St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School

711 & 805 W 5th St., Neillsville, WI 54456

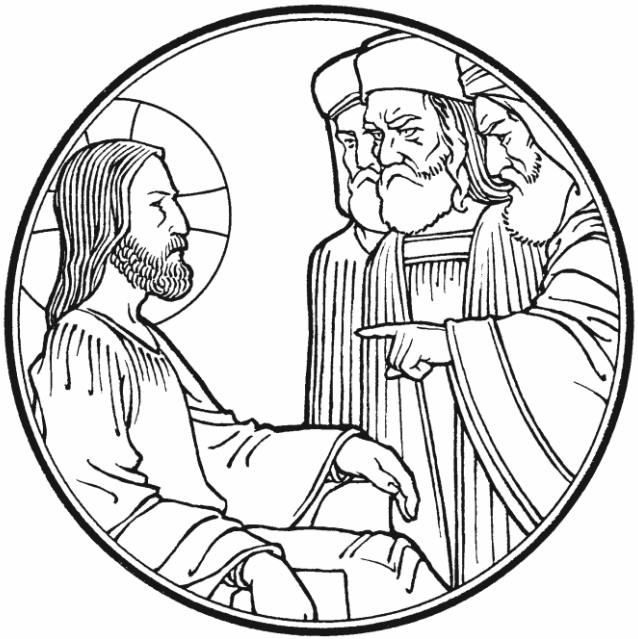
Member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

"Welcome Visitors & Members!"

To those who are visiting us for the first time, we extend our sincere welcome; to our friends who know us we renew our welcome; to those who seek a church home we invite you to be part of our family and enjoy fellowship with our Savior.
For further assistance in worship and information on our church, please see the back cover.

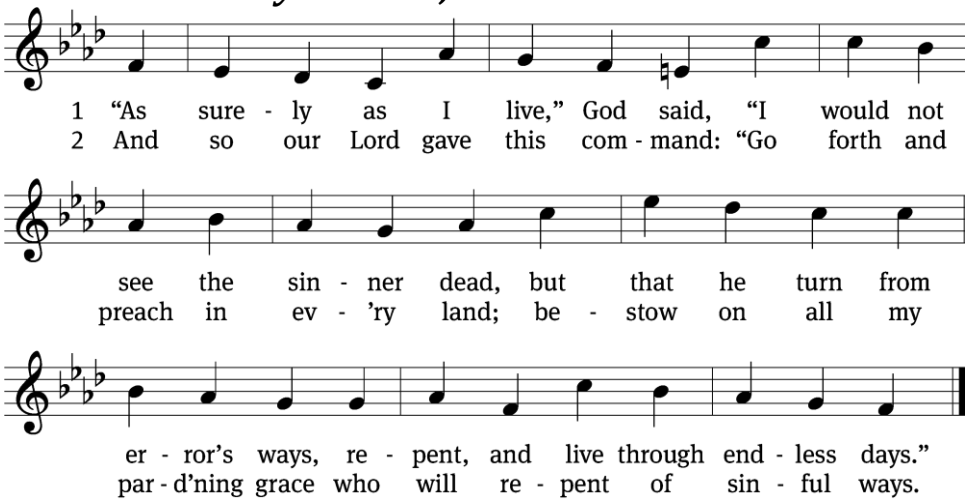
18th Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026



UNEXPECTED TRUTHS-REAL REPENTANCE LOOKS DIFFERENT

656:1-2 As Surely As I Live, God Said *CW 21*



Text: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561, abr.; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.
Tune: Jeremiah Clarke, c. 1674–1707
Text and tune: Public domain

The Service Setting 2 CW 21

In the name of the Father and of the ✞ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Confession

