



“Go and work in the vineyard today.”

MATTHEW 21:28



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
September 27, 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

September 27, 2026

Eighteen Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome to Worship! Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy 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 Jenny Weichel 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

"Come into His Presence"

Jenny Weichel

©1998 Integrity's Hosanna! Words and Music by Lynn Baird

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

“God Is Here”

ELW 526

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1 God is here! As we your people
meet to offer praise and prayer,
may we find in fuller measure
what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
all our varied skills and arts
wait the coming of the Spirit
into open minds and hearts.

2 Here are symbols to remind us
of our lifelong need of grace;
here are table, font, and pulpit;
here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal,
God the Spirit comes to each.

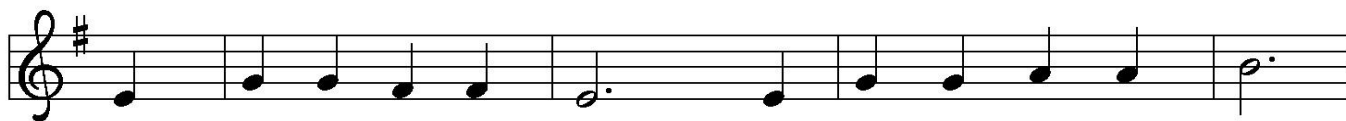
3 Here our children find a welcome
in the Shepherd's flock and fold;
here as bread and wine are taken,
Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant
seek in worship to explore
what it means in daily living
to believe and to adore.

4 Lord of all, of church and kingdom,
in an age of change and doubt,
keep us faithful to the gospel;
help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication,
all we have to give, receive;
we, who cannot live without you,
we adore you! We believe!

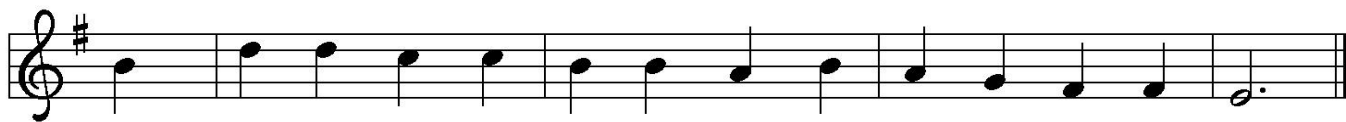
Greeting

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.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Please be seated

First Lesson: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

A reading from Ezekiel.

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is

unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?

³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

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

Psalms 25:1-9 (Read responsively)

¹ To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

² **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³ Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴ **Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶ **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸ **You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

Second Lesson: Philippians 2:1-13

A reading from Philippians.

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹ If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish

ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,

⁸ he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,

¹⁰ so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence
but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling,

¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good
pleasure.

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

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³ When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴ Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.”

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

Please be seated
Youth Time

Sermon

Please stand

Hymn of the Day

“Here I Am Lord”

ELW 574

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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

Offering

“Give Thanks”

©1998 Integrity’s Hosanna! Words and Music by Henry Smith

Please stand

Offertory

“As the Grains of Wheat”

ELW 465

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Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, 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.

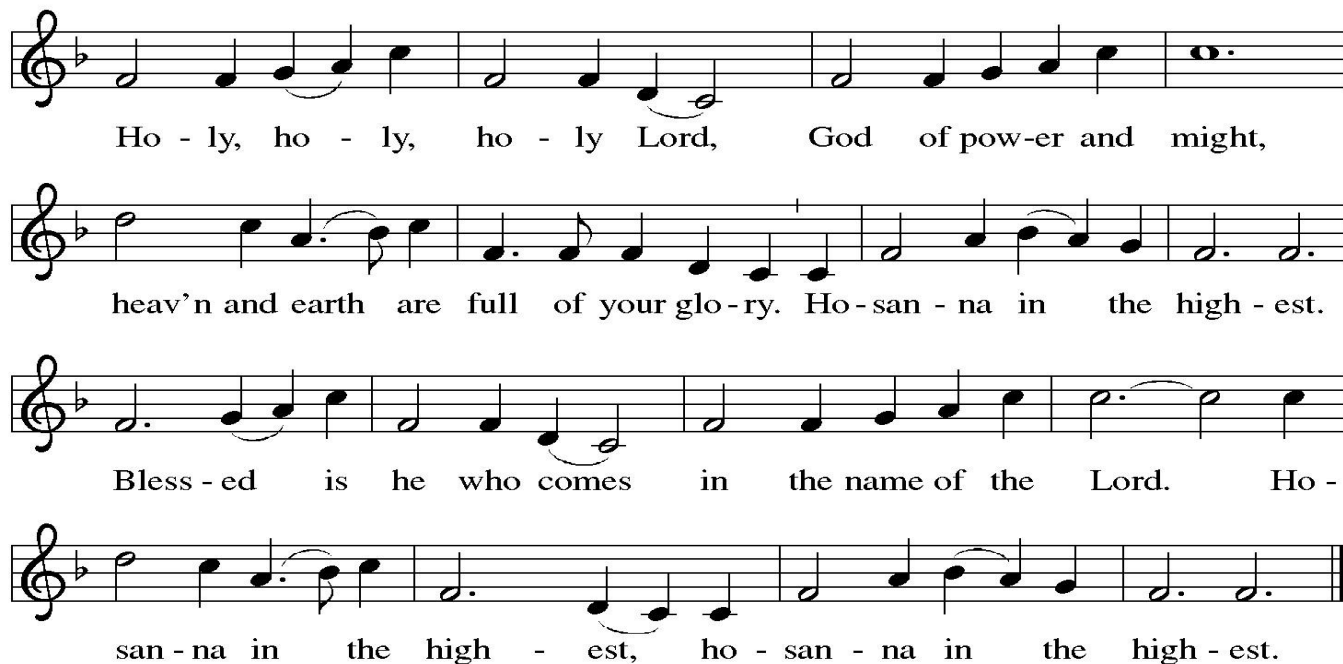
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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: "Let Us Break Bread Together"

