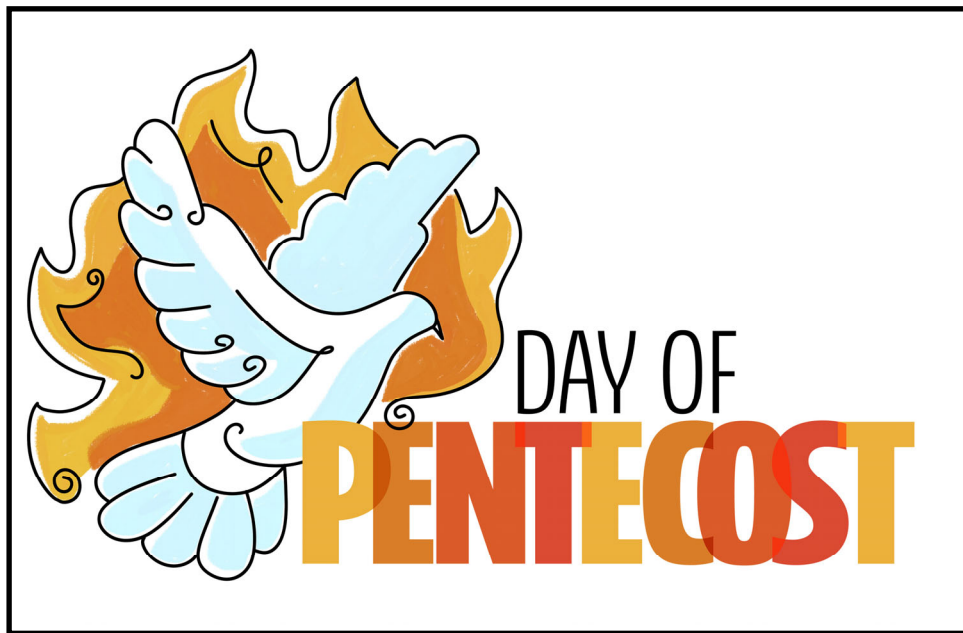


St. John's Lutheran Church  
Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center  
9 am Worship Service  
Day of Pentecost  
May 24, 2026



Welcome!

Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

## Welcome to Worship!

### PRE-GATHERING MUSIC/WELCOME

#### GATHERING SONG "Spirit of the Living God" (2x)

Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me,  
Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall fresh on me.

OPENING

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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

**Gracious God, have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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.**

SONG

*“Spirit Song”*

Oh let the Son of God enfold you  
With His Spirit and His love  
Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh let Him have the things that hold you  
And His Spirit like a dove  
Will descend upon your life and make you whole

*Refrain*

*Jesus oh Jesus  
Come and fill Your lambs  
Jesus oh Jesus  
Come and fill Your lambs*

Oh come and sing the song of gladness  
As your hearts are filled with joy  
Lift your hands in sweet surrender to His name  
Oh give Him all your tears and sadness  
Give Him all your years of pain  
And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name. *Refrain*

THE APOSTOLIC 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.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit. Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

YOUTH MESSAGE

*Adriana McMurphy*



### THE FIRST READING

### Acts 2:1-21

<sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost had come, [the apostles] were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. <sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. <sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” <sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” <sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.” <sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup> ‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. <sup>19</sup> And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. <sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. <sup>21</sup> Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ ”

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b— *Read Responsively*

<sup>24</sup> How manifold are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

<sup>25</sup> **Yonder is the sea, great and wide, with its swarms too many to number, living things both small and great.**

<sup>26</sup> There go the ships to and fro, and Leviathan, which you made for the sport of it.

<sup>27</sup> **All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.**

<sup>28</sup> You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

<sup>29</sup> **When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.**

<sup>30</sup> You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.

<sup>31</sup> **May the glory of the LORD endure forever; O LORD, rejoice in all your works.**

<sup>32</sup> You look at the earth and it trembles; you touch the mountains and they smoke.

<sup>33</sup> **I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.**

<sup>34</sup> May these words of mine please God. I will rejoice in the LORD.

<sup>35b</sup> **Bless the LORD, O my soul. Hallelujah!**

THE SECOND READING

**1 Corinthians 12:3b-13**

<sup>3b</sup>No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit. <sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of powerful deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. <sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

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

*Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.*

THE ALLELUIA VERSE

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia;  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

THE GOSPEL

**John 20:19-23**

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

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

THE MESSAGE

*Pastor Rachel Connelly*



SONG OF RESPONSE

“*Spirit of Gentleness*”

*Refrain*

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free;  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.*

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
Then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
And over the eons you called to each thing:  
“Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.” *Refrain*

You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
And you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
And when they were blinded with idols and lies,  
Then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. *Refrain*

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
Then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
And down in the city you called once again,  
When you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. *Refrain*

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
Our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise. *Refrain*

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate and was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. 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.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

*After each prayer petition—* Merciful God, receive our prayer.

THE SHARING OF CHRIST’S PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always. **Congregation: And also with you.**

## THE OFFERING

*Our gifts and offerings are gathered for the mission of the church.  
Plates are passed by the ushers.*



## THE OFFERTORY SONG

*“You, Lord”*

We stand here in awe before you, Lord. We kneel here and honor you, Lord.  
For love never ending, for grace freely giving. We come here to thank you, Lord.

