

May 7, 2023

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

I Am the Way

On the one hand, the scriptures imagine God as light, life, and truth so bright that we could not look upon it all and live. On the other hand, the scriptures show us Jesus, a real human being who is sometimes tired, thirsty, hungry, angry, and sad. He is also passionate about God's rule of the world and about bringing healing of all kinds to the people he meets.

Imagine a friendship with someone who does not believe in God but who respects your beliefs and wants to hear more about them. Where would you begin? How would you describe a future shaped by justice and life when there is so much injustice and death in the world?

Christians trying to explain their beliefs often find themselves telling stories about Jesus. He healed people, sometimes even when they didn't ask for help. He called a tax collector out of a tree and invited himself to dinner at the tax collector's house! He made powerful people angry; he lifted up the lowly. He was faithful to such things even when it cost him his life, so he knew about injustice and death from the inside. In the end, God did not abandon him but raised him up to life again. As Christians tell stories like these, it becomes clear that Jesus is the way God has made God's own self known to us.

Ask a Christian what they believe about God, and sooner or later they will probably begin to tell you things they know about Jesus. That is just how we think. Jesus has made God known (John 1:18). He is the way we know God. He is the truth of God's passionate, healing connection to the world. He is the life, God's "No!" to destruction and corruption in every form and God's "Yes!" to all that God has made.

First St. John Lutheran Church

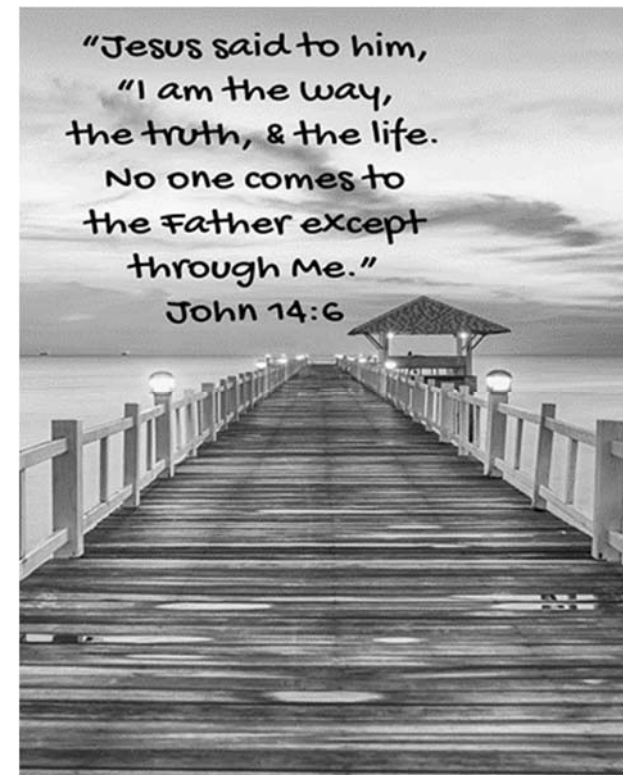
2471 Seaman Street
Toledo, Ohio 43605
419-691-7222

office@firststjohn.com

www.firststjohn.com

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Church Musician
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir Director
Jacob Kelly - Youth & Family Minister



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

May 7, 2023 - 10:30 am

May 7, 2023

Fifth Sunday of Easter

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

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	Sunday School / 1st Year Catechism
9:15 am	Adult Bible Study
10:30 am	Late Worship
11:30 am	2nd Year Catechism every other Sunday

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.

Children ages 3 through 5th grade will meet at 9:15 am for Sunday School in the basement of the church (the JAM Room!).

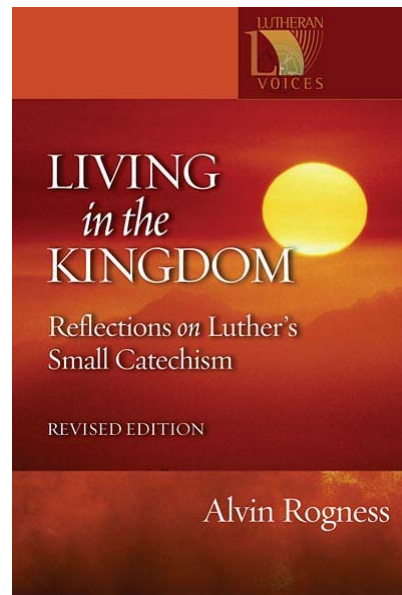
Catechism Classes: First year class will be held from 9:15 to 10:15 am each Sunday. Second year class will meet every other Sunday from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.

