

First St. John Lutheran Church

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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

November 19, 2023 - 10:30 am

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25th 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. 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.

Prelude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ring of the Bell (Please stand)

Opening Hymn "Light Dawns on a Weary World" No. 726

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.

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"

No. 857

**"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: Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

FIRST READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining

salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 90:1-8, 12 — Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

¹Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.

²**Before the mountains were brought forth
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,**
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

³You turn us back to dust
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

⁴**For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past
or like a watch in the night.**

⁵You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;

⁶**in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.**

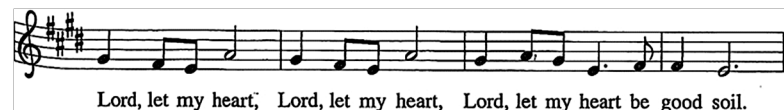
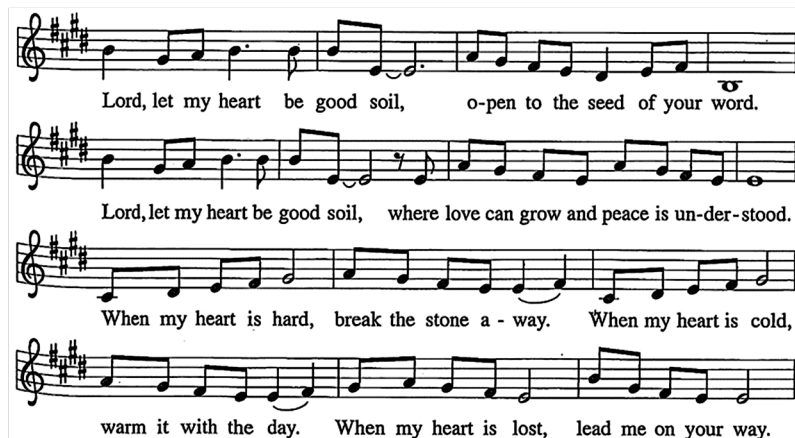
⁷For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

⁸**You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

¹²So teach us to count our days
that we may gain a wise heart.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 25.

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

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"Lord of Light"

No.688

(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

*"Precious Lord" Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician*

Offering Prayer

P: God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

C: Amen.

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

P: Merciful God,

C: Receive 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: May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn *"Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow"* No.327

Dismissal

P: Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Tom Gaskins, Terry Ruedy

READER

Tom Hartford

SOUND BOARD

Beth Huguely

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.



CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE FUNDRAISER

SPONSORED BY WELCA

Please consider helping WELCA with their Christmas Cookie Sale that will be held on December 10th after both services. To participate and help raise funds plan to bring your baked cookies on Saturday, Dec 9th between 10-12pm. All types of cookies, fudge, bars, or bark accepted. There is a sign-up sheet available in the lounge on a clipboard or complete the form below and place in the offering plate. All funds raised will be donated to the Property Management group to help with maintenance and repairs in the building. Contact Sue Ann Rogers for more information (419) 280-1310.



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☒ I will plan to bake cookies for the fundraiser and bring them on Saturday, December 9th between 10-12pm.

Name _____

Phone _____

Type of Cookie or dessert:

Quantity: _____

*****Drop in the offering plate*****

2023 POINSETTIA SALE
SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



Fill in the form below to place your order for poinsettias to be used during worship at Christmas time. You can place this form with payment in the offering plate or mail it in to the church office. Payment must accompany orders. Checks payable to: **First St. John**

Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 10th.

Number of plants @ \$15.00 each _____ Enclosed: \$ _____

Color (circle one) Red White

Name _____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) _____

In Honor of (Living) _____

November 19, 2023

25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Wealth to Share

At first Jesus' words might seem unfair: "To all those who have, more will be given . . . but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away." Wouldn't it seem more evenhanded if everybody got a little? But try to see the story from the perspective of the master. Would you rather entrust your wealth to the wise investor or to the employee who hides a million dollars in the garden?

What is most important to realize is that none of the slaves in the story owns the wealth entrusted to them by their master. The difference between the trustworthy slaves and the lazy one is that the trustworthy slaves know the master expects something to be done with the wealth left in their care. What a lame excuse when the one who buried his loan in the ground says, in effect, "Oh, I was supposed to *do* something with this?"

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of all in Jesus' story is that the lazy slave never understands the extreme generosity and the extravagant trust of his master. "I knew that you were a harsh man." Hardly! Harsh people don't leave others with a million dollars to invest.

So, what are you doing with the extravagance of God? Do you have any idea how much has been given to you? Have you tasted the generosity of God? God holds nothing back from you--not even Jesus' life! Begin by taking stock of the wealth entrusted to your care. Remember, it's not just in your bank account. It includes your time, your relationships, the story of your one-of-a-kind journey through the world. What are you doing with all that wealth? Is it buried in the garden? Go grab a shovel and get to work! Understanding how wealthy we are is the first step to becoming generous investors in others.