

**First St. John Lutheran Church**  
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[www.firststjohn.com](http://www.firststjohn.com)

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music  
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician  
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director  
Jennifer Hess, Office Manager



*Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community*

**October 22, 2023 - 10:30 am**

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**21st Sunday After Pentecost**

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

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	JAM Sunday School
9:15 am	Adult Bible Study
10:30 am	Late Worship
11:45 am	2nd Year Catechism (every other Sunday)

**LIVESTREAM AND RECORDED WORSHIP:** We livestream the service on our church website at [www.firststjohn.com](http://www.firststjohn.com). Also, the service will be recorded and published to the website

**SMILE! YOU'RE ON CAMERA:** Please remember you may be on camera during the livestream and the recording of the service.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** Please remember to silence your cell phone before church begins. Thanks!

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL** meets at 9:15 am in the lounge every Sunday.

**CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5TH GRADE** will meet at 9:15 am for Sunday School in the basement of the church (JAM Room).

**2ND YEAR CATECHISM CLASSES:** Second year class will meet every other Sunday at 11:45 am.

**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.

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**Prelude**

Dr. Anthony Pattin

**Ringin of the Bell** (Please Stand)

**Opening Hymn**

*“God is Here!”*

No.526

**Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Blessed be God, the one who forms us, ☩ Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

**C: Amen**

P: Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

*(Silence for reflection and self-examination.)*

P: Steadfast and faithful God,

**C: you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world’s violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

P: Beloved in Christ, God’s justice stretches beyond all understanding. God’s compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

**C: Amen**

**Sharing of the Peace**

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:*

***“Lord I lift your name on high;  
Lord I love to sing your praises,  
I’m so glad you’re in my life,  
I’m so glad you came to save us.  
You came from heaven to earth to show the way.  
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,  
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky;  
Lord, I lift your name on high.”***

**Prayer of the Day**

P: Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

**Announcements**

**Introduction**

When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

**FIRST READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

*Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

<sup>2</sup>We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly <sup>3</sup>remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup>because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full

conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. <sup>6</sup>And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, <sup>7</sup>so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. <sup>8</sup>For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. <sup>9</sup>For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, <sup>10</sup>and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

### PSALM: PSALM 96:1-9, 10-13 (congregation responds in **BOLD**)

*Ascribe to the LORD honor and power. (Ps. 96:7)*

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord;  
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

<sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory among the nations  
and God's wonders among all peoples.

<sup>4</sup>**For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;  
more to be feared than all gods.**

<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;  
but you, O Lord have made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup>**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence!  
power and splendor are in your sanctuary!**

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;  
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

<sup>8</sup>**Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name;  
bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;  
tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>10</sup>**Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king!  
The on who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;  
will judge the peoples with equity."**

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;  
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

<sup>12</sup>**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy  
At your coming O Lord, For you come to judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>You will judge the world with righteousness  
and the peoples with your truth.

(Please stand)

### Gospel Acclamation



### Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 22.

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

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22**

*After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.*

<sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said.

<sup>16</sup>So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. <sup>17</sup>Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" <sup>18</sup>But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup>Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup>Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" <sup>21</sup>They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." <sup>22</sup>When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

### Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

*(Please be seated)*

### **SERMON**

Pastor Rayl

### Sermon Hymn

*"We Give Thee but Thine Own"*

No.686

*(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.

### Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Merciful God,

**C: Receive our prayer.**

*(Please be seated)*

### The Offering

### Offertory Music

FSJ Chancel Choir  
Dr. Joan Walldorf—Director

### Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. Merciful God, you open wide your hand and satisfy the need of every living thing. You have set this feast before us. Open our hands to receive it. Open our hearts to embrace it. Open our lives to live it. We pray this through Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through your Savior Jesus Christ. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



P: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

### **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.

### **Invitation to Communion**

P: Come and know Christ, broken and poured out for you.

**C: We come at our Lord's command.**

### **The Communion** *(distribution will be continuous)*

*If you wish to receive apple juice instead of wine, place your hand over your shoulder as you approach the person distributing the wine.*

*"All baptized Christians, believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's table. Infants, children and others who have*

*not been baptized are welcome to come to receive a blessing; please make an X with your arms across your chest."*

*(After all have received communion, please stand.)*

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and sustain you in God's grace.

**C: Amen.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

P: Jesus Christ, host of this meal, you have given us not only this bread and cup, but your very self, that we may feast on your great love. Filled again by these signs of your grace, may we hunger for your reign of justice, may we thirst for your way of peace, for you are Lord forevermore.

**C: Amen.**

### **Blessing**

P: May God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, grant you the gifts of faith and hope. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn**      *"When Our Song Says Peace"*      No.709

### **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. God is at work in you.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

Dr. Anthony Pattin

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## PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

### ELDERS

Jeff Smith, Ted Hagedorn

### READER

Bob Haar

### SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

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## 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.



October 22, 2023

21st SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## God's Due

What are "God's things?" Are they spiritual rather than material? Are they religious rather than secular? Do they belong to the Sunday world rather than the Monday world?

In today's gospel Jesus is confronted with a question meant to trap him. "Is it lawful to pay taxes . . . or not?" hardly sounds like a trick question to us. But in Jesus' world taxes supported a foreign occupation, and so this question has political overtones. "Jesus, are you a collaborator with the Romans (or are you a revolutionary)?"

Jesus' answer cleverly avoids the trap while shifting the focus to its proper object: "Give to God the things that are God's." Jesus answers a thorny question by reminding us that some things matter more than others. The emperor's claims, as weighty as they may be, are not the ultimate demand upon us. Caesar's authority goes no further than his face on a coin. "The things that are God's" know no limits! The coin, the emperor, the empire--*all* are God's!

Giving God what belongs to God cannot be calculated by a formula or worked out as a percentage. God's due includes everything--all that I have, all that I am. It includes my possessions, my money, my skills, my personality, my relationships, my history, and my future. All of it is God's. It is not that God is greedy. The bottom line is that, simply, God is God. And that makes us stewards. All that we have, all that we are, all that has been entrusted to our care, is evidence of God's lavish and extravagant generosity. We offer these good gifts--our lives and our possessions--as the hymn of praise we sing to the God who holds the universe.