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 lounge. 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.



COMING IN JUNE

A very special Bible study will be presented each Sunday starting in June, following the worship service at 10:30 am.

Join Pastor Rayl as together we discuss how the teachings of the Bible and the church help us meet the often perplexing problems of life? The book, "Living in the Kingdom" will be our resource (cost \$14.99 from Augsburg Fortress Press,

also available for Kindle from Amazon).

Morning type refreshments will be served, (bagels, donuts, rolls, coffee, juice, etc.) Watch for details in the newsletter and future bulletin announcements.

This will be a great opportunity to grow and strengthen your faith and spiritual life, while having some of your big and small questions of faith addressed and hopefully answered.

(Interested in membership at First St. John Lutheran? This is your pathway.)



**GRADUATE RECOGNITION
SUNDAY
June 11, 2023**



We will publicly acknowledge all our graduates from high school and college at our worship service on Sunday, June 11th. Please plan on having your graduate attend this service as all graduates will be recognized. If you know of a graduate, please complete this form and drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or fax this page to 419-691-7220 by Tuesday, June 6th.

NAME OF GRADUATE _____

GRADUATED FROM _____

DEGREE EARNED _____

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

FUTURE PLANS (SCHOOL, WORK, ETC.):

YES, WE PLAN TO BE AT THE SERVICE _____

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude

Dr. Pattin

Ring of the Bell *(Please Stand)*

Opening Hymn “O Savior Precious Savior”

No.820

Thanksgiving for Baptism

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, by whose hand we are given new birth, by whose speaking we are given new life.

C: Amen.

P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation.

(Water is poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.)

P: Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism. Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring. In mercy and might you have freed us from death and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.

P: In baptismal waters our old life is washed away, and in them we are born anew.

P: Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for waters that wash us clean, quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures. Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism, the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

**C: Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you.
Empower our witness to your resurrection. Strengthen our
resolve in seeking justice for all.**

P: Satisfy the world’s need through this living water. Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment. Where despair prevails, grant hope. Where chaos reigns, bring peace. We ask this through Christ, who with you and the Spirit reigns forever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

Sharing of the Peace

The congregation may greet one another by shaking hands, fist bumping, or any other form of greeting with the words, "Peace be with you."

We conclude the sharing of the peace by singing:

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today" No. 365, v. 1, & 2

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

FIRST READING: Acts 7:55-60

Stephen was one of seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). But Stephen does more than distribute food. For his preaching of God's word, Stephen becomes the first martyr of the faith.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶"Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

Reader: Word of God. Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

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.



Pastoral Prayer (Each petition concludes with this response)

P: Hear us O God.

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: The God of all, who raised † Jesus from the dead, bless you by
the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation..

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn

"On Our Way Rejoicing"

No. 537

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Dick Haar, Darold Henninger

READER

Lisa Anderson

ACOLYTES

PSALM: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

Into your hands I commit my spirit. (Ps. 31:5)

In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.

²**Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily.**

Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

³You are indeed my rock and my fortress;

for your name's sake lead me and guide me;

⁴**take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.**

⁵Into your hand I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

¹⁵**My times are in your hand;**

deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

¹⁶Let your face shine upon your servant;

save me in your steadfast love.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Peter has spoken of Christians as people reborn through Christ's resurrection. Now, those who have experienced this new birth in baptism are encouraged to seek the nourishment of scripture that provides spiritual growth.

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation--³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture:

"See, I am laying in Zion a stone,

a cornerstone chosen and precious;

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

⁷To you then who believe, he is

precious; but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected

has become the very head of the corner," ⁸and

"A stone that makes them stumble,

and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

¹⁰Once you were not a people,

but now you are God's people;

once you had not received mercy,

but now you have received mercy.

Reader: Word of God. Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. John Chapter 14.

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

GOSPEL: John 14:1-14

John records some of Jesus' final words to his disciples before his departure. As the one through whom God is known, Jesus promises always to go before them and to continue to act on their behalf.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"How Great Thou Art"

No.856

(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.

(Please be seated)

The Offering

Offertory Music

"Jesus Shall Reign"

FSJ Bell Choir

Offering Prayer

P: Our generous heavenly Father, all good gifts come from you and from these riches we bring this offering. Help us to use it for the furtherance of your purpose in this place, and for the benefit of those in need, through our resurrected and living Lord, Jesus Christ.

C: **Amen.**