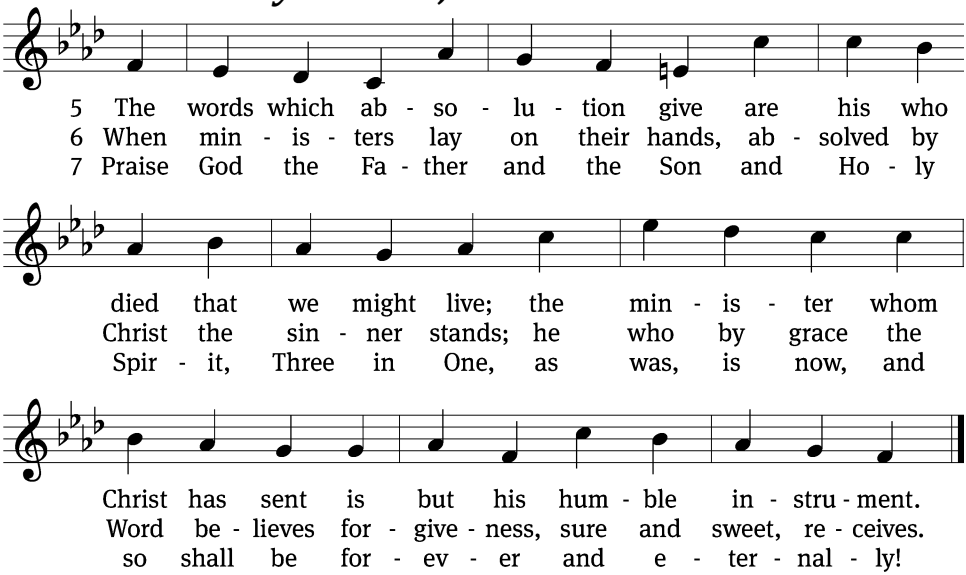
Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.
Almighty and merciful Father,
we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.
We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.
We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done.
Have mercy on us, Lord!
Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✞ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

656:5-7 As Surely As I Live, God Said CW 21



Text: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561, abr.; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.
Tune: Jeremiah Clarke, c. 1674–1707
Text and tune: Public domain

This morning, we will speak the Kyrie ("Lord, Have Mercy").

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
Amen.

Glory to God in the Highest CW 21

Tune: Marty Haugen
Tune: © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716538

The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day
Let us pray.

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:1–4,25–32
1 The word of the LORD came to me:
2 What do you mean, you who keep repeating this proverb concerning
the soil of Israel, "Fathers eat sour grapes, and their sons' teeth are set
on edge"? 3 As surely as I live, declares the LORD God, you will never
again use this proverb in Israel. 4 Indeed, all souls are mine. The soul of
the father is mine just like the soul of the son. The soul who sins is the
one who will die.
25 But you say, "The Lord's way is not fair." Listen now, house of Israel.
Is it my way that is not fair? Is it not your ways that are not fair? 26 If a
righteous man turns away from his righteousness and practices
unrighteousness, he will die because of it. Because of the
unrighteousness that he has practiced, he will die.
27 But if a wicked man turns from his wickedness that he has done and
practices justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life. 28 Because
he has seen and turned away from all the rebellious acts that he had
committed, he will surely live, and he will not die. 29 But the house of
Israel says, "The Lord's way is not fair." Is it really my ways that are
not fair, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not fair?

30Therefore, I will judge each one of you according to his ways, O house of Israel, declares the LORD God. Repent and turn away from all your rebellious acts, so that you will not set out a stumbling block that makes you guilty. 31Throw off from yourselves all your rebellious actions by which you have rebelled, and obtain a new heart and a new spirit for yourselves. Why should you die, O house of Israel? 32For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the LORD God. So repent and live!