ELW 471

Text: African American spiritual Music: African American spiritual Public Domain

1 Let us break bread together on our knees;
let us break bread together on our knees.

1 Let us break bread together on our knees;
let us break bread together on our knees.

Refrain

When I fall on my knees,
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Refrain

When I fall on my knees,
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Distribution Hymn: "Come, Let Us Eat"

ELW 491

Text sts. 1-3 and tune © Lutheran World Federation; text st. 4 and adapt. © 1972

Contemporary Worship 4, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 (Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,
come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.
(Our Lord's body let us take together,
our Lord's body let us take together.

2 (Come, let us drink, for now the wine is
poured,
come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.
(Jesus' blood poured let us drink together,
Jesus' blood poured let us drink together.

3 (In Jesus' presence now we meet and rest,
in Jesus' presence now we meet and rest.
(In the presence of our Lord we gather,
in the presence of our Lord we gather.
Please stand

4 (Rise, then, to spread abroad God's mighty word,
rise, then, to spread abroad God's mighty word.
(Jesus risen will bring in the kingdom,
Jesus risen will bring in the kingdom.

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

"Rise Up, O Saints of God!"

ELW 669

Text © Norman O. Forness, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 Rise up, O saints of God!
From vain ambitions turn;
Christ rose triumphant that your hearts
with nobler zeal might burn.

2 Speak out, O saints of God!
Despair engulfs earth's frame;
as heirs of God's baptismal grace,
the word of hope proclaim.

3 Rise up, O saints of God!
The kingdom's task embrace;
redress sin's cruel consequence;
give justice larger place.

4 Give heed, O saints of God!
Creation cries in pain;
stretch forth your hand of healing now,
with love the weak sustain.

5 Commit your hearts to seek
the paths which Christ has trod;

and, quickened by the Spirit's pow'r,
rise up, O saints of God!

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“For All the Saints”

by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Arranged by Mark Hayes

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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.: Melinda Zorn

Att.: - Sept. 20 - 63

Website: www.stjohnlcsandusky.com

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

Bible Verse for September: *1 John 4:7*

“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God”.

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

A Celebration of Life for Elliot Young took place on Saturday, September 26, 2026 at St. John's Lutheran Church. Elliot son of Ray Young, grandson of Kevin and Allison Young. Your prayers and support are needed for these families as they grieve the death of Elliot.

Communion Clean-up today: Paula Hoffman Laws

Oct. 4 - Set-up - Jim Kluding	Clean-up – Jim
11 - Set-up - Paula Hoffman Laws	Clean-up – Paula
18 – Set-up - Joleen Dillender	Clean-up – 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.

Sunday School Classes are back in session in our fellowship hall. We need your help, so the classes are not disrupted. Please refrain from going through the fellowship hall and kitchen while classes are in session. If you need to use the restroom, please use the Upper Room restroom. Thank you for your support in helping our teachers and students. Signs are posted as a reminder.

St. John's Pet Blessing: Please bring in a picture of your pet on **Sunday, October 4th** and we will do a blessing during youth time.

Youth Event:

Trip to the apple orchard: All kids and their families are invited to join us September 27th (rain date October 4th) with a trip to Burnham Apple Orchard from 4-6 PM. St John's will sponsor games for the group, and hopefully a hayride! Please text Pastor Stacy (419) 680-0358 if you are able to go.

Getting to Know Our Neighbors: This year, a focus at St John's is getting to know our neighbors. How can we love who we don't know? Our next field trip is scheduled for **October 20**, when we will go with Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries for a public immersive experience in Cleveland. The experience is 9-12, plus drive time. Space is very limited and open to the entire public, so please let Pastor Stacy know if you can join **ASAP**. Thank you to Lynn and Sue for helping organize this!

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.

Happy Birthday to Jim Semon III, Jeff Justi and Jenna Burnham.

Happy Anniversary to David & Susan Zorn and Mike & Jenn Bell.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 27TH THRU OCTOBER 11TH

Sunday, September 27	9:00 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am 4-6:00 pm	Catechism Class Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship Youth/Family trip to the Apple Orchard
Wednesday, September 30	5:30 pm	Choir Practice
Sunday, October 4	9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship/Pet Blessing
Tuesday, October 6	1:00 pm	Faith Life Team
Wednesday, October 7	12 noon 5:30 pm	Scripture & Prayer at Parkvue Choir Practice
Sunday, October 11	9:00 am 9:15 am 9:15 am 10:30 am	Confirmation Class Adult Class with Lynn Sunday School for all ages Worship