

First St. John Lutheran Church

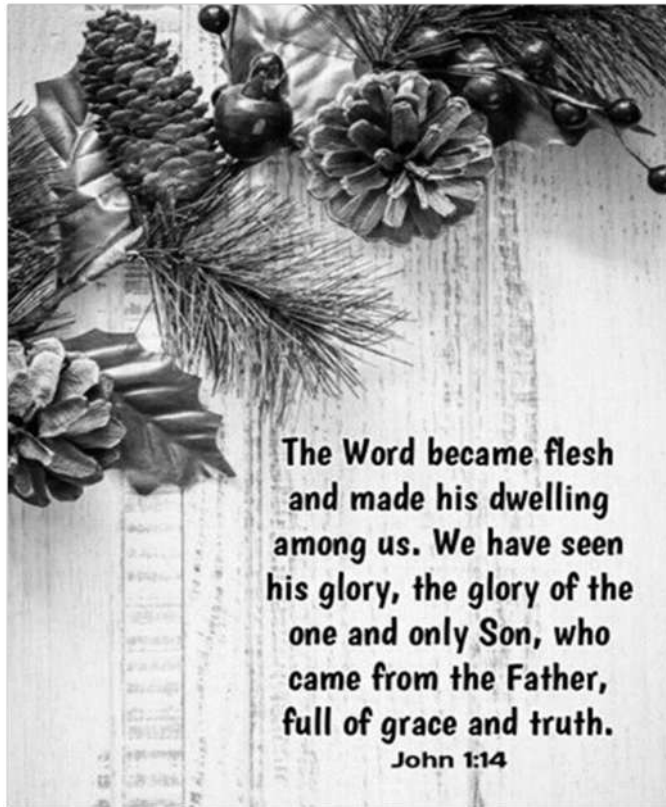
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

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



January 5, 2025

Second Sunday of Christmas

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. 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.

Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community
January 5, 2025 - 10:30am

ORDER OF WORSHIP - 10:30 am

Prelude Nancy Russell

Ring of the Bell
(Please Stand)

Opening Hymn "O Come, All Ye Faithful" No.283

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:

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" No. 288

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we 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

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wind. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gifts of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷Thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
'Save, O Lord, your people,
the remnant of Israel.'

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,

I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.'

¹¹ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the Lord.

Reader: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ^[a] before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, ^[b] having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes

all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this^[c] is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Reader: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation "Cold December Flies Away" No. 299

Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. John, chapter 1.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 1:9-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"What Child is This"

No. 296

(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

(Please Stand)

Nancy Russell

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.

Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: Hear us O God.

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: 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

"Joy to the World"

No. 267

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Nancy Russell

+ + + + +

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Dick Haar, John Roth

READER

Susie Purewal

SOUND BOARD

Dave Wilbarger



**MONTHLY MINISTRY
FOCUS:
*ISAIAH 117 HOUSE***

“Changing how Foster Care Begins”

This month’s monthly ministry focus will again be the Isaiah 117 House in Lucas County. The Isaiah 117 project exists to reduce trauma on removal day for children who are being placed in the foster care system. The house helps lighten the load for caseworkers and ease transition into foster care by creating a ‘home’ environment where children on removal day can go instead of an office while caseworkers work on placement. This home provides the comforts of home and lessens the impact.

Even better, an Isaiah 117 home is planned for Oregon / East Toledo! Genacross Lutheran Services has donated a half-acre of land in Oregon, Ohio, and the surveying of the land is being donated. The general contractor, Jim Moline with Moline Builders is actively reaching out to suppliers and subcontractors. But, we need your help! FSJ is joining other Lutheran churches in the area on taking up a collection to help fund the home’s creation. Please consider donating by placing your offering in the yellow envelopes in your pew during offering.

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



January 5, 2025

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Embodied Love

The mystery is so immense as to be almost incomprehensible. That the very Word of God, present at creation when God's Spirit moved over the waters, should take on human skin and share our life, is a wonder we grasp only by faith.

That incarnate Word, whom we know as Jesus Christ, is both messenger and message. Jesus, the bearer of light to an uncomprehending people, is himself the very Light of the world. Jesus, the Word, is God's gracious word to us. It is a curious fusion, this unity of person and mission, life and teaching.

This fusion continues today in our own embodiment of Jesus' example and teaching. Through us, Jesus is not simply a concept, but real, tangible. We "live" Jesus. How? By speaking a word of encouragement to one verging on despair. By serving those whose circumstances cause them to doubt the presence or goodness of God. By modeling the love of Christ in our families, churches, and communities. By calling for an end to practices that unjustly benefit a few at the expense of many. By experiencing in suffering the redeeming presence of the God who suffers with us. By gathering weekly with other Christians to hear the word proclaimed, preached, and sung. By sharing the holy meal in which we not only receive Jesus in bread and wine, but become the very body we receive: the body of Christ.

Our witness to the Jesus who lived and suffered like us is only possible because, like Jesus, we are kept close to God's heart. We can make Christ known only because Jesus blazed the way by showing us what God is like. In this season when we celebrate the incarnation, we rejoice that Jesus reveals the very heart of God, so that we, too, might live in that love and bear it in our very bodies to all creation.