

December 13, 2020

Third Sunday of Advent

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.

HOPE ☆ PEACE
JOY

Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude
Ringing of the Bell

Dr. Pattin

Praise Song *"Light of the Stable"*

Invocation

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity (+) one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace. Amen.

P: Let us come before God in confession.

(silence is kept for personal reflection)

P: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

P: Children of God, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation. Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of (+) Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads! The reign of God is near.

Lighting the Third Candle

P: Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free.

P: As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

P: O ransomed people of the Lord, come, let us travel on God's holy way and enter into Zion with singing. Amen.

ADVENT HYMN: Hark the Glad Sound – ELW 239 (v. 1 & 4)

*Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long;
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.*

*Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.*

Greeting

P: The grace given to us in Christ Jesus, the help of the Holy Spirit living in us, and the power of God who calls us with a holy purpose be with you all.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Announcements

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The people returned to Jerusalem from their exile in Babylon as the prophet had said. What they now face, however, is unforeseen hardship and oppression. Through the prophet, the Lord announces the good news of impending healing, restoration, and transformation. This good news of joy is both unexpected and inexplicable.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion--
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
⁸For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;

for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (please stand) *(sung by Annette Slater)*

*Lord, let my heart be good soil,
Open to the seed of your word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil,
Where love can grow and peace is understood. (Repeat)*

Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. John, Chapter 1.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 1:1-9

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, as one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

MESSAGE Pastor Rayl
Message Song "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" (v. 1&4)
(sung by Annette)

(Please stand)

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

(Please be seated)

The Offering *(As you exit, please place your offering in the wooden church in the Narthex if you have not already done so.)*

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Hear us, O Lord. Your mercy is great.

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 and ever. Amen.

