

First St. John Lutheran Church

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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

Dr. Anthony Pattin, Church Musician
Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Director of Music
Cheri Sergent, Bell Choir, Director
Jennifer Hess, Office Manager

September 21, 2025

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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	Adult Sunday School (starting 9/28)
9:15 am	J.A.M. 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.

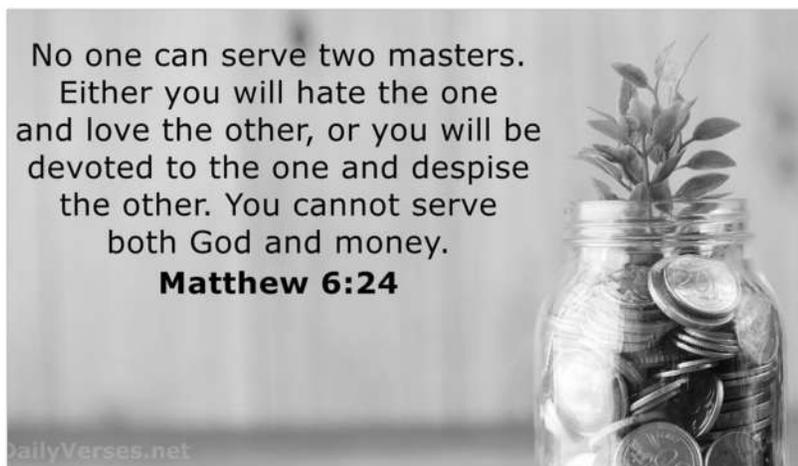
IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remember to silence your cell phone before church begins. Thanks!

NURSERY is provided during second service, downstairs in the basement of the church. 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.



No one can serve two masters.
Either you will hate the one
and love the other, or you will be
devoted to the one and despise
the other. You cannot serve
both God and money.

Matthew 6:24

Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

September 21, 2025 - 10:30 am

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ringling of the Bell

Opening Hymn “All Creatures, Worship God Most High!” No. 835

Invocation

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

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.

P: You are the treasured people of the LORD,

C: a people holy to the LORD our God.

P: Keep the words of the LORD in your heart; teach them to your children.

C: Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

P: One does not live by bread alone,

C: but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Confession and Forgiveness

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: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

Hymn

“We are Baptized in Christ Jesus” v. 1-2
(printed on next page)

No. 451

We are baptized in Christ Jesus, we are baptized in his death; that as Christ is raised victorious, we might live a brand new life. And if we have been united in a dreadful death like his, we will all be reunited, for he lives.

In the water and the witness, in the breaking of the bread, in the waiting arms of Jesus who is risen from the dead, God has made a new beginning from the ashes of our past; in the losing and the winning we hold fast.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

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:

Glory be to God the Father, glory be to Christ the Son, glory to the Holy Spirit, ever three and ever one; as it was in the beginning, glory now resounds again in a song that has no ending. Amen

The Greeting and Prayer

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. “Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all.” Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God’s gracious favor we have everything we need.

FIRST READING: Amos 8:4-7

Amos was called by God to prophesy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Peace and prosperity in Israel led to corrupt business practices and oppression of the poor. The prophet declares that God will not tolerate such a situation.

⁴Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵saying, “When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
and practice deceit with false balances,
⁶buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”
⁷The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 113 Congregation responds in **BOLD**.

¹Praise the LORD!
Praise, O servants of the LORD;
praise the name of the LORD.
²**Blessed be the name of the LORD
from this time on and forevermore.**
³From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the LORD is to be praised.
⁴**The LORD is high above all nations
and his glory above the heavens.**
⁵Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,
⁶**who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?**
⁷He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,
⁸**to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.**

⁹He gives the barren woman a home,
making her the joyous mother of children.
Praise the LORD!

SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

The pastoral epistles offer insight into how early Christians understood many practical matters, such as church administration and worship. The church’s focused prayer for others is an expression of the single-minded passion God has toward us in Jesus.

¹First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For

there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
⁶who gave himself a ransom for all

—this was attested at the right time.⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation *(sung by the congregation)*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 16.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 16:1-13

Jesus tells the curious story of a dishonest manager who cheats his employer and then is commended by him for having acted so shrewdly. Jesus wonders why his own followers are less creative and diligent in their stewardship given that they are managers of a far more valuable household.

¹ Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ² So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ ³ Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ ⁷ Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ ⁸ And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

¹⁰ “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹ If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

“We Give Thee but Thine Own”

No. 686

(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

Musical Offertory

*“At His Name” FSJ Chancel Choir
Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Music Director*

(Please stand)

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. Merciful God, you open wide your hand and satisfy the need of every living thing. You have set this feast before us. Open our hands to receive it. Open our hearts to embrace it. Open our lives to live it. We pray this through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

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

P: Hear us, O Lord.

C: Your mercy is great.

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.

Blessing

P: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.

