

First St. John Lutheran Church

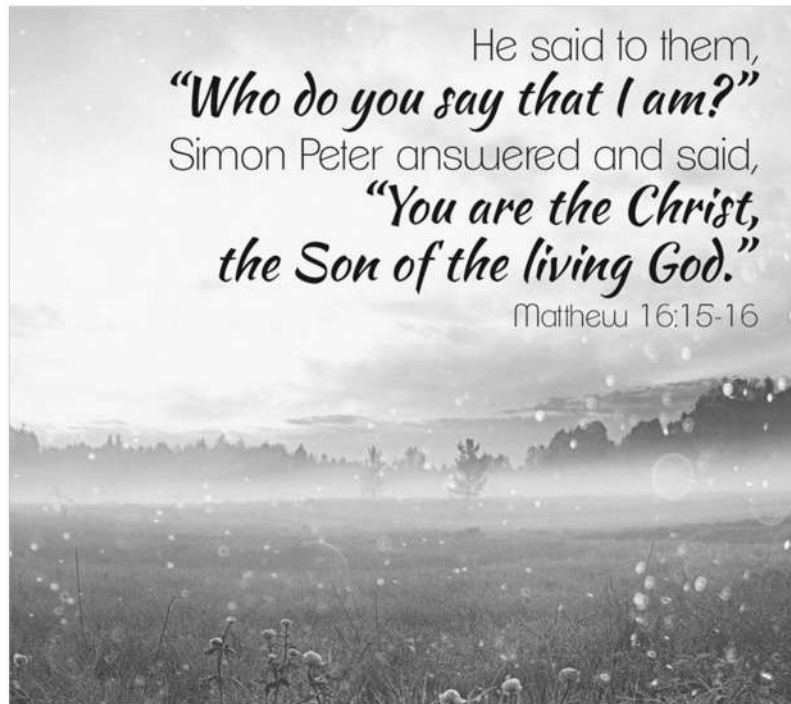
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

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

August 23, 2026 - 9:00 am

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Thirteenth 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 Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ringing 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 fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter’s bold confession of faith. God’s word of reconciliation and God’s mercy are keys to the church’s mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 51:4-6

Just as God had called Abraham and Sarah and given them many descendants, so now God offers comfort to Zion. God’s deliverance will come soon and will never end.

⁴ Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
⁵ I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.

⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,

and those who live on it will die like gnats,
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 138 (*congregation responds in BOLD*)

- ¹ I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;
² **I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your
faithfulness, for you have exalted your name and your word
above everything.**
³ On the day I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength of soul.
⁴ **All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.**
⁵ They shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.
⁶ **For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly,
but the haughty he perceives from far away.**
⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;
you stretch out your hand,
and your right hand delivers me.
⁸ **The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8

In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us:

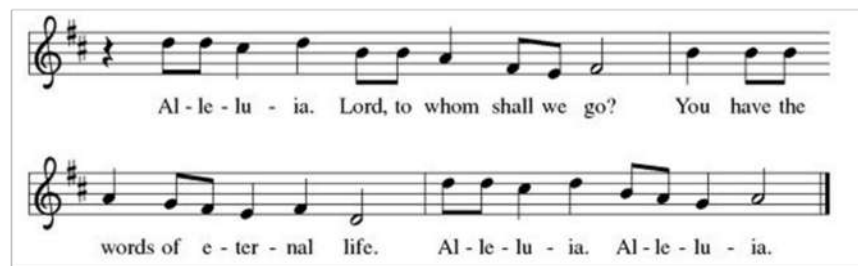
prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

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 16.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn *"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"* No. 596

(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

Dr. Anthony Pattin

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

"O Savior, Precious Savior"

No. 820

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Sherrie Haar

Bob Haar

READER

Lisa Anderson

SOUND BOARD

Andy Hodges

FIND YOUR PLACE AT FIRST ST JOHN

Check anything that interests you. You can choose more than one—and you don't have to commit today.

MUSIC	■ Adult Choir ■ Bell Choir ■ Organ/Piano ■ Worship
FAITH & PRAYER	■ Prayer Chain ■ Adult Sunday School ■ J.A.M. ■ Readers ■ Youth
CHILDREN & YOUTH	■ Nursery ■ Scouting ■ VBS ■ Youth Ministry
HELPING OTHERS	■ Personal Needs Pantry ■ Feed Your Neighbor ■ WELCA ■ Bereavement
FRIENDSHIP & FELLOWSHIP	■ Hannah Circle ■ Rebecca Circle ■ Miriam Circle ■ Ruth Circle ■ Dartball
HANDS-ON / BEHIND THE SCENES	■ Quilters ■ Altar Guild ■ Library ■ VBS Team ■ Event Help
COMMUNITY	■ East Toledo outreach ■ Community partners ■ Other service
RECONNECTING	■ Worship ■ Coffee/conversation ■ Prayer ■ I want someone to contact me

Something else I would enjoy: _____

I'd like someone to contact me about: _____

Name (optional): _____ Phone/Email: _____

Remember: You don't have to do everything. Find one thing that fits you, try it, and see where it leads.

August 23, 2026

13th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

God Gives Us the Answer

Jesus' question to his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" might sound like a serious challenge to their faith and faithfulness. The question certainly left open the possibility that the disciples would give the wrong answer. After all, rumors among the crowds who followed Jesus—who heard his preaching and teaching, and witnessed his healing—proposed that Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. All these people were believed to be mere forerunners of the Messiah. Would the disciples get it right?

Peter did. He answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus, perhaps amazed by his confession, responded, "Blessed are you, Simon! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven."

The good news for us in this exchange is profound. It is not up to us, flesh-and-blood folks, to figure out who Jesus is. That truth is revealed to us by God, who speaks through the Holy Spirit to call and enlighten us. We do not have to rely on our own understanding or strength to come to God. The one who made the world also creates faith in us. God gives us the answer!

The giver of all good continues to watch over us into eternity. Having called us through baptism, the Spirit makes us holy and keeps us in relationship with God. Our Advocate abundantly forgives our sins and continues to nurture our faith through the bread and wine of holy communion. When we are in need of healing or consolation, the Comforter speaks to us through the communion of saints, ever reminding us of God's love and concern for all creation.

Who do you say Jesus is? Listen! God is telling you!