

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



February 4, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

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.

Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

February 4, 2024 - 10:30 am

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ring of the Bell (Please stand)

Opening Hymn “We Come to You For Healing, Lord” No. 617

Rite of Baptism See insert

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:

Hymn “We are Baptized in Christ Jesus” No. 451

Greeting

P: The grace given to us in Christ Jesus, the help of the Holy Spirit living in us, and the power of God who calls us with a holy purpose be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So, in Jesus’ healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon’s mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:21-31

The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.

²¹Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;

²³who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

²⁵To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 147:1-11— Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

¹ Praise the LORD!

How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

² **The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.**

³ He heals the brokenhearted,
and binds up their wounds.

⁴ **He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.**

⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.

⁶ **The LORD lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground.**

⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.

⁸ **He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.**

⁹ He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.

¹⁰ **His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;**

¹¹ but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love. Praise the LORD!

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

God entrusted Paul with the responsibility of bringing the gospel to diverse people. Hence the focus of Paul's ministry is not his own rights or privileges as an apostle but the privilege of serving God by freely sharing the good news of Christ with others.

¹⁶If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!

¹⁷For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as

not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. ²²To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

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 Mark Chapter 1.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39

Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.

²⁹As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

No.773

The Offering

Offertory Music

"Give Me Jesus"

arr. C. Courtney

FSJ Chancel Choir

Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

(Please stand)

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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: God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, (+) bless you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn

"When We Are Living"
(Verses 1-3 in English)

No.639

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. You are God's beloved.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

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PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Bob Haar, Sherrie Haar

READER

Toni Wilbarger

SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

SERVICES FOR LENT

GUIDED *to the* CROSS



Lent is coming with Ash Wednesday on February 14, this year. Lent is a season when we are guided to the cross. Throughout this holy time, we are drawn to Calvary to live in forgiveness, hope, love, peace, trust and perseverance. Each week, on Wednesday at 11:00 am & 7:00 pm, the services will reveal how Christ and his cross serve as examples for us of how to live our lives for and through our crucified Lord and Savior.

ASH WEDNESDAY: GUIDED TO FORGIVENESS

On Ash Wednesday, February 14, we are drawn to Calvary to receive forgiveness. In word and song, we contemplate how to live lives of forgiving one another as we have been forgiven by Christ through the cross.



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES
of Northwestern Ohio

Strengthening People in Body, Mind and Spirit

We once again will be participating in the **Souper Bowl of Caring** to benefit Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio's Food Pantry. The local Toledo food pantry distributes food to those in need every Tuesday and Thursday each month.

We will be collecting items for the pantry and also monetary donations. Every dollar donated will go directly to the purchase of food for the pantry!

Food Pantry Wishlist

- Canned Meats (Tuna, Chicken, Spam)
- Canned Fruits and Vegetables
- Canned Soup, Ravioli, Chili, Beef Stew
- Juice (46 or 64 oz.—plastic bottles only)
- Ramen
- Crackers
- Cereal
- Oatmeal or Grits
- Pasta and Pasta Sauce (Marinara or Alfredo)
- Ketchup, Mayo, Mustard
- Cake or Brownie Mixes and Frosting
- Cereal Bars
- Jelly

Grocery Carts are available for your food donations, and a soup pot is in the Narthex (lobby) to collect monetary donations. You can also donate directly to LSS by using the pink envelopes in the pew and placing in the offering plate. Please write "LSS food pantry" in the memo line. This will be our ministry focus for January and February. Please plan to participate!

Visit www.lssnwo.org for more info.

2024 EASTER FLOWER SALE
 SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



It's time to order flowers that will decorate the church on Easter morning, March 31st. The price is \$15.00 per plant. You can choose a lily, daffodil, hyacinth, or tulip. Fill out the order form below and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church. The final Sunday to order will be March 17th. Payment must accompany your order. Make checks out to: **First St. John Lutheran** and write "Easter Flowers" on the memo line.

Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, March 17th.

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

Type of plant: _____
(lily, daffodil, hyacinth, tulip)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased) _____

In Honor of (Living) _____

February 4, 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Healed for Service

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have Jesus as our own private physician? To have him lift us from our sickbed with his warm healing touch? No more trips to a long line of specialists. No waiting for days, weeks, or months to see the doctor. No more pokes, pricks, prods, pills, prescriptions . . . or bills! Just sweet immediate relief.

Jesus may be our personal Lord and Savior, but he is not our private one. We cannot hoard Jesus for ourselves. Nor can we limit Jesus to what feels good for us right now.

Early in his gospel, Mark describes a typical day in Jesus' ministry, full of miracles of healing. When the disciples tried to institutionalize this healing and open up a permanent clinic in their home town of Capernaum, Jesus said he had others to attend to and bigger fish to fry than just tending to the fevers of the locals. Jesus moved on to the next town . . . and the next one . . . and the next one, until he took on our sickness unto death, the greatest illness of them all. And this, too, is "typical" of him.

Jesus came to get to the root of our illness, not simply to treat its symptoms. And that took the stronger medicine of the cross. Jesus came to extend a healing touch to everyone and to raise up all who would entrust their lives to him. Those who are healed are in turn mobilized to serve so that the good news of the kingdom might be extended all the further--which is the whole purpose of it all.

Simon Peter's mother-in-law got the point. As soon as she was healed she began to serve. What about you? What is your response to Jesus' healing?