

Ministry Profile

Connecting



Faith and Life



Together

St. John's Lutheran Church



“Let’s Connect Faith and Life. *Together.*”



There is no such thing as the church of “one.”

Even Jesus didn’t go it alone. Before he preached a sermon or healed a leper he called disciples. Even the disciples didn’t go it alone. On the unofficial birthday of the church, Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Spirit extended the reach of the Gospel to people from far flung places and who spoke other languages.

Even Luther didn’t go it alone. The most foundational document of the Lutheran church wasn’t written by Luther himself but by Luther’s theologian friend Philip Melanchthon. And at St. John’s we don’t do this thing we call church by ourselves either. In the pages that follow you will see how we are church together. You will see how our faith informs our living and how in our living our faith comes alive.



Article VII of the Augsburg Confession: The Church

“The church is the assembly of believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.”

In the founding document of our Lutheran faith we read that to find out what the church is, one must go within the four walls of the our church buildings. It is only there, together among the people, where faith is enlivened and our lives are given ultimate meaning and purpose.

Our Faith and Life



Lutherans love to talk about “both/and.”

But what does this mean? It means that in our worship we lift up both the word and sacraments equally. It means in our preaching we emphasize both our need for the law and our ultimate dependence on God’s grace. It means that we humans are both saints and sinners at the same time. It means that Christ was both fully divine and fully human.

And here at St. John’s we know that it takes both faith and life together to make us who we are. We know that for our life to be truly worth living it needs to be rooted in our faith, and for our faith to be worth proclaiming it must inspire how we live and how we change the lives of others.

Here at St. John’s we know that it takes both our time and our talents, both our traditional and contemporary worship, both our youth and our seniors, both our seasoned and our new members, both our desire for mercy and our love of justice, both me and you to be the church together.

Core Values

As we have discerned the call of the Holy Spirit, we have identified six core values that guide our ministries. These values are:

- Worship + The Arts
- Mercy + Justice
- Discipleship
- Congregational Life- LifeTogether
- Stewarding God’s Resources
- Hospitality

Worship

- Our Worship is where the connection of our faith and life is on full display. We worship in ways that proclaim our faith and make it real in our lives in both contemporary and traditional forms each Sunday at 9:27 am and 11 am.
- Dynamic preaching and outstanding music leadership enhance our worship experience including a worship team at 9:27 am and a 40+ member Chancel Choir at 11 am worship.
- We are blessed to host special arts and music events throughout the year.
- We have an online presence that allows our 11 am worship service to be live streamed throughout the world!
- Ushers, Greeters, and Worship Assistants warmly welcome you to worship each week!



Our Faith and Life

"Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

- Matthew 25:40

Our faith comes alive in our lives when we serve our neighbors. It is Jesus who tells us that by reaching out to those in our community who are in need we are encountering our risen Lord. There are many ways that we as a congregation help our neighbors in Rowan County and around the world. But no matter where our time and resources go we make a greater impact because we do this work together.

Local Outreach

Meals on Wheels: \$1,070

St. John's volunteers deliver meals with Meals on Wheels to homebound, disabled, and elderly friends in our community the first and second Wednesday of each month.

Rowan Helping Ministries

- Women's Ministry regularly hosts Packing Parties, where they pack bags of food for families and children.
- St. John's members serve dinner and provide assistance with laundry and clean-up on the second Wednesday night of each month, then provide breakfast the following morning.

Buck-a-Meal: \$11,523

Loose \$1 bills are collected on the first Sunday of each month to provide a meal to someone at Rowan Helping Ministries. Between August 2023-August 2024, you have contributed \$11,523 through our Buck-a-Meal ministry.



Vision for Racial Healing

Currently, we have a very active and committed group of individuals who are finding ways to make our community and St. John's a place where we walk alongside our neighbors in Christ to strive for peace, justice, and equity for all, especially those harmed by racism.

