

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
Jessica Miller, Office Manager



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

July 19, 2026 - 9:00 am

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Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! Through the Summer months we offer one service. Holy Communion will be celebrated every Sunday throughout the Summer.

9:00 am Worship

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 not monitored during the summer months but you are welcome to sit with your child downstairs as needed. 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—9:00 am

Prelude Nancy Russell

Ring of the Bell

Opening Hymn "O Holy Spirit, Enter In" No. 786

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, whose compassion endures forever.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

C: we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

P: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

C: Amen.

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:

"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: 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: Let us pray. Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44:6-8

There are no other gods besides God: the word of the Lord does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.

⁶Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.

⁷Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

⁸Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 86:11-17 (*congregation responds in BOLD*)

- ¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.
¹² **I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.**
¹³ For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.
¹⁴ **O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.**
¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
¹⁶ **Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.**
¹⁷ Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-25

For Paul, true spirituality means that we experience the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

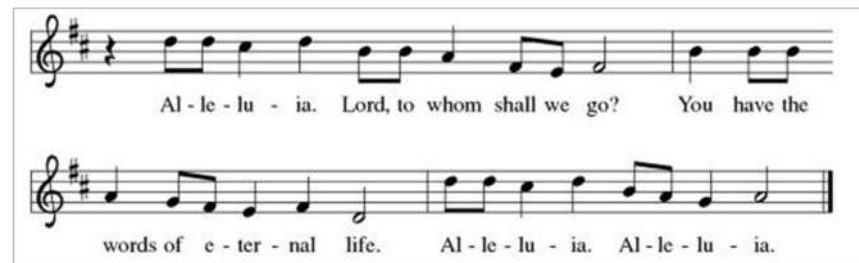
²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 13.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the

weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.
⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom
all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace
of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the
righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone
with ears listen!"

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"O Word of God Incarnate"

No. 514

(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 Lord,

C: your mercy is great.

The Offering

Offertory Music

Nancy Russell

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs
forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous
with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in
service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always.

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 and salutary that we should at all times and in all
places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through
Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting
life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we
praise your name and join their unending hymn:



P: In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took
bread, 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. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

P: Lord 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: The risen Christ invites us to this table.

C: Come, eat and be satisfied.

(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."

**** Please be certain to fill our a communion record card then put it in the offering plate or hand it to the usher when directed to go up to receive the bread and wine.*

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: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, (+) bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" No. 536

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Nancy Russell

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Sherrie Haar

Bob Haar

READER

Toni Wilbarger

SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

July 19, 2026

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Practicing Patience

Have you recently been exasperated while driving in snarled traffic or waiting in a lengthy line? Do some of the losses that accompany aging frustrate you or someone you love? Are you occasionally short of patience as you parent young children or teenagers? It isn't unusual to feel your reserves of patience are low or, indeed, to feel resentful of the demands life makes on your patience.

Many North Americans live in a world of material abundance. "Stuff" fills our lives even as we are hounded by messages to *consume* more, to *have* more. Without purposefully agreeing to exchange what we hold dear--our time, resources, and good will--for an excess of things of lesser value, we often do just that, unintentionally.

In contrast to the prevailing culture of consumption, God's message comes to us today urging us instead to *be* more. Patience is required for our hope in God to be realized. Like the weeds sown among good seed in the gospel parable, evil does exist in the world. Its omnipresence in the ordinary stuff of life can deplete our patience even when we are trying to resist choosing what is easy, immediate, and everywhere.

Along with day-to-day claims on our patience, spiritual patience can sometimes seem in short supply. Why must we suffer the results of evil in the world, when we pray it should be otherwise? Why does it seem that some prayers go unanswered? Are we too ready to interpret "not now" or "not in this place" as "no" in response to prayers? The one who planted good seed and suffered the weeds models patience. This parable and the experience of everyday life tell us that patience ultimately will be rewarded. And so, as members of the body of Christ, we practice patience, hoping and trusting in God's grace, gathered for all time in God's love.