

JULY 2026

THE VINE

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School

Leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, His followers, and His world.

Worship in July

This month we continue our summer worship series, "You Asked For It!" Thank you to all who submitted topics for this series.



July 5

For Freedom Set Free

As our nation celebrates its 250th birthday, we focus on the meaning of freedom as it is used in the New Testament. How does that compare to the founders' definition? How does it compare to its meaning in our culture today?

July 12

God and Country

We are citizens of God's Kingdom and we are citizens of our country. What does this mean for how we live and think of our country? How do we keep love of God and love of country in the right order? We will touch on patriotism and nationalism and more.

July 19

Maker of Heaven and Earth

We confess in the creed our belief in God the creator. But what does that mean for how we think about how He created the world? Does it make a difference? We will touch on faith and science and more.



This issue:

Summer Worship Series
PAGE 2

Bible Classes & Studies
PAGE 3

Large Print Ministry
PAGE 3

Children and Youth
PAGE 4

News and Events
PAGE 5

Money Matters
PAGE 6

Mission Farm
PAGE 8

Disability Ministry
PAGE 9

Stephen Ministry
PAGE 10

Birthdays
PAGE 11

Anniversaries
PAGE 11

Daily Bible Readings
PAGE 12

Worship in July



July 26

Taking Care of the Garden

What is our Christian mission regarding God's creation? In Genesis 2, God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. What does that mean for us today regarding God's creation and caring for it?

SUMMER WORSHIP SERIES

What's coming up in our Summer Worship Series in August?

August 2

Entertaining Angels

God's Word encourages Christians toward hospitality, welcoming and caring for others. Why is this important in today's world? How can we do this when our lives are often so busy and hectic?

August 9

The Word of the Lord

Why should we trust the Bible? How reliable is it? The culture at large seems to adopt a skeptical approach to God's Word. How do we respond to this? What does it matter?

August 16

Peace In/Peace Out

School Year Theme for 2026-2027

In Colossians 3, Paul reminds us that the peace of Christ is not something we manufacture; it is a gift that rules in us, shaping our words, our choices, and our life together. Today we celebrate the God who brings peace in through His forgiveness, His presence, and His Word, and who sends peace out through acts of kindness, compassion, and love.



August 23

For Hearth and Home

What does it mean to be a Christian family? How do we incorporate and reflect our identity in Christ in our marriages, our parenting, our grandparenting?

August 30

A Fruitful Branch

Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. This agricultural metaphor is one that we relate to quite well here in our valley. The only way the branches can be fruitful is to remain connected to the vine. What does it mean to be pruned by the Gardener? What does it mean for us today to be connected to Jesus, the Vine, so that we might bear fruit?

BIBLE CLASSES AND STUDIES



Pastor Mike's Bible Class

The Book of Revelation

Pastor Mike is leading a Bible study series on the Book of Revelation. What is the meaning of this book? What does it say to us today? What are we to make of the striking images and symbols? We will be going through the entire book in the months ahead, seeking to understand and apply Jesus' revelation to John, and through him, to us today. We meet in Room 10 each Sunday after worship at 11:00 AM.



Men's Bible Study

The Men's Saturday Morning Bible Study is currently studying Paul's Letter to the Philippians. All men are welcome to join us every Saturday morning in Room 10. Breakfast will be at 7:30 AM, and the Bible study will be from 8:00-9:00 AM.



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Monday Morning Bible Study has wrapped up for the summer, but we will resume in the fall with a study of Genesis. In the meantime, if you would like more information, please contact Judi Rock at goalyce2041@gmail.com.

LARGE PRINT MINISTRY

LARGE PRINT MINISTRIES



Please join us producing Bibles for people all over the world with sight impairments

We meet in room 10
9:00-11:00 a.m.
Every Monday and Friday

Large Print Ministry Schedule Update

Large Print will not be meeting during the first few weeks of July, but we will resume our usual schedule starting Monday, July 20. For more information, please contact Sherlene Mulsoff or Rebecca Vitkus.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Join Us For Children's Church!

All children ages preschool through 5th grade are invited to join us for Children's Church, an age-specific time of teaching and fellowship during the main worship service every Sunday morning.



