



Title: Saint Paul delivering the Areopagus Sermon in Athens. Artist: Raphael, 1515.

Seventh Sunday of Easter
Graduation Sunday
May 17, 2026, 11:00 am



St. John's Lutheran Church

Salisbury, North Carolina

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S!

We are so glad God has brought you here!

Today is Graduation Sunday where we will celebrate our Class of 2026 graduates and acknowledge our 2026 St. John's Scholarship Recipients.

St. John's Men's Chorus will present a spring program titled "*Voices Raised*" **today, 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 the Luther Ringers, accompanied by Janie Rollins and guest musicians. A freewill offering will be received to benefit the Terrie Hess Child Advocacy Center.

St. John's Good Samaritan Ministry – We need your help! To meet the ever-growing demand and continue serving our neighbors with compassion and urgency, we are seeking to raise \$10,000 for the Good Samaritan Fund, and would encourage recurring gifts to this ministry, which will help with continued sustainability. This funding will ensure no neighbor is turned away in a moment of crisis and will allow us to expand the number of households we can assist. Scan the QR code to give now or you may call the church office.



VBS Prep Day – Thurs., May 21, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm or 6-8 pm in the Ark. Help us Prep for VBS! Stacey is ready to spark some themed inspiration, and we need you to help bring it all to life! Crafting skills are not required. Contact stacey@stjohns-salisbury.org with any questions.

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 Wish List

St. John's Kindergarten—Enrollment Now Open for the 2026-2027 School Year for Kindergarten and Pre-K. We are seeking to hire a Substitute Teacher. For information call 704-636-4404 or email at kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org.

Altar Flowers – Given to the glory of God and in honor of our Graduates from the Class of 2026, by St. John's Lutheran Church.



*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.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

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

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb! **Amen.**

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God,

you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.

You lead us beside still waters.

We thank you for the waters of creation:

morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves.

We thank you for the waters that nourish us.

Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness

who accompanies us on our journeys.

We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.

We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows.

Break down barriers that divide us.

Fill us with the breath of peace.

Blessed are you. **You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism,
and for making us a new creation.

We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise,
now and forever. **Amen.**



1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New hymns through-out the world shall
 2 The ho - ly ap - os - tol - ic band up - on the Mount of Ol - ives
 3 To whom the shin - ing an - gels cry, "Why stand and gaze up - on the
 4 "You see him now, as - cend - ing high up to the por - tals of the
 5 O ris - en Christ, as - cend - ed Lord, all praise to you let earth ac -



ring: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, by a road be - fore un -
 stand, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! and with his faith - ful fol - l'wers
 sky?" Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! "This is the Sav - ior!" thus they
 sky." Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! "Here - af - ter Je - sus you shall
 cord: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! You are, while end - less ag - es



trod, as - cends un - to the throne of God.
 see their Lord as - cend in maj - es - ty.
 say, "this is his glo - rious tri - umph day!" Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 see re - turn - ing in great maj - es - ty."
 run, with Fa - ther and with Spir - it one.



lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

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.



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.



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.



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.*

2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT RECOGNITION

*Kevin Agner
Finnegan Avery
Ryan Brady
James Demmel
Samuel Goodman
Kristin Hannon
Reagan Helmbold
Morgan Jeter
Christopher Kafitz
Dylan Kluttz*

*Kaitlyn Losh
Ainslee Lowry
Connor McCormick
Reese Merrell
Maddox Moore
Aiden Moss
Andrew Rabon
Connor Towns
Makara Trick
Audrey Ward*

*Ella Wilson
Molly Wilson
Callie Wisecarver
Cora Wymbs
Alex Yang
Ashley Yang
Ellen Yang
John Yang
Gabriel Young*

WORD

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



READING

Acts 28:23-30

A reading from Acts, the 28th chapter.

²³ After [the Jewish leaders (and others among the Jewish community in Rome)] had set a day to meet with [Paul], they came to him at his lodgings in great numbers. From morning until evening he explained the matter to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. ²⁴ Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. ²⁵ So they disagreed with each other, and as they were leaving Paul made one further statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your

ancestors through the prophet Isaiah, ²⁶ ‘Go to this people and say, You will indeed listen but never understand, and you will indeed look but never perceive.’²⁷ For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; otherwise they might look with their eyes and listen with their ears and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.’ ²⁸ ‘Let it be known to you, then, that this salvation of God has been sent to the gentiles; they will listen.’ ³⁰ He lived there two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him.

