

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

August 9, 2026

11th Sunday after Pentecost (A)

Will Layman

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

“Sanctuary” (sung twice)

#482

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true; with thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

John 13:34-35

³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

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

[And also with you.]

PRELUDE AND CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

You'll Never Walk Alone

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, people of God, from calm waters and stormy seas alike.

Many: We come seeking the One who meets us where we are.

One: When fear threatens to overwhelm us,

Many: We come to hear Christ's voice above the wind and the waves.

One: When we hesitate to step out in faith, Christ reaches out a hand of grace.

Many: We come trusting that God's love is stronger than our fear.

One: Come, let us worship the One who never abandons us, who walks beside us through every storm.

Many: We come with hope in our hearts, ready to worship God with joy. Amen.

*HYMN

"I Sing the Almighty Power of God"

#31

*OPENING PRAYER

Holy and loving God, You are our refuge when life feels uncertain, our strength when we grow weary, and our peace when the winds of this world blow against us. Gather us into your presence this day and quiet the fears that distract us from your voice. As we worship, remind us that you do not promise a life without storms, but you do promise that we will never face them alone. Open our hearts to receive your Word, strengthen our faith to follow where Christ leads, and fill us with the courage to step beyond what is comfortable so that we may faithfully serve you and our neighbors. May your Holy Spirit renew, encourage, and send us into the world as bearers of your hope and love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

A Closer Walk with Thee

performed by David Ekstrand

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 14:22-33 [NRSVUE]

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And early in the morning he came walking toward

them on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." ²⁸ Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

REFLECTION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN

"How Firm a Foundation"

#411

PRAYER CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

PASTORAL PRAYER & UNISON 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 debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

*RESPONSE ***"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"***

#34

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host:
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, for every good and perfect gift comes from you. Receive these offerings as signs of our gratitude and trust. Bless them, and bless us, that together they may become

instruments of your love in a world longing for hope. When we are tempted to cling to what feels safe, teach us instead to trust your abundant grace. Use these gifts to strengthen your Church, care for those in need, proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, and help build a more just and compassionate world. In the name of Christ our Lord, Amen.

HYMN *“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” #405

POSTLUDE *Because He Lives

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