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The Reverend Tony Fields, Sr., Pastor • (223) 316-7453 • fieldstsr@gmail.com
Keith Gingrich, Consistory President, Rebekah Reece, Pianist

August 9, 2026 • 10:00 a.m.
Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Over the turbulent waves of our lives, Jesus calls out to us.

People: We get so busy watching the storms that we often block out His voice.

Leader: Look again! Jesus is present and calling to you today.

People: Do not be afraid. Take the step, for Jesus will not let us down.

Leader: Come, let us place our trust in the Lord and worship God together!

Amen.

***OPENING HYMN #297** "I Love to Tell the Story"

*** PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Holy God... amidst the raging winds and shifting waters of our lives, You step off the shore to meet us. We confess that we are often paralyzed by fear. We look at the storms around us instead of looking at You. Forgive our small faith, Lord. When we begin to sink under the weight of our worries, reach out Your hand and catch us. Calm the winds in our hearts today. By Your Holy Spirit, grant us the courage of Peter to step out of the boat. Speak peace into our chaos. Open our eyes to recognize Your presence here in this place. Truly, You are the Son of God, and we gather to worship You alone. **Amen.**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Leader: Let us confess our sins together before God.

All: Lord Jesus, we confess that our faith is often small. We easily panic when the winds of life howl around us. We focus on the height of the waves rather than the power of Your presence. Forgive us for staying safely in the boat when You call us to step out in trust. Forgive us for sinking into doubt when we should be looking at You. Reach out your hand, Lord, and save us from our fears. Calm our anxious hearts and restore our confidence in Your saving grace. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: Even when we doubt, Jesus does not let go. The moment Peter cried out, Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught him. Hear the good news: Christ stretches out His hand to you today in mercy and love. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free to walk in faith.

People: Thanks be to God! 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 #342 "Just As I Am"

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28 (Pg. 34)

Psalms 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b (Pg. 556)

Romans 10: 5-15 (Pg. 160)

Matthew 14: 22-33 (Pg. 16)

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

MESSAGE

"Why Did You Doubt?"

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION / LORD'S PRAYER

Holy and Loving God, You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in times of trouble. When the winds of life howl and the waves rise high, You do not leave us marooned in the storm. You come to us, walking across the troubled

waters, saying, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Lord, we confess that our hearts are often heavy with fear. We look at the headlines, the economic uncertainties, the divisions in our world, and the fractures in our own lives, and we feel the wind whipping around us. We confess that like Peter, we easily lose our focus. We take our eyes off You and begin to sink into despair, anxiety, and doubt. In Your great mercy, catch us when we fall. Reach out Your hand and pull us up from the deep waters of our worries.

Today, we pray for those in our community who are currently in the midst of fierce storms. We pray for:

Those drowning in physical pain, illness, or chronic disease. Bring Your healing presence.

Those sinking into grief, loneliness, or depression. Be their anchor and comfort.

Those facing turbulent relationships, broken households, or stressful workplaces. Speak Your peace into their chaos.

Those standing at the edge of the boat, terrified to make a decision or take a step of faith. Grant them the courage to trust Your call.

We also pray for Your world, Lord.

Where there is violence and war, calm the raging storms of conflict.
Where there is injustice and poverty, empower Your Church to step out of its comfort zones to bring relief and hope.

Remind us that You are in the boat with us. Calm the winds within our own souls so that we may quiet our minds and hear Your voice. Renew our strength, increase our faith, and fill us with the peace that passes all understanding. We join our hearts and voices now to worship You, confessing with total confidence: truly, You are the Son of God. In the holy name of Jesus Christ, 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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

In the midst of life's storms, it is easy to clutch our resources tightly out of fear. Yet, Jesus invites us to trust Him completely, stepping out of our comfort zones to participate in His work. Giving our tithes and offerings is an act of faith. It is a declaration that our security is not found in the boat of our own wealth, but in the hands of the One who walks on water. Let us freely share what God has given us, trusting Him to multiply our gifts for the healing of the world.

***OFFERING RESPONSE** "Doxology" (Hymnal, p. 625)

***DEDICATION OF OUR GIFTS**

Generous God, we bring these gifts to You today as an act of trust. Take what we offer and use it to bring peace to chaotic places. May these funds feed the hungry, comfort the sinking, and shelter those caught in life's storms. Multiply our faith and these resources for the growth of Your kingdom. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN #544** "We'll Understand It Better By and By"

***BENEDICTION**

Leader: Go now into the world with courage. Do not be afraid of the wind or the waves. When Jesus calls you to step out in faith, step out boldly. When you begin to sink, trust that His hand is already reaching out to catch you. And may the blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—rest upon u, quiet your fears, and give you peace, both now and forevermore.

People: Amen.

*Sermon excerpts from "Faith in Rough Waters" by Bryce Morgan, Way of Grace Church, from the series *Our Bible Reading Plan* (2023-2024).



Thank you to our Volunteers today:

Deacon of the Month: Randy Thomas
Lay Reader: Keith Gingrich
Worship Leader: Jason Eberhart
Message: Dena Eberhart
Joy Pantry Delivery: Linda Tyrpin



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

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!

Thank you for your contributions for the **Joy Pantry** today. Our July donations totaled 70.8 pounds of food, and a \$20 cash gift. We will take a break from collecting food next month because of our irregular schedule, and will take it up again in October.

Don’t forget to sign up for our **Covered Dish Luncheon next week**. The sheet is on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Please plan to join us!

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.

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!

UPCOMING EVENTS

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
August 31 st	6:30 pm	Consistory Meeting

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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 • Steve Clark • Bruce R. Shepps • Jon Olesh • Callum Quinn Frank Shepler • Emily Rentschler • Jean Ann and Neal Grimes • Karen Metz Harford Overton • Jodi Checket • Mike Large • Reverend Tony and Jodie Fields