

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Walhalla, South Carolina

11 am Worship Service

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026

The one who
enters by the
gate is the
shepherd of
the **sheep**.

JOHN 10:2



Welcome!

Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

Welcome to Worship!

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE GATHER

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb! **Amen.**

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.

We thank you for the waters that nourish us. Blessed are you.

You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.

You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.

You guide us to springs of the water of life.

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *“At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing” (verses 1-4)* *ELW 362*

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.

KYRIE

ELW pg. 147

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

Help, save comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

“This is the Feast”

ELW pg. 149



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

CHILDREN/YOUTH MESSAGE

Adriana McMurphy

THE FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² [The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Psalm 23— *Read Responsively*

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

THE SECOND READING

1 Peter 2:19-25

¹⁹ It is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. ²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.

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 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.*

ANTHEM

*“Father I Adore You”
St. John’s Chancel Choir*

by: Terry Coelho

THE OFFERTORY SONG

“The Doxology”

ELW 884

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise him all creatures here below, praise him above ye
heavn’ly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW pg. 152

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

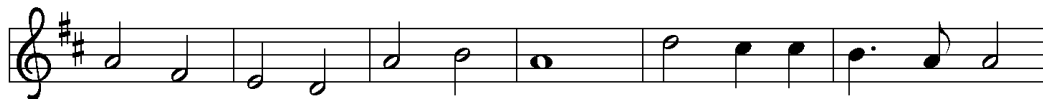
Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE PROPER PREFACE

THE SANCTUS

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

ELW pg. 153



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

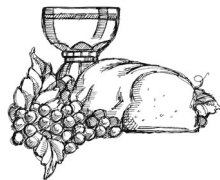


Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER/WORDS OF INSTITUTION



THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW pg. 154

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

All of God's people who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord are invited to His table for Holy Communion. Those who are not communing are invited to receive a blessing from the Pastor; please indicate this with folded hands. We have gluten-free wafers available.

Please let Pastor Rachel know your preference.

The ushers will guide you as we practice continuous communion

We kneel or stand at the communion rail.

Please join us in singing the communion hymns.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Lamb of God"

ELW pg. 154



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.

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

ELW 502

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.**


THE SENDING HYMN “*At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing*” (verses 5-8) *ELW 362*

THE DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE



 <p>Serving Today in Worship</p>	<p><u>Serving Today in Worship</u></p> <p>Pastor: The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly Assisting: Brenda Safrit Lector: James Hoadley Interim Organist: Grace Lichtenwald Choir Director: John Fallon Greeters/Ushers: Shonda Mahler & Joan Lewis Altar Guild: Frank & Cindy Honeycutt</p>
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Our Church Family

Gary Cabbage, rehab & healing (knee surgery)
Andera Stroud, healing-Seneca Rehab
Jerry Cobb, healing in hospital
Joe Kent, healing
Polly Kent, healing
Jana Snelgrove, baby JoCassie born 3/21/2026
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

Our Elders at Home or Assisted Living

Jeanne Welch, hospital/healing
Michelle Leggett, hospice
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, tornados in Kansas.
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

Joan Kramer, successful treatment (friend of Williams')
Marie Simon, healing (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)
Betty & Herman Brock, healing (friends of Lois Sharpe)
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 Safrin'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)
Bob Lidwin, (nephew of Bill Pickard)
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)
George Combes, (brother of Grace Lichtenwald)
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



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

TODAY following worship, High School youth will be gathering for lunch and a Bible lesson. We will read about God's creation and paint garden rocks.



CHURCH DIRECTORY-FINAL PHOTOS

Our directory team has scheduled **TODAY** as the final opportunity to have your photo taken for the St. John's Pictorial Directory. There are time slots available beginning at 1:10pm. If you have not had your picture taken yet, please sign-up. Contact Joan Lewis for more information.



MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Learn about the Life of Jesus from infancy to the Resurrection. Led by Adriana from 6-7pm in the Education Building.



TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Rachel's Tuesday morning Bible Study on Galatians is at 11am in the Sanctuary.



HELLO SUMMER EVENT AT BIGGERSTAFF

Join us on **Saturday, May 2 from 4-6pm** at Biggerstaff for a "Hello Summer" Event. There will be fun for ALL Ages with a piñata, games, music, a soft taco bar (while supplies last), and more! The event will be held rain or shine. Contact Pilar Riddle for more information.



2026 LUTHER ROAD DAY CAMP

St. John's is hosting Luther Road Day Camp at Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center on **June 22-26, 2026. Deadline for Early Registration is May 1.** Camp runs 9am - 4pm Monday - Thursday, 9am - 12 pm on Friday For children completing Kindergarten through 5th grade. Cost is only \$175 (\$150 Early Bird Special) 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.



**CHURCH
OFFICE
STAFF**

St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA
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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.

