

November 28, 2021

First Sunday of Advent

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism between the services. Our Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	Sunday School / Catechism
10:30 am	Late Worship

Covid Guidelines: If you are fully vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask. However, if you have not been vaccinated, please continue wearing a mask. We have some available near the entryway if you don't have one.

Livestream and Recorded Worship: We livestream the service on our church website at www.firststjohn.com. Also, the service will be recorded and published to the website.

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:15 am in the lounge (middle floor of the educational building – turn right out of the door by the choir loft).

Children ages 3 through 5th grade will meet for Sunday School in the basement of the church (the JAM Room!).

Catechism Class: Class will be held from 9:15 to 10:15 am each Sunday.

Nursery is in the church basement and is currently unstaffed; you are welcome to sit with your child. A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

Restrooms are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take either set of steps to the basement hallway. The ladies room is at one end, and the men's room is at the other.

Flowers: If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, there is a book in the Narthex (lobby) by the telephone. Or, you can call the church office during the week to check on availability.

Memorials: If you wish to give a memorial in honor or memory of a loved one, you may mail it in or pick up a memorial card in the church office or in the Narthex (lobby) and place it in the offering plate.

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude Dr. Pattin
Ringing of the Bell *(please stand as you are able)*

Opening Song "Love the Lord" Praise Singers

Lighting the First Advent Candle

Isaiah 2:3-4

P: For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
⁴He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

P: Blessed are you, O 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.

(Light the first candle)

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,

C: Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

*(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at
baptism)*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who alone does
wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good
things.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

P: God for whom we wait,

**C: in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.**

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through
the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are
children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and
recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow
the way of peace.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your
merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our
sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

*In the Hebrew scriptures, righteousness is not so much a moral virtue as the fulfillment
of the responsibilities of a relationship among people or with God. God acts
righteously in speaking against Israel's faithlessness and in working salvation for
them. Jerusalem's future name--"The Lord is our righteousness"--serves as a sign the
Lord is even now working salvation for the people.*

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I
made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that
time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall
execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be
saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will
be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. (Ps. 25:1)

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

**²O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.**

³Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

**⁴Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

**⁶Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.**

⁷Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

**⁸Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.**

⁹He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

**¹⁰All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

From Timothy, Paul hears about the faithful congregation in Thessalonica and is moved to express his thanks to God. He prays the congregation may grow in love and holiness until "the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints."

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation

*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.*

Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. Luke Chapter 21.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

When God brings creation to fulfillment, there will be dismay, perplexity, fright, and shaking heavens. But this vision also has words of assurance: for the faithful, it will be a time not to cower in fear, but to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Sermon Hymn "Oh Happy Day When We Shall Stand" No. 441

Deacon Laura Scherer

(Please stand)

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(Please be seated)

The Offering *(We now are passing the offering plates again.)*

Chancel Choir “Sing We Now of Christmas” arr. Eilers

(Please stand)

Offering Prayer

P: God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts
and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way
before us as we meet you in the lives of our neighbors in need,
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

C: Amen.

Intercessory Prayer *(following each petition)*

P: Lord in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

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: The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that
we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through
Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: Thanks be to God.

Closing Hymn
Postlude

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

No. 671
Dr. Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY’S SERVICE

ELDERS

Jeff Smith, Ted Hagedorn

SOUND BOARD

Beth Huguely

ACOLYTES

Aubrey Swartz, Jordan Cummerow

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

Please purchase full size items.

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| dish soap | shampoo, child | disposable razors |
| paper towel | laundry soap | toothbrush, adult |
| toilet paper | fabric softener sheets | toothpaste, adult |
| tissues | body lotion | sanitary pads |
| deodorant | body soap | band aids |
| shampoo, adult | | |

This is a list of the items that will provide a month's worth of hygiene supplies to families or individuals in our neighborhood to help them stay clean and healthy. We always welcome any donations from our congregation members. **If you would like to donate items, please donate only full size products as sample sizes will not last a month.**

If you would prefer a Pantry volunteer to do the shopping for you, we welcome monetary donations. Please make out checks to First St. John Lutheran Church and write Personal Needs Pantry on the memo line.



2021 POINSETTIA SALE
SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



It's time to order your Christmas poinsettias that will decorate the church on Christmas Eve. Fill out the order blank below and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office by Sunday, December 5^h. Payment must accompany your order. Make checks to: **First St. John Lutheran**

Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 5th.

Number of plants @ \$12.00 each _____ Enclosed: \$ _____

Color (circle one) Red White

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) _____

In Honor of (Living) _____

November 28, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Cleared Vision

Now and then, the landscapes and images of ancient scripture mirror our own time so eerily that we catch our breath in amazement. Today's gospel provides such an example. Distress among nations. Fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world. Powers shaken. Yes--we know about these things.

Upset and unease around the globe, reported with unrelenting vigor, may at times threaten to overwhelm us. Wars. Biological weapons. Health epidemics. Human cloning. Overpopulation. Famine. Environmental degradation. These are things that may cause general anxiety. But often, the real terrors are the day-to-day fears. Will I have enough to live on in my old age? Does anyone *really* know me? Are my children responsible, healthy, compassionate? Will I ever be happy? Have I made the right decisions about what to do with my life? Is this all there is? These human-scale worries loom large in our imaginations.

When we are haunted by worry, when our notion of who we are and what we are about seems shaken and unsteady, then, oddly enough, we are most prepared to recognize Jesus when he comes. Formidable circumstances, within or beyond our control, can bring us face to face with our need of a savior. Anxious times bring with them this clarity of vision--a vision harder to come by when everything is just as we think it should be.

On this first Sunday in Advent we are reminded again that the coming of Jesus brings only blessed consequences for those who watch for his coming with faith and hope. Jesus' presence does not guarantee a quick end to our anxieties, but does assure us that they will come to an end, and that in the meantime we are never alone. In word, meal, and the gathered body of Christ, we hear and taste and touch the presence of the one who will not let us go.