



St. John's of Hatboro

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Faith - Service - Community



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026

The Good News for Today: From the unique names Jesus gave His closest disciples to the playful titles we give each other, nicknames are a joyful reminder that we are deeply known, valued, and loved.

Thank you for worshiping with us at St. John's. Please fill out your yellow attendance card and place it in the offering plate when we collect the offering later in the service.

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

Gathering Music

STAND

Hymn: Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me — ELW 623 (Red Book)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood,
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure;
cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r. | 3 Nothing in my hand I bring;
simply to thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to thee for dress;
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Savior, or I die. |
| 2 Not the labors of my hands
can fulfill thy law's demands;
could my zeal no respite know,
could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone;
thou must save, and thou alone. | 4 While I draw this fleeting breath,
when mine eyelids close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee. |

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740-1778

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose compassion endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.

Welcome & Greeting

Welcome to St. John's, where we are building a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ, and giving people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.

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.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray... O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SIT

The Readings

Isaiah 51:1-6

Just as God had called Abraham and Sarah and given them many descendants, so now God offers comfort to Zion. God's deliverance will come soon and will never end.

¹ Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the Lord.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

² Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah, who bore you,
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
³ For the Lord will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the Lord;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.
⁴ Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
⁵ I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats,
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 138

¹ I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing your praise.
² **I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because
of your steadfast love and faithfulness;
for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.**
³ When I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength within me.
⁴ **All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O Lord,
when they have heard the words of your mouth.**
⁵ They will sing of the ways of the Lord,
that great is the glory of the Lord.
⁶ **The Lord is high, yet cares for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty from afar.**

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall
save me.

⁸ **You will make good your purpose for me;
O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the
works of your hands.**

Romans 12:1-8

In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

STAND

Gospel Acclamation — ELW p. 151 (Red Book)

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia.

Matthew 16:13-20

At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter:

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SIT

Sermon – “Guess Who?” – Deacon Linda DiMeo

STAND

Hymn: What a Friend We Have in Jesus – ELW 742 (Red Book)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;
oh, what needless pain we bear--
all because we do not carry
ev'rything to God in prayer!</p> <p>2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged--
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness--
take it to the Lord in prayer.</p> | <p>3 Are we weak and heavy-laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge--
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.</p> |
|--|--|

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886

The Apostles' Creed

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and 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.

Prayers of Intercession

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

God, our rock, you are the foundation on which the church is built. Strengthen and encourage your faithful people everywhere they gather, that they boldly proclaim your word of life to all the world. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You spoke and all creation came into being. Field and forest, wetland and wilderness—all reveal your glory. Sustain and nourish your creation. Teach us to be wise stewards of all you have made. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You bring deliverance to nations and peoples. Come to the aid of nations experiencing war, conflict, disease, famine, and disaster. Guide the work of relief agencies and peacemaking organizations. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You regard the lowly and hear us when we cry out to you. Be present among all who struggle with addiction, housing insecurity, incarceration, and mental illness, that they know they are not alone. Hear our prayers for all in need this day. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You draw together people with differing gifts. Lift up the many and varied gifts and talents of this congregation and strengthen the bonds of fellowship that all may be united as the body of Christ. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Your steadfast love endures forever. We give thanks for the faithful who died in the hope of this promise. Strengthen us in faith until the day we join them at your eternal banquet. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share a sign of peace with one another.

SIT

Announcements

Printed copies of our weekly announcements are available at the usher's stand in the Narthex, and monthly newsletters are on the Hospitality Table. Please include your email address on your yellow attendance card to receive announcements electronically.

Children's Message

Offering

STAND

Offertory Hymn: Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow

– ELW 884 (Red Book)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

Offering Prayer

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 Lord's Prayer

And now, as Christ taught us to pray, we say:

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.

SIT

Blessing

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

Amen.

Hymn: Faith of Our Fathers — ELW 812 (Red Book)

- 1 Faith of our fathers, living still
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword.
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
whene'er we hear that glorious word.

Refrain

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
we will be true to thee till death.

- 2 The martyrs, chained in prisons dark,
were still in heart and conscience free;
and blest would be their children's fate
if they, like them, should die for thee. *Refrain*
- 3 Faith of our fathers! We will love
both friend and foe in all our strife;
proclaim thee too, as love knows how,
by saving word and faithful life. *Refrain*

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.

Dismissal

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

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

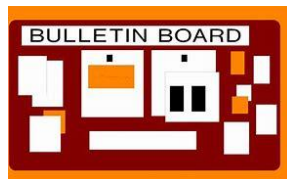
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The Candles for the Month of August are dedicated by Linda Eickhoff in loving memory of Alan Eickhoff on the anniversary of his birthday, August 5, 1946.

