



MAY 3

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE WEEKLY UPDATE

2026

Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church! **Today is the Fifth Sunday of Easter.** We are delighted to have you worship with us. All who have come to worship are heartily welcomed. Let us joyfully open our hearts to God and one another. If you'd like to connect with us, share a prayer request, or learn more about St. John, please complete a yellow communication card located on the back of the pews and place it in the offering plate.

PRAYER REQUESTS

When we pray for each other, we demonstrate Christ's love for each of us

For **Bill Meyer**, who is at the Springs at Wyandot Trail in Lancaster, now under Hospice care

For **Linda Leist**, who is at home and on Hospice care

For **Donna Canini**, her tests were completed for her upcoming heart valve procedure in May or June

For **Kyle Jackson**, nephew of Deb Canini, diagnosed with Thyroiditis, working to get medications adjusted

For **Scott Arnett**, son-in-law of Jonette Christy, as he undergoes a six-week course of cancer treatments

For **Karma Wisecarver**, daughter of Lee & Peggy Smith, is doing another new treatment in her cancer journey

For **Brian Fowler**, as he slowly recovers from West Nile Virus

Continued prayers for **Jim Fogle, Jon & Linda Leist, and Linda Miller**

If you have a prayer request, please reach out to Sue Mason, who will email our church members. She can be reached at: 614-260-1107 or at susiemase3@hotmail.com.

OFFICE HOURS ARE BACK Amy will be in the church office on Wednesday, **May 6 and May 20**, from **10 am - 2 pm**. Feel free to stop by to chat - this is a great opportunity to share ideas for enhancing worship, serving our neighbors, or just talking in general. Appointment not needed.



UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Layla Kincaid
Briana Hart
Jerry Daily



May 2
May 3
May 4

Next Sunday, **May 10**, is Mother's Day, and the ladies of the church invite you to a **Mother's Day Tea Party** in the church basement from **9:00 to 10:15 a.m.** Tea, coffee, and water will be provided, along with a variety of pastries. Please feel free to wear an old bonnet or a special hat! All women of the church are welcome—bring your daughters, mothers, or any special ladies in your life to enjoy this time together, and enjoy a special treat.





THE INSIDE STORY BY SALLY ACTON



The Opening Hymn, “ Lord God, We Praise You”, was created in 1858 by Clarence Walworth. The hymn covers themes from the Apostle’s Creed focusing on the Trinity, Christ’s incarnation, death, resurrection and return.

BAKE SALE



On Monday, **May 25th**, St John will be holding our **annual bake sale** as part of the Lithopolis Memorial Day festivities. Sign up sheets are coming for donations of baked goods and volunteers to help set up and staff the tables at Wagnalls. More details to follow.



Please place your food donation for the **Food Pantry** in the shopping cart. Thank you, everything is appreciated. **NOTE:** items in our grocery cart that members donate are given to Lutheran Social Services in Lancaster. This is different from the quarterly donation from our MEF that is given to the Bloom-Carroll Pantry Mission.



CALLING ALL SHOPPERS! Did you know that **Kroger has a Community Rewards Program?** They will send monies to St John every time you shop at any of their stores. Instructions for signing up are in a blue folder on the bulletin board in the back of the sanctuary. Please consider enrolling in this easy way to earn money for our church while doing your grocery shopping!



The **Altar Flower** chart is in the Narthex where you may sign up to place flowers on the altar. Flowers are \$35. You may leave the money in the envelope under the chart for Linda Leist. Please be sure to indicate if the flowers are for a special occasion, and let Don Hornbeck know if you would like it posted in the Bulletin.

Potluck
Sunday



Sunday, May 31– St John **Potluck** after church.

More details to follow.

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL MEETING NOTES MAY 26, 2026

ATTENDEES: SAM Amy, Alan Fisher, Sally Acton, Jon Leist, Neil Jarvis, Mike Drodofsky, Deb Canini, Jerry Canini, Briana Canini, Diana Johnson ABSENT: Charlotte Meyer, Jonette Christy, Sue Mason

Alan reviewed the budget. It was discussed about what uses the Capital improvement gift of \$10,000 could be used to do for the church improvements.

We discussed the use of posting on our Facebook page on a more regular basis. Briana stated she now has admin rights on the account. She stated that she could post events, hours of service and other notifications as needed. Amy stated that she could post a snippet of her sermons or thoughts for the week on the FB page. She said she could send the files for Briana to post. Need to determine who all are admins on FB, so it can be determined who can post on the site. It was decided that Briana would be our Social Activities Coordinator.

St. John’s website is up and running. Don Hornbeck can add items to this website as needed or requested. It would be considered a more permanent site for our church information.





The potluck was discussed. It was determined to have them as a 5th Sunday event with our members. The first one that is planned is for May 31st. Church members will bring a side dish, Sally will provide buns, Amy will provide sloppy joes, and Neil will provide shredded chicken.

Jon brought up the idea of a Mother's Day event. Council decided it may be too soon to undertake the task this year.