The children will spend the first part of the service in the sanctuary, then join their teachers for Children's Church in one of the classrooms. The children then rejoin their families for the last part of the worship service. We are also looking for more adults and teens to help lead these classes, so if you are interested, please reach out to Kevin at kevin@stjohnsnapa.org.

Vacation Bible School Recap

Many thanks to all the adults and teens who volunteered their time and talents to make this year's VBS so fantastic! We had over 120 children from our church, school, and the local community join us in Rainforest Falls to explore the nature of God and learn about His great love for them. We can't wait for next year!



Confirmation Classes

Congratulations to our 2026 confirmands! Our confirmation classes have wrapped up for this school year, but any current 6th and 7th graders who are interested in participating in confirmation classes in the fall can reach out to Kevin Mathison for more information.



Tuesday Night High School Hangouts

Tuesday is Youth Night! We're kicking things off with an apologetics series to better prepare ourselves for sharing our faith. Join us as we dive into the Word and have a little fun while doing so! Invite a friend and come join us! We'll meet on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30 PM in the SJL Library. For more information, please contact Kevin Mathison.



NEWS AND EVENTS

Congregational Budget and Election Meeting Recap

At the congregational meeting on June 7, the assembly elected Ron Johnson, Dick Lemin, Martin Meissenhalter, and Paula Schweiger to two-year terms on the Board of Directors. The congregation also approved the 2026-2027 Ministry Plan and Budget, making no changes to what the Board of Directors proposed. The assembly also authorized the securing of a Ministry Improvement Loan from Church Extension Fund for the repaving of the main parking lot.



DISABILITY MINISTRY

July 7 - Disability Ministry Task Force Meeting

St. John's Disability Ministry Task Force will be meeting on Tuesday evening, July 7, in Room 10 at 7:00 PM. If you are interested in serving on the Task Force, please plan to attend this meeting! For further information about disability ministry at St. John's Lutheran Church, or if you have an idea or suggestion that will meet someone's need or that will enrich the ministry, please contact Elaine Zimmerman at zimelaine@comcast.net or 707-225-4291.

July 16-17 - High School Rafting Trip

The High School Crew is going rafting! We will be hitting the American River rapids on July 16th, camping out, and hitting them again on the 17th. A two day trip filled with fun, fellowship, and maybe a dip in the river. If you signed up for this trip, please be on the lookout for emails from Kevin with more details.



July 18 - Kitchen & Pantry Work Party

Join us on Saturday, July 18 at 8:30 AM to clean and organize the kitchen and pantry. Bring a pail and gloves if you're able. *Cleaning supplies and lunch will be provided by Thrivent.* For more info, contact Susan Clark at 707-253-2477, or call the church office. If anyone has anything in the refrigerator or freezer, please let us know or remove it as we will be cleaning them out.

MONEY MATTERS

OFFERING UPDATE

Actual Offering Income for May:

