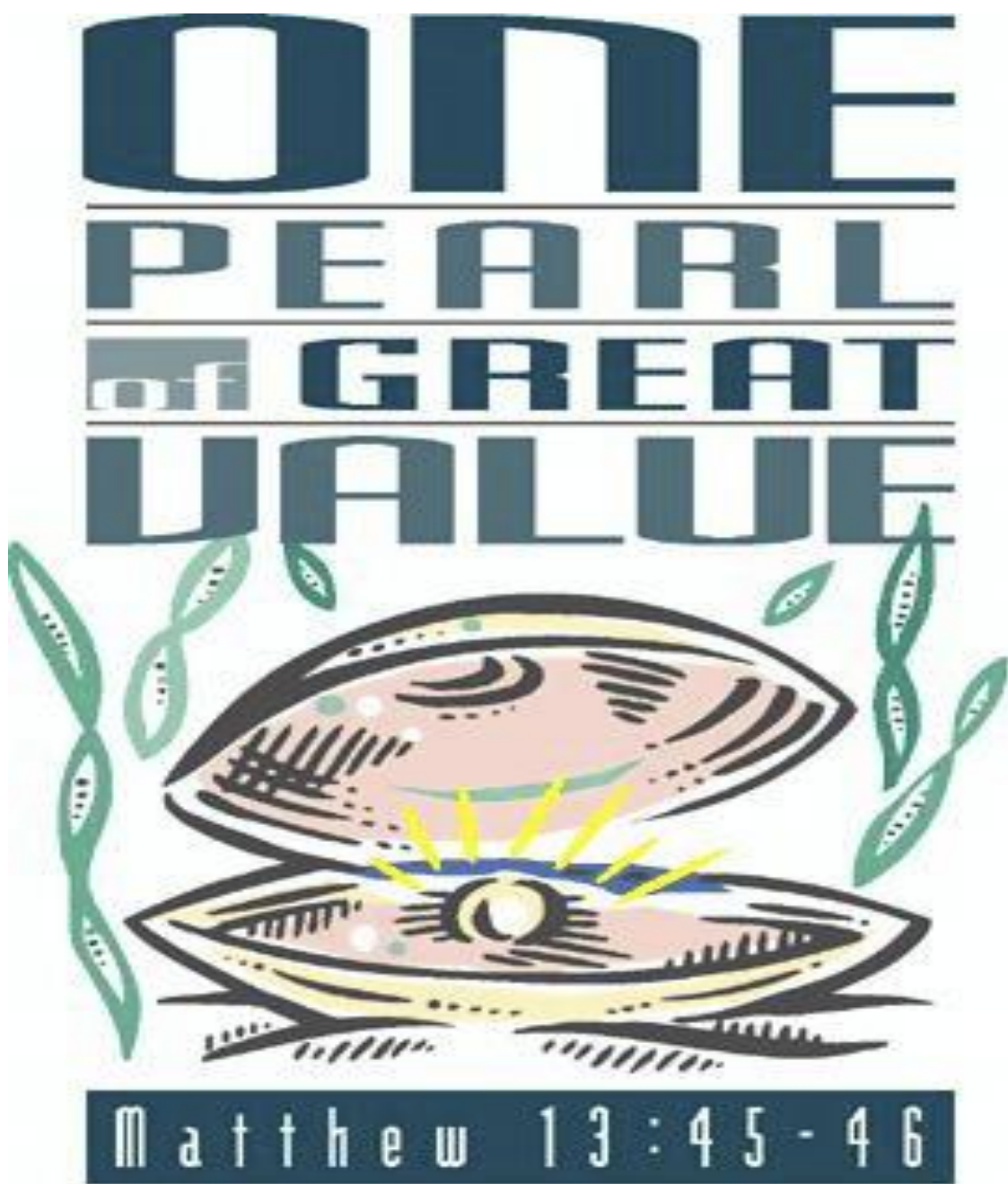




St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
July 26, 2026

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-2192 www.stjohnlcsandusky.com
Sanctuary Worship 9:30 a.m. Live streamed to Facebook

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

July 26, 2026

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to Worship! As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

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.

