

St. John United Church of Christ
“In Christ We Live, Celebrate, & Serve”

July 12, 2026

7th Sunday after Pentecost(A)

Rev. Dr. Carol Lange, supply pastor David R. Ekstrand, Dir. of Music

9:30 Zoom & In-Person Worship 9:30 Sunday School for Children

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Large print bulletins are available from the Ushers.

Bold italic denotes congregation reads or sings.

*Denotes all who are able, please stand.

WE COME TO WORSHIP GOD

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC AND BELLS CALLING TO WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH A SMILE AND WAVE

*RESPONSE¹ ***“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High”*** #88

Lord, I lift your name on high, Lord, I love to sing your praises.

I'm so glad you're in my life, I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from heaven to earth to show the way,

from the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,

from the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;

Lord, I lift your name on high.

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Isaiah 55:10-11

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it spring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

[And also with you.]

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER²

We have gathered to rejoice in our oneness in Jesus Christ! Each of us experiences faith and life in a unique way.

Yet we have one God, one faith, one baptism, and one Spirit who unites us all.

Let us lift our hearts as one, in songs of praise, in prayer, and in listening for God's Word.

Even when we leave this place, let us be joined in common concerns for humanity, like that shown by Jesus Christ.

Let us pray together:

All-powerful God, we celebrate the freedom you give us to make our own response to all the possibilities you lay out before us. We are grateful for the revelation you provide through the witness of many in Scriptures. Through their words, help us to discern your Word. Come to us in the midst of our diversity to bring understanding and mutual caring. Open us to a new appreciation of our birthright as your children. Beyond all our clamor for the things of this world, we long for the richness of spirit you alone can provide. Feed us here, we pray. Amen.

*HYMN

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee"

#59

*RESPONSIVE LITANY OF CONFESSION

We have gathered to find release from the cares of life which sap our energy and depress our spirits. We have come seeking deeper roots for our faith and the ability to survive and thrive amid life's thorny pathways. We open all the hidden places of our lives to the light of God forgiving love, that we might be cleansed, healed, and set free from sin. God knows our need for this time of confession.

All-knowing God, we know you understand us more deeply than we understand ourselves. You know how much the cares of this life weigh us down. Our thoughts and actions are sometimes shortsighted. We can take things for granted, failing to value the wonder of life around us, the gift of family and friends, the amazing reality of your Spirit dwelling in us. We want to be like good soil, receiving the seed of your Word with understanding that nourishes roots of trust and joy. Free us from all that keeps us from bearing fruit for you. Amen.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. As disciples of Jesus, we have the opportunity to grow in understanding

and in the joy of serving others in Christ's name. The Spirit of life sets us free from our narrow concerns to celebrate the good within and around us. Life is transformed by this new attitude of grace. Amen.

*RESPONSE ***"Trust and Obey"*** Vs. 1 #443
***When we walk with the Lord in the light of his Word,
what a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will, he abides with us still,
and with all who will trust and obey.
Trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.***

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE SCRIPTURE LESSON Romans 8:1-11 pg. 147
SPECIAL MUSIC *I Need Thee Every Hour* Eleanor Reynolds
GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23, 18-26 pg. 13
MEDITATION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN ***"As We Gather at Your Table"*** #695
PASTORAL PRAYER
RESPONSE ***"The Lord's Prayer"*** (One Amen) #740

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*

*RESPONSE³ ***"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"*** Vs. 1 #72
***Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;
as thou has been thou forever will be.
Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided—
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!***

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Accept our offering of praise and our offering of ourselves, O God, along with our tithes and contributions toward our church's mission. You have given us life and guidance for living. You have made us partakers of your own Spirit. We rejoice in the opportunity to receive and share your Word. May the ministry in which all of us have a share bear much fruit, bringing in an abundant harvest for your realm. Amen.

INVITATION⁴

Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and west, from the north and south, and gather about Christ's table.

This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

COMMUNION PRAYER

PREPARING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

All are invited to the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The inner circle of cups contains white grape juice. The outer circles contain wine. Please hold each element when served in the pews so all may partake together, remembering that in the upper room last supper Jesus said, "take this and divide it among yourselves." (Luke 22:17b)

*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING⁴

Bountiful God, we give thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*HYMN

"How Firm a Foundation"

#411

BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

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We thank Linda Mizell for serving as liturgist.