Child Development Center

For over 20 years, our St. John's Child Development Center:

- Provides high-quality faith and developmentally appropriate instruction;
- Fosters a safe environment for children to be nurtured and develop their God-given potential;
- Provides the opportunity to build positive relationships with children, families, staff, congregation and community at large;
- Celebrates diversity and cultivates respect and compassion.

St. John's Kindergarten

Since 1946, the St. John's Kindergarten has been committed to the physical, social, intellectual, spiritual and moral development of each child (Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten), all in a loving, Christian environment.

Public School Outreach

St. John's continues to partner with our local schools to increase the educational opportunities of our children and to advocate for more equity. Currently we partner with Isenburg Elementary to make that dream a reality.

Community Ministry Center

Our Community Ministry Center, located on the corner of Church and Council streets, provides rent and utility-free, collaborative office space for local non-profits who share St. John's vision. Currently, the CMC houses:

- Scouts
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Lutheran Services Carolinas New Americans Program

LSC/New Americans: \$4,750

In 2022 we welcomed the New Americans Program into our CMC building. As their program flourished and continued to grow we were able to move Young Life to a dedicated office on our education hallway to accommodate their need for more space.



New Americans Program

Global Outreach

South Sudan

The new nation of South Sudan continues to struggle with famine, tribal unrest, and limited educational opportunities. Many of the people in South Sudan say they crave spiritual renewal in order to overcome the many challenges they face on a daily basis.

Founded at St. John's, Sudan-Rowan is an ecumenical coalition that joins hands with South Sudanese partners in efforts to achieve peace and education. In 2010, Sudan Rowan began a project called "Raising South Sudan" in collaboration with former Lost Boys of Sudan and Charlotte-based, nonprofit Mothering Across Continents.

Together, we serve communities in Ruweng State, South Sudan, an area greatly affected by years of civil war between what is today the country of Sudan to the north and the independent country of South Sudan, by walking alongside the communities and leadership to help provide education.

Bethlehem

The Evangelical Christmas Lutheran Church is the oldest Lutheran Church in Palestine, started in 1854 by German missionaries. Today, it is one of six Lutheran churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. In September 2019, St. John's and Christmas Lutheran Church of Bethlehem signed a covenant formalizing the partnership between the two congregations.

Twelve of our youth recently partnered with Christmas Lutheran Church youth who traveled to Salisbury. Together the youth traveled to Ocean City, MD and Washington, DC. They spent time in fellowship, prayer, and studying scripture.

\$37,530 in Global Ministry Grants

Over the last year, grants have been provided to support a variety of global ministry projects, including providing breakfast and lunch to students at Escuela Integrada, scholarships for university students in South Sudan, English learning materials and program supplies for New Americans, and salary support for the office staff of Christmas Lutheran Church (Bethlehem).

Guatemala

- For 15 years, St. John's has been in a deeply personal relationship with the Escuela Integrada school in Antigua Guatemala.
- The school serves over 200 children in the surrounding villages of Antigua.
- One half of the school's resources come through the sponsorship program.
- The school focuses on holistic ministry - aiding student's growth physically, emotionally and spiritually.

St. John's support has made all the difference!

GRACES turned 10 years old on May 21! We have so much to be grateful for over the last 10 years, including the community of supporters at St. John's.

Ten years ago, Escuela Integrada was on the brink of closing its doors after the previous funding organization dissolved. Thankfully, a group of dedicated volunteers—many of whom were from St. John's—quickly formed a new entity to preserve Escuela Integrada in their moment of greatest need.

The programs would cease to exist if it were not for individuals, churches and groups who come alongside the organization in partnership, financial support and service. Over the last 10 years, St. John's has been an active participant in youth and adult Vision Trips, service activities, Corriendo por Oportunidades (formerly Racing for GRACES), and student sponsorships.



Our Future Together

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

- Jeremiah 29:11

Increasing your generous giving, as you are able, will help fund everything that we do and everything that we dream of doing in the future. Inspired by our faith, made real in our lives, it is only together that we can dream big. It is together that we will discover the plans God has for St. John's.

