

## 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*

**January 28, 2024 - 10:30 am**

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**Fourth 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 (every other Sunday)
2:00 pm	Chapel Communion (2nd Sunday of the month)

**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.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ring of the Bell (Please stand)

**Opening Hymn** “Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” No. 886

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, creator of darkness and light, word of truth, wind sweeping over the waters.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: God, our rock and refuge,

**C: we pour out our hearts before you. We have known you but have not always loved you. We have wounded one another and sinned against you. We have not always recognized the Holy Spirit dwelling in each of us. Remember your covenant. Renew your creation. Restore us, that we might proclaim your good news to all.**

**Amen.**

P: The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. God has spoken: The time of grace is now. In Jesus, the reign of God has come near. By the authority of (+) Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are God's beloved.

**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:*

**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: Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **Announcements**

#### **Introduction**

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

#### **FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

*Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.*

[Moses said:] <sup>15</sup>The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup>This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” <sup>17</sup>Then the Lord replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup>But any prophet who speaks in the

name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.”

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 111**— Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

<sup>2</sup> **Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them**

<sup>3</sup> Full of honor and majesty is his work,  
and his righteousness endures forever.

<sup>4</sup> **He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;  
the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

<sup>5</sup> He provides food for those who fear him;  
he is ever mindful of his covenant.

<sup>6</sup> **He has shown his people the power of his works,  
in giving them the heritage of the nations.**

<sup>7</sup> The works of his hands are faithful and just;  
all his precepts are trustworthy.

<sup>8</sup> **They are established forever and ever,  
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**

<sup>9</sup> He sent redemption to his people;  
he has commanded his covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is his name.

<sup>10</sup> **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all those who practice it have a good understanding.  
His praise endures forever.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-6**

*Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.*

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; <sup>3</sup>but

anyone who loves God is known by him.

<sup>4</sup>Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup>Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

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 1:21-28**

*Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.*

<sup>21</sup>[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup>They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

<sup>23</sup>Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup>and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you

come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”<sup>25</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!”<sup>26</sup> And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.<sup>27</sup> They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”<sup>28</sup> At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

### Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

*(Please be seated)*

### SERMON

Pastor Rayl

### Sermon Hymn

“Healer of Our Every ill”

No.612

*(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

“How Can I Keep From Singing?”

FSJ Chancel Choir

Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

*(Please stand)*

### Offering Prayer

P: Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you.  
In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table,  
that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose  
name we pray.

**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 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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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: At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.

**C: Come, take your place at the table.**

*(Please be seated)*

**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: : Giver of every gift, Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

**C: 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**

*"Soon and Very Soon"*

No.439

**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**

Bill Nelson, Mike Winslow

**READER**

Carol Haar

**SOUND BOARD**

Andrew Hodges



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.

January 28, 2024

*FOURTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY*

### **Jesus-Style Peacemaking**

Teach us, Jesus, about what it means to be seen as blessed in your eyes. We so often imagine the opposite. Don't we admire the rich in spirit? The comfortable? The confident? The secure?

How would we frame the peacemakers Jesus calls blessed? We might imagine them to be the people who walk gently through life, navigating complex personal and organizational relationships without creating a fuss, leaving everyone happy in their wake. Would these be the type Jesus calls "children of God"?

Probably not. Jesus himself was hardly a lukewarm presence in his world. It is true that he healed many, and no doubt kissed a few babies in his day. But he also flipped tables in the temple and publicly chastised the religious leaders of his time. He was not above using a bit of sarcasm to make a point, and he tended to hang around with people of questionable reputation. He openly challenged the prevailing piety of his tradition.

Jesus' kind of peacemaker focuses more on justice and less on placating powerful people or persistent tradition. Jesus' kind of peacemaker takes into account the needs of all people, not just the ruling majority. Jesus' kind of peacemaker has a vision of a world that reflects God's mercy and God's justice for the whole creation. And, like Jesus, this kind of peacemaker is committed to a deep and lasting peace, even if it is very costly.

Can we find the courage to be such a peacemaker? Could we risk reputation, confidence, security, or comfort for the sake of the good news of God's love for all? When we are full of the Spirit, when we are at our faithful best, we will. And when we fall short, as we will, we can trust that Jesus will welcome us all the same, forgiven and blessed.