

First St. John Lutheran Church

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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 26, 2023 - 10:30 am

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CHRIST THE KING

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 “All Hail the Power of Jesus Name” No. 634

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: O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus’ great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. In the first reading God is the shepherd who seeks the lost, weak, and injured and feeds them with justice. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Because Israel’s kings proved to be bad shepherds, Ezekiel declares that the Lord will assume the role of shepherd in Israel. The Lord will also set over them a shepherd-messiah, “my servant David,” who will feed and care for the people.

¹¹Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on

the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

²⁰Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 95:1-7a — Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

- ¹ O come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- ² **Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;**
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- ³ For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
- ⁴ **In his hand are the depths of the earth;**
the heights of the mountains are his also.
- ⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.
- ⁶ **O come, let us worship and bow down,**
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
- ⁷ For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:15-23

In this passage, God is praised for revealing ultimate divine power in raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrected, exalted Christ is Lord of both the church and the entire universe, now and in the age to come.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 25.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus compares himself to a king who moves among his subjects to see how he is treated: what is done for the least of those who belong to his family is truly done for him.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

“Crown Him with Many Crowns”

No.855

(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

“Let us Break Bread Together”

*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.

(Please stand)

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 our 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.

(Please be seated)

Invitation to Communion

P: There is a place for you at the banquet.

C: Come and feast at Jesus' table.

The Communion (*distribution will be continuous*)

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."

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

(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 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

"Jesus Shall Reign"

No.434

Dismissal

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

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PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Bill Nelson, Mike Winslow

READER

Bob Haar

SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

SERMON NOTES:

Matthew 25:31

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne."

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.

+++++

✓ 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 26, 2023

CHRIST THE KING

A Divine Will

God wants to leave us an inheritance. But how do we get an inheritance from God? An inheritance comes after somebody dies. Ah, now we get closer to the heart of the matter! Can God die? It would not seem so, but God *did* die. That is what the cross of Jesus is all about. God died and left us an inheritance.

Thinking about today's gospel reading this way puts a different spin on Jesus' words: "I was hungry, thirsty, sick, and in prison." Jesus was dying for a long time. Jesus came among us not only to share in our life but to share in our dying as well. Through Jesus we know that God refuses to distance the divine self from our suffering, our pain, even our death. God has decided to share *everything* in the human experience--even the grave.

"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom!" What a blessing this is, that God loves us so deeply that even our dying cannot be separated from God. In Jesus God enters so deeply into the pain of the human condition that we can find God even in the places that appear most God-forsaken. God in a soup kitchen? God in a jail cell? God in a cancer ward? Yes!

The inheritance we receive from God is more than a promise of happy days ahead. God's will is to meet us even in those places where we would never expect to find God. Jesus reigns even in the places of suffering and death. It is the divine will that you should meet God where you never expected to see God.

"I was there! Didn't you see me? No? Look more closely. I am there, present in human need, ready to bless you with the inheritance that has been prepared for you."