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

We rise.

GOSPEL READING

John 17:1-11

Sing twice.



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

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 17th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ After Jesus had spoken these words [to his disciples,] he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶ “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you, ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

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

Be seated.

SERMON

Connor Towns and Cora Wymbys

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, we confess our faith:

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.**

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

'Teach Me Your Way'

by Lloyd Larson

*Teach me your way, O Lord, teach me your way.
Your guiding grace afford, teach me your way.
Help me to walk aright, more by faith and less by sight;
Lead me in heav'nly light, teach me your way.*

*When doubt and fears arise, teach me your way.
When storm clouds fill the skies, teach me your way.
Shine through wind and rain,
make now my pathway plain.*

*When I am sad at heart, teach me your way.
When earthly joys depart, teach me your way.
In hours of loneliness, in times of dire distress,
in failure or success, teach me your way.*

*Long as my life shall last, teach me your way.
Where'er my lot is cast, teach me your way.
Until my race is run, until the journey's done,
until the crown is won, teach me your way.*

We rise.

RESPONSE AND PRAYER

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

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

'Hungarian Rondo'
Emmett Stephensen, performer

by Franz Joseph Haydn

COMMUNION HYMN

'I Come with Joy'

ELW 382

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.**



BLESSING OF GRADUATES

2026 High School Graduates and their immediate families are invited forward to the altar. Our 2026 high school graduates are: Finnegan Avery, Sam Goodman, Kaitlyn Losh, Maddox Moore, Aiden Moss, Connor Towns, Meredith Williams, Cora Wymbbs, Gabriel Young.



PRESENTATION AND PRAYER

A reading from John: Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” *(John 8:12)*

Members and friends of St. John’s, will you promise to keep these graduates and their families in your thoughts and prayers as they go forth into the future? **We will.**

Will you, as fellow believers in Jesus Christ, promise to help these young people as need and opportunity arise? **We will.**

BLESSING WITH FAREWELL AND GODSPEED

Graduates are invited to kneel at the altar.

THE CHARGE

A reading from Matthew: Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” *(Matthew 5:16)*