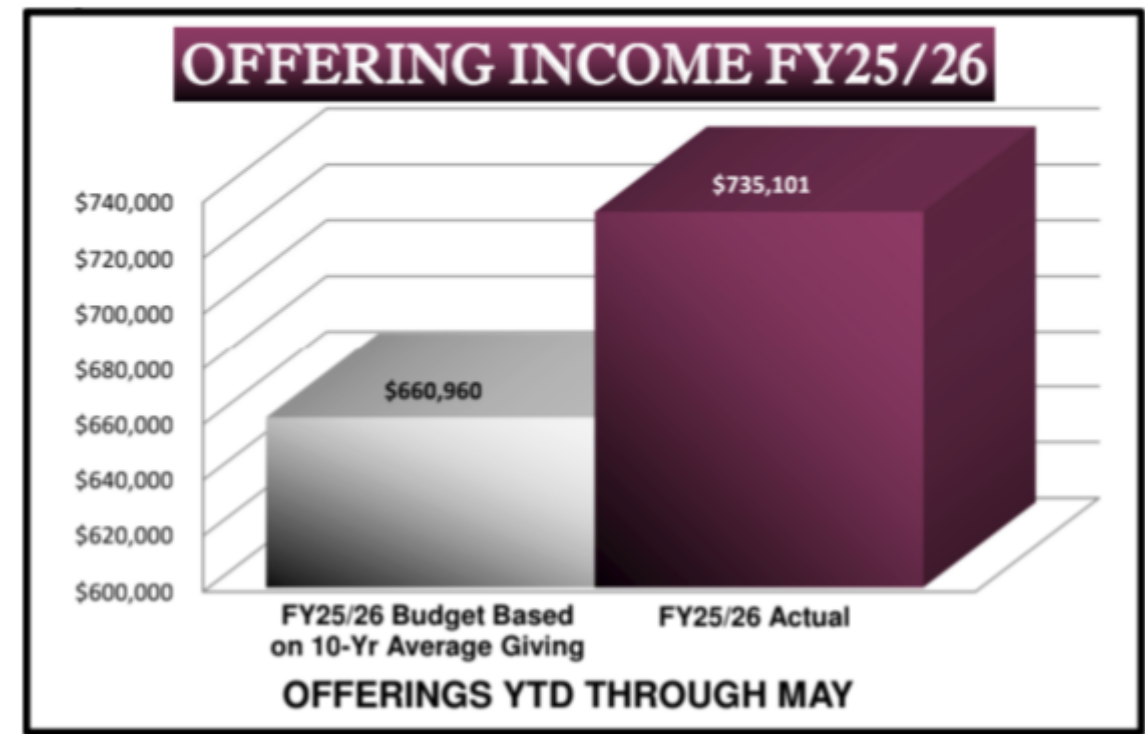
\$62,945.

Total Offerings for FY 2025-26 (as of May 31, 2026):

\$735,101 which is **11.22%** or **\$74,141** above our budgeted offering income.

Total expenses appear to be relatively in line with our budget, and we paid all bills received.

*The budget amount shown below is based on the ten-year average offering received for that time period.



Meditation:

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a little child to Him, and placed the child among them. And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'" (Matthew 18:1-4)

Giving a Cup of Cold Water

During Jesus' last three years on earth, He spent much time nourishing and teaching His disciples. Only when they were prepared to go out into the world to preach, teach, and heal did he send them. Leaving without provisions, the disciples were totally dependent upon those whom the Lord would send them for their support. The disciples relied upon the power of the Gospel to move the hearts of their listeners who would willingly provide for their needs. They were to travel light and trust in the Lord.

In Matthew 10:40-42 Jesus, referring to His disciples, said, "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward." Jesus told His disciples that whoever gives to you is also giving to Him. Although support today doesn't fund the work of the 12 original disciples, we assist the spreading of the Gospel by supporting today's disciples and missionaries around the world. As we provide for church workers locally and abroad in the name of Jesus, we are serving the Lord Himself.

As we express our Christian faith through our giving and serving, God is pleased. God notices every act of compassion and kindness that we express. In the verse above, He refers to even the simple gesture of giving a cup of cold water to a thirsty person. Through our faith, we are empowered to do acts of service. When we act in response to the Lord and not for recognition, God will bless us. Having already been assured of salvation by God's grace through faith, blessings such as peace, contentment, patience, and hope are added rewards.

Only a small number of people make their living as full-time church workers, but we all are given the privilege and opportunity to be Christ's ambassadors. May God bless us all as we work to further His kingdom.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, certainly, in order to measure up to Your standards, I must ask You to increase my faith. Still, I fail, for I do not love You with my entire being, nor do I love my neighbors as myself. I lack humility and I serve my own interests before those of others. Therefore, I thank You for the gift of Your Son Who has met Your standard of perfection and has lived that standard in my place. Forgive me, Lord, for my failures. Teach me to depend on You to give me grace to be obedient to Your command to love and to serve others even as You love me. Through Christ I pray. Amen.

Adapted from "12 Months of Congregational Stewardship" by Ronald J. and Phyllis J. Chewning, Stewardship Advisors, Inc.



