

First St. John Lutheran Church

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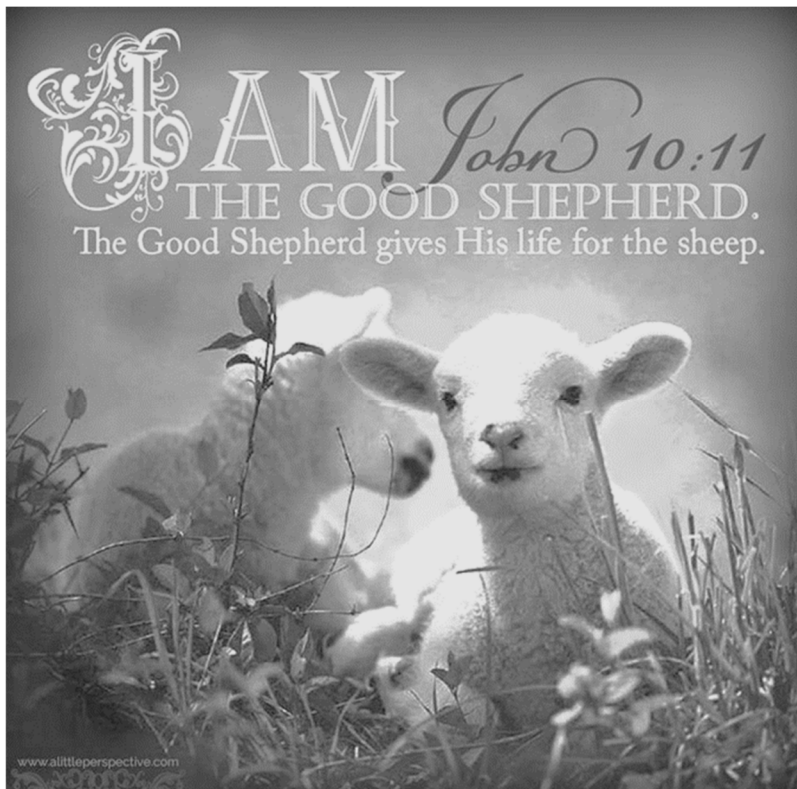
www.firststjohn.com

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Annette Slater - Music Director

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Organist

Toni Wilbarger - Secretary



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

April 25, 2021 - 8:00 am

April 25, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Easter

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 now sing the hymns and speak the congregational responses behind our masks. Annette Slater will lead the hymns. 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—8:00 am

Prelude Dr. Pattin
Ringing of the Bell

Opening Song “Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing” No. 389
(led by Annette)

The Invocation

P: In the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water is poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

P: We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.
We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.
Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

C: Make us one, risen Christ. Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life.

P: To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Announcements

FIRST READING: Acts 4:5-12

Peter and John are arrested when healing a lame man becomes an occasion for preaching in public about Jesus. When questioned by religious leaders, Peter attributes the healing to the power of the risen Christ.

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners Peter and John stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'

¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (Ps. 23:1)

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

²**He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;**

³he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

⁴**Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.**

SECOND READING: 1 John 3:16-24

This passage speaks of the great gift of God's love bestowed on all people in Christ. John notes that love is a social gift, something to be shared.

We know love by this, that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us--and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation *(led by Annette)*

*Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia. Alleluia.*

Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. John Chapter 10.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 10:11-18

In language that recalls the 23rd psalm, Jesus describes himself as the shepherd who cares for his sheep. He is willing not only to die for them, but also to overcome death for them.

[Jesus said:] ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away--and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Sermon Hymn

"The Lord's My Shepherd"

Pastor Rayl

No. 778

(led 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: God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

P: Hear us, O 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: May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, (†) Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Closing Hymn *"Sent Forth By God's Blessing"*

No. 547
(led by Annette)

Postlude

Dr. Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Ted Hagedorn, Jeff Smith

April 25, 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Shepherd's Signs

Basque shepherders left many marks as they idled away time in the American West. Their mysterious carvings on aspen trees included names, dates, initials, and human and animal figures. A seventeen-foot bronze sculpture in Nevada called "The Shepherd" portrays the Basques' work complete with signs of hat, dog, and sheep hook.

But their sheep could never be as inattentive and contrary as people are. That is why Jesus, our good shepherd, offers to lead us on a life pilgrimage where he has already walked. His clearest sign is a life laid down for us and taken up again when he rose from the dead. No one hired him to care for us; he leads the journey through life's thickets, forests, canyons, and caves because we are his sheep.

Reading a map is not the same as making a journey or experiencing a trip, and so it is with our trek. We can occupy our lives with daily concerns, work hard, save money for the kids' college, plump up the IRA, and engage in many other activities, but miss life's true pilgrimage with the good shepherd at our side. To walk that road with him is to trust his greatest sign, laying down and taking up life for our sake.

Jesus shepherds us as he did the two who walked to Emmaus, setting their hearts on fire. These nail-printed hands reveal God's full mercy; these imprinted feet lead us onto paths of righteousness. Jesus reveals his resurrection victory in the cracking of wheat and pouring of wine. These are the good shepherd's signs. When we walk with Jesus we are not strangers in a foreign land since he leads us to the Father while his Spirit nurtures and protects our faith. This shepherd will not run when danger and doubt cross our path. We know that from his signs.