

First St. John Lutheran Church

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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

February 21, 2021

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First Sunday in Lent

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.

NOTE: We can speak the congregational responses behind our masks. Dr. Tony and Annette Slater will provide music. The service will be recorded and published to the website. We are now live streaming the service on our church website, www.firststjohn.com

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
Ringing of the Bell

Dr. Pattin

Opening Hymn "Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church"
No. 321 v. 1&2 (sung by Annette)

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, (+) one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

C: Amen.

P: God hears us when we cry out and draws us close in Jesus Christ.
Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

P: Fountain of living water,

C: pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.

P: Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, Through the wisdom and power of God, your sins are (+) forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

P: Let us pray. Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Announcements

FIRST READING: Genesis 9:8-17

In the conclusion to the flood story, the Lord destroys the earth by flood, except for Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet, divine destruction, because of human sinfulness, gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation (Genesis 1), God blesses the human community and establishes a covenant with all creatures.

God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." ¹² God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." ¹⁷ God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9 (Psalm 25:1-10 [NRSV])

Your paths are love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant. (Ps. 25:9)

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you;
let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

**²Let none who look to you be put to shame;
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.**

³Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.

**⁴Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**

⁵Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.

**⁶Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.**

⁷Gracious and upright is the LORD;
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

**⁸He guides the humble in doing right
and teaches his way to the lowly.**

⁹All the paths of the LORD are love and faithfulness
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:18-22

Here the author emphasizes God's saving action on behalf of Noah, his family, and the creatures. This saving presence continues to be manifested through Christ in the act of baptism.

Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit,¹⁹ in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison,²⁰ who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.²¹ And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you--not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Lenten Verse *"Return to the Lord Your God"* (sung by Annette)

*Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
And abounding in steadfast love. (Repeat)*

Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. Mark Chapter 1.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-15

The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the gospel of God's reign.

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Sermon Hymn "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" No. 319
(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.

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: Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

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

P: Hear us, Lord.

C: Your mercy is great.

The Lord's Prayer *(prayed by all)*

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.

Blessing

P: In faith you are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you (+) that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Share the hope that is in you.

C: Thanks be to God.

[illegible]

Postlude Dr. Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Tom Gaskins, Terry Ruedy

SOLOIST

Annette Slater

SOUND BOARD

Dave Wilbarger

2021 EASTER FLOWER SALE
SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



It's time to order the flowers that will decorate the church on Easter morning, April 4th. The price is \$10.00 per plant. You can choose a lily, daffodil, hyacinth, or tulip. Fill out the order blank below and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. The final Sunday to order will be February 28th. Payment must accompany your order. Make checks out to: **First St. John Lutheran.**

Deadline for placing orders is Wednesday, March 3rd.

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

Type of plant: _____
(lily, daffodil, hyacinth, tulip)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) _____

In Honor of (Living) _____

February 21, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

The Wilderness

Who among us has been spared the wilderness? The wilderness may be different for each of us, but always stops us dead in our tracks. We are thrown into the company of wild beasts.

So it was with Jesus' wilderness. Our starchy understanding of this story assumes that for Jesus this and every step in his ministry was softened by clear and resolute understanding of the ways of the Father. Whether or not this was so, there is no doubt that Jesus allowed himself to be fully human, fully vulnerable, for our sake.

But before the wilderness, there was baptism: sign and seal of enduring love of the Father for the Son. In the baptism of Jesus by John, we are given tangible signs of God's intent to bring the kingdom of God to a wayward world: the wild and singular John, the dove, the voice from heaven. In all these tangible signs God proclaimed a radical, wild, and unexpected infusion of mercy and forgiveness, for the sake of a waiting world.

In the sign of the rainbow, God entered a covenant with Noah and all living creatures, sign and seal of enduring love. In the waters of baptism we, fully vulnerable and fully human, enter into a covenant with God. It is in the strength of that unbreakable covenant that we can live in our wildernesses as Jesus lived in his.

For some, the wilderness fades over time; for others there is no sense of an ending, just the unspeakable wilderness of one long and listless day followed by a longer night. The imprint of ashes on our days this Lenten season brings our human frailty into sharp relief. Yet by water, faith, and the word of God, our frailty is not the last word. Jesus has made it so.