Next Gen Ministry

St. John's has a fun, multi-faceted next generation ministry, spanning from nursery to confirmation to high school graduation. Our students learn about Jesus's love and put into practice what it means to be the hands and feet of Christ, walking alongside our community through a variety of ministries:

- Faith Milestones for Children
- Vacation Bible School
- Hands and Feet Service Camp
- Annual Youth Mission Trips
- Confirmation Classes
- Youth Group Classes and Outings
- Youth Worship
- Lutheridge Camp
- Young Adult (20s-30s) Small Groups
- Sunday School
- Lutheran Youth Organization

Faith Formation

- Wednesday Evening Studies
- Senior Seasons Academy
- Book Studies
- Men's and Women's Bible Studies
- Sunday morning small group gatherings
- Friendship Folds
- Congregational Life Events
- Scouting
- Mercy and Justice events
- Gator Reading Club
- Community Care Clinic
- International Ministry Partners

Future Ministry Vision

- Discipleship and Faith Formation
- Worship/ Fellowship events
- Expanded Women's and Men's Ministry
- Additional worship and music events
- Staffing
- Podcast Ministry
- Exciting communications plan
- Supporting salaries and benefits for staff for retention
- Funding Catawba Worship and the Arts Intern



Our Generosity

2023

Total Receipts: \$1,611,197
 Current and Capital Expenses: \$1,491,664
 Synod Mission Support: \$88,000

2024

Ministry Budget: \$1,498,338
 Pledged Amount: \$ 1,103,619
 Projected Income: \$1,394,661

O Lord, how manifold are your works!
 In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full
 of your creatures.
 These all look to you to give them their food in due
 season;

when you give to them, they gather it up;
 when you open your hand, they are filled with
 good things.

-Psalm 104:24, 27-28

Our Generosity as a congregation is a great
 gathering up of what God has first given us and
 given creation. In our generosity let us never forget
 the great blessings of God that make this all
 possible.

The St. John's Benevolent Foundation

\$36,600 in Partner Ministry Support

Supporting local schools, scouting,
 community relations, senior adult food
 programs, college campus outreach,
 grants to local non-profits and global
 partners, and much more.

26 scholarships totaling \$45,309

For students seeking higher
 education and those studying to
 become an ordained minister in
 the ELCA.

\$395,907 in ministry support through Rowan County

Through a variety of designated funds, the
 Foundation provides support for St. John's outreach
 ministries like congregation retreats and seminars,
 continuing education, congregational service
 projects, the Gator Reading Club, the Child
 Development Center, and youth service projects.

