

## First St. John Lutheran Church

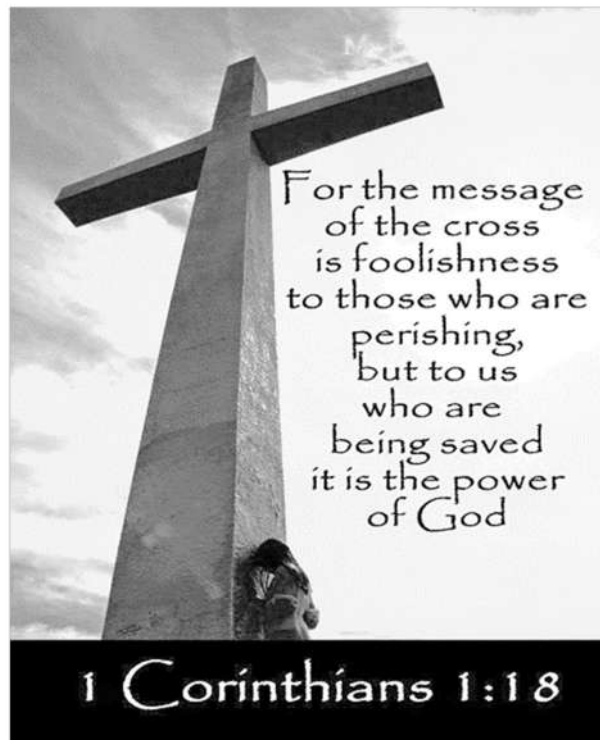
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[www.firststjohn.com](http://www.firststjohn.com)

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*

**March 3, 2024 - 10:30 am**

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**Third Sunday in Lent**

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** “Awake, My Soul and with the Sun” No. 557

**Confession and Forgiveness**

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

P: In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**(silence is kept for reflection.)**

P: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**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 of Praise**

Assisting minister  
Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All  
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,  
we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;  
you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,  
you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,  
in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

### Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

P: Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only 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

**Special Music**    *"Praise to the Lord the Almighty"*    FSJ Bell Choir  
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir Director

### Introduction

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

### **FIRST READING: Exodus 20:1-17**

*After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.*

<sup>1</sup>God spoke all these words: <sup>2</sup>I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; <sup>3</sup>you shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who

reject me, <sup>6</sup>but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup>You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup>But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work--you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.

<sup>11</sup>For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

<sup>12</sup>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup>You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup>You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup>You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C:        **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALMS: Psalms 19**— Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.  
**Day to day pours forth speech,  
and night to night declares knowledge.**

There is no speech, nor are there words;  
their voice is not heard;  
**yet their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.**

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,  
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.  
**Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them;  
and nothing is hid from its heat.**

The law of the Lord is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
**the decrees of the Lord are sure,  
making wise the simple;**

the precepts of the Lord are right,  
rejoicing the heart;

**the commandment of the Lord is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;**

the fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever;  
**the ordinances of the Lord are true  
and righteous altogether.**

More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
**sweeter also than honey,  
and drippings of the honeycomb.**

Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
do not let them there is great reward.  
**But who can detect their errors?  
Clear me from hidden faults.**

Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
**Then I shall be blameless,  
and innocent of great transgression.**

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you,  
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

## **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25**

*The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.*

<sup>18</sup>The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand)

## **Gospel Acclamation**



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and  
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in  
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## **Gospel Announcement**

P: The Gospel according to St. John Chapter 2.

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

## **GOSPEL: John 2:13-22**

*Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.*

<sup>13</sup>The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup>Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." <sup>18</sup>The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" <sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." <sup>20</sup>The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But he was speaking of the temple of his body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

## **Gospel Response**

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

*(Please be seated)*

**SERMON**

Pastor Rayl

**Sermon Hymn** "In His Temple Now Behold Him" No.417

*(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.  
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** "I Love You, Lord" FSJ Chancel Choir  
Dr. Joan Walldorf, Director of Music  
Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician

*(Please stand)*

**Offering Prayer**

P: God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world

signs of your gracious presence in 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: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.  
C: **Amen.**

**Closing Hymn** "On What Has Now Been Sown" No.550

**Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Share the good news.  
C: **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

Dr. Anthony Pattin

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***PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE***

**ELDERS**

Tom Gaskins, Terry Ruedy

**READER**

Susie Purewal

**SOUND BOARD**

Andrew Hodges

**2024 EASTER FLOWER SALE**  
 SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD



It's time to order flowers that will decorate the church on Easter morning, March 31<sup>st</sup>. 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 17<sup>th</sup>. 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 17<sup>th</sup>.***

\*\*\*\*\*  
 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) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**March 3, 2024**

**THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT**

**Belonging**

The line between law and gospel, the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God, has been drawn in the sand in today's gospel reading. Jesus startles the disciples and us with edgy words about suffering, rejection, dying, and rising.

Peter, struggling to find logic in Jesus' words, prompts his master to describe one of the most perplexing paradoxes of following him: in order to find your life you must lose it.

A little girl, abandoned by her mother in Sweden, takes the voyage to America in the early 1900s at the age of four, tagging along with distant relatives. As a child she is shuffled from relative to neighbor, unwanted, growing up virtually alone in a strange land. One can imagine her joy in becoming a Lutheran deaconess, entering a community of strong young women like herself, belonging. Perhaps it is because she has never really had a life that this new home is so sweet. Secondary school leads to nursing school, and she comes into her own. She has found herself.

The day after her nursing school graduation, she leaves the only real home she has known. Once again, she is on a voyage, alone. This time the destination is China. Her first nursing job is as director of nursing at a hospital where she will serve alongside Lutheran missionaries in a strange land. She pours out her life, joyfully. She serves with intelligence and compassion, always taking under her wing an orphan or a misfit as her personal assistant.

Jesus calls each of us to follow him. But what shape that call takes is between the Lover and the beloved. After all, we are as individual as stars in the sky. One by one, day by day, we are called to this lavish, abandoning love.