If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

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, whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

In the name of God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven.
Rest in God's love.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Gather Us In"

ELW 532

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1 Here in this place the new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

2 We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

3 Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

4 Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away--
but here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

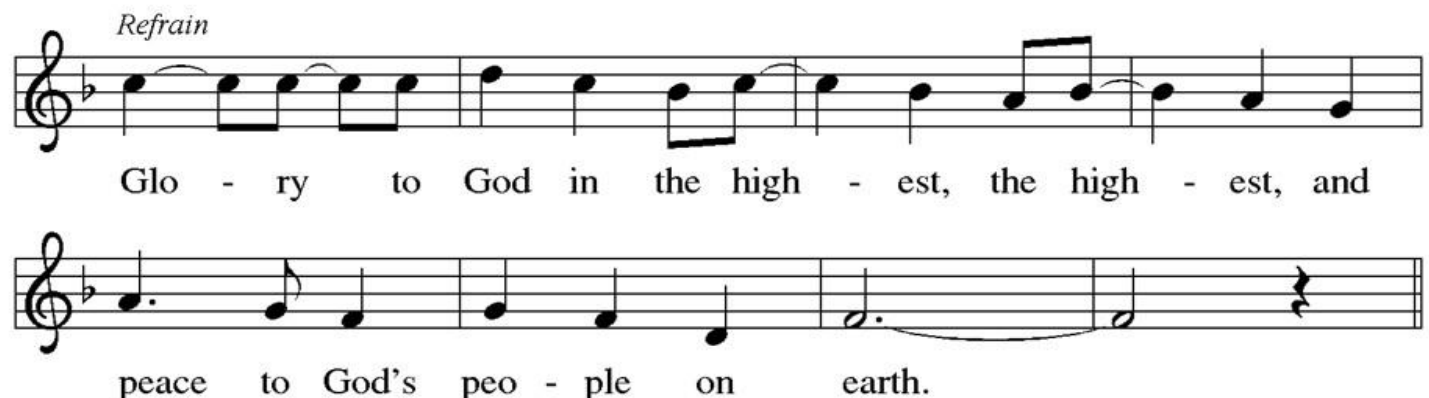
Greeting

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

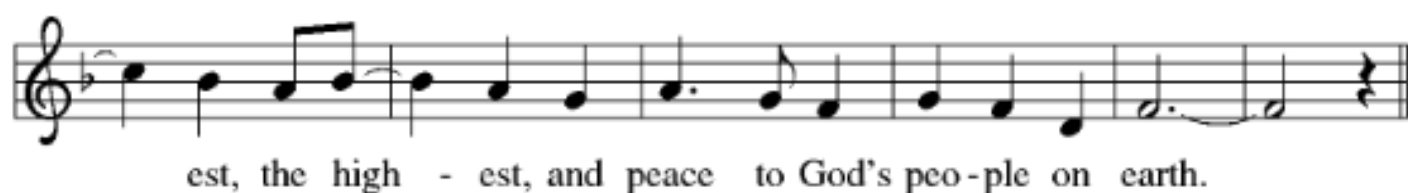
And also with you.

Canticle of Praise

Refrain



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and
peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and
 peace to God's peo - ple on earth. 3 For you a -
 lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,
 you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the
 Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
 A - men. A - men. A - men.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and peace to God's
 peo - ple on earth. Glo - ry to God in the high -
 est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Please be seated

First Lesson: 1 Kings 3:5-12

A reading from 1 Kings.

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”

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

Psalm 119:129-136 (Read responsively)

¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.

¹³⁰ **When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.**

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.

¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.**

¹³³ Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴ **Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.**

¹³⁵ Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.**

Second Lesson: Romans 8:26-39

A reading from Romans.

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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

Please stand

Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.
When my heart is hard, break the stone away.

When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Throughout Matthew’s gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that “the kingdom of heaven is near!” Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people’s lives.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

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

Please be seated

Youth Time

Sermon

Please stand

Hymn of the Day

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”

ELW 597

Text: Edward Mote, 1797-1874, alt. Music: John B. Dykes, 1823-1876 Public Domain

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
no merit of my own I claim,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name. | 2 When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
in ev'ry high and stormy gale
my anchor holds within the veil. <i>Refrain</i> |
| 3 <i>Refrain</i>
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand. | 3 His oath, his covenant, his blood
sustain me in the raging flood;
when all supports are washed away,
he then is all my hope and stay. <i>Refrain</i> |
| 4 When he shall come with trumpet sound,
oh, may I then in him be found,
clothed in his righteousness alone,
redeemed to stand before the throne! <i>Refrain</i> | |

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: God of grace, hear our prayer.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

Offering

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”

Text: Edward Mote, 1797-1874, alt. Music: John B. Dykes, 1823-1876 Public Domain

Offertory

“All Are Welcome”

Verse 3

ELW 641

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3 Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,

is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
Refrain
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

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.

