

First St. John Lutheran Church

2471 Seaman Street
Toledo, Ohio 43605
419-691-7222

office@firststjohn.com

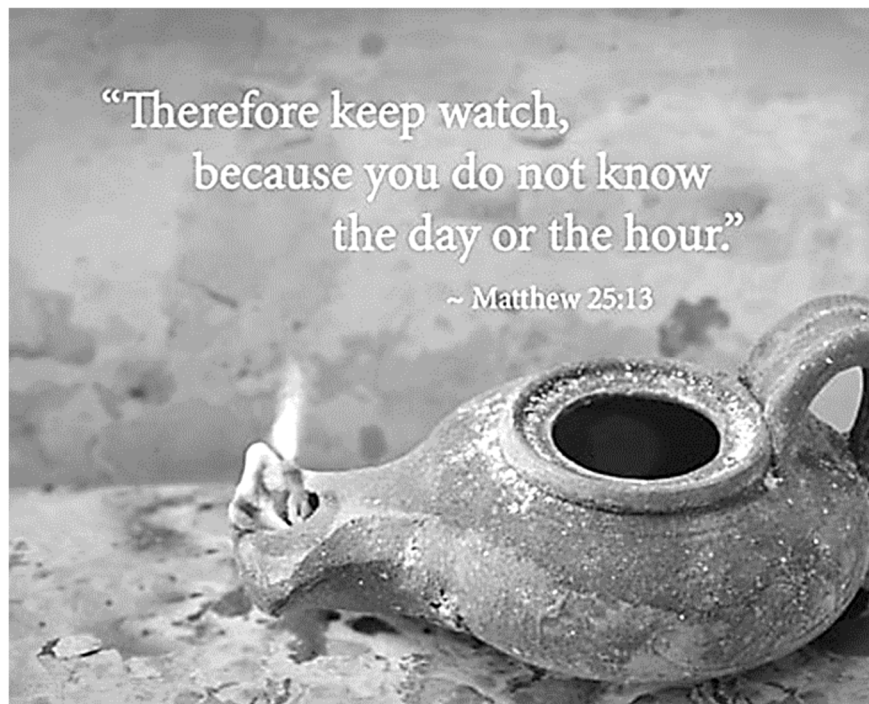
www.firststjohn.com

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

November 8, 2020

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23rd Sunday After Pentecost

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! Please review some of our reopening guidelines below.

Masks must be worn. We have some available to take if you don't have one. Some are cloth masks and can be taken home to wash and reuse. There are also disposable masks.

Please do not congregate in the Narthex (entrance area) either as you arrive or leave.

To minimize direct contact, we will use the outside aisles only for entry and exit. The center aisle will be used for communion, special needs, or emergency exit.

Ushers will fill the pews from the front to the back of the church and dismiss from the back to the front. Please follow their directions. We are sorry everyone cannot have their usual seat.

Due to increased cases of Covid in Lucas County, we are returning to no corporate singing or spoken responses. Dr. Tony and Annette Slater will provide music. The service will be recorded and published to the website. Future plans are to "live stream" the service.

Elders will wear gloves. You can get a bulletin at the check-in table when you walk in. Please do not leave your bulletin in the pew when you exit; take it home or put it in the recycling bin at the front door.

There is a small wooden church just to the right of the main door when you come in. It has a slot for your offering.

Restrooms are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take the left set of steps down. The ladies room is at one end of the hallway, and the men's room is at the other. Return to the Narthex using the opposite set of stairs. Please, one person only in the restroom area.

Diaper Changing: A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

Flowers: If you would like to sign up for flowers for a Sunday, please call the church office during the week to check on availability.



2020 POINSETTIA SALE
SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD

Fill in the form below to place your order for poinsettias to be used during worship the last two weeks of December. You can place this form with payment in the wooden church we use for offering (located in the Narthex) or mail it to the church office. Payment must accompany orders. Checks payable to: **First St. John Lutheran**

Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 6th.

Number of plants @ \$10.00 each _____ Enclosed: \$ _____

Color (circle one) Red White

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) _____

In Honor of (Living) _____

November 8, 2020

23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Wise Ignorance

In today's gospel reading, Jesus suggests that what we do *not* know could make us wise. These final weeks of the church year focus our attention on the end of time. Biological life will end for each of us one day, but our deaths will be preceded by other kinds of endings. Childhood ends. Young adulthood ends. Schooling, careers, interests--even being single or being married sometimes comes to an end. "I did not see it coming." *That* can be a sign of foolishness. "I did not know if or when it might come." *That* could be a sign of wisdom.

Wisdom is not a matter of possessing a crystal ball to see the future. What is required from us is an act of imagination--the ability to envision a variety of different endings to our stories. The bridegroom could arrive early (which means we will have lots of time to party). The bridegroom could arrive late (which means we will need to have extra oil for the wait). But one thing is certain: when the bridegroom arrives, it is too late to start shopping for lamp fuel.

Wake up! The time to take action is now! Being a wise disciple of Jesus is much, much more than sitting around waiting for judgment day or searching for signs of the Lord's return. A wise disciple engages powerful acts of imagination and takes action here and now, propelled by a humility that acknowledges that we do not know what the future will bring. Our strength for living does not come from our wits or our planning. Instead it comes from the certainty that one day, indeed, the bridegroom *will* appear and the party *will* begin, and we really want to be there! What shall we do *now* with this knowledge?