It's you, Lord, only you, Lord. To you we bring this offering of praise.  
It's you, Lord, only you, Lord. Everything I give; my life I want to live for you, Lord

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

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

## THE MEAL

*All are welcome at the table of communion*

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

## THE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONGS      *“Sanctuary/I Exalt Thee Medley”*

Lord prepare me, to be a sanctuary pure and Holy, tried and true.  
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for You.

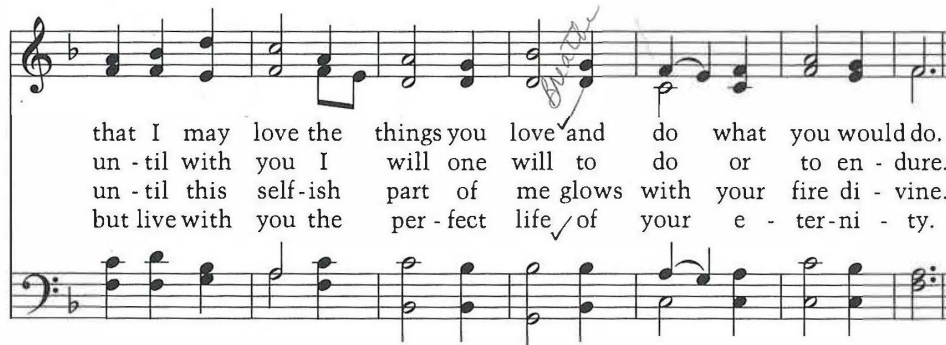
I exalt Thee, I exalt Thee, I exalt Thee O Lord,  
I exalt Thee, I exalt Thee, I exalt Thee O Lord

Holy Spirit, fill this vessel make my heart to, burn within  
Purify me, make my life be a sanctuary for You.

*“Breathe on Me, Breath of God”*



1 Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life a - new,  
2 Breathe on me, breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,  
3 Breathe on me, breath of God, my will to yours in - cline,  
4 Breathe on me, breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,



that I may love the things you love and do what you would do.  
un - til with you I will one will to do or to en - dure.  
un - til this self - ish part of me glows with your fire di - vine.  
but live with you the per - fect life of your e - ter - ni - ty.

THE PASTORAL BLESSING

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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



### THE BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

### SENDING SONG

*“Every Time I Feel the Spirit”*

#### *Refrain*

*Every time I feel the spirit moving in my heart, I will pray  
Every time I feel the spirit moving in my heart, I will pray.*


Upon the mountain my Lord spoke  
Out of His mouth came fire and smoke. *Refrain*

All around me, it looked so fine  
Asked my Lord if all was mine. *Refrain*

### THE DISMISSAL

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



 <p>Serving Today in Worship</p>	<u>Serving Today</u>	
	Pastor:	The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly
	Lay Assistant:	Patty Shepard
	Lector:	Torrie Landon
	Greeters:	Jeff & Torrie Landon
Musicians:	Tom Ward, Ray Burroughs & Dave Devoe	

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### **Our Church Family**

Gary Cabbage, rehab & healing (knee surgery)  
Andera Stroud, healing-home  
Jerry Cobb, healing/home  
Joe Kent, healing  
Polly Kent, healing  
Jana Snelgrove, baby Jocassee born 3/20/2026  
John Champion, healing  
Beth Davis, health/healing  
Tom Ward, treatment of a neurological disease  
Tiffany Chapman, healing  
Katie Johns, home, healing  
Charlie (health) & Debbie (lung cancer) Busch

### **Those Grieving**

Grace Lichtenwald, death of her brother, George Combes  
Bill Pickard, death of his nephew, Bob Lidwin

### **Our Elders at Home or Assisted Living**

Jeanne Welch, healing/rehab Lila Doyle  
Betty Mantell, The Residences (Wells Highway)  
Thelma Miller, The Residences (Wells Highway)  
Brenda Cantrell, home  
Linda Humphries, home  
Frances Carter, home/hospice  
Marie Palmatier, home  
Peg Turner, home in Central  
Lynne Williams (Pawleys Island)



### **Other Prayer Concerns**

For those affected by military actions in the Middle East  
For our country amidst on-going nationwide violence.  
For wisdom for military leaders involved in the events unfolding in the Middle East.  
For those dealing with loss from recent natural disasters and severe weather.  
For all those who have lost their jobs due to recent government changes.  
For peace for our country and protection for our government officials.  
For colleges & universities across our country.  
For those dealing with loss and fear from gun violence.  
For peace in the Middle East, and comfort to those impacted by violence.  
For Bishop Ginny Aebischer and Synod staff  
All military Personnel

