

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St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is:
“A Family of Disciples, Faithfully Making Christ Known”
And a congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN'S, MINISTERS

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2026 The Year of the Way of Love. “We love because he first loved us.”

Bible Verse for October: *1 John 4:10-11*

“In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another”.

Council asks the congregation to pray that we all strive to see one another, and the world, through God's eyes.

Communion Clean-up today: Sandy Thompson

Oct. 25 – Set-up - Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up – Sue & Lynn Schlessman
Nov. 1 - Set-up – Jim Kluding	Clean-up – Jim
8 – Set-up – Paula Hoffman Laws	Clean-up – Paula
15 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up – Sandy Thompson
22 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender	Clean-up –
29 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up – Sandy Thompson
Dec. 6 – Set-up – Paula Hoffman Laws	Clean-up – Paula
13 – Set-up – Jim Kluding	Clean-up – Jim
20 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender	Clean-up –
24 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up – Elizabeth

Thank you for your willingness to help with this important ministry. If you would like to help, please see Elizabeth Libben or Sandy Thompson.

Reformation Sunday, October 25th: Over the centuries, Lutherans have kept a special day to thank God for the freedom that the word of God grants to believers and to pray that with the help of God's Spirit, the church will be continually reformed and renewed. You are invited to worship with us on this Reformation Sunday, in praise and petition to God for the ongoing health of the church.

All Saints Sunday, November 1st is when we take the time to give thanks for the saints who have shared their faith with us and helped us grow in our faith. We give thanks this year for William Steinfeldt, Elliot Young and Papa Bell.

Happy Birthday to Stephanie Cepec, Thomas Dawson, Peg Kingsley, Jason Thompson, and Cole Ruggles.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 25TH THRU NOVEMBER 8TH

Sunday, October 25	9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship/Reformation wear RED
Wednesday, October 28	10:30 am 5:30 pm 6:15 pm	Homebound Info Meeting Gathering Grounds Huron Choir Practice Bell Practice
Sunday, November 1	9:00 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Confirmation Class Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship/All Saints Sunday
Tuesday, November 3	1:00 pm	Faith Life Team
Wednesday, November 4	12 noon 5:30 pm 6:30 pm	Scripture & Prayer at Parkvue Choir Practice Bell Practice
Sunday, November 8	9:00 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Confirmation Class Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship

St. Stephen UCC's annual Christmas Bazaar takes place on Saturday, November 14th, 9 am to 3 pm at 905 E Perkins Ave. Sandusky. Door prize, lunch available, Free Admission.

Christmas Card Making Workshop: The workshop will be held on Thursday, November 12, 4:00-8:00 pm in the Fellowship hall at Zion's Huron. Arrive anytime during workshop hours and create one-of-a-kind Christmas cards! All supplies are provided-papers, images, stickers, ribbon and little sparkly things await you! The workshop is free and all ages are welcome.

Please call or text Diane Chevalier at [419-602-7412](tel:419-602-7412) with any questions. In order to plan for supplies please sign up on the registration sheet on the bulletin board or call the Zion office at [419-433-4711](tel:419-433-4711).