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Keith Gingrich, Consistory President, Rebekah Reece, Pianist

August 2, 2026 • 10:00 a.m.
Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

**You are invited to stand in body or in spirit*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.

People: What had happened? Did you hear the news? There has been a death! There has been a tragedy!

Leader: Jesus went to the Father with his grief, with his sadness.

People: We too come into the Father's presence today with whatever happened this week. With our triumphs and our tears, with our happiness and our hurt, with our laughing and our lament. We draw near.

Leader: Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sickness.

People: Come close to us Jesus! Have compassion on us! We need your healing!

Leader: No matter what we bring with us to worship, Jesus has compassion and draws near to us. The love of the Father embraces us today. The healing of the Holy Spirit envelops us.

People: Come let us worship the Triune God! Amen.

***OPENING HYMN #34** "The God of Abraham Praise"

*** PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Lord, we come to You today with our small offerings and our deep hungers, acknowledging our human limits. As You once took the loaves and fish, blessed and multiplied them to satisfy the crowd, multiply our efforts, our time, and our love. Fill us with Your presence, that we may leave here nourished and equipped to serve others in Your name. **Amen**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Leader: When Jesus saw that the crowd was hungry, he took five loaves of bread and two fish, he gave thanks to his Father, and then he fed the people. Holy Father, you are the God who feeds us, yet we forget to give you thanks. Instead, we take pride in our work, we celebrate our independence, we lie to ourselves that we are the ones who have done it all.

People: Lord, have mercy on us.

Leader: When Jesus fed the people, everyone was satisfied, and there were even twelve baskets of leftovers! Holy Father, you are the God who feeds us in abundance, yet we often live as if resources are scarce. We cling to our food, our things, and our money instead of sharing with our neighbors near and far.

People: Lord, have mercy on us. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: Let us pray: Gracious Father, teach us to give thanks. Fill our hearts with gratitude for all that you have given us, and from that gratitude, enable us to share what you have given us with others. May we reflect your gracious abundance with everyone we encounter. Amen.

People: While we were still sinners, Jesus invited us to the table to feast. In his compassion, he gave his body and his blood for us. God grants us forgiveness and feeds us grace today! Amen!

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And 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, dead, and buried. He descended into Hades; the third day, He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick 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.

HYMN #383 "Open Our Eyes, Lord"

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 32: 22-31 (pg. 30)

Psalms 17: 1-7, 15 (pg. 496)

Romans 9: 1-5 (pg. 159)

Matthew 14: 13-21 (p. 16)

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON

“Wrestling Until Dawn”

Pastor Fureman

PASTORAL PRAYER / LORD'S PRAYER

Gracious and Compassionate God, we gather today carrying the weight of a weary world. Like the crowds who followed Jesus into the desolate place, we come seeking Your healing, Your teaching, and Your presence. Lord, look upon us with compassion. Heal our sicknesses, quiet our anxieties, and restore our souls. We confess that we often look at the problems around us and see only scarcity. We look at our empty hands and cry out, 'We have nothing here.' Forgive us for our lack of faith. Remind us that You are the Lord of abundance. Open our eyes to see the hidden resources of grace, love, and community that You have already placed among us. We pray today for those who are physically and spiritually hungry. Comfort those facing financial strain, illness, or grief. Break the bread of Your presence to them. Teach us, as Your disciples, not to send the needy away, but to step forward and say, 'We will help feed them.' Use our hands to distribute Your blessings. Multiply the small acts of kindness shared in this community this week. May our fragments of time, energy, and love be gathered up to show Your glory to the world. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, who satisfies our deepest hungers, and who taught us to pray... **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 debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Hymn #323 “Let Us Break Bread Together”

HOLY COMMUNION (Please see insert)

***INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

In the Gospel of Matthew, the disciples looked at a crowd of thousands and saw only scarcity, saying, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' But Jesus took those small gifts, blessed them, and broke them, and everyone was satisfied. We, too, look at our world and see overwhelming need. We might feel that our individual gifts are too small to make a difference. But when we place what we have into the hands of Christ, scarcity turns into abundance. Let us now

bring our tithes, offerings, and gifts to the Lord, trusting Him to multiply them for the healing of the world.