### **Our Extended Family and Friends**

Jon Fowler, brain cancer (cousin of Wilson's)  
Jean Deal, healing (sister-in-law of McLean's)  
Tina Sanders, knee replacement 5/21 (friend of Jan Long)  
Joan Kramer, successful treatment (friend of Williams')  
Riley Medlin, cancer diagnosis (WHS student)  
Stetson Underwood in NICU in Greenville (infant grandson of Kathy Radford)  
The family of Doug Wilson and his wife Elaine  
Kathy Quickel, healing (mother of Mike Goyne)  
Doug Scanlon, healing (friend of Grace Schmeelcke)  
Maggie Ormes, healing (friend of Mary Sprouse)  
Billy Joe Lindley, healing (friend of Kents)  
The family of Ruby Hendrix (grandmother of Travis Tilson)  
Barbara Cary, comfort (sister of Dave Devoe)  
Karen Connelly Pierce, healing (Pastor Rachel's sister)  
Teresa Newton, healing (friend of Kents)  
Buffy McCarthy, healing (daughter-in-law Kathy Scherter)  
Stephanie Williams, cancer/chemo (cousin/ Pastor Rachel)  
Kathy Smith, liver cancer (cousin of Cathy Plowden)  
Isabel Fogel, healing (granddaughter of Fogel's)  
Dwight Amick, hospice (Stephanie Champion, step dad)  
Danny Childress, comfort (nephew of Safrit's)  
Larry Smith, (friend of Jane Harris)  
Bonnie Blanchett, healing (mother of Ryan Raab)  
E. Christian Gauderer, hospitalized in Lisbon, Portugal (brother of Michael)  
Janelle Gibson, healing (Aunt of Jan Day)  
Erica McKee Skinner, healing (friend of Tina Barrett)  
Ben Harding, healing (brother of Allen Harding)  
Chad Cobb (son of Wilma)  
Kay Davis, recovery (mother of Stephanie Champion)  
George Rogers, lung cancer (half brother of Micky)  
Kelsey Bowman, healing (daughter-in-law of Bowmans)  
Lauren Bowman, Lyme disease (daughter of Gary and Barb Bowman)  
Jacquelyn Moore, (niece of Kathy Scherter)  
Bennie Smith, health (nephew of Wards)  
Dohnvan (grandson of Kathy Scherter)  
Dolorico Perez (father of Josie Perez)  
Gina Daly, health (daughter of Bob Johnson)

*Please let the church office know of any updates to our prayer list.*



# The Bell Tower— Ministry News



## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed on **Monday, May 25** in observance of Memorial Day. It will reopen on Tuesday.



## ST. JOHN'S MEET UP AND CONNECT HIKING DAY

**Friday May 29, 2026**

**Our Hike:** Kings Creek Waterfall at Burrells Ford. **Hike description:** Easy to moderate, about 2.25 miles total. Partly along the Chattooga River; the water fall is stunning. **Meet at:** St. John's Schedule: 9am to carpool to trail parking (35 min drive). Back to St. John's by 2pm. **Pack a Lunch/Bring Water:** Pack a small lunch and water that you can carry on the trail. **What to wear:** Good hiking/walking boots or shoes, hiking clothes and a hat. **Hike Leaders:** Jeff and Torrie Landon. If weather is questionable check the Meetup and Connect website calendar. Cancellation will be posted by 7:30 am that morning. You can also call or text Jeff Landon: 704-770-6276.



## 2026 LUTHER ROAD DAY CAMP

St. John's is hosting Luther Road Day Camp at Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center on **June 22-26, 2026**. Camp runs 9am - 4pm Monday - Thursday, 9am - 12 pm on Friday For children completing Kindergarten through 5th grade. Cost is only \$175 for the week and scholarships are available.

**Registration deadline is June 1.** Same family multiple child discounts available. *Registration forms are available in the church office.* Join us for a great week of fun for children of our church, grandkids, friends, and kids from the community!! For more information, contact the church office at 864-638-6363.



## ST. JOHN'S MEET UP AND CONNECT CRAFT DAY

**Friday, June 16, 2026**

Create a festive July 4th table decoration using sustainable materials. Craft will involve painting and using hot glue. **What to bring:** 3-14.5 oz cans. Cans should be clean, label and glue removed ready to paint. All other material will be provided. **Craft Leaders:** Alan and Mary Boggs **Class size:** To ensure adequate materials are available and time to complete the craft 20 seats are available. Sign up in Information Alley. For any questions, please call Alan Boggs: 864-499-4533



CHURCH  
OFFICE  
STAFF

**St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA**  
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Cell: (910) 515-0897 or Email: stjohnspastorrachel@gmail.com

**Director of Family Life Ministry—Adriana McMurphy**  
Email: stjohsadriana@gmail.com

**Administrative Assistant—Melissa Rasley**  
(864) 638-6363 or Email: stjohsluther@gmail.com  
Office Hours: Monday—Friday 8:30am to 1:00pm

**Additional St. John's Staff**  
Ray Burroughs, Facilities Manager  
Joan Lewis, Spiritual Gifts Coordinator  
Cathy Plowden, Congregational President

WELCOME TO  
church

**Our tithes and offerings** are an important part of our faith journey.

- Electronic offerings may be given through the GIVELIFY app.
- You may also go to our website: **www.stjohnswalhalla.org** and click on the "Give Now With Givelify" button
- Another option is to scan this QR code to go directly to our Givelify page.