Amy discussed a conference that she had attended. It was about what congregations can do with regard to outreach in communities, mission needs, and how to be neighbors in the community. It was called CoLab. The goal of CoLab is to raise the profile of the church to serve God within the community where it is located. The goal is to create interest for members of the community to participate with the church in outreach activities. \$250 - cost to participate, \$500 given by synod as a refund for participating. Starts August 1st. It was discussed by council to possibly participate by next year, so we can determine what the community needs are to enable the church to raise a profile of who we are and what we want to do for and with the community.

The bake sale for Memorial Day, May 25th, was brought up, and we need to get a sign up to gather volunteers to bake for and work the event. It was suggested that we put flyers about the church at the bake sale to let people know about our church within this community.

Council discussed ideas as to how we can draw interest to the church: Breakfast once a month to give back to the community, give out pens at events that have a roll out feature banner about our church (Amy had an example of a pen that was like this feature), and Dime a Dog night at youth baseball games. It was discussed that we need an upgrade to the church signage into Lithopolis.

It was discussed that we need to refine our mission statement for the church, since we have three. If we determine what the mission statement is, then we can include that statement on our flyers, pens and social media platforms. It was determined that the council will come up with a statement and bring it to the church for a vote. Looking forward to 2030, it will be the 175th anniversary of the church. If we set goals for the church and when we reach those goals we can celebrate those achievements. If we use and place the tree in the area of the church where members can see it (currently located in the Sunday school room), we can use index cards to place on the tree as we reach the goals we set.

Jon talked about prioritizing the use of our monies (CIF gifts) to use for improvements to the church property. The top 3 areas Jon thought the money should be used to upgrade and getting estimates to determine what could be or should be done first: Replace the carpet with laminate in the Narthex, Blacktop replacement of the parking lot, and air conditioning units evaluated to determine their remaining life.

Other items discussed: SAM Amy will not be here next Sunday (May 3rd), so there will be no communion. It was discussed and questioned if the Bloom Township Crisis Fund still exists. Jon stated that he had turned it over to the Methodist church a few years ago, but he said he doesn't know if they have used the funds to help the community or if it is still in existence.

Jerry Canini discussed the committee in Bloom Township that he serves on, which is known as the Comprehensive Plan committee. It is a long term planning effort to manage change in the township, preserve agricultural usage and rural character in order to prepare the township for the future. As our township experiences increased development pressure, this process for planning provides the township to proactively shape its future while preserving what residents value, as well as benefit from new growth opportunities. He stated that if we put information out to members of the church, then more members can attend and have input as to what they would like to see happen within the township.

There was a motion to adjourn and we closed with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Canini for Sue Mason, Council Secretary, w/edits

2026 YTD Offerings Summary	
Offerings through:	4/30/2026
Budget (yearly)	60,180.40
Budget YTD	20,831.68
Offerings - Received	21,257.91
YTD Over(+)/Under(-)	426.23

2.05%

2026 Average Sunday Attendance Watch	
2025 Avg = 35 Q1(2026) = 32, Apr = 40	

Worship Leader

Today	Jon Leist
5/10/2026	Amy Lytle, Synod Authorized Minister
5/17/2026	Amy Lytle, Synod Authorized Minister
5/24/2026	Amy Lytle, Synod Authorized Minister (Pentecost)

Happenings

5/6/2026 (Wed)	Amy's Wednesday Office Hours, 10am- 2pm
5/10/2026 (Sun)	Mother's Day Tea Party 9:00-10:15 in Parish Hall Basement
5/17/2026 (Sun)	Council Meeting
5/20/2026 (Wed)	Amy's Wednesday Office Hours, 10am- 2pm
5/25/2026 (Mon)	Memorial Day

Opportunities to Serve

Contact Don Hornbeck with information for our weekly Sunday bulletins.

Sunday School & Bible Study

Adults: Sunday mornings 9am-10am upstairs in the Parish Hall (CANCELED NEXT SUNDAY)

Children: During the church service in the Parish Hall youth room (Jonette Christy)

Sunday Average Attendance by month for 2022 through 2026

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg
2022	14	21	26	48	40	32	31	30	38	32	29	34	31
2023	24	31	29	35	38	33	33	30	35	26	29	29	31
2024	17	23	30	25	46	46	45	39	34	29	30	36	33
2025	36	28	37	38	35	36	33	37	31	33	31	35	34
2026	27	26	44	40									34
Yr-Yr Chg	-9	-2	8	2									

Amy Lytle's email address: amyblytle@gmail.com
 Amy Lytle's cell phone: 614-208-3719
 Council President contacts: 614-286-6175 / alfisher@aol.com
 St John's website: www.StJohnLithopolis.com
 St John's email address: office.StJohnlithopolis@gmail.com
 St John's office phone: 614-837-2947 (voice mailbox)
 St John's mailing address: 133 West South Street, PO Box 206 / Lithopolis, Ohio 43136
 St John's facebook page: https://facebook.com/StJohnLithopolis

Sunday, May 3, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter

ELW Service of the Word

GATHERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who creates us and forms us,
who redeems us and calls us,
who unites us and sends us.