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25B — *CW 21 Psalter*

Text: para. William Miller; Jaroslav Vajda, alt.
Tune: Swedish
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Second Reading: Philippians 2:1–11

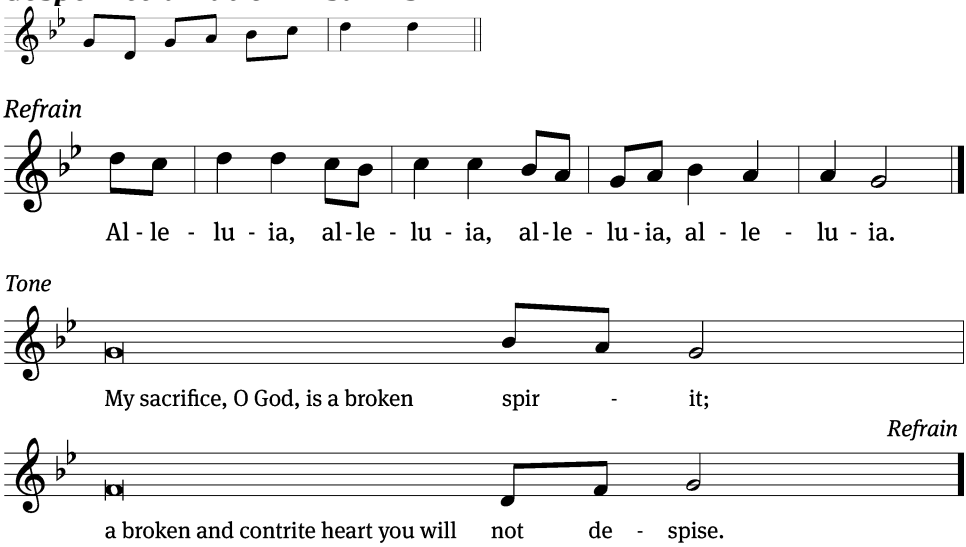
[1]So if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, [2]then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one mind. [3]Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility consider one another better than yourselves. [4]Let each of you look carefully not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

[5]Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. [6]Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, [7]but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, [8]he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. [9]Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, [10]so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11]and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Psalm 51:17



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Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:23–32

[23]When Jesus went into the temple courts, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him while he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things?" and "Who gave you this authority?"

[24]Jesus answered them, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer it, I will tell you by what authority I do these things. [25]The baptism of John, where was it from? From heaven or from men?"

They discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' [26]But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of the crowd, since they all regard John as a prophet." [27]So they answered Jesus, "We do not know."

He said to them, "Then I will not tell you by what authority I do these things."

[28]"What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' [29]He answered, 'I will not,' but later he changed his mind and went. [30]He came to the second and said the same thing. The second son answered, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go. [31]Which of the two did the will of his father?"

