



Artist: Aelbert Cuyp (1620–1691). Title: Conversion of Saul. Date: 1645.

Second Sunday of Easter
April 12, 2026, 11:00 am



St. John's Lutheran Church

Salisbury, North Carolina

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S!

We're so glad God has brought you here!

Guest Speaker – We are excited to have Dr. Matthew L. Skinner, Professor of New Testament Luther Seminary with us today. Our sermon series dates on “*Acts: Catching Up with the Spirit*” are **Apr. 14, 21 and 28, 9:30 am – 3 pm in Ritchie Hall**. Dr. Skinner will draw our attention to what he calls the “saints around the edges”. After lunch, we will board the St. John’s bus and be led by member and historian, Dr. Gary Freeze as we visit some of the oldest churches in Rowan County connecting our story with the faithful witness of those who have gone before us.

Six-Week Book Discussion – “*Christ in the Rubble*”- Join us in person or via Zoom on **Tues., Apr. 14 at 7 pm in Room 218** (Education Wing). Written by Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, former pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church, Bethlehem, this book explains the Israel/Gaza war from both an insider as well as a Christian perspective. Contact Michael Connor at mjconnor1982@gmail.com or (734) 255-7230, with any questions.

St. John’s Pickleball – **Apr. 16, 6:30-8 pm**, weekly at the **Salisbury City Park**. Come join us for some Pickleball fun! All skill levels welcome. Contact Paige Mitchell at Pbmitchell731@gmail.com if interested.

Adult Discipleship – “*The Vanishing Church*” – Beginning on **Apr. 17 through May 15** (5 Fridays) **from 12 – 1 pm in Room 213**. Join us for a thoughtful conversation facilitated by Trevor Eppheimer, Academic Dean at Hood Theological Seminary. Bring your own lunch and beverage.

Youth Sunday – **Apr. 19** – at both worship services. Our theme this year is “*Rooted*”, and our theme verse is Colossians 2:6-7 - “*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*” We are excited to offer the opportunity for our youth to give back to St. John’s through their worship leadership and reflect upon the year they have had together. Our youth will help prepare and lead nearly every aspect of these services. Come and be blessed.

St. John’s Men’s Chorus will present a spring program titled “*Voices Raised*” on **Sun., May 17 at 4 pm in the Sanctuary**. Under the co-direction of Jason Harwood and Spence Robertson, the concert will feature the St. John’s Chancel Choir, Women’s Ensemble, and Handbell Ensemble, accompanied by Janie Rollins and guest musicians. A freewill offering will be received to benefit a local charitable organization, which will be announced next month.

VBS—ages 3 through CURRENT 5th grade—Join us on **Jun. 8-12 from 9 am—12:15 pm** as we explore the Nature of God through “*Rainforest Falls*”. Register by scanning the QR code here. Sign up to VOLUNTEER today by emailing Stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org.



VBS Registration



VBS Wishlist

Altar Flowers – Given to the glory of God and in honor of Peter Joyner Miller’s Baptism today, by his parents, Pastor Dan and Kendra, and sisters, Eliza and Jo.



*The congregation is invited to respond where words are in **Bold**.
Hymns are found by number in the red worship books located in each pew.*

PRELUDE

We rise and face the cross.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

‘Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies’

ELW 553

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

THIS IS THE FEAST

Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

...continue...

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain
has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Almighty and ever-living God, in the days of the apostles you poured out your Holy Spirit upon the Church, giving them boldness to proclaim your Word and gathering many into the fellowship of your Son: Grant us the same Spirit of power and grace, that, made alive in Christ, we may bear faithful witness to his resurrection, serve one another in love, and walk in the way of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Be seated.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Children ages 3 through 3rd grade are now invited to **Kingdom Kids**, exiting through the door near the baptismal font. Children will return to the worship service after the sermon.*

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.



READING

Acts 9:1-20

A reading from Acts, the 9th chapter.

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” ⁵ He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” He answered, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹ The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” ¹³ But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.” ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” ¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, ²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 9:9-13

Sing twice.



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 9th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him. ¹⁰ And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

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

Be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Matthew Skinner

REFLECTION SONG

Baptismal family gathers at the font.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Child - Peter Joyner Miller

Parents - *Daniel and Kendra Joyner Miller*

Godparents - *Josh and Lara Musser Gritter*

Baptismal Partner – *Sabine Witt*

PRESENTATION

People of God, do you promise to support Peter and pray for him in his new life in Christ? **We do.**

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church ... Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God and the ways of sin that draw you from God? *We renounce them.*

We rise.