Submitted by: Farmer Ted, AKA Pastor Ted

Can I tempt you with a peach? Satan used the fruit of a tree in the Garden of Eden to tempt Adam and Eve. When they looked at the fruit, they saw it was good for food, a delight to the eye, and promised the adventure of enjoying something new (Gen. 3:6). Artists have often depicted the fruit as an apple, although the Bible only describes it as the fruit of a tree. It could have been a peach like this beauty I am holding. Or one of my favorites, a pluot, which is a delicious cross between a plum and an apricot. The peach is one just picked from the trees on our Mission Farm. The volunteers had loaded them in the back of Dick Lemin's truck and were ready for delivery to the Napa Valley Food Bank so they can sweeten the lives of local families facing food insecurity. Rather than disobeying God we are obeying one of his commands recorded in both Old and New Testaments: "If a person (even one who is your enemy) is hungry, feed him" (Prov. 25:20; Rom. 12:20). Showing mercy by addressing the needs of the impoverished has always been the mark of God's people.



Your support of our work with your prayers, time, energy, skill, or financial support enables us to do this God-pleasing service. God is doing his part, opening his hand to give us thousands of pounds of fruit to enjoy ourselves, and more than enough to share with others in need. Even the fruit that falls from the trees helps feed others of his creatures.

"The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing" (Ps. 145:13b-16).



Disability Scoop

This month's Disability Ministry article is focused on disability awareness. One day this past year, I received an interesting email identified as "Disability Scoop". The title caught my attention, and I cautiously opened the site since I had no ALERT- DON'T GO THERE message from my firewall. Having been involved in Christian disability ministry for over 60 years, plus being a parent of a child with developmental disability for 54 years, I was immediately curious about this "Disability Scoop."

Disability Scoop is an online current news site. It was founded in 2008 as the nation's "Premier Source of Developmental Disability News." It includes a coverage of autism, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and more. It offers a timely and comprehensive take on the issues that matter to the developmental disability community and their families and friends.

You can learn more at www.disabilityscoop.com. You can enroll as a casual viewer, where you get all the headlines and a paragraph on each article for free. In addition, you can open two full articles each month for free. After about 4 months, I decided to actually subscribe to the website so that I could read everything that interested me! The price is minimal at \$5 per month, or an even better bargain at \$50 for a year.

The news covers a wide range of issues and articles of opportunity and interest. I encourage you to give "Disability Scoop" a try for a couple of months. It's free to check it out, subscribe to it, or simply stop receiving it. If nothing else, you will have been able to have a glimpse into the disability community and learned about their achievements, innovations, aspirations, and challenges! You will realize that their hopes and needs are the same as yours. The issues you read about may be crucial to you, your children, your grandchildren, your friend, your neighbor, your fellow church member. As Christians, we care about others as God cares for us all!



Did You Know...

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." - Matthew 11:28

77 percent of people experience stress that affects their physical health. Regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, and religion, no one is immune to the burdens of stress.

An estimated 31.1% of U.S. adults experience anxiety at some time in their lives.

Depression affects approximately 17.3 million American adults, or about 7.1% of the U.S. population age 18 and older, each year.

There are common causes of grief, including: Death of a loved one, Divorce, Loss of a job, or Death of a pet.

More than one-third of adults aged 45 and older feel lonely, and nearly one-fourth of adults aged 65 and older are considered to be socially isolated.

God never intended for us to go through these experiences alone. That's why God has brought us together as a congregation, and why we have Stephen Ministry.

Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who are trained caregivers, to minister to people experiencing a crisis, facing a challenge, or simply going through a tough time. They are prayerfully matched with people who are going through a stressful time or life difficulty.

A Stephen Minister will meet with you on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, provide emotional and spiritual support, and remind you of Christ's presence in your life. The care you'll receive is confidential, free, and very supportive.

If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more about connecting with a Stephen Minister, please contact Penni Cremen (707-483-9321) or Pastor Mike in the church office (707-255-0119).