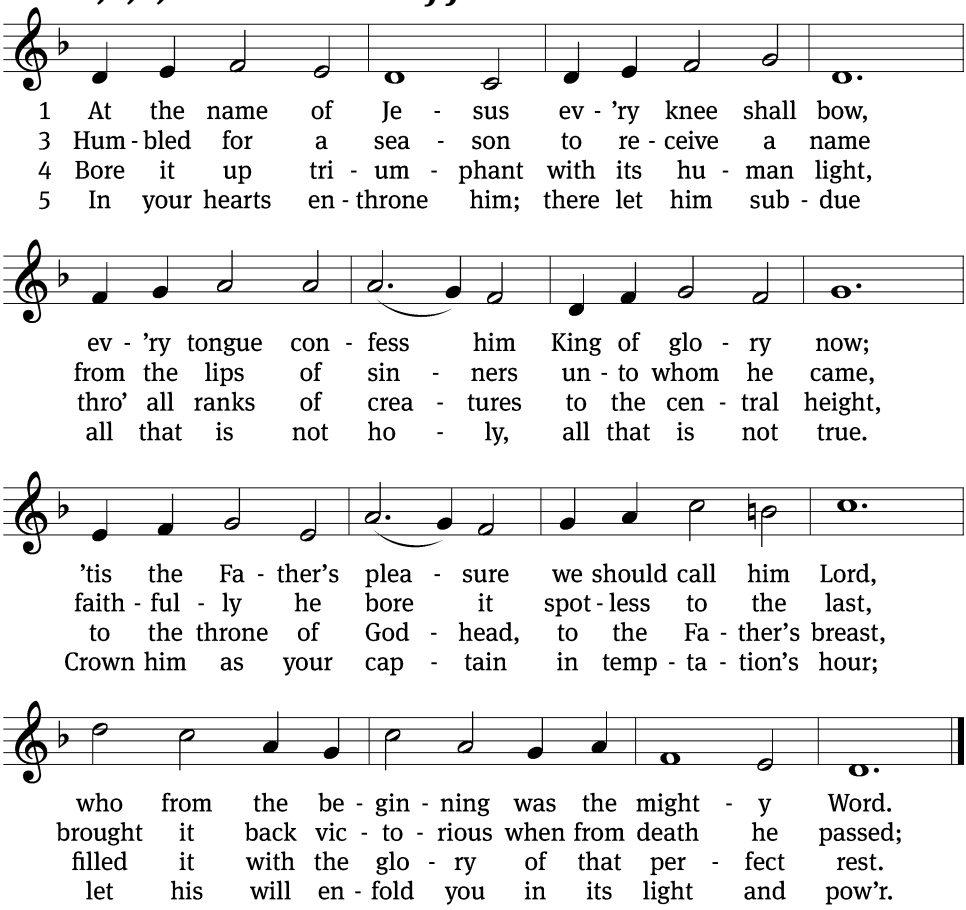
They said to him, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "Amen I tell you: The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. [32]For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him. Even when you saw this, you did not change your mind and believe him.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Children's Message

547:1,3,4,5 At the Name of Jesus CW 21



Text: Caroline M. Noel, 1817–1877, abr., alt.
Tune: Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon Text: Ezekiel 18:1–4,25–32
Sermon Theme: God Calls Us To Life Through Repentance.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

With all our hearts and with all our minds, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy."

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the leaders of our synod and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For our president, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this city, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth that God has given us and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air (or through outer space), let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in your compassion protect us, O Lord, by your grace.
Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of the holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and all our lives to Christ our God.
Amen.

OFFERING & WELS CONNECTION - *The members of St. John's have joined together, in gratitude for God's grace in Jesus, to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world and support this gospel ministry with their time, talents, and treasures. Guests need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry, but please use this QR code to fill out a short form giving us a digital record of your attendance. Visitors may also fill out our guest register by the drinking fountain in the entryway.*

Friendship Registers: *Please take a few moments before church or during the offering to mark down your attendance at worship by signing the friendship registers we have placed back in the racks at the end of each pew. Thanks!*

Prayer

Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies, that we may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

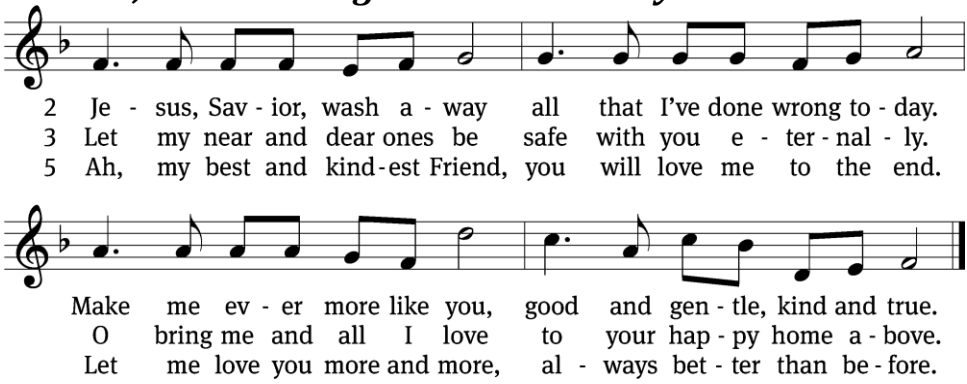
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ✞ give you peace.
Amen.

