

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

July 26, 2026

9th 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

Romans 8:26

“Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”

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

To God Be the Glory

AMENZ

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Gracious and loving Creator, we come today in summery joy;

We come to celebrate your love in our midst;

We come here secure and assured –

Of your forgiveness and truth,

Your salvation and joy,

Your sustaining love and your persuasive will.

Yet in this hour we know too and confess our weakness –

Our sometimes-faltering faith and imperfect lives.

Lead us, great God, in faith through the hours and days ahead,

To glorify you and to serve one another.

Let us pray together:

Spirit of holiness and life, be with this community of faith as we worship this morning. Search within each of us for the sighs too deep for words and make them articulate so that we may share our hopes and fears and bring out of our silence life-changing prayers for ourselves and, intercession, for all precious, groaning creation. Amen.

*HYMN

“Love Divine, all Loves Excelling”

#358

*RESPONSIVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God’s love frees us to be the people we are without having to become more attractive, more intelligent, more popular.

God’s love frees us to live in confidence, not needing to be self-absorbed, but ready to listen and to hear the stories of others.

God’s love frees us to take risks, to surprise, even ourselves with courage, sometimes to fall flat on our faces – but always to move onward with the knowledge that God is encouraging us.

God’s love frees us to view the world not from the standpoint of wealth gained or ambition achieved, but from the perspective of relationships lived and human love shared.

God’s love frees us to put our sins behind us, to know that no sin is too great or too small to be left open and healed by God’s gentle touch.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

*RESPONSE

“There’s a Wideness...”

Vss. 3 & 4 #61

For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind;

And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple, we would take him at his word,

And our lives would be illuminated by the presence of the Lord.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE SCRIPTURE LESSON	Romans 8:26-39	pg. 148
SPECIAL MUSIC	<i>It's Alright Now</i>	AMENZ
GOSPEL LESSON	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-48	pg. 14
MEDITATION		

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN	<i>"O Love that will not Let Me Go"</i>	#446
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JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND UNISON LORD'S PRAYER

STEWARDSHIP INVITATION

OFFERTORY *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

*RESPONSE ²	<i>"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"</i>	Vs. 1 #72
<i>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!</i>		

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

The gift of your realm is precious to us, O God. It is worth our greatest efforts and our caring sacrifice. As we search for the best in life, we also want to share our faith discoveries with friends and neighbors. We do that personally and with our giving. May our outreach proclaim to all that nothing can separate us from your love. We give you thanks that you have entrusted to us all that we are privileged to share. Amen.

*HYMN	<i>"Pass it On"</i>	#557
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*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

In the Sweet By and By

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²"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" Words: Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960) Music: William C. Runyon (1870-1957) Used with permission CCLI License #133401.