

First St. John Lutheran Church

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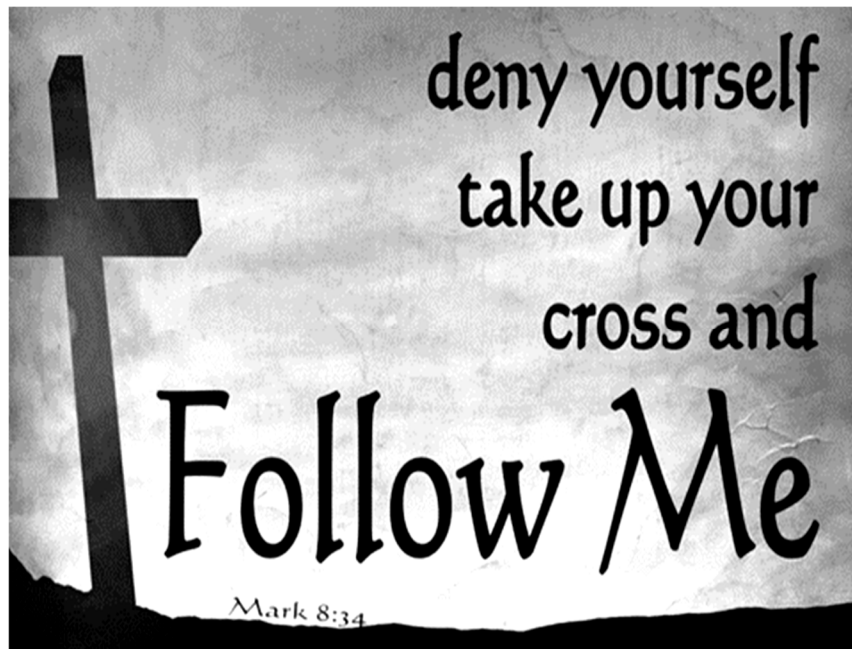
www.firststjohn.com

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

February 28, 2021

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Second 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 Song "Shine, Jesus, Shine" (Praise Singers)

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. O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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 17:1-7, 15-16

Here the writer connects the covenant made with Abraham and Sarah to the "everlasting" covenant made with Noah. The relationship between God and Abraham's descendants is as sure as the relationship between God and the seasons and times of the year. The name changes further emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarah your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

Paul is trying to persuade the Roman Christians that people are made right with God through faith rather than by works of the law. Abraham became the ancestor of God's chosen people not by keeping the law but by trusting God to keep his promises.

The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")--in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also.

It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,²⁵ who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

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 8.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Sermon Hymn

“Take My Life, That I May Be”

Pastor Rayl

No. 685

(v. 1, 2, 5, & 6 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;

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 28, 2021

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Belonging

The line between law and gospel, the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God, has been drawn in the sand in today's gospel reading. Jesus startles the disciples and us with edgy words about suffering, rejection, dying, and rising.

Peter, struggling to find logic in Jesus' words, prompts his master to describe one of the most perplexing paradoxes of following him: in order to find your life you must lose it.

A little girl, abandoned by her mother in Sweden, takes the voyage to America in the early 1900s at the age of four, tagging along with distant relatives. As a child she is shuffled from relative to neighbor, unwanted, growing up virtually alone in a strange land. One can imagine her joy in becoming a Lutheran deaconess, entering a community of strong young women like herself, belonging. Perhaps it is because she has never really had a life that this new home is so sweet. Secondary school leads to nursing school, and she comes into her own. She has found herself.

The day after her nursing school graduation, she leaves the only real home she has known. Once again, she is on a voyage, alone. This time the destination is China. Her first nursing job is as director of nursing at a hospital where she will serve alongside Lutheran missionaries in a strange land. She pours out her life, joyfully. She serves with intelligence and compassion, always taking under her wing an orphan or a misfit as her personal assistant.

Jesus calls each of us to follow him. But what shape that call takes is between the Lover and the beloved. After all, we are as individual as stars in the sky. One by one, day by day, we are called to this lavish, abandoning love.