

**First St. John Lutheran Church**

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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician  
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director  
Jennifer Hess, Office Manager

**January 12, 2025**

**Baptism of Our Lord**

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism (starting soon). Our regular Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	JAM Sunday School
9:15 am	Adult Sunday School
10:30 am	Late Worship
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!

**SUNDAY SCHOOL & CATECHISM** JAM Sunday School (church basement) and Adult Sunday School (lounge) meet each Sunday at 9:15 am. First year catechism will start soon! If you have a child in 6-7th grade interested please let Pastor Rayl know.

**NURSERY** is in the church basement and is now available during 2nd Service each week; you are welcome to sit with your child as well. 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.

The Lord's voice shakes  
the oaks. The leaves fall  
off the trees. All on earth  
say, Glory to God!

psalm 29:9



**Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community**  
**January 12, 2025 - 10:30 am**

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**ORDER OF WORSHIP - 10:30 am**

**Prelude**

Dr. Anthony Pattin

**Ringling of the Bell**

*(Please Stand)*

**Opening Hymn** “Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters” No.445

**Confession and Forgiveness**

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**

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*(Silence for reflection and self-examination.)*

P: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are in bondage 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: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**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: Let us pray. Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, 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**

Today’s festival rejoices in God’s blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God’s children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we “pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire.” On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God’s Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:1-7**

*Near the end of Israel’s exile in Babylon, God promises to bring the people home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.*

<sup>1</sup> But now thus says the Lord,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:  
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine.

<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.

<sup>3</sup> For I am the Lord your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,  
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.

<sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my sight,  
and honored, and I love you,

I give people in return for you,  
nations in exchange for your life.

<sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you;  
I will bring your offspring from the east,  
and from the west I will gather you;

<sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, "Give them up,"  
and to the south, "Do not withhold;

bring my sons from far away  
and my daughters from the end of the earth—

<sup>7</sup> everyone who is called by my name,  
whom I created for my glory,  
whom I formed and made."

Reader: Word of God, Word of life.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 29** — Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name;  
worship the LORD in holy splendor.**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD, over mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup> **The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup> **He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

<sup>8</sup> **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl,  
and strips the forest bare;  
and in his temple all say, "Glory!"

**10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**

<sup>11</sup> May the LORD give strength to his people!  
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

**SECOND READING: Acts 8:14-17**

*Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.*

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup> The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit <sup>16</sup> (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). <sup>17</sup> Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

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. Luke, chapter 3.

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

### **GOSPEL: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**

*The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.*

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

### **Gospel Response**

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

*(Please be seated)*

### **SERMON**

*Pastor Rayl*

### **Sermon Hymn**

*"Baptized in Water"*

No. 456

*(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: Hear us O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **Installation of Officers**

*(All newly elected and currently serving officers of WELCA, Church Council, Day School Board, and Altar Guild please come forward.)*

P: The following people have been elected by the congregation to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

*(The pastor addresses those being installed)*

P: A reading from First Corinthians: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.  
*(1 Corinthians 12:4-7)*

P: You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation.

P: You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with their whole church.

P: You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world.

P: You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the

Spirit who empowers you may be glorified.

P: You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

*(The pastor addresses those being installed)*

P: On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices of which you have been elected?

**Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.**

*(The congregation stands. Those being installed face the congregation. The pastor addresses the congregation)*

P: People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

**Response: We will, and we ask God to help us.**

*(Those being installed face the pastor who addresses them)*

P: I now declare you installed as Leaders of this congregation. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants to Christ.

**C: Amen**

### **The Offering**

#### **Offertory Music**

*Dr. Anthony Pattin*

(Please Stand)

#### **Offering Prayer**

P: Our generous heavenly Father, all good gifts come from you and from these riches we bring this offering. Help us to use it for the furtherance of your purpose in this place, and for the benefit of those in need, through our resurrected and living Lord, Jesus Christ.

**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: You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

P: 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.

P: For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from the cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### **C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: To you, O God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

### **C: Amen.**

P: Remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

#### **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: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to 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: Now may the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

**C: Amen.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

P: Generous God we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

**C: Amen.**

### **Blessing**

P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, (+) bless and keep you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

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

### **Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

Nancy Russell

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

### **ELDERS**

Bob Haar, Sherrie Haar

### **READER**

Carol Haar

### **SOUND BOARD**

Beth Hugueley

January 12, 2025

**BAPTISM OF OUR LORD**

## **Blessed Mysteries**

This is a day full of mysteries. A mature man receives baptism, a rite we now often associate with babies. This, though, is a baptism of repentance--yet we confess him to be the Sinless One. In the aftermath, while Jesus is praying, the Holy Spirit descends on him and a voice from heaven proclaims "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." But wouldn't Jesus, as God incarnate, know this already?

Such mysteries are useful for at least two reasons. In the church year, today marks the transition from paying attention to the infant Jesus to a season when we will begin to explore his adult ministry. And while mysteries certainly abound in Christ's nativity, somehow we tend to overlook them because, well, he was just a baby. The events of today's gospel, though, remind us how much we do not--cannot--comprehend about Jesus' identity and ministry. Amid the aspects we cannot fully explain, though, we find the blessing of God and the presence of the Spirit.

The same divine blessing is, in effect, offered to each of us at our baptism. Whether adults or infants, we are declared God's beloved, and because of our new, baptismal identity, God is well pleased with us. This brings us to the second use for the day's mysteries. They remind us that we too have been born into a new life whose depths can never be completely plumbed. Some mysteries will remain just that. Other things we do know, however. We are assured that the Spirit is with us and that, as children of God, we have a purpose. At some point in our lives we will seek the Spirit's guidance in discerning our gifts and how we might best use them. The answer may not come in the form of a dove or a heavenly voice, but God will lead us in the path first trod by Christ.