



St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA
301 W. Main Street, Walhalla, SC
www.stjohnswalhalla.org
Facebook — St. John's Lutheran, Walhalla

Pastor—The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly
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**CHURCH
OFFICE
STAFF**

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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.



St. John's Lutheran Church
Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center
9 am Worship Service
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 4, 2026



Welcome!

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection

Welcome to Worship!

PRE-GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

GATHERING SONG *"Jesus Name Above All Names"*

Jesus name above all names
Beautiful Saviour glorious Lord
Emmanuel God is with us
Blessed Redeemer living Word

Jesus loving Shepherd
Vine of the branches Son of God
Prince of Peace Wonderful Counselor
Lord of the universe Light of the world. *(Repeat first verse)*

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.**



The Bell Tower— Ministry News



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

TODAY there will be a “Blessing of the Animals” **at Biggerstaff at 4pm rain or shine.** All friendly, well-behaved pets are invited for a special service of blessing. All pets must be leashed or crated. If you are unable to bring your pet, bring a photo of them. Contact Adriana with any questions.



PET SUPPLY DRIVE

St. John's is participating in a supply drive for the Oconee Humane Society. Donations are to be placed by the Youth/Family Ministry Table. Contact Adriana with any questions.
Deadline for donations is Sunday, October 4.



MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Monday Evening Bible study is at 6pm. we are starting a new class, "All Saints' Study!". Contact Adriana with any questions.



TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Bible Study on Ezra & Nehemiah at 11am in the Sanctuary -

Come share in a discovery of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which tell a story of rebuilding and renewal for God’s people. These powerful Old Testament texts speak directly to what it means to rebuild community, restore faith, and navigate major life transitions after a period of exile and disruption. Whether you are a lifelong Bible reader or picking up the Scriptures for the very first time, your voice and perspective are welcome at the table. table.



GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS DAY

The Fall God's Work Our Hands Day will take place on **Saturday, October 10.** This year St. John’s will be working at Hope Village (formerly Tamassee DAR School) with the Early Childhood Center and with the Starlight program. We will meet at the church at 8:30am for a prayer send-off and then travel to Hope Village (1925 Bumgardner Drive, Tamassee). We will be collecting the following items to support the Starlight program: Diapers- Sizes 1, 4, and 5, Baby wipes, Pull ups- Sizes 3T and 4T, Laundry Detergent, Dish washer Detergent, Dish Detergent, Lysol Wipes, toilet paper, paper towels, Please bring your items to church the week of 10/4-10/10. There will be a designated area for you to leave them. Please sign-up on information alley.

Our Church Family

Tom Ward, healing, recovery
Sandy Yuda, healing (Patrick Square)
Wilma Cobb, healing
Gary Cabbage, healing
Michael Pode, healing
Deb Blackmore, healing
Tina Barrett, healing
Tiffany Chapman, healing
Charlie (health) & Debbie (lung cancer) Busch

Those Grieving

The family of Betty Mantell
The family of George Rogers (brother of Micky Ward)

Our Elders at Home or Assisted Living

Andera Stroud, Foothills
Thelma Miller, The Residences (Wells Highway)
Brenda Cantrell, home
Linda Humphries, home
Frances Carter, home/hospice
Marie Palmatier, home
Lynne Williams (Pawleys Island)

Other Prayer Concerns

For those affected by the fire in Walhalla.
For those affected by the flooding in Nepal & China and in the Grand Canyon.
For those affected by earthquakes in Japan & Columbia.
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 Wade Roof and Synod staff
All military Personnel

Our Extended Family and Friends

Kristen, healing (daughter of Robert Smith)
Archie Yusef, tests (great nephew of Sandra Pruitt)
Kyle Hollandsworth, job search (grandson of Millie)
Charlotte Eaker, breast cancer (sister-in-law of Ann Brackett)
Valarie Bentley (infant) hole in heart (Tina Barrett)
Mary Jane Rees, healing (mother of Rod Rees)
Bobbie Williams, hospice (aunt of Jan Day)
Susan Ward, cancer (daughter of Joan Lewis)
Barbara Williams, hospice (mother of Cathy Plowden)
Jon Fowler, brain cancer (cousin of Wilson’s)
Jean Deal, healing (sister-in-law of McLean’s)
Joan Kramer, successful treatment (friend of Williams’)
Riley Medlin, cancer diagnosis (WHS student)
Kathy Quickel, healing (mother of Mike Goyne)
Doug Scanlon, healing (friend of Grace Schmeelcke)
Maggie Ormes, healing (friend of Mary Sprouse)
Barbara Cary, comfort (sister of Dave Devoe)
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)
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)



OPENING SONG

“Come and See”

Come and see the glory of the Lord.
Come, behold the Lamb.
Come and see the mercy of the King,
bowing down before him.

Come and give thanks to the Lord.
Come, behold the Lamb.
Come and sing the praises of the King,
bowing down before him.

For he is Lord above the heavens,
Lord in all the earth, Lord of all the angels
worthy to be served.
Alleluia. Alleluia, Lord

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

Pastor: 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: Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

CHILDREN & YOUTH MESSAGE

Adriana McMurphy



THE FIRST READING Isaiah 5:1-7
¹ I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. ² He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes. ³ And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes? ⁵ And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished garden; he expected justice but saw bloodshed; righteousness but heard a cry!

Psalm 80:7-15— *Read Responsively*
⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
⁸ **You have brought a vine out of Egypt; you cast out the nations and planted it.**
⁹ You cleared the ground for it; it took root and filled the land.
¹⁰ **The mountains were covered by its shadow and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.**
¹¹ You stretched out its tendrils to the sea and its branches to the river.
¹² **Why have you broken down its wall, so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?**
¹³ The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.
¹⁴ **Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;**
¹⁵ behold and tend this vine; preserve what your right hand has planted.

THE SECOND READING Philippians 3:4b-14
[Paul writes:] ^{4b} If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

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

SENDING SONG “*Soon and Very Soon!*”

Soon and very soon we are going to see the King *(3 times)*
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we’re going to see the King

No more cryin’ there we are going to see the King *(3 times)*
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we’re going to see the King

No more dyin’ there we are going to see the King *(3 times)*
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we’re going to see the King

Soon and very soon we are going to see the King *(3 times)*
Hallelujah, hallelujah, we’re going to see the King

THE DISMISSAL
Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace. **Thanks be to God.**





Serving Today

Serving Today

Pastor:	The Rev. Dr. Rachel Connelly
Lay Assistant:	Patty Shepard
Lector:	Jan Long
Greeters:	Stan & Kay Gartner
Musicians:	Ray Burroughs and Dave Devoe
Videographer:	Jason Dickard

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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.

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

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.

Let us drink wine together on our knees; let us drink wine together on our knees. *Refrain*

Let us praise God together on our knees; let us praise God together on our knees. *Refrain*

THE PASTORAL BLESSING

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assisting: Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**
The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.** The God of grace ☩you now and forever. **Amen.**

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *"Thy Word" (2x)*

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 21:33-46

[Jesus said:] ³³ “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Then he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹ They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?” ⁴³ “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

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

THE MESSAGE

Pastor Rachel Connelly



SONG OF RESPONSE

“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there’s doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there’s despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there’s sadness, ever joy.

O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we’re born to eternal life.

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— Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

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: God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. **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