

St. John's Grace United Church of Christ

1000 S Rolling Road, Catonsville, Maryland 21228

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 11, 2026 11:00 AM

OCTOBER 11, 2026



TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Vision Statement:

Our vision is to be a community of faith and a voice of hope following Jesus' way of love and service.

Mission Statement:

We serve God as Christ called us, to love our neighbor and minister to everyone. We welcome you to join us no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey.

Nursery care is available during service for young children.

During the school year, Church School is offered during service after the Passing of the Peace

ORDER OF WORSHIP

+ Please rise in body or in spirit

Congregation reads text in ***bold italic.***

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Welcome and Announcements

Centering Prayer and Silence

In the name of Compassion, the embodiment of Peace, the incarnation of Mercy, we turn ourselves to you, we hear your word, we see the Radiance of your face. Our whole being resonates with your Truth. May we open ourselves to your Presence now and always, here, and in every place we travel. Let our every step recognize the holiness of the realm in which we live. Let our every word express the sacred covenant we hold in our hearts with you. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Lighting of the Presence Candle

In lighting this candle, we acknowledge that:
God is here, now, everywhere, always.

+Opening Hymn:

Gather Us In

FWS 2236

v. 1, 2 & 4

+Invocation and Call to Worship

from Psalm 46 adapted by Nan Merrill

The Beloved is our refuge and our strength,

A Loving Presence in times of trouble.

Therefore we need not fear though the earth should change,

Though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

Though its waters roar and foam,

Though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the Holy City.

The holy habitation of the most high.

The Beloved is in the midst of it, it shall not be moved;

Our loving Creator is an ever-present help.

Prayer for Transformation

We find life in you, the same life in us, the same pulse of a heartbeat that is noticed by the miracle of our awareness. We see the hands that work, the arms that carry, the legs and feet that bear the weight of our body. The gravity that holds us close to earth never stops, continuously sharing presence with us. Nothing exists without this awareness that sees everything through our eyes, that hears every sound, the deep, dark tone of emptiness breaking open into new life. Help us keep the beauty of life sacred, letting it unfold before our patient eyes. Help us to notice the small behaviors of a resurrected body, the sensitivity and tenderness, the quiet astonishment of new movement. May we celebrate the simple walk home after life has been raised up and made new. Raise us from a deathly existence, so we might transcend all that is incomplete, everything that has been denied, and from this perspective, grant us light that when we walk among people we will find the eternity that exists within us. Amen.

The Prayer for New Life

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray:

We come to your Presence, God, with humility and faith. We often deceive ourselves, we speak without thinking, we act selfishly. We fail to listen carefully, and we sometimes turn away moments where our full attention is needed. Forgive us for failing to love others in the same way we are loved by you.

Help us to live deeply into our faith, accepting that we are always beginners when it comes to accepting and giving grace to each other. We ask that you bless us in our brokenness, bless our lack of understanding and help us fully embrace your presence. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

Take comfort in the assurance that even those things that are hidden from memory, or are too deep for words, are not beyond God's love. God who knows us completely bestows pardon and grace. The past is finished we become new through God's love given to us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Children's Sermon

All children are invited to come to the front of the church for a special conversation.

+Passing of the Peace

I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river,

In my soul.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

The Hebrew Reading:

Isaiah 25:1-9

Ministry of Music:

Celebrate God's Love

Chancel Choir

+The Gospel Reading:

Matthew 22:1-14

Reflection:

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Hymn of Reflection:

When God Restored Our
Common Life

FWS 2182

Prayers for the Church and for the People

The Lord's Prayer

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. Amen.

WE SHARE OUR GIFTS

Invitation to Generosity:

God calls us to be a light to the world. We make our offering as witness to God's love at work among us. In gratitude for the gifts we have received, and in hope for the light God is still bringing into the world. Amen.

Your generous offerings are appreciated and used for continuing the missions of this church.

For electronic giving, a QR code is available in the pews or in your bulletin at the end of the printed worship service.

+Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God, for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

WE GO OUT TO LIVE AND TO SERVE

+Commission and Blessing

Our worship is ended. Our service begins.
What does God need from us?

"Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God."