***OFFERING RESPONSE** “Doxology” (Hymnal, p. 625)

***DEDICATION OF OUR GIFTS**

Generous God, we bring to You what we have, knowing it is small compared to the vast needs of our world. Yet, we remember how You turned five loaves and two fish into an abundance for thousands. Take these tithes, gifts, and offerings today. Bless them, multiply them, and use them to feed the hungry, comfort the hurting, and expand Your kingdom. We dedicate not just our money, but our lives to Your service. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN #602** “God Be With You”

***BENEDICTION**

Go forth into the world now, filled and satisfied by the bread of life. Do not fear the desolate places or the overwhelming needs of this world. Remember that the God of abundance goes with you. May the compassion of Jesus Christ move your heart, the power of the Holy Spirit multiply your gifts, and the love of God the Father sustain you now and forevermore. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Amen.**

Liturgy based on Matthew 14:13-21, from Reformed Worship, by Katy Matejka Kroondyk, for the 10th Sunday after Pentecost.

Please join us in the Karen Light Fellowship Hall for a time of fellowship and refreshments following our service.



Thank you to our Volunteers today:

Deacon of the Month: Randy Thomas

Worship Leader: Julie Ditzler

Communion Preparer: Keith Gingrich



We **welcome Rev. Dr. John Fureman** to our pulpit here at St. John's this morning. Rev. Fureman is retired from the ministry and is an active member of Quentin United Church of Christ. He serves as President of the Lebanon Association and on the Board of Hoffman Homes. He and his wife, Rogie, live in the Lebanon area. Thank you for visiting with us and leading our worship today!

SPONSORS NEEDED for flowers and bulletins. Please see the sign-up sheet in the Karen Light Fellowship Hall.

We will collect items for **Joy Pantry** next Sunday, August 9th.

PASTORAL CARE: If anyone is in need of "pastoral care" during Pastor Tony's sabbatical, they should reach out to either Robin Gingrich, Dena Eberhart, or any other member of Consistory.

We are looking for members who are willing to serve as **Worship Helpers**, as well as provide our Sunday Message throughout Pastor Tony's Sabbatical. If you would be interested in helping, please see Julie Ditzler, Keith Gingrich, or Dena Eberhart. Thank you!

If you are interested in helping with the **Back to School Blessings** activities, volunteers are needed for the Saturday August 8th distribution to families. Please see the information on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

We are selling Marianna's **Subs and Pizzas** as an early fall fundraiser. The orders will arrive here on Thursday, September 10th. Orders are due on Tuesday, September 1st. Check out the poster and pick up an order form in the vestibule. Let's work together to make this an effective fundraiser!

On **August 30th**, we will plan to have our worship service and a picnic lunch at the "middle pavilion" at Memorial Lake State Park. The service will start at 10:00 am, with lunch to be served afterwards. There is plenty of parking! Bring your lawn chair and plan to join us! If you need directions, please ask anyone from Consistory. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 9 th	10:00 am	Worship Service
August 16 th	10:00 am	Worship Service & Potluck
August 23 rd .	10:00 am	Worship Service
August 30 th .	10:00 am	Worship Service at Memorial Lake – Lunch to follow



"In You, O Lord, I put my trust; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness. Bow down Your ear to me, deliver me speedily: Be my rock of refuge, A fortress of defense to save me. For you are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, lead me and guide me."

(Psalm 31: 1-3 NKJV)

Please keep the following members and friends of St. John's in your prayers this week: Pat Ziegler • Millie Schriver • Randy Sweigart • Gerald Rudy Cortney Smith • Tom Graby • Marlene Zechman • Steve Clark • Bruce R. Shepps • Jon Olesh • Callum Quinn • Frank Shepler • Emily Rentschler • Jean Ann and Neal Grimes • Bev Myers • Karen Metz • Harford Overton • Jodi Checket • Mike Large
Reverend Tony and Jodie Fields