People of God, do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day He rose again; He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God...unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

RITE OF BAPTISM

The Rite of Baptism includes three symbols used in baptismal liturgy since the beginning of the church: water (for cleansing), oil (for sealing), and light (for proclaiming).

Baptism with Water. Peter is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Imposition of Oil. Oil is used to make the sign of the cross on Peter's forehead, a symbol that seals him in relationship with Christ.

Gift of Light. Peter is welcomed into the Family of God. A candle (the light of Christ) is presented to him with the words, "Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Let us welcome the newly baptized: **We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: Join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative redeeming Word to all the world.**

As Peter is introduced to the congregation; all are invited to sing:

BAPTISMAL SONG

'Jesus Loves Me'

ELW 595

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong, they are weak, but he is strong.

*Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.*

Jesus loves me! He who died, heaven's gates to open wide;
he will wash away my sin, let his little child come in. *Refrain*

PRAYERS AND PEACE

Each petition concludes with the following:

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Share the 'peace' of Christ with one another.
The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Be seated.

OFFERING AND ANTHEM

'Sacred Ground'
By Benjamin Harlan

*To wonder, Lord, awake my sight, to see that Christ is all around,
so feel my gaze with heavenly light, 'Til common things are sacred ground.*

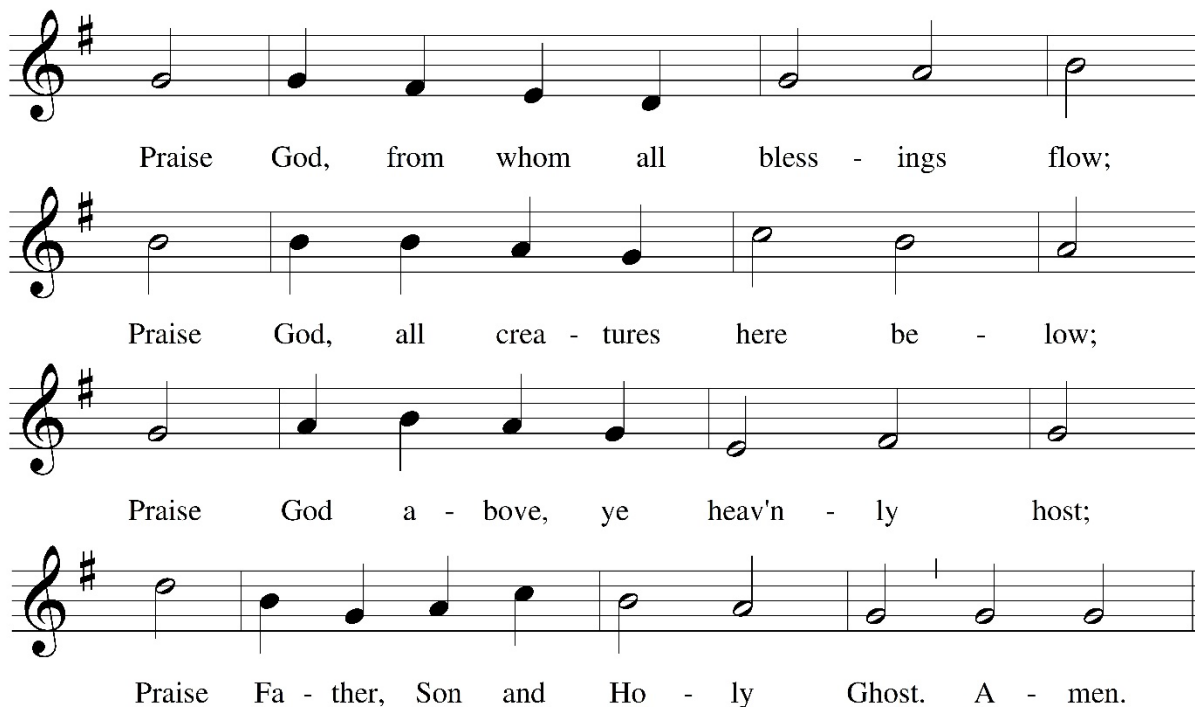
*You gift us, Lord, the world you own, to mirror here your grace above.
A child's embrace, the neighbor known, in simple signs we see your love.*

*Come now to us in stranger, in friend; in daily meals, on table shared;
in simple cup, in common bread, renew our vision to see your care.*

*All earth is filled with heaven's light, bid wondering eyes to see all around;
when Christ, diffused in all our sight: the common things, are sacred ground.*

We rise.