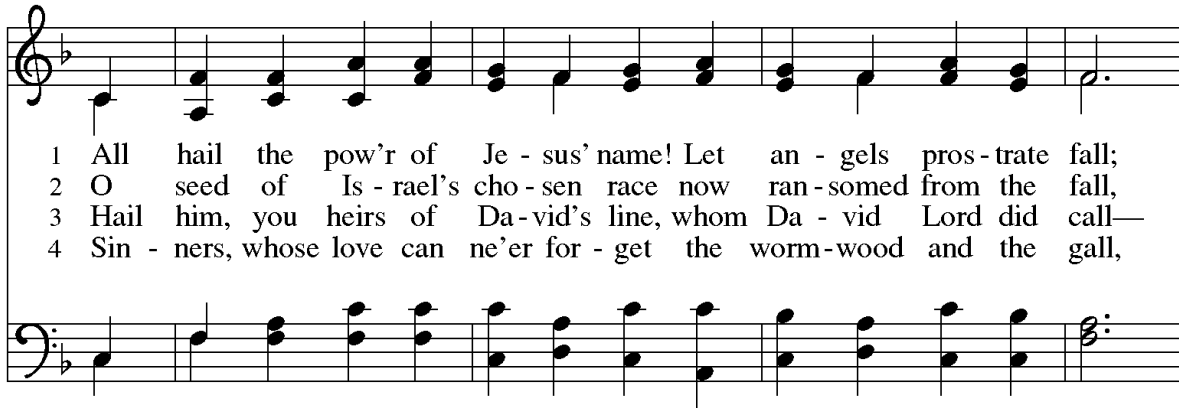
BLESSING

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.**

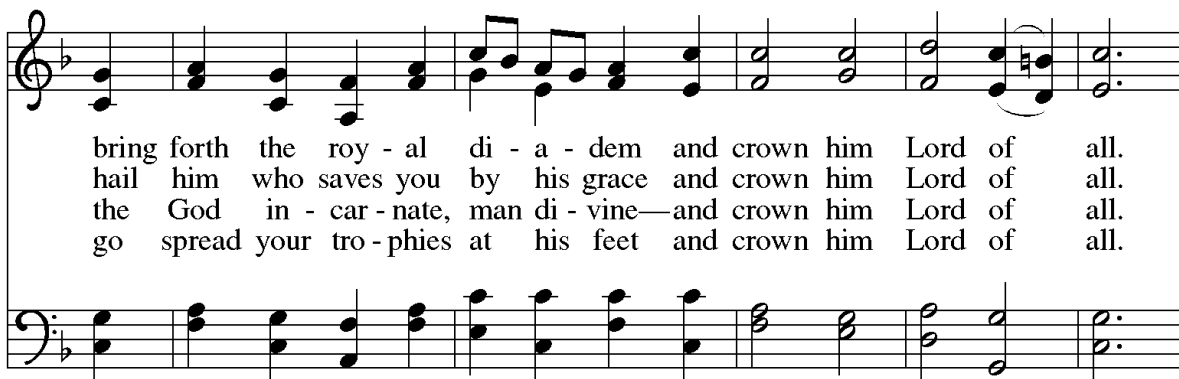
SENDING HYMN

'All Hail the Power of Jesus Name'

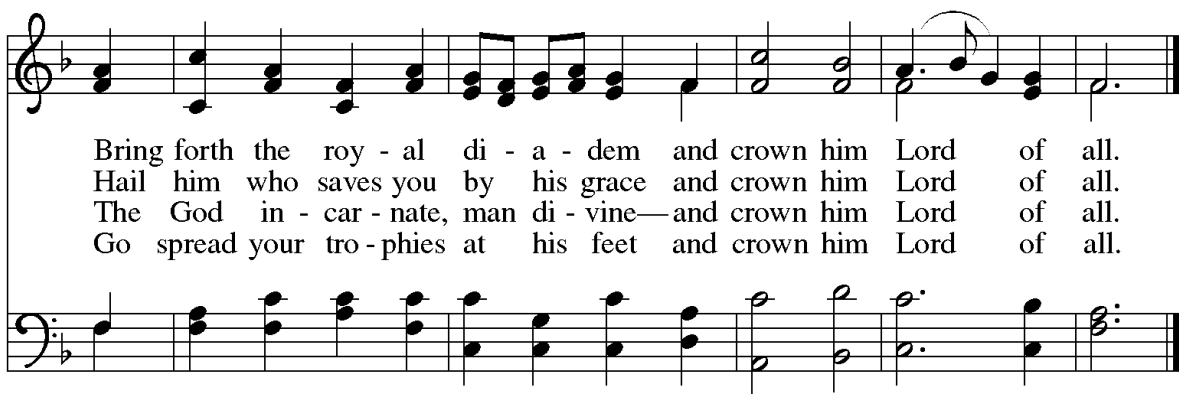
ELW 634



1 All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2 O seed of Is - rael's cho - sen race now ran - somed from the fall,
3 Hail him, you heirs of Da - vid's line, whom Da - vid Lord did call—
4 Sin - ners, whose love can ne'er for - get the worm - wood and the gall,



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
the God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem and crown him Lord of all.
Hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
The God in - car - nate, man di - vine—and crown him Lord of all.
Go spread your tro - phies at his feet and crown him Lord of all.

5 Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe
on this terrestrial ball
to him all majesty ascribe
and crown him Lord of all.

6 Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song
and crown him Lord of all.

DISMISSAL AND POSTLUDE

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Cantor.....Malachi Overcash
Reader.....Meredith Williams
Preacher.....Connor Towns and Cora Wymbs
Presider.....Pastor Dan Joyner Miller
Liturgist.....Pastor Lori Carter

ORDER OF ST. JOHN'S

Acolytes.....Noah Trick and Clara Misner
Crucifer.....Graham Wilson
Banner Bearer.....Landen Ryerson

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ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

200 West Innes Street, Salisbury, North Carolina 28144 | 704.636.3431
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.*