

# St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Walhalla, South Carolina

11 am Worship Service

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2026



Now they know that  
everything you have  
given me is from you;  
for the words that  
you gave to me  
I have given to them.

John 17:7, NRSV

## Welcome!

In these days between Ascension and Pentecost, we gather with the disciples in the upper room, waiting for the Spirit to transform the church around the world. In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, eager for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.

## *Welcome to Worship!*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE GATHER

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.**

OPENING HYMN

*“Earth and All Stars”*

*ELW 731*

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 of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, 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/GRADUATION RECOGNITION

*Adriana McMurphy*

THE FIRST READING

Acts 1:6-14

<sup>6</sup> When [the apostles] had come together, they asked [Jesus], “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” <sup>9</sup> When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup> They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

<sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. <sup>13</sup> When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. <sup>14</sup> All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35— *Read Responsively*

<sup>1</sup> Let God arise, and let God’s enemies be scattered; let those who hate God flee.

<sup>2</sup> **As smoke is driven away, so you should drive them away;**

**as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.**

<sup>3</sup> But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; let them also be merry and joyful.

<sup>4</sup> **Sing to God, sing praises to God’s name; exalt the one who rides the clouds;**

**I AM is that name, rejoice before God!**

<sup>5</sup> In your holy habitation, O God, you are a father to orphans, defender of widows;

<sup>6</sup> **you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners into freedom;**

**but the rebels shall live in desert places.**

<sup>7</sup> O God, when you went forth before your people, when you marched through the wilderness,

<sup>8</sup> **the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain,**

**at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.**

<sup>9</sup> You sent a bountiful rain, O God; you restored your inheritance when it languished.

<sup>10</sup> **Your people found their home in it; in your goodness,**

**O God, you have made provision for the poor.**

<sup>32</sup> Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord.

<sup>33</sup> **You ride in the heavens, O God, in the ancient heavens; you send forth your voice, your mighty voice.**

<sup>34</sup> Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is in the skies.

<sup>35</sup> **How wonderful you are in your holy places, O God of Israel, giving strength and power to your people! Blessed be God!**

THE SECOND READING

**1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11**

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup> But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.

<sup>14</sup> If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

<sup>5:6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. <sup>10</sup> And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

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

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*ELW pg. 151*



THE GOSPEL

**John 17:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus had spoken these words [to his disciples,] he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. <sup>6</sup> "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me is from you, <sup>8</sup> for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup> And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

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

THE SERMON

*Pastor Rachel Connelly*

HYMN OF RESPONSE

*"We Are Called"*

*ELW 720*

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM / RITE OF CONFIRMATION *(see insert)*

THE OFFERING

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

ANTHEM

*"God is So Good"  
St. John's Chancel Choir*

*by: Douglas Wagner*

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 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.**

OUR FATHER,  
WHO ART IN  
heaven.

## 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.*

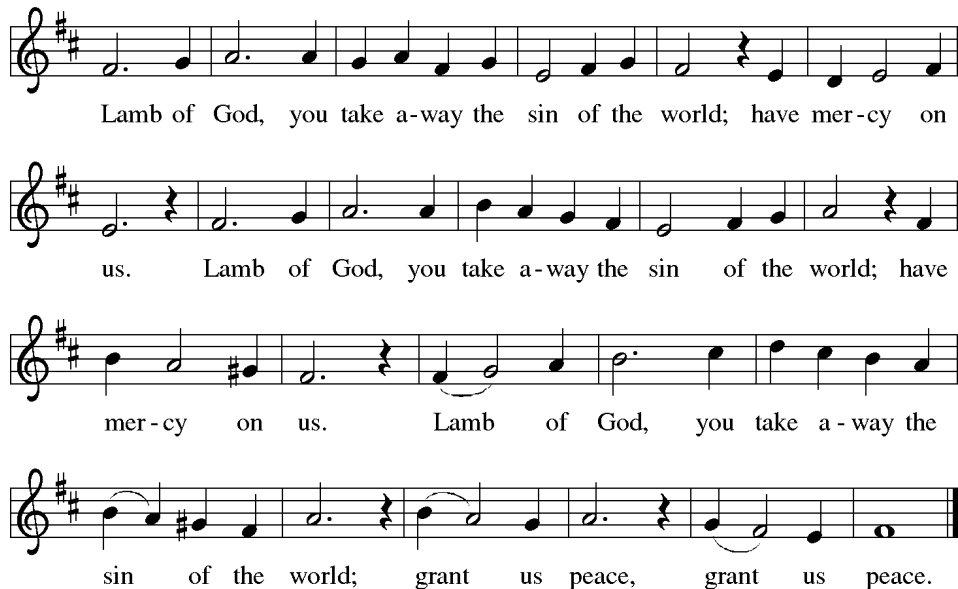
*The ushers will guide you as we practice continuous communion  
We kneel or stand at the communion rail.*

***Please join us in singing the communion hymns.***

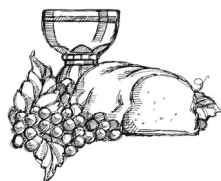
## COMMUNION HYMNS

*"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.



### “Bind Us Together”


*Refrain*




Bind us to - geth - er, Lord, bind us to - geth - er with cords that



can - not be bro - ken. Bind us to - geth - er, Lord,




bind us to - geth - er, Lord; bind us to - geth - er in love.



1 There is on - ly one God.                      There is on - ly one King.  
2 You are the fam - 'ly of God.                      You are the prom - ise di - vine.

*Refrain*



There is on - ly one Bod - y;                      that is why we can sing.  
You are God's cho - sen de - sire, . . .                      you are the glo - rious new wine.

### 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      *“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”*



1 “Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.  
 2 “Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.  
 3 “Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.  
 4 “I the Lord will bless and keep you, and give you peace.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.  
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
 Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.  
 I the Lord will smile up - on you, and give you peace.



In my love’s bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.  
 Here you heard my dear Son’s sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.  
 Here my Spir - it’s pow - er filled you, here his ten - der com - fort stilled you.  
 I the Lord will be your Fa - ther, Sav - ior, Com - fort - er and Broth - er.




Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own.”  
 Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.”  
 Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free.”  
 Go, my chil - dren, I will keep you, and give you peace.”

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: Barbara Wilson                  Lector: Hayden Gilliam                  Interim Organist: Grace Lichtenwald                  Choir Director: John Fallon                  Greeters/Ushers: Ryan &amp; Christy Raab                  Altar Guild: Jan Day</p>

### **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 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**

The friends and family of Michelle Leggett

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

Jeanne Welch, Terra Bella Summit, Greenville  
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**

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 Goynes)  
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 Safris')  
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



## 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. **This will be the last Monday Evening Bible Study until August.**



## 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 LUTHEROAD DAY CAMP

St. John's is hosting Lutheroad 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**  
301 W. Main Street, Walhalla, SC  
www.stjohnswalhalla.org  
Facebook — St. John's Lutheran, Walhalla

**Pastor—The Reverend Dr. Rachel Connelly**  
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](http://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.

