



**"GIVE...
TO GOD**

**THE THINGS
THAT ARE
GOD'S."**

MATTHEW 22:21, NRSV

*St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
October 18, 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 18, 2026

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to Worship! In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

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 thank Linda Stauffer for sharing her music today. If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Prelude

"Meditation"

Music: E.L Ashford 1850-1930 Public Domain

Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering

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

Please stand

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the  Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“You Servants of God”

ELW 825

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Music: attr. Johann Michael Haydn, 1737-1806 Public Domain

1 You servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name, all-victorious, of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all!

2 Ascended on high, almighty to save,
yet still he is nigh, his presence we have.
The great congregation his triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus, our king!

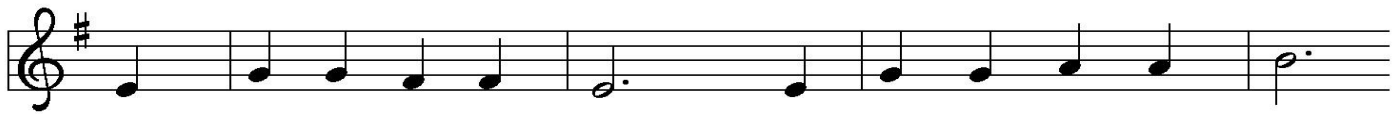
3 Salvation to God who sits on the throne!
Let all cry aloud and honor the Son.
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.

4 Then let us adore and give him his right,
all glory and pow'r and wisdom and might,
all honor and blessing, with angels above,
and thanks never ceasing, and infinite love!

Greeting

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

Kyrie



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Please be seated

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and to strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:

² I will go before you
and level the mountains;
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron;

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,

the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob
 and Israel my chosen,
 I call you by your name;
 I give you a title, though you do not know me.
⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 besides me there is no god.
 I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
 and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
 I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷ I form light and create darkness,
 I make weal and create woe;
 I the LORD do all these things.

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

Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13](Read responsively)

Emily Young

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song;
 sing to the LORD, all the earth.
² **Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
 proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**
³ Declare God's glory among the nations
 and God's wonders among all peoples.
⁴ **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
 more to be feared than all gods.**
⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
 but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
⁶ **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
 power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**
⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
 ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
⁸ **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
 bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**
⁹ Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
 tremble before the LORD, all the earth.
¹⁰ **Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!
 The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the
 peoples with equity."**

- ¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- ¹² **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**
- ¹³ You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

A reading from 1 Thessalonians.

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

² We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers,
constantly ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of
love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ For we know, brothers and
sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our message of the gospel came
to you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction;
just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And
you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the
word with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers
in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not
only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known,
so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹ For they report about us what kind of
welcome we had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and
true God ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus,
who rescues us from the coming wrath.

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

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

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

Please be seated

Youth Time

Sermon

Please stand

Hymn of the Day

"Drawn to the Light"

ELW 593

Text and music © 1990 John C. Ylvisaker

1 People who walk in darkness have sought
a light in the heart of the darkest night.
Just when we thought all would be lost,
we were drawn to the light of God.

Refrain

Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night,
drawn to the light and the morning.
Glorious and bright, oh, what a sight
to be drawn to the light of God.

2 How can we tell a heaven from hell
if ev'ryone dwells in the dark of night?
Morning dispels, gently compels,
and we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain*

3 Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none!
The Lamb is the one who is shining bright,
bids us to come! Life has begun
when we're drawn to the light of God. *Refrain*

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

"Praise the Lord" Natalie Sleeth

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Please stand

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!

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, 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

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal:
you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore.

You formed the earth from chaos; you encircled the globe with air;
you created fire for warmth and light; you nourish the lands with water.
You molded us in your image, and with mercy higher than the mountains,
with grace deeper than the seas, you blessed the Israelites and cherished them as your own.

That also we, estranged and dying, might be adopted to live in your Spirit,
you called to us through the life and death of Jesus.

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.

Together as the body of Christ, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son,
the first-born of your new creation.

We remember his life lived for others,
and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth.

We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,
all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate,
send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit, whose breath revives us for life,
whose fire rouses us to love.

Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food.

Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit,
that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Holy and benevolent God, receive our praise and petitions,
as Jesus received the cry of the needy, and fill us with your blessing,
until, needy no longer and bound to you in love,
we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb:

through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One,
with the Holy Spirit, 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



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: “Just As I Am, without One Plea”

ELW 592

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871 Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868 Public Domain

1 Just as I am, without one plea,
 but that thy blood was shed for me,
 and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

2 Just as I am, though tossed about
 with many a conflict, many a doubt,
 fightings and fears within, without,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

3 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
 wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
 because thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come,

4 Just as I am; thy love unknown
 has broken ev'ry barrier down;
 now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Distribution Hymn: “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

ELW 631

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788 Music: Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887 Public Domain

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

3 Come, Almighty, to deliver;
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy loving Spirit
into ev'ry troubled breast;
let us all in thee inherit;
let us find thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.

4 Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee!
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!

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, our life, our strength, our food, we give you thanks for sustaining us with the body and blood of your Son. By your Holy Spirit, enliven us to be his body in the world, that more and more we will give you praise and serve your earth and its many peoples, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and 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.

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

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!

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

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Lay Reader: Lisa Fryer

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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

25 – Set-up - Elizabeth Libben

Clean-up – Sue & Lynn Schlessman

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

Have you missed some members of our church family who are not able to attend worship anymore? Did you know that Pastor Stacy tries to visit those who are homebound at least once a quarter? Would you be willing to visit a member of our church family once a month to help during the between time? We will have an informational meeting on **October 28th at 10:30 AM at Gathering Grounds**. Please let Pastor Stacy know if you can be there. Being at this meeting does not mean that you have to participate—you're welcome to come and learn more!

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. **Wear your RED!**

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 Nathan Samsa, Lynn Schlessman and Pat Babiuch.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 18TH THRU NOVEMBER 1ST

Sunday, October 18	9:00 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Confirmation Class Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship
Tuesday, October 20	9:00 am 6:30 pm	Trip to LMM/Getting to Know Our Neighbors Council Meeting
Sunday, October 25	9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship
Wednesday, October 28	5:30 pm 6:15 pm	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

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Lutheran World Relief kits. We were able to make 87 kits!

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.

Lutheran Dartball league begins October 19! New players are always welcome. Contact Paul Nabors ([440-315-5078](tel:440-315-5078)) or the Zion's office ([419-433-4711](tel:419-433-4711)) if you are interested in joining the Zion Huron team. Competitions are held on Monday evenings. They play on Monday evenings travelling around the area (Bellevue, Castalia, Sandusky and Norwalk). Some churches have 2 teams. There is a home match and away match with each team. This starts on October 19 and goes into the beginning of March. They break during the Christmas/New Years holiday weeks.

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).