The altar flowers are dedicated by Cappy and Pat Adduci in honor of the American Red Cross Blood Drive workers, volunteers, and donors who literally save lives.

Today's reader is Ellen Link.

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St. John's Community Bulletin Board:

To dedicate flowers or candles, please complete a form that is on the table in the Narthex along with \$25 and place it in an envelope either in the offering plate or the Office mailbox in the Church Library. Make checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Church. **Please take the flowers with you after the service.**

July 2026 Operating Budget Update

Year-to-Date Financial Status 7/31/26	
Income	\$253,513.84
Expenses	\$241,682.76
Reserve*	\$11,831.08

**Now that we have balanced the budget, we need to build a cash reserve in case of emergencies. Any excess funds after paying expenses will be applied to the reserve.*

This chart does not include donations to the Capital Improvement fund, which is not part of the operating budget.

A Request from the Publicity Committee: Our committee cannot always be at every event. If you attend events at St. John's, please take photos and send them to stjohnspublicitycommittee@gmail.com, so we can put them on our social media accounts! *We want to respect everyone's privacy: If you or your family do not want your pictures posted on social media, please send us an email with your first and last name, and you will be put on our "do not share my picture" list to ensure your privacy.*

Remember! Prayer squares are available on the Hospitality Table. Give one to anyone in need. Prayer shawls are also in bags in the Narthex.

10 Ways to Support Your Church:

1. Attend regularly
2. Give generously
3. Love radically
4. Bring others consistently
5. Volunteer joyfully
6. Share Jesus willingly
7. Fellowship purposefully
8. Show up energetically
9. Pray fervently
10. Encourage faithfully



Prayer requests may be made on your yellow attendance cards or through the church office. Members stay on the list until they ask to be taken off, and loved ones remain on the list for 6 weeks.

Prayers for Our Members

Ben Bannister, Pat Beadling, Jacob Berntsen, Denise Betz, Nancy Boyle, Barbara Bradley, Sue Cern, June Crippen, Ruth DiEva, Judy Divver, Lillian Dube, Janice Elwood, Al & Grace Farrell, Valerie Holmes, Stephen Imre, Carolyn Kircher, Jeff Kyack, Wendy Larson, Ellen Mertz-Yoesron, Anne & Bob Michel, Natalie Notarianni, Joan Nubbemeyer, Jan Paul, Carole Pfeiffer, Schree Schumacher, Ian Shaw, Barb Sheppard, Emilie Sloan, Audrey Smoyer, Ted Smoyer, Andrea Trout, Alyssa Troy, Nancy Walbert, Joe Wolf, Jim Yankowski.

Prayers for Our Loved Ones

Colleen Cerino (*added by Cappy Adduci*), Patricia Cherry (*added by Christina Gottschall*), Brenda & Bill Gradwell (*added by Richard Gradwell*), Jon Kummery (*added by Linda Eickhoff*), Arlene Lukens (*added by Floss Braithwaite*), Noah Mattke (*added by Sue Giesecke*), Sue McLaughlin (*added by Diane Crain*), Donna Michael (*added by Gerry Flynn*), Regina Ryan (*added by Cathy Wesemann*), Dorothy Scott (*added by Lynne Larson*), Richard Scott (*added by Lynne Larson*), Charles Squitiere (*added by Cathy Wesemann*).

Prayers for Our Homebound

Richard Betz, Wendy Larson, Elma Lester, Mary Lou McNickel, Bob Michel, Rosemarie Mueller, Joan Nubbemeyer, Kenneth & Judith Oliver, Lisa Schroeder-Savory.

Prayers for Those Who Are Grieving

The Davenport family on the passing of former Bishop Patricia Davenport.
Don Fisher & Family on the passing of his brother, David H. Fisher.
Jeff and Edie Kyack and Family on the passing of Jeff's sister, Renee Kyack Perkins.
Rev. Linda Manson and Family on the passing of her son, Lamar Manson.
Leesa Mercaldo and Family on the passing of her mother, Teresa Crone.
Mark Vallone and Family on the passing of his father.

Prayers for Those Who Are Actively Serving Our Country

A1C Gavin W. Briggs, LCpl Justin Bupp, 1LT Matthew Fritz, Matthew Hilliard, Captain Josh Hunt, Sam Keller, Connor McNamee, Ssgt Aidan Orth, SGT Ryan Varela.

Prayers for Other Churches in the Lower Bucks Conference

This week we pray for Redeemer Lutheran Church and Interim Pastor Heidi Rocrick-Schnaath in Jamison, PA.



September 13 – Rally Day

September 19 – Hatboro Praise Fest

September 27 – Brad Fox Concert

October 11 – Bingo