Closing Hymn *“My God, How Wonderful Thou Art”* No. 863

Dismissal

P: Go in peace and serve the Lord.
C. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

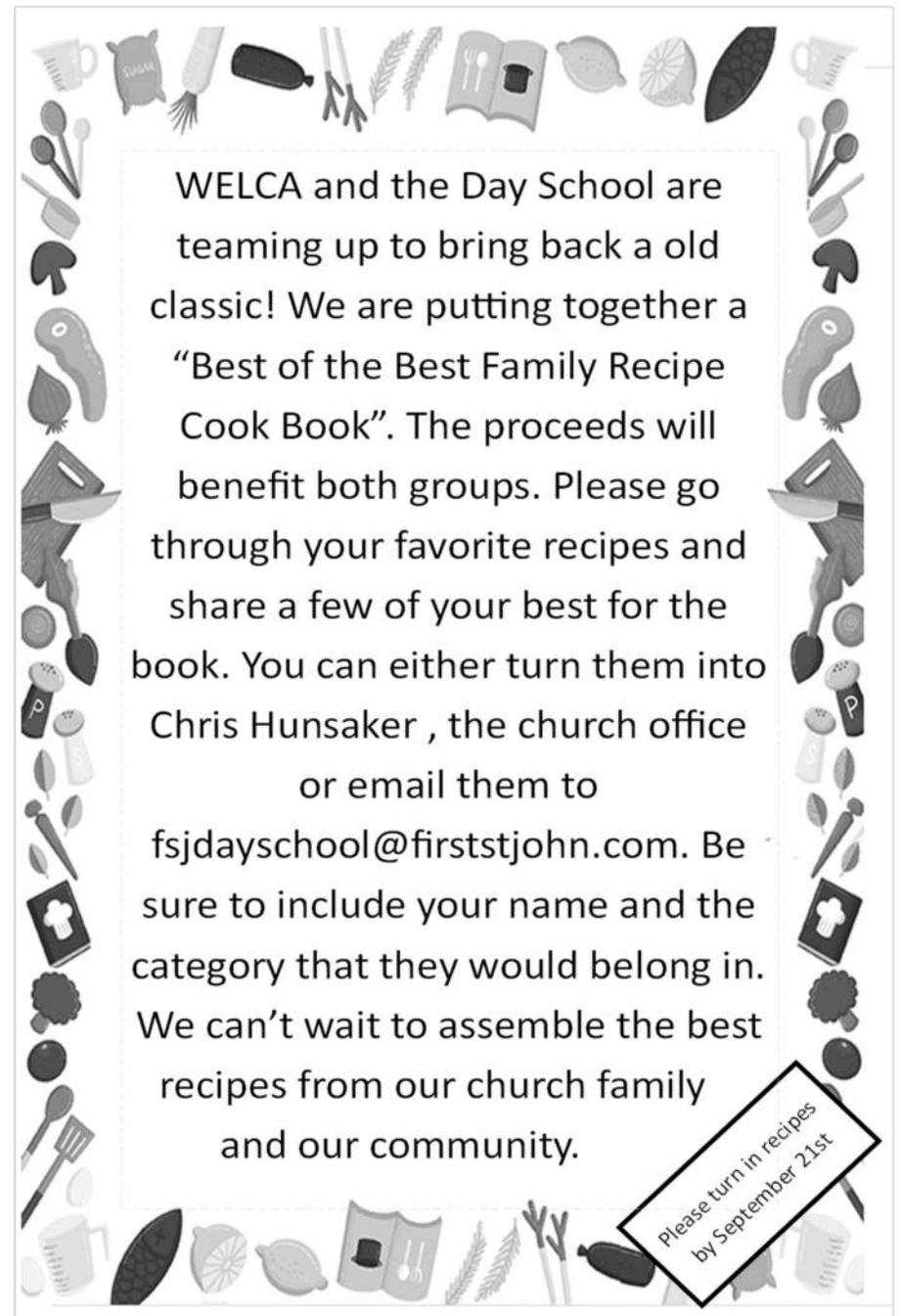
Bill Nelson
Matt Miller

READER

Toni Wilbarger

SOUND BOARD

Amy Nelson



WELCA and the Day School are teaming up to bring back a old classic! We are putting together a “Best of the Best Family Recipe Cook Book”. The proceeds will benefit both groups. Please go through your favorite recipes and share a few of your best for the book. You can either turn them into Chris Hunsaker , the church office or email them to fsjdayschool@firststjohn.com. Be sure to include your name and the category that they would belong in. We can't wait to assemble the best recipes from our church family and our community.

Please turn in recipes by September 21st

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		

**denotes high need item*

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.



September 21, 2025

15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A Show of Hands

Our hands tell a story. They tell the story of our lives in some specific detail. The calluses, the scars, the grease stains are very revealing. They are stark reminders of where our hands have been and with what they have been occupied. What we choose to do with our hands is the very essence of our lives.

When we pray the prayer of the day today, "Set us to our tasks in the work of your kingdom, and help us to order our lives by your wisdom," we are asking God to direct the work of our hands. When we first order our lives by the wisdom of God, then we can put our hands to each task with confidence.

When the wisdom of God orders our lives, our foolish hands may reveal a marked change. Think of Jesus' hands. His were hands soiled with mud and spittle in the healing of a man born blind. His were hands held out in welcome to little children. His were hands scarred with the mark of the nails in the horror of the crucifixion. His were hands that came to serve, not to be served.

The lifting up of hands in prayer is the "first of all" with which Paul instructs Timothy in the second reading. Prayer is always the first order of business for Christian hands--the first of our tasks in the work of the kingdom. Thereafter, baptized hands that have been lifted up in prayer "for everyone" will be extended to serve some. If even shrewd (ever-so-slightly-dishonest) servants, like the one in the gospel, understand the merit in serving the poor and the debtor, how much more might we, servants of the self-sacrificing Lord Jesus, be eager to put our hands to those tasks?