Thanksgiving at the Table

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.

You are most holy,

and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought but as we are able;
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

Amen.

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**

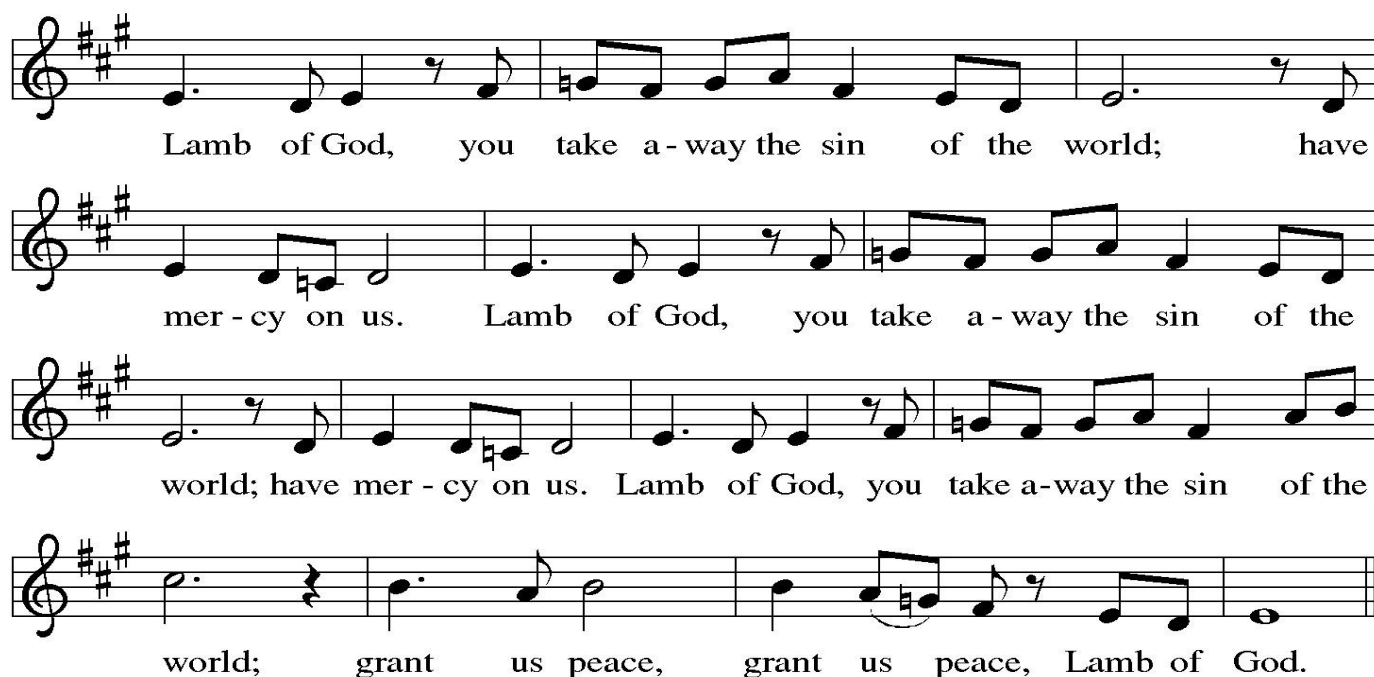
not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Invitation to Communion

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated

Distribution



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

Distribution Hymn: “For the Bread Which You Have Broken”

ELW 494

Text © 1925 Robert Jeffreys Jr., admin. Augsburg Fortress

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.

Distribution Hymn: “Come to the Water of Life”

Text and music © 1999 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 All who are thirsty for mercy,
all who are thirsty for love;
all who are thirsty for love, for mercy, come:
come to the Water of life.

2 All who are thirsty for healing,
all who are thirsty for touch;
all who are thirsty for touch, for healing, come:
come to the Water of life.