BIRTHDAYS

		16	Riann Engelbracht, Melinda Herrera, Teri Mitchell
		17	Laurie Bresee, Matthew Commander
2	Gabriel Gutierrez, Laura Kostelac, Abigail Munoz	18	Tatum Chagonjian, James Henry
3	Christopher Johnson, Craig Underhill	20	Samuel Hoff
4	Kailea Bresee, Nancy Henry	21	Robert Ehlen, Megan Meyers, Todd Mitchell
5	Liam Alexander	23	Alexander Christie, Christine Lesti
6	Roxana Castro, Katie Chagonjian	25	Shanna Caceres, Bryce Mathison
7	Karen Dalen, Christine Zanone	26	Mark Budz, Michelle Roberts, Karol Underhill
10	Cynthia McFarland-Johnson	27	Dennis Arnett
11	Noah Helfrich, Andy Schweiger	28	Nathan Kaufmann
12	Natalie Bouchet, Alexander Winkler	29	Deidre Newton, Rodney Skillings
15	Landon Abraham	30	Susan Clark, Judi Rock, Gary Virkus, Todd Yoder

ANNIVERSARIES

1	Tom and C.C. Commander (31 years)		
3	Easton & Jessica Bresee (5 years) Todd & Teri Mitchell (44 years)		
4	Cameron & Debra Hopkins (45 years)	15	Jeffery & Cynthia McFarland-Johnson (42 years)
6	Levi & Ashley Cloud (13 years)	20	Scott & Ayne Ondek (7 years)
7	Todd & Natalie Yoder (26 years)	21	George & Andrea Clark (52 years)
9	Rodney & Marie Skillings (8 years)	27	Kevin & Megan Mathison (7 years)
10	Ken & Michele Arnold (33 years)	31	Kevin & Lezlee Cootey (44 years)

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

	Psalm	Old Testament	New Testament
1	Psalm 80:8-11	Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6	Luke 6:12-26
2	Psalm 80:12-19	Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22	Luke 6:27-38
3	Psalm 81:1-5	Deuteronomy 11	Luke 6:39-49
4	Psalm 81:6-10	Deuteronomy 12	Luke 7:1-17
5	Psalm 145:8-14	Zechariah 9:9-12	Matthew 11:16-19,25-30; Romans 7:15-25a
6	Psalm 81:11-16	Deuteronomy 13:1-14:21	Luke 7:18-30
7	Psalm 82:1-4	Deuteronomy 14:22-15:18	Luke 7:31-38
8	Psalm 82:5-8	Deuteronomy 15:19-17:7	Luke 7:39-50
9	Psalm 83:1-8	Deuteronomy 17:8-18:22	Luke 8:1-15
10	Psalm 83:9-12	Deuteronomy 19:1-20:9	Luke 8:16-25
11	Psalm 83:13-18	Deuteronomy 20:10-21:23	Luke 8:26-39
12	Psalm 65:(1-8),9-13	Isaiah 55:10-13	Matthew 13:1-9,18-23; Romans 8:1-11
13	Psalm 84:1-7	Deuteronomy 22	Luke 8:40-56
14	Psalm 84:8-12	Deuteronomy 23:1-24:13	Luke 9:1-11
15	Psalm 85:1-7	Deuteronomy 24:14-25:19	Luke 9:12-27
16	Psalm 85:8-13	Deuteronomy 26:1-27:13	Luke 9:28-36
17	Psalm 86:1-10	Deuteronomy 27:14-28:24	Luke 9:37-50
18	Psalm 85:11-17	Deuteronomy 28:25-57	Luke 9:51-62
19	Psalm 86:11-17	Isaiah 44:6-8	Matthew 13:24-30,36-43; Romans 8:12-25
20	Psalm 87	Deuteronomy 28:58-29:21	Luke 10:1-16
21	Psalm 88:1-5	Deuteronomy 29:22-31:8	Luke 10:17-24
22	Psalm 88:6-12	Deuteronomy 31:9-32:9	Luke 10:25-42
23	Psalm 88:13-18	Deuteronomy 32:10-43	Luke 11:1-13
24	Psalm 89:1-8	Deuteronomy 32:44-33:17	Luke 11:14-28
25	Psalm 89:9-18	Deuteronomy 33:18-34:12	Luke 11:29-36
26	Psalm 119:129-136	1 Kings 3:5-12	Matthew 13:31-33,44-52; Romans 8:26-39
27	Psalm 89:19-29	Joshua 1,2	Luke 11:37-54
28	Psalm 89:30-37	Joshua 3,4	Luke 12:1-12
29	Psalm 89:38-45	Joshua 5,6	Luke 12:13-21
30	Psalm 89:46-52	Joshua 7	Luke 12:22-34
31	Psalm 90	Joshua 8:1-29	Luke 12:35-48