Amen.

Gathered in God's presence, let us confess our sin.

Mighty and loving God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free
ourselves. We seek our own way. We divide the body of
Christ. In your mercy, cleanse us and heal us.**

**Let the words of our mouths, the thoughts of our hearts,
and everything that we do be filled with faith, hope, and love.**

Amen.

Hear the voice of Jesus:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
to proclaim release to the captives."

In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ,

I proclaim to you that our sins are forgiven and we are released.

The joy of the Lord is our strength,

and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are ours forever.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG (ELW 558) *Lord God, We Praise You*

1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is over,
Active and watchful, standing here before you;
Singing, we offer prayer and meditation
Thus we adore you.

2 Monarch of all things, fit us for your mansions;
Banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
Bring us to heaven, where your saints united
Joy without ending.

3 All-holy Father, Son, and equal Spirit,
Trinity blessed, send us your salvation;
Yours is the glory, gleaming and resounding
Through all creation.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
We worship you, we give you thanks,
We praise you for your glory.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
Receive our prayer.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest;
Glory to God, glory to God,
And peace to God's people on earth,
And peace to God's people on earth.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together the prayer of the day.

**Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth,
and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in
the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life
with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.**

FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

A reading from Acts, Chapter 7.

⁵⁵ Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

¹ In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

² **Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.**

³ Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

⁴ **Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵ Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

¹⁵ **My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

¹⁶ Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.”

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Christ is the cornerstone of God’s saving work and the foundation of our lives. We are God’s chosen, holy people who continuously celebrate and declare the mercy of God we experience through Jesus Christ.

A reading from 1 Peter, Chapter 2.

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,”

⁸ and

“A stone that makes them stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 216)
Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?
Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

On the night that he is to be arrested, Jesus shares final words with his disciples. As the one through whom God is known, he promises to go before them and act on their behalf.

The holy gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW 367)

Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds

1 Now all the vault of heav'n resounds
In praise of love that still abounds:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2 Eternal is the gift he brings,
Therefore our heart with rapture sings:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Now still he comes to give us life
And by his presence stills all strife.
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;
Set heart and will on things above
That we conquer through your triumph;
Grant grace sufficient for life's day
That by our lives we truly say:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4 Adoring praises now we bring
And with the heav'nly blessed sing:
"Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!"
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
To Spirit blest, most holy God,
All the glory, never ending!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,
Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Let us further profess our calling in the faith.

**We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God:
who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the
Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in
us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to
be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with
respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice
and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our
judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

Reader 1: God of glory, you have built your church on Christ the cornerstone. Inspire lay leaders, deacons, pastors, and bishops to proclaim forgiveness and your steadfast love to all whom they encounter. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 2: God of majesty, you bring forth plants and animals, skies and seas, mountains and valleys. Protect all you have made from the ravages of pollution and climate disaster. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 3: God of mercy, you intend governments and social service agencies to be instruments of peace and justice. Guide political leaders and organizations to be agents of compassion, and raise up advocates for those who seek refuge and assistance. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Jon: God of well-being, you soothe those in distress, console all who grieve, provide for any in need, and comfort those who are sick. Instill caregivers with a sense of purpose to be your healing hands in this world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 4: God of community, you call us together as your people for mutual support and to witness to your love in the world. Make your presence known among those unable to attend worship today. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reader 5: God of eternal life, you have prepared dwelling places for your people, so that we are never separated from you. We give you thanks for the faithful departed who witnessed to your mighty acts in word and deed. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Jon: God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.
Amen.

WE SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray together, giving thanks to our God.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.

BLESSING

May the God of glory dwell in you richly, name you beloved,
And shine brightly on your path;
And the peace of our almighty God,
The Father, the ✝ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

SENDING SONG (ELW 380) *Hallelujah! Jesus Lives!*

- 1 Hallelujah! Jesus lives!
He is now the Living One;
From the gloomy halls of death
Christ, the conqueror, has gone,
Bright forerunner to the skies
Of his people, yet to rise.
- 2 Jesus lives! Why do you weep?
Why that sad and mournful sigh?
Christ who died our brother here
Lives our brother still on high,
Lives forever to bestow
Blessings on his church below.
- 3 Jesus lives! And thus, my soul,
Life eternal waits for you;

Joined to Christ, your living head,
Where he is, you shall be too;
With the Lord, at God's right hand,
As a victor you shall stand.

4 Jesus lives! Let all rejoice.
Praise him, ransomed of the earth.
Praise him in a nobler song,
Cherubim of heav'nly birth.
Praise the victor king, whose sway
Sin and death and hell obey.

5 Hallelujah! Angels, sing!
Join with us in hymns of praise.
Let your chorus swell the strain
Which our feebler voices raise:
Glory to our God above
And on earth his peace and love!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the Good News. Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!! Thanks be to God.

Let us sing together:

**God be with you 'til we meet again,
By his counsel's guide, uphold you,
With his sheep securely fold you,
God be with you 'til we meet again. Amen.**

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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