RESPONSE AND PRAYER



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow;

Praise God, all crea - tures here be - low;

Praise God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host;

Praise Fa - ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Let us pray: Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover
from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence. Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

With all your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us: **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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Be seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Communion in the nave. Please follow the usher's guidance. In the nave, communion is by intinction, dipping bread (gluten free by request) into wine (or grape juice). Those not receiving Communion are invited forward to receive a blessing (crossing your arms across your chest as a sign to the pastor). If you need Communion brought to you, please signal the servers when they come down from the chancel.

COMMUNION HYMN



Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Be known to us, Lord Je - sus, in the break - ing of the bread.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

COMMUNION SONG

'Duke Street'
arr. Thomas Keesecker

Kim Lentz, Performer



1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call
 2 "Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call
 3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call
 4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call
 5 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when you but call



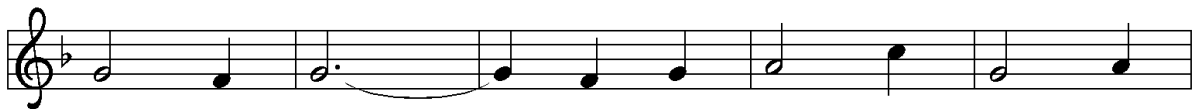
your name? Will you go where you don't
 your name? Will you care for cruel and
 your name? Will you set the pris - 'ners
 your name? Will you quell the fear in -
 my name. Let me turn and fol - low



know and nev - er be the same?
 kind and nev - er be the same?
 free and nev - er be the same?
 side and nev - er be the same?
 you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare, should your life at -
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and



name be known, will you let my life be
 tract or scare? Will you let me an - swer
 this un - seen, and ad - mit to what I
 world a - round, through my sight and touch and
 foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and live and



grown in you and you in me?"
 pray'r in you and you in me?"
 mean in you and you in me?"
 sound in you and you in me?"
 grow in you and you in me.

We rise.

COMMUNION BLESSING AND PRAYER

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen.**

Let us pray: Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

SENDING

Forgiven and nourished, we are now sent into the world to share God's love.



BLESSING

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

'Here I Am, Lord'

ELW 574

DISMISSAL AND POSTLUDE

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Cantor.....Trixie Martin
Reader.....Gerrie Blackwelder
Preacher..... Rev. Dr. Matthew Skinner
Presider and Liturgist..... Pastor James Demmel

ORDER OF ST. JOHN'S

Acolytes.....Anson Ward and Waylen Jarrett
Crucifer.....Graham Wilson
Banner Bearer.....Finn Avery

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ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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stjohns-salisbury.org | To contact a staff member: *first-name*@stjohns-salisbury.org

Pastoral Ministry

Senior Pastor.....Dan Joyner Miller...ext. 2060
Pastor for Congregational CareLori Carter...ext. 2050
Pastor for Youth and OutreachJames Demmel...ext. 2040

Worship and Music Ministry

Pastor for Worship and the Arts.....Spence Robertson...ext. 2080
Production Manager.....Taylor Hutchins...ext. 2190
Associate Parish Musician.....Janie Rollins
Contemporary Worship Leaders.....Michael Board and Ondria Witt
Director of Music *emeritus*.....Karl Kinard, Jr., *deacon*

Program Ministry

Children.....Stacey Shafer...ext. 2020
St. John's Kindergarten (4 & 5 year olds), Director.....Bonita Rowland...ext. 2120
Child Development Center, Executive Director.....Lea Anne Thomas...ext. 3212

Administrative Team

Church Administrator.....Deborah Cross...ext. 2030
Office Manager.....Vivian Connor...ext. 2000
Bookkeeper.....Mark Bias...ext. 2170
Communication Specialist.....Stephanie Mesimer...ext. 2220
Ministry Program Coordinator.....Mary Wymbs...ext. 2180
Facility Manager.....David Ellenburg...ext. 2070
Custodian.....Steven Elliott



Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*