Continue to serve with faith and love, depart from this time today committed to sharing the best of yourself, through extravagant generosity of time and resources, meeting the needs of others, both spoken and unspoken, seen and unseen, heard and unheard.

We will go now to share loving compassion and hope for justice with the world.

My dear friends in faith, will you to into your worlds to be people of God in Christ's name?

We will. Amen!

+Closing Hymn:

O Spirit of the Living God

NCH 263

v. 1,3,4

+Benediction

We welcome you this morning, and invite you to return, and worship with us every Sunday morning at 11:00 AM

For your convenience you can scan our QR code to contribute electronically.



Visitor Badges are available at the Greeter Desk

Help us get to know you and welcome you!

Name Tags for Members and Friends!

Members and friends are asked to wear name tags for worship time because they help other people. It is also helpful for folks who may know the face but not the name of another. Wearing a name tag is voluntary but shows that you care about others.

If you need a name tag, please ask a greeter or usher at the welcome desk to fill out a badge request slip!

St. John's Grace United Church of Christ
Stjohnsuccmd.com
410-744-5700
welcome@stjohnsgraceucc.org

Senior Pastor and Interim Minister: Rev Jeff Munnis
Email: revjeffmunnis@stjohnsgraceucc.org
Office Manager: Barbara Burck
Email: barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org

Connections...

Connecting our community through prayers, thoughts, and actions
– no matter where we are today!

WE HOLD in LOVE and PRAYER:

Please keep these friends and loved ones in your prayers! If there is someone you would like added to our list, let Pastor Jeff or Barbara know. The church email is welcome@stjohnsgraceucc.org.

Those added to the prayer list will remain for three months before being removed. If prayers need to be continued for another three months, please let Barbara know your request.

Continuing Prayers

Family and friends of Mary Weaver
Sandy Duncan
Family of David Yates
Betty Ewing & Bob, Jr.
Rosemary Woods & Janese Murray
Family of Linda Ballard
Family of Nicole Webb
Family of Charlene Stratton
Jessica Hayden
Linda Armacost
Greg Mervis

Serving Our Country

Joe Clark
Jason Shoemaker
Michael Barbarino
Josh Tullius

Assisted Living

Doris Bush
Virginia Hoffman

Our Prayers and Sympathy to the friends and family of Mary Weaver who has passed away.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Jennings Iamps Restaurant	Sun, Oct 11 th	Noon – 7:00 pm
Fall Vendor & Craft Fair	Sat, Oct 17 th	10 am – 2 pm
Ministries Council Mtg	Tues, Oct 20 th	6:30 pm Zoom
Board of Trustees Mtg	Tues, Oct 20 th	7:00 pm Zoom
Trunk of Treat!!	Sat, Oct 24 th	12-2 pm Parking Lot
Congregational Meeting	Sun, Oct 25 th	10:45 am Sanctuary
West Side Men's Shelter	Mon, Oct 26 th	Lunch & Dinner
All Saints / Totenfest	Sun, Nov 1 st	11:00 am Sanctuary

Governing Body Minutes

Our governing body consists of the Board of Trustees and the Ministries Council. Meetings are held monthly via Zoom. Interested parties are welcome. Contact the office if you would like a paper copy or email copy.

View Past Services on our Website

If you missed a worship service here at St. John's Grace, you can now view the service on our website!

Go to www.stjohnsucemd.com Worship/ Online Worship tab and scroll down to the service you would like to view.

They are on our YouTube channel so you can subscribe if you like.

Deadline for Submitting Announcements

Announcements or changes to announcements need to be submitted by noon on Tuesday prior to the Sunday service to be included in the bulletin. Email to barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org.



Notice of Congregational Meeting

Our Fall Congregational Meeting is scheduled for 10:45 am Sunday, **October 25, 2026**, prior to worship. We will be voting on new board members, the budget for 2027, and a covenant for Open & Affirming.

Your participation is very important to the life of our church.



Congregational Ballots and Voting

Voting Members of St. John's Grace have been emailed a copy of the Congregational Meeting package including a ballot. Ballots may be submitted via email to the office: barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org, and mailed or left at the office, any time prior to the beginning of the meeting on October 25th at 10:45 AM.

Packages and ballots are also available in the narthex.

