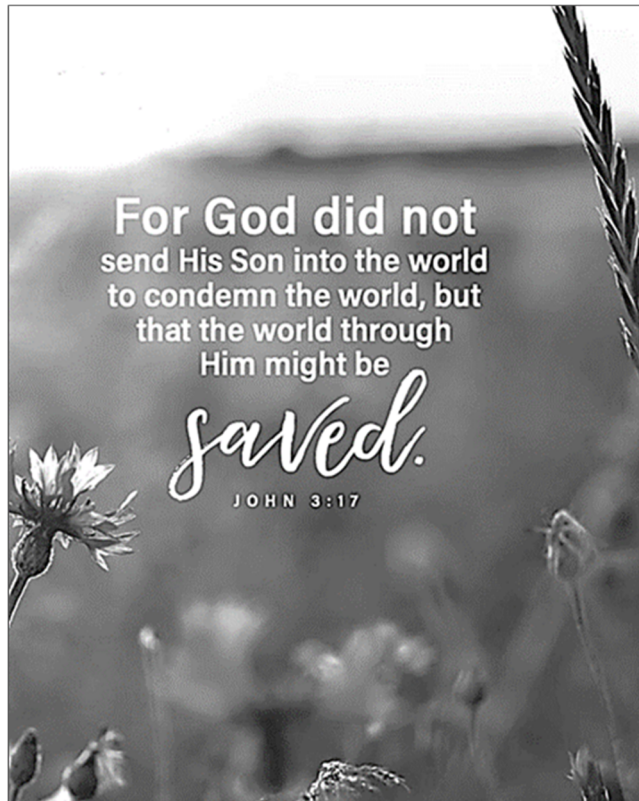


## Mid-Week Lenten Services

### *Return from Exile: A Lenten Journey*



**March 17, 2021**

**First St. John Lutheran Church  
2471 Seaman St.  
Toledo, OH 43605  
419-691-7222 or 419-691-9524**

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor  
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Organist  
Annette Slater, Music Director

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*March 17, 2021 11:00 am & 7:00 pm*

*Lent Midweek*

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#### **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

God created man, and man began his journey in the Garden of Eden. In the midst of that garden were two trees more beautiful than the rest. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life—what joy for man to come to these trees and worship, giving thanks to God for His good and gracious gifts. But one day there was an unwelcome visitor to their worship service—Satan. He had things to say, wise things to share with man. They were lies, but man followed. Sin came, and Adam and Eve were exiled from the garden and from the tree of life. How they longed to return to the garden and the beautiful tree, and God promised that He would lead the way. Jesus Christ leads us from one garden to the next and from one tree to the tree of life in the courts of heaven. It was a hard and treacherous journey for our Leader, and it required a stop at another tree, the cross. But the evil Satan, who used a tree to bring sin into world, was conquered by another tree, and our sin was washed away.

*Prelude*

Dr. Pattin

*(The Congregation stands)*

Opening Hymn “*All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night*” No. 565

#### **OPENING SENTENCES**

**P:** Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not Your peace at my tears!

**C:** **For I am a sojourner with You, a guest, like all my fathers.**  
*Ps. 39:12*

**P:** Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to Me, says the LORD of hosts,

**C:** **and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. Zech. 1:3**

P: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
**C: let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Is. 55:7**

P: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
**C: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Is. 35:10**

P: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
**C: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears!  
**C: For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers. Ps. 39:12**

### **CONFESSION**

P: We are on a journey from a deserved exile to a gracious promised land. Although we merit nothing, because our heavenly Father promises forgiveness and mercy to all who call on Him for Jesus' sake, let us go to Him, confessing our sin.

*(Silence for reflection and self-examination)*

P: Heavenly Father, we are fallen creatures, prone to hiding our faults from one another, yet knowing our sins are laid bare before You.

**C: Forgive us and clothe us with Christ's own righteousness.**

P: We have erred and strayed from Your way.

**C: Forgive us and turn our feet toward the paradise You promise.**

P: We have attempted to placate Your just demands by our own efforts.

**C: Forgive us for the sake of Your Son's sacrifice in our stead.**

P: We have often failed to reflect the new life You granted us in our Baptism.

**C: Forgive us and drown the old Adam within us.**

P: We have eaten "forbidden fruit" in our disobedient thinking, speaking, and acting.

**C: Forgive us and grant us the new life won on the tree of the cross.**

P: We have failed to trust Your care and protection as we journey through this wilderness.

**C: Forgive us and accompany us on our pilgrim way.**

P: Our gracious God, even when we were dead in our trespasses, You made us alive together with Christ (Eph. 2:5). You who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ (Eph. 2:13). May He who began this good work in you bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6).

**C: Amen.**

*(The Congregation is seated)*

### **The Service of the Word**

**FIRST READING:** from *Genesis 3:22–24*

*The devil took the form of a serpent and tempted Eve and Adam to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The couple fell into temptation and ate. Their action received the punishment God promised—death. By eating from the tree, Adam and Eve did not become wise like God as promised by the serpent. Instead, because of their sin, they became separated from God and even more different than Him. As a result, by a tree man fell away and became separated from God.*

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever"—therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

P: O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*(The Congregation stands for the reading of the Gospel)*

### **Gospel Acclamation (Spoken)**

P: Return to the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful,

**C: slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

P: The Gospel according to St. Mark, chapter 1.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-11**

*To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in Sunday's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>14</sup>"Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup>"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup>Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup>And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

<sup>20</sup>For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

### **Gospel Response (Spoken)**

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(The Congregation is seated)*

Sermon "Tree to Tree; The Tree of Life to the Cross" Pastor Rayl

Hymn "There in God's Garden" No. 342

### **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.

Offering

Musical Offertory

Dr. Pattin

*(The Congregation stands)*

### **The Bidding Prayer** *(each petition concludes with:)*

P: O Lord have mercy on us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **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.

*(The Congregation is seated)*

P: Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence and above all, that we may find our treasure in the life 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.**

P: Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,

**C: That awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.**

P: Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel.

**C: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,

**C: That awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.**

### **Benediction**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up God's countenance upon you and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## **THE PASSION HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST Reading — Part 4**

## **CLOSING HYMN      “The Old Rugged Cross”**

**On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,  
The emblem of suffering and shame.  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.**

**(Refrain)**

**So I'll cherish the old rugged cross  
Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross  
And exchange it someday for a crown.**

**To the old rugged cross I will ever be true;  
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
Then He'll call me someday to my home far away,  
Where His glory forever I'll share.**

**(Refrain)**

Postlude

Dr. Pattin

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Welcome to all who are worshipping with us in the name of Jesus Christ. Join us each Wednesday during Lent at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm in the church sanctuary for in-person worship.

The services also will be livestreamed on our church website and recorded for later viewing on our website at [www.firststjohn.com](http://www.firststjohn.com)

**ELDERS (7 pm):** Jeff Ladd, Dave Wilbarger

**SOLOIST (7 pm):** Toni Wilbarger