Although today's final hymn is properly an evening hymn, we sing it this morning because the children at St. John's School are learning it in their hymnology classes.

784:2-3, 5 Now the Light Has Gone Away *CW 21*



Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879, alt.
Tune: Liederbuch für Kleinkinder-Schulen, Kaiserswerth, 1842
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Acknowledgments

Setting Two from Christian Worship

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This Week at St. John's: Sep 27, 2026

SERVING US TODAY

Greeters: Donna Anding & Rosie Murphy
Ushers: Team 3-Dick Urban's team
Altar Guild: Pat Strangfeld
Bulletins: Randy Roehl in memory of William & Hattie Roehl
Sep Website: Pat & Alice Glinski for their 54th anniversary

SERVING US NEXT SUNDAY

Greeters: Joel & Darlene Zschernitz
Ushers: Team 4-Rex Roehl's team
Altar Guild: Judy Quicker

~OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW & SERVE~

TODAY	9:00 AM Worship Service
	10:30 AM Sunday School
	10:30 AM Bible Study
	6:00 PM Youth Group
MONDAY	6:00 PM Adult Instruction Class
WEDNESDAY	8:20 AM Chapel
	6:00 PM Choir
	7:00 PM Handbells
SUNDAY	9:00 AM Communion Service
	10:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Study
	6:00 PM Pioneers

Worship the Lord with Gladness:
Last Sunday: 238

Worship with Our Care of God's Wealth:
Thankoffering Given Last Week:
$8,655.40 (Home); $703.50 (Missions)
Needed per week for Home: $9,035.00

Owed on line of credit: $47,933.66

CHURCH NEWS

Sunday Bible Study: *Sunday Bible study continues today after church. We will be studying "Christian Doctrine Two: 8 Studies on Deeper Christian Teachings." All are invited to join us in the church basement.*

Sunday School: *Sunday School continues today for preschool through 6th grade students. Preschool-Kindergarten students will meet in the church basement; Grades 1-6 will meet in the school. All children are invited! We encourage 7th & 8th grade students to attend Sunday Bible Study. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have volunteered to teach Sunday School this year: Kayla Harder & Ruth Walsh (Preschool-Kindergarten); Gloria Hamm & Brian Thell (Grades 1-3); Louise Wendland, Skye Defourneaux, Rachel Anderson, Brian Thell (Grades 4-6). Thank you for your willingness to serve!*

Youth Group: *Youth Group will hold its first meeting of the school year TODAY at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's Christie. All students in 8th through 12th grades are invited.*

We will be watching an online Teen Bible Study, "My Self-Worth," led by Pastor Jon Enter. "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That sentence is a lie. Words hurt. Mephibosheth knows your pain. His short yet powerfully personal Bible story will guide you to see yourself differently, to see yourself as God sees you: beloved, worthy, and his. We hope many 8th graders and high school students can join us!

Flag Football: *Tomorrow afternoon we will travel to St. Mark in Eau Claire. We play St. Mark at 4:00 and Messiah at 5:00.*

Home Volleyball: *This Tuesday we have home volleyball games vs Trinity of Marshfield. The B Team will play at 4:00, and the A Team will play at 5:00. Come and cheer for the Hornets!*

Pioneers: *The first Pioneer meeting of the school year will be held on Sunday, October 4th at 6:00 p.m. in the school gym. All children in grades K-8 are invited.*

Thanksgiving Service: *We are considering a change in our Thanksgiving worship schedule. Because a Thanksgiving Day service is currently offered at Globe/Christie, Pastor Tim and Brian Thell are considering offering a Thanksgiving Eve service at St. John's. Please share any thoughts about this proposal with them.*

Homebound Ministry: *Pastor Tim is looking for volunteers to assist in making regular visits on our homebound members. Please contact him if you have interest.*