3 All who are thirsty for beauty,
all who are thirsty for truth;
all who are thirsty for truth, for beauty, come:
come to the Water of life.

4 All who are thirsty for justice,
all who are thirsty for peace;
all who are thirsty for peace, for justice, come:
come to the Water of life.

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.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through 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

"Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

ELW 674

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1 Let us talents and tongues employ
reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard. Refrain

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

2 Christ is able to make us one,
at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless,
love in word and in deed express. Refrain

3 Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Immanuel) ev'rywhere! Refrain

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”

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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

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

Church: 419-625-2192

Pastor Stacy's Day Off – Friday

Cell: 419-680-0358

Mrs. Sandy Thompson, Secretary

419-625-2192

E-mail: Sandy8110@gmail.com

Nathan Samsa, Organist

Lay Reader: Paula Hoffman Laws

Ushers: Chuck Thompson

Communion Assistant: Paula Hoffman Laws

Audio/Visual Tech.: Brandon Alt

Att.: July 19 - 41

www.stjohnlcsandusky.com

Like us on Facebook: St John's Lutheran Church Sandusky

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

Bible Verse for July: *1 John 3:18*

“Little children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth”.

The Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of the birthday of Peg Kingsley's mother, Margaret Lindsey.

Council asks the congregation to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the 250th Anniversary of the founding of our nation, that God unites us as one people in our love for Christ, our nation and one another.

Communion Clean-up today: Sandy Thompson

Aug. 2 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up –
9 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender	Clean-up – Sandy Thompson
16 – Set-up – Jim Kluding	Clean-up – Jim Kluding
23 – Set-up – Elizabeth Libben	Clean-up – Sue & Lynn Schlessman
30 – Set-up – Joleen Dillender	Clean-up – Sandy Thompson

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

Worship at the Park: Wednesday, July 29th we will have worship at Nickel Plate Beach that includes a potluck meal, so please bring a dish to share. Worship is at 6 PM. We need help with this service!

Who would like to bring and roast hot dogs? Who will bring a case of cold water? Who would like to bring plates, napkins, and utensils? Please let Pastor Stacy know by texting her at 419-680-0358. Thank you!

New Worship Ministry Lists are posted! We need your help with worship.

Looking for a way to serve and get involved at St. John's? We need lay readers, communion assistants, ushers, AV techs, assisting ministers. Please give prayerful thought to helping with these much-needed aspects for worship. The third quarter sign-up sheets are posted for you to choose which Sunday you can help out!

Endowment Grant Applications are being accepted: please contact a member of the endowment team and they will be glad to mail you an application. The requests need to be presented to the Endowment committee no later than October 4, 2026. You can mail the application back to the church, put your request in the endowment mailbox in the basement or present it to any member of the committee. The committee members are John Miller, Ted Call, Jeff Justi, Bob Stacy, Kathy Schlessman, Ron Zorn, Pastor Stacy. If you have any questions, please see a member of the endowment committee.

The Endowment Team will hold its quarterly meeting in mid to late October, at which time all grant applications that have been presented will be reviewed and voted on.

Those that are approved will be sent to the Finance Team for additional review and approval.

Are you Interested? St. John's Council would like to offer a CPR Instruction class but need to know if you are interested in taking the course. If you are interested, there is a sign-up sheet at the rear of the sanctuary

Happy Birthday to Ryan Scovanner and Paula Hoffman Laws.

Happy Anniversary to Paul and Laura Knott.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR JULY 26TH THRU AUGUST 9TH

Sunday, July 26	9:30 am	Worship
Wednesday, July 29	6:00 pm	Worship at the Beach Potluck Picnic
Sunday, August 2	9:30 am	Worship
Tuesday, August 4	1:00 pm	Faith Life
Sunday, August 9	9:30 am	Worship

Dear Members of St. John's Council and Congregation,

Mike and I would like to thank you for allowing us to rent the church's parsonage for the past couple of years. We greatly appreciate your willingness to do so and agreeing to a moderate monthly rent. That and your flexibility with our timing made the transition from full-time ministry to retirement far less stressful than it might have otherwise been. It was a joy to live next door to you and get to know so many of you.

We pray for God's continued blessing on your ministry and the Spirit's guidance as you decide how you can best use the property to further your ministry.

Blessings and peace to you all,
Pastor Katie and Mike Suggitt