

First St. John Lutheran Church
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www.firststjohn.com

Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music

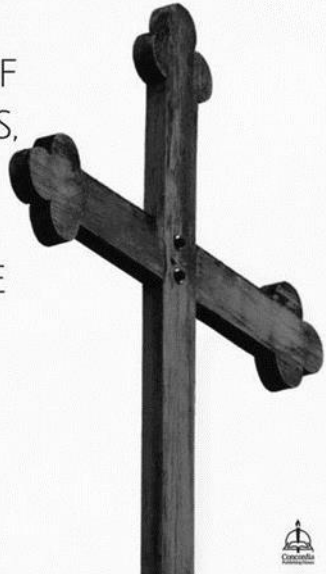
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director

Jennifer Hess, Office Manager

IF WE SAY WE HAVE NO
SIN, WE DECEIVE
OURSELVES, AND THE
TRUTH IS NOT IN US. IF
WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
He is faithful & just
TO FORGIVE US OUR
SINS AND TO CLEANSE
US FROM ALL
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

1 John 1:8-9 ESV



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

April 7, 2024 - 8:00 am

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 <i>(every other Sunday)</i>
2:00 pm	Chapel Communion <i>(2nd Sunday of the month)</i>

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.

ORDER OF WORSHIP—8:00 am

Prelude
Ringing of the Bell

Dr. Anthony Pattin

Opening Hymn “Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing” No. 389

The Invocation

P: In the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☐ one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy.

C: Amen.

P: Behold, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep

and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden’s verdant rivers.

The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.

Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom’s land.

In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life.

P: Behold, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By the baptism of Jesus’ death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people.

We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: Behold, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

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:

Opening Hymn “Come You Faithful Raise the Strain” No. 363

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the day of our Lord’s resurrection. By the grace of Christ among us, enable us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do, 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

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ’s presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. Today we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness, and material sharing such that no one among us is in need.

FIRST READING: Acts 4:32-35

While the apostles testified to others about the resurrection of Jesus, the early Christian community shared what they owned or sold their possessions to help their fellow believers who were in need.

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was

sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 133

How good and pleasant it is to live together in unity. (Ps. 133:1)

¹How good and how pleasant it is,
when kindred live together in unity!

²**It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard,
upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar of his
robe.**

³It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the hills of Zion.
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing: life
forevermore.

SECOND READING: 1 John 1:1--2:2

The opening of this letter serves as a reality check. The reality of God is light, but our confessed reality has been sin. God cleanses us from our sinful reality through Christ's death so that we live in fellowship with Christ and walk in God's light.

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life--²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us--³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ²and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

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 St. John Chapter 20.

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

GOSPEL: John 20:19-31

The story of Easter continues as the risen Lord appears to his disciples. His words to Thomas offer a blessing to all who entrust themselves in faith to the risen Lord.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

“The Day of Resurrection”

No. 361

(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

“Before the Crucifix”

Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music

Offering Prayer

P: Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

C: Amen

Pastoral Prayer

P: Hear us, O Lord,

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: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P: The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and
the Spirit of Easter hope (†) bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Closing Hymn *"Go, My Children, With My Blessing"* No. 543

Postlude Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

READERS

Toni Wilbarger

SOUND BOARD

SERMON NOTES:



“Peace be with you!
As the Father sent me,
I am sending you.”

John 20:21

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY URGENT NEEDS!

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	toothpaste, child	toothbrush, child

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.

*denotes high need items for this month



A Powerful Image

Images fill our lives. Marketing campaigns depict people, products, and symbols. Images are beamed into our homes via television and Internet. Billboards, buses, stadiums, and clothing all become canvas for visual communication. In church we touch the baptismal font in remembrance, meditate on the cross, and find peace in a window's rainbow color.

Seen or unseen, images are powerful. An inventor awakes with a problem-solving picture in the middle of the night, and some scientists think in images. The power of images is disputed by very few among us.

For Christians the image of the risen Christ is infinitely powerful. He stirs among us when pride keeps us from answering his knock, and he enters lives sometimes bolted shut to grace. As God's true image he reflects that redemption is more than a gruesome death scene on Friday. His resurrected, wounded body is an image of suffering love both for those who saw and touched him and for those who have done neither.

Seeing Jesus as the hinge of history is a life-saving image. On the far side death's wrecking ball destroys all in its path. On this side of Jesus' resurrection the hulk of death dissolves into harmless fog, and Christ reassures those who cannot touch his wounded hands and side that resurrection is coming. He is history's hinge, and in the great resurrection he will mark us forever with the image of the invincible God.

Blessed are the eyes of faith that see the most powerful image of all: the Victor towering over death. See how his hands, feet, and side point to the Father's glory. Watch him leading saints and martyrs to the banquet at God's throne. Taste it already now in the eucharist as he opens your eyes in the breaking of bread. Come, taste and touch the very power and image of God.