Your votes and attendance are encouraged

TODAY: Restaurant Fundraiser - Jennings Café

After worship on Sunday, October 11th, our fundraiser is at Jennings Café, 808 Frederick Rd, Catonsville, MD 21228.

Noon until 7PM Eat in or Carry Out!



Open & Affirming – Questions?

If you have questions about the upcoming vote on the Open and Affirming process and what it means, please feel free to ask questions of Nancy Gardner, Jen Pettis, Jan Bauer or Fred Lease. Or any member of the board. We will be voting on the proposed covenant at the end of the month.

Westside Men's Shelter Mission – Now Serving



We will again be serving lunch and dinner to the men at Westside Shelter on **Monday, October 26th!**

We will also be needing donated cakes to be shared with the men.

For serving lunch, arrive at the shelter by 11:30 am.

For serving dinner, arrive at 5:30 pm.

Desserts are due at church by Sunday, October 25th.

The signup sheet is in the Narthex.

CEA: October is for

Ramen Noodles and Mac n' Cheese!

Most varieties welcomed!

As usual, CEA welcomes ANY food, at any time!

CEA can use any donations so please pick up whatever you can for our neighbors!

When Faith Goes to Market – It Always Takes a Basket!

Please stop by our new website: www.catonsvillehelp.org for lots of information about CEA and your community!



Craft & Vendor Show

Our annual Fair is next weekend.

Saturday, October 17th.

We are looking forward to seeing you all there!

Bring your friends and family

Thank you in advance for your help!

Remembrances for Totenfest/All Saints Day

Our service for All Saints Day will be Sunday, November 1st. A listing of those loved ones who have passed in the past twelve months will be included. If you have anyone you would like to be included, please send their information to Barbara in the office (barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org). Please include date of birth, date of death, and how their should be listed.



Mission & Outreach Transitional Hold-Alls

The National Capital Treatment and Recovery Center (a nonprofit organization based in Arlington & Alexandria, VA) provides substance abuse and mental health treatment to those who need these services. One of their programs is an 84-bed residential treatment center for men who are in need. When admitted, men usually have their belongings in paper bags.

Help them feel prouder when they leave with the donation of gently used or new backpack, duffle bag, or piece of luggage.

Please forward donations for Ken or Charlene Mowery.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 11, 2026

Philippians 4:1-9

Praiseworthy Living

Today is Laity Sunday, the day we celebrate the many astounding gifts of people who are not authorized or ordained ministers and yet serve the church in manifold ways. On this day, we remember that the priesthood of all believers means that every person has a vital part to play in the life of local congregations.

Laity Sunday is a day of joy, a day to remember that when we focus on standing with one another, even as we maintain a variety of perspectives or behaviors, we are living God's dream for us. Laity Sunday is a day to remember the gladness of giving into the spaciousness of God's call and purpose for all people. Laity Sunday is a day to focus on, as the letter writer exhorts in the epistle to the Philippians, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise."

Laity Sunday is a day to remember that this journey can be full of wonder and bursting with possibility. In short, Laity Sunday is a perfect day to play together. If you haven't already, it's a good day to check out *"Grow Your Church: A Board Game for Engaging the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Congregations"*.

This game is designed to get people talking about church vitality through the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Churches. It will help deepen relationships with each other and with the congregation's covenantal partners while laughing, thinking creatively and having critical conversations.

This game is for the decision makers and strategic thinkers. It's for the board room and the dining room table. It's for the flower arranging committee and the deacons. This game is for people who love their church and want to experience it grow in vitality and faithfulness. Roll the dice and move about a garden path with your church friends!

You can learn more about the *"Grow Your Church: A Board Game for Engaging the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Congregations"*, and order one for your own congregation at uccresources.org.



ST. JOHN'S GRACE UCC
1000 S. ROLLING ROAD, CATONSVILLE, MD 21228
410-744-5700
EMAIL: WELCOME@STJOHNSGRACEUCC.ORG

FALL FAIR

Craft & Vendor Show



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2026
10AM TO 2PM

**FOOD | RAFFLES | CAKE WALK
AND LOTS OF VENDORS!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO
[HTTPS://STJOHNSUCCMD.COM/FUNDRAISING/](https://stjohnsuccmd.com/fundraising/)