Fall Mission Fest: *Our Fall Mission Fest will be held on Sunday, October 18th. Our guest speaker will be Rev. Chris Christenson, who will be presenting on Home Mission work at Our Redeemer, Ladysmith, WI. In addition to preaching, he will be giving a special presentation in place of Bible Class after the worship service.*

Fall Dinner: *The Friends of St. John's will be sponsoring their annual Fall Dinner on Sunday, Oct. 18th, following our special Mission Fest presentation. Every year the Friends of St. John's chooses someone to be their honored guest at the Fall Dinner. This year our honorees are Henry & Julie Berry.*

In addition to honoring the Berrys, we would also like to verbally recognize at the meal the previous Fall Dinner honored guests we have had over the last 30 years.

Proceeds from the Fall Dinner will go toward replacing a broken slide on the older kids' playground. (That older playground equipment was installed in 1996.)

FIC & Calendar: *The October edition of "Forward In Christ" and the October calendars are available in the entryway.*

Candy Bags: *We would once again like to fill candy bags to give to the children after their Christmas program in December. We are in need of cash donations to help cover the cost of the candy and other items. Please mark your donation "candy bags" and place your gift in the offering basket or turn in at the school office. Thanks!*

Student of the Week: *The student of the week is Ezra Allard. Ezra is in 7th Grade. He is polite and respectful, sets a good example in the classroom and on the sports field, is a hard worker, and is letting his light shine to those around him. Congratulations Ezra!*

Men of His Word Conference: *Men of His Word equips Christian men to take a leadership role within their family, within their congregation, and in their community. Join hundreds of men for a day of powerful teaching, engaging breakout sessions, and meaningful fellowship. Forge new connections. Strengthen your faith. Leave equipped and encouraged. This year's theme is "Courage Under Fire". The conference is October 24th at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, MN. The early bird registration rate is $85 through October 11, 2026, after which regular registration pricing begins. Register at menofhisword.org/locations/rochester.*

Thrivent: *As we start another school year, we want to encourage you to consider using your Thrivent Action Teams to help provide needed school supplies and resources for our students. For those who have Thrivent, Thrivent Action Teams offer an opportunity for members to make a positive difference by organizing a service project or supporting a need within our school community. To do so, please submit an action team online and label it "Education Supplies." By working together and using these opportunities to purchase classroom supplies, educational materials, or other needed items, we can help support our school while being good stewards of the blessings God has provided.*

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Mr. Leiterman.

School Boiler: *As we informed you in July, one of our two school boilers developed mechanical problems and needed to be replaced. We decided to hire RC Heating and Cooling LLC of Neillsville to do the work. The installation took place yesterday and the total cost for this work is $13,400.00. Donations toward this project are gladly accepted. You can drop those off in the school office or put them in the offering basket marked "school boiler."*

To assist you in worship:

- ✞ Personal listening devices are available for anyone to use. Please talk to the ushers for assistance.
- ✞ Large-print bulletins available in the entryway.
- ✞ Personal Prayers: Red Hymnal (pp. 10-11); Blue Hymnal (inside front cover)
- ✞ Preparation for Lord's Supper: Red Hymnal (p. 156); Blue Hymnal (pp. 295-296)
- ✞ Luther's Small Catechism: Blue Hymnal (pp. 286-293)

We love seeing young children in church as we want families to worship together. We also love to hear children making a "joyful noise to the Lord." If you need some privacy for feeding an infant or changing a diaper, please make use of our parents' room off the north side of the entryway where you can still listen to the service.

***Visitors**, if you would like to know more about our church or school, please introduce yourself to our pastor. He would be delighted to speak with you and serve you in whatever way he can.*

St. John's Lutheran Church & School
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Facebook (church): www.facebook.com/stjohnsneillsville/
Facebook (school): www.facebook.com/stjohnshornets/

Worship Schedule
Sunday-9:00 a.m.