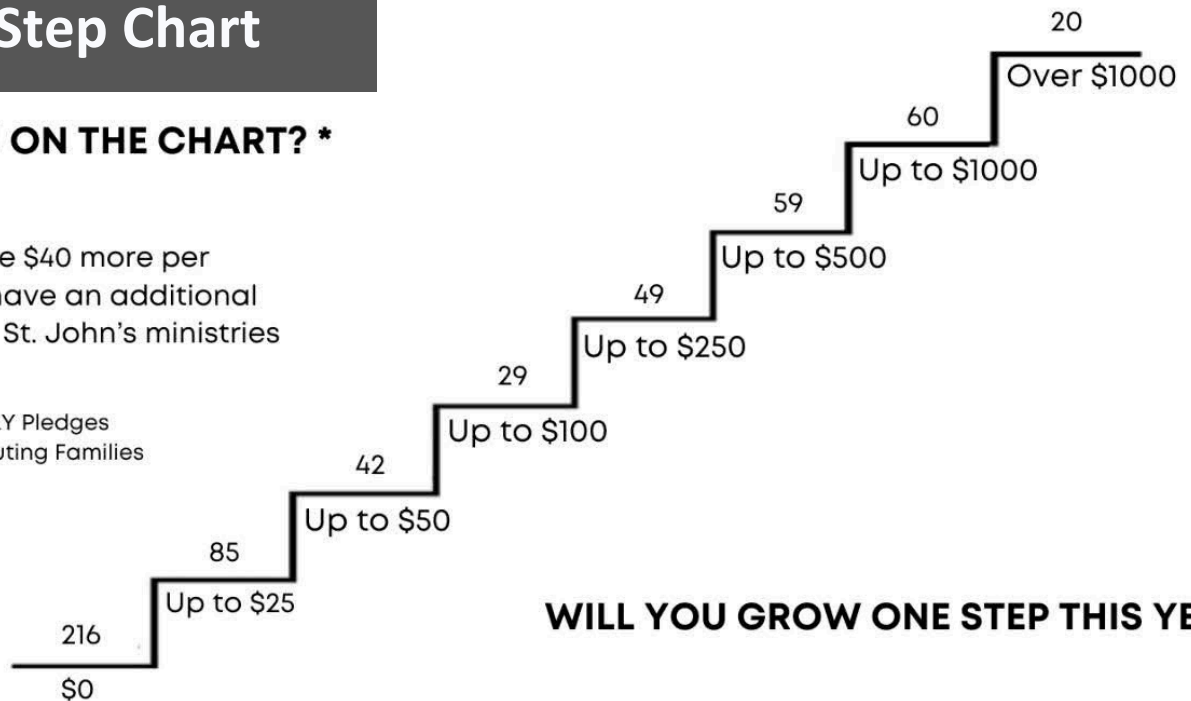
Grow One Step Chart

WHERE ARE YOU ON THE CHART? *

CONSIDER THIS:

If every family gave \$40 more per
 month, we would have an additional
 \$165,120 to support St. John's ministries
 and missions.

*Based on 2024 MONTHLY Pledges
 and gifts of 344 Contributing Families



WILL YOU GROW ONE STEP THIS YEAR?

Thank You!

Thank you for providing funds for the GRACES Meal Support Program. The funds of \$5,000 from the St. John's Benevolent Foundation, helped to provide meals for 174 students at Escuela Integradada de Niños Trabajadores during the month of June 2024. The meals consisted of breakfast and lunch that were served five days a week.

We greatly appreciate the support of the St. John's Lutheran Church Benevolent Foundation and making nutrition for these students possible.

Hannah Nadeau Girón
GRACES Executive Director

Thank you for your gift to Lutheran Services Carolina! Together we can empower our neighbors in need to live healthy, safe, and enriching lives. Each year, LSC cares for thousands of people through a variety of programs and services. Ensuring older adults have access to vibrant senior living and health care communities, protecting children from abuse and neglect, assisting those with disabilities to reach their highest potential, and welcoming refugees to become new Americans are just a few ways we are working to strengthen local neighborhoods and communities.

Ted W. Goins, Jr.
President
Lutheran Services Carolina

Thank you so much for the wonderful supplies, snacks, and books for our Kindergarten. Your love and generosity to our school is amazing and we cannot thank you enough.

St. John's Kindergarten Staff

The challenges all citizens have faced in the past three years could have weakened our resolve to help our neighbors in need. But I know with certainty that the spirit of giving long ingrained in our donors has not faded. You have answered God's call to care for our most fragile citizens. For your gifts and loving hearts, we are thankful. We are so very grateful for your generous partnership and continued support.

Kyna Grubb
Executive Director
Rowan Helping Ministries

Ten times during the winter months, a team of volunteers arranged for pick up from local farmers, divided the produce into bags and delivered it to the school. We were very pleased to be able to use The Pit at St. John's to sort the food.

The Community In Schools Social workers were so pleased and excited to receive the fresh produce to distribute to the students and their families. They have already asked if we will be able to provide School Harvest Bags to them for the 2024-2025 school year. The program went smoothly, just as we planned.

Bread Riot
Dottie Hoy

On behalf of Lenoir-Rhyne University, thank you for your gift. We are grateful for your support. Gifts like yours are enhancing our facilities, expanding access to scholarships, recruiting and retaining talented faculty and creating a rich campus life for students.

Catherine Serrin Niekro
Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Lenoir Rhyne University

