

St. John's Lutheran Church
Biggerstaff Christian Retreat Center
9 am Worship Service
Second Sunday after Pentecost
June 7, 2026



Welcome!

Though Jesus was a devout Jew who practiced his faith, he was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners—the religiously nonobservant. Jesus criticizes the self-righteous and reminds us that mercy is to be at the heart of our religious practices. God continues to be made known in those on the margins of society, like Matthew the tax collector and the hemorrhaging woman. As we gather each Lord's day we receive the healing that makes us well and sends us forth to be signs of God's mercy for the world.

Welcome to Worship!

PRE-GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

GATHERING SONG *“Morning Has Broken”*

Morning has broken like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise ev'ry morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

*Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965
Text © used by permission of David Higham Associates*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin to God.

Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.
Amen.



OPENING SONG

“Step By Step”

Oh God, You are my God
And I will ever praise You
Oh God, You are my God
And I will ever praise You

I will seek You in the morning
And I will learn to walk in Your ways
And step by step You'll lead me
And I will follow You all of my days
(Repeat)

Last time:

I will follow you all of my days
And, I will follow you all of my days
And step by step You'll lead me
And I will follow You all of my days

*Text: Beaker, Music: Beaker; arr Nylea Butler-Moore
Text and music c 1991 BMG Songs, Inc. and Kid Brother of St. Frank Publishing*

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, you are the source of life and the ground of our being. By the power of your Spirit bring healing to this wounded world, and raise us to the new life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

YOUTH MESSAGE

Adriana McMurphy

TEMPLE TALK

Libby McLean

THE FIRST READING

Hosea 5:15-6:6

¹⁵ I will return again to my place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face. In their distress they will beg my favor: ^{6:1} “Come, let us return to the LORD, for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up. ² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. ³ Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD; his appearing is as sure as the dawn; he will come to us like the showers, like the spring rains that water the earth.” ⁴ What shall I do with you, Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early. ⁵ Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets; I have killed them by the words of my mouth, and my judgment goes forth as the light. ⁶ For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Psalm 50:7-15— *Read Responsively*

⁷“Listen, my people, and I will speak: Israel, I will bear witness against you; for I am God, your God.

⁸ **I do not accuse you because of your sacrifices;
your burnt offerings are always before me.**

⁹ I will not accept a calf from your stalls, nor goats from your pens;

¹⁰ **for all the wild animals of the forest are mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.**

¹¹ I know every bird of the mountains, and the creatures of the fields are mine.

¹² **If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the whole world is mine and all that is in it.**

¹³ Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴ Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and make good your vows to the Most High.

¹⁵ Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall honor me.

THE SECOND READING

Romans 4:13-25

¹³ The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression. ¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), and the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² Therefore “it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³ Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was handed over for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Thy Word”

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

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

⁹ As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him. ¹⁰ And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

¹⁸ While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹ And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰ Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹ for she was saying to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” ²² Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that moment. ²³ When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ he said, “Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ And the report of this spread through all of that district.

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

THE MESSAGE

Guest Pastor Emily Whitlow Stolba



SONG OF RESPONSE

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”



1 There’s a wide-ness in God’s mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
4 ’Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there’s a kind - ness in God’s jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth’s sor - rows are more felt than up in heav’n.
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth’s fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv’n.
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

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— God of grace, **hear 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

“We Are an Offering”

We lift our voices, we lift our hands,
We lift our lives up to You: we are an offering.
Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands,
Lord, use our lives they are Yours: we are an offering

All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to You, we give to You.
We lift our voices, we lift our hands,
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering,
we are an offering.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Assisting: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **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

“In the Morning When I Rise”

In the morning when I rise, in the morning when I rise,
in the morning when I rise, give me Jesus.

Refrain

Give me Jesus, give me Jesus.
You may have all the rest, give me Jesus.

Dark midnight was my cry, dark midnight was my cry,
dark midnight was my cry, give me Jesus. *Refrain*

Just about the break of day, just about the break of day,
just about the break of day, give me Jesus. *Refrain*

Oh, when I come to die, oh, when I come to die,
oh, when I come to die, give me Jesus. *Refrain*

And when I want to sing, and when I want to sing,
and when I want to sing, give me Jesus. *Refrain*

“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.

THE PASTORAL BLESSING

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assisting: Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ✠ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG

“Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone”

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

Refrain

My chains are gone, I've been set free. My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood, His mercy rains unending love, Amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures

Refrain 2x

The Earth shall soon dissolve like snow the sun forbid to shine
But God, Who called me here below will be forever mine, will be forever mine
You are forever mine

THE DISMISSAL

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!


Thanks be to God.



Today we welcome Guest Pastor Emily Whitlow Stolba. Thank you, Emily, for sharing your talents with us while Pastor Rachel is away.

Welcome

Starting this week we welcome Sadie Thatcher, who will be singing with the Praise Band for the Summer. Thank you, Sadie, for sharing your musical talents with us.

Serving Today		Serving Today	
	Guest Pastor:	The Rev. Emily Whitlow Stolba	
	Lay Assistant:	Cathy Plowden	
	Lector:	Lynn Pöde	
	Greeters:	Stan & Kay Gartner	
	Musicians:	Ray Burroughs, Dave Devoe, Faith Goyne & Sadie Thatcher	

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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
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 family and friends of Peg Turner
Grace Lichtenwald, death of her brother, George Combes
The family and friends of Barbara Dahlquist

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
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

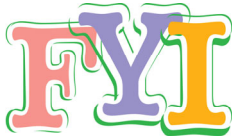
Our Extended Family and Friends

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



• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

Pastor Rachel is on vacation from May 26-June 9. She will be back in the office on Wednesday, June 10. During this time, if you have a pastoral care emergency, please call Melissa at the church office at 864-638-6363 or Cathy Plowden, congregation President at 864-723-5454.



Biggerstaff Beach Clean Up - Volunteers Needed

We're looking for a few good volunteers to help clean debris from the beach and clear a path to the beach. Date: **Saturday, June 13**. Time: **8am - 12 noon**. Bring: rakes, tarp, shovels, saws, gloves, sunscreen and water. Contact David Blakeney with questions- dbtiger1@yahoo.com. Sign up in Information Alley.



Peg Turner Memorial Service

There will be a Memorial Service for Peg Turner on **Sunday, June 14 at 2pm** in the sanctuary. There will be a reception to follow.



ST. JOHN'S MEET UP AND CONNECT CRAFT DAY

Friday, June 19, 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



Columbarium Dedication

There will be a dedication ceremony for the Columbarium at St. John's Cemetery on **Sunday, June 21** at 12:30pm

SAVE THE DATE...SUNDAY JULY 5th



Let's celebrate 250 years of independence! On **Sunday, July 5** we will have **ONE worship service at Biggerstaff beginning at 10:30am** followed by a congregation picnic. Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share. Hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks will be provided. Sign up on Information Alley.



**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 and click on the "Give Now With Givelify" button
- Another option is to scan this QR code to go directly to our Givelify page.

