

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

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude

Ring of the Bell

Opening Song "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"  
(sung by Annette)

### 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 First Candle

P: Blessed are you, God of Jacob, for you promise to transform weapons of war into implements of planting and harvest and to teach us your way of peace; you promise that our night of sin is far gone and that your day of salvation is dawning

P: As we light the first candle on this wreath, wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path of peace.

P: O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.  
Amen.

*SING: Hark the Glad Sound – ELW 239 (Vs. 1 & 2)*

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

*He comes the prisoners to release, in Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.*

### 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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection waken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### Announcements

#### **FIRST READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

*Paul's first letter to the Corinthians addresses many problems that had arisen in the early church. Still, he sets these problems within the context of thanksgiving for the grace and faithfulness of God.*

[Paul writes:] <sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind--<sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you--<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. 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. Mark, Chapter 1.  
Glory to you, O Lord.

#### **GOSPEL: Mark 13:32-37**

*In today's reading, Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

<sup>32</sup> "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup> Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup> It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves

home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake--for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

### **Gospel Response**

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

*(Please be seated)*

MESSAGE

Message Song

*"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"*

Pastor Rayl

*(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.)*

### **Musical Offertory**

Dr. Pattin

### **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**

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.

### **Lighting the Christmas Tree**

P: Let us glorify Christ our light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and forever. Amen.

P: A Reading from Ezekiel 17: 22-24.

*Thus says the Lord God:*

*I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar;  
I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs;  
I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.  
On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it,  
in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar.  
Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind.  
All the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord.  
I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree;  
I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish.  
I the Lord have spoken; I will accomplish it.*

P: May this tree of lights may remind us of the tree of glory on which Christ accomplished our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, give light to our hearts.

P: That the joy of Christmas may always be in our homes, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, give light to our hearts.

P: That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the world, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, give light to our hearts.

P: Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree. May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts. May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The lights of the tree are illuminated.*

**"Tannenbaum"** (*Sung by the Annette Slater*)

*Text: Ernst Anschütz, 1824—Melodie: Volksweise (traditional)*

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
How steadfast are your branches!  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
How steadfast are your branches!  
Your boughs are green in summer's time  
And through the snows of wintertime.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
How steadfast are your branches!

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
Your boughs can teach a lesson.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
Your boughs can teach a lesson.  
That constant faith and hope sublime  
Lend strength and comfort through all time.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree  
Your boughs can teach a lesson.

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
How strong and true God made you!  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
How strong and true God made you!  
You bid us all to faithful be,  
To trust in God unchangingly.  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
How strong and true God made you!

### **Blessing**

P: May God direct your ways in peace, make you abound in love for one another and for all, and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus. Almighty God, Father, (+) Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen.

### **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Pattin

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE***

### **ELDERS**

Tom Gaskins, Terry Ruedy

### **SOLOIST**

Annette Slater

### **SOUND BOARD**

Don Holmes



**Lutheran Disaster Response**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

On Nov. 2, Hurricane Eta, a powerful Category 4 storm, hit Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. Throughout Central America, at least 171 people died. Winds as high as 150 mph caused power outages and structural damage while heavy rains caused catastrophic flooding and landslides, damaging homes, crops, roads and bridges. Just two weeks later, Hurricane Iota made landfall in Nicaragua, 15 miles from where Hurricane Eta had made landfall. Iota was the first Category 5 hurricane of the 2020 season, bringing strong winds and rains to areas already devastated by Hurricane Eta, hampering any ongoing recovery.

To assess the immediate needs and initiate a response, Lutheran Disaster Response is engaging with many companion churches and ecumenical partners in the region. While the extent of the damage is not yet known, we will accompany devastated communities from immediate relief through long-term recovery. This is an important part of Christ's call on our church.

If you can help, your gifts designated for "Hurricane Response" will be used entirely (100%) for our direct response. There are various ways to help— by check, over the phone by credit card, or online.

By Check—Make payable to Lutheran Disaster Response. Write "Hurricane Response" on your check's memo line and send to:

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
**P.O. Box 1809**  
**Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**

By Phone—Call **800-638-3522** to make a donation with a credit card. Hours are Monday—Friday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm Central Time.

Online—[www.https://community.elca.org/hurricane-relief](https://community.elca.org/hurricane-relief)

With gratitude for your partnership,

The Rev. Daniel Rift  
Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response



**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 6<sup>th</sup>.***

\*\*\*\*\*

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 29, 2020***

***FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT***

**Stay Awake!**

Some envision the end of the world as annihilation in thermonuclear destruction or in a human race that chokes to death on its own fumes of progress. Some imagine a collision of the planets. Others view this event as the freezing of the world because the sun has burned out, or as the overheating of the world because solar energy has moved in too close. Still others look for a specific day or hour when the earth and its inhabitants will be no more.

For us and countless other believers, however, the words of today's gospel sound a clarion call. We are invited to watch for the signs of the times. As these signs begin to take place, we are looking for the blessed advent of our Lord and great redeemer, Jesus Christ.

However, the curtain has not yet been lifted on the last act of our human drama. It may be five minutes to midnight and the zero hour. But that hour has not yet struck. The symphony is still unfinished; the last movement is yet to be played.

Those last signs will come in one form or another, in one way or another. The events, once started, will not go away nor be dismissed. The end-time events described in the gospels will in their own way unfold upon the stage of human history. And there will be no turning back the clock to another day, week, or time.

By God's grace and mercy, we shall stand in that multitude without number before the throne and before the very face of God for the first time! When all else has passed away, we will welcome the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ who has indeed delayed his coming, but who now finally comes to receive us.

So that we do not miss anything, wait patiently and keep awake!