

First St. John Lutheran Church

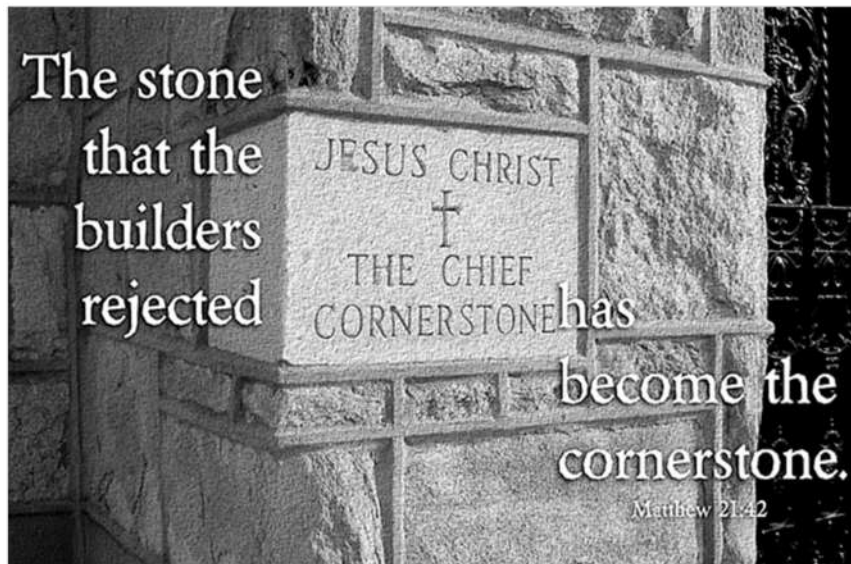
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

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



October 4, 2026

19th Sunday After Pentecost

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism. 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!

NURSERY 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.

Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

October 4, 2026 - 10:30 am

ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude Dr. Anthony Pattin

Ring of the Bell

Opening Hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” No. 803

Invocation

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

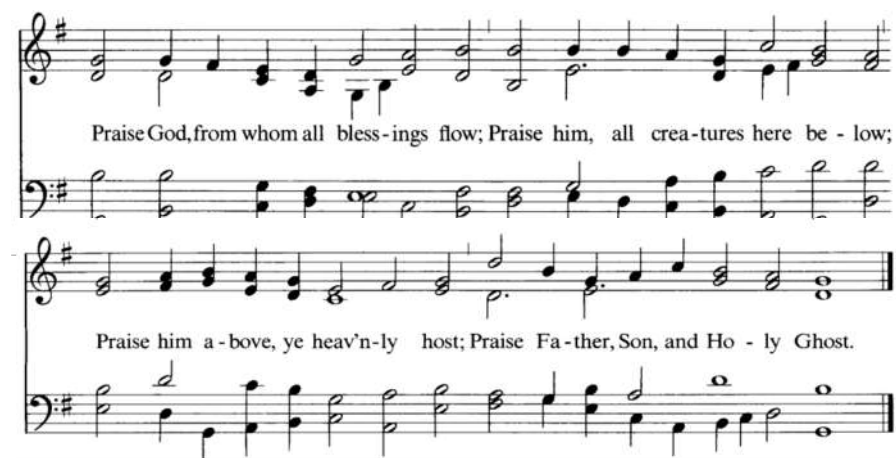
C: And also with you.

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

Passing of the Peace which concludes by singing the Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise him, all crea-tures here be - low;

Praise him a - bove, ye heav'n-ly host; Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Introduction

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "rotten grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

¹ I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. ² He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes. ³ And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes? ⁵ And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ⁷ For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished garden; he expected justice but saw bloodshed; righteousness but heard a cry!

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:7-15 *(congregation responds in BOLD)*

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁸ **You brought a vine out of Egypt;**
you drove out the nations and planted it.

⁹ You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.

¹⁰ **The mountains were covered with its shade,**
the mighty cedars with its branches;

¹¹ it sent out its branches to the sea
and its shoots to the River.

¹² **Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?**

¹³ The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.

¹⁴ **Turn again, O God of hosts;
look down from heaven and see;
have regard for this vine,**

¹⁵ the stock that your right hand planted.

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b} If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me.

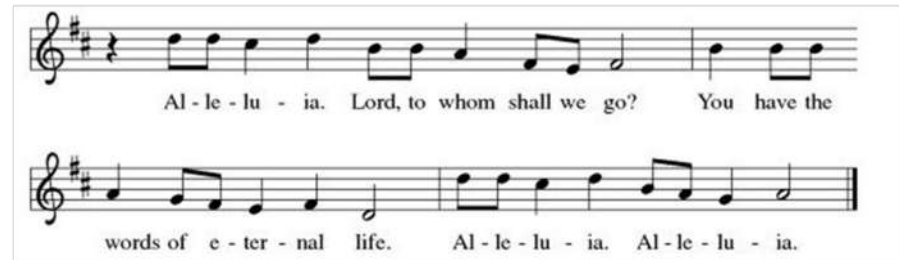
¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Alleluia Verse (sung in unison)



Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 21.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

[Jesus said:] ³³ “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Then he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹ They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? ⁴³ “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

(Please be seated)

Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn

"My Song Is Love Unknown"

No. 343

(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.

The Offering

Musical Offertory

"How Can I Keep from Singing"

FSJ Chancel Choir

Jo-Anne Chrysochoos, Director

Offertory Response – (sung by the congregation, as the offering plates are brought forward to the Altar).



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.

Pastoral Prayer (Each petition concludes with this response)

P: Hear us, O Lord,

C: your mercy is great.

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.

Blessing

P: Like children held in the arms of Jesus, receive the blessing:

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and (+) give you peace.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn "All Creatures, Worship God Most High!" No. 835

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve your neighbor with joy.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. Anthony Pattin

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Bill Nelson
Matt Miller

READER

Mark Ackerman

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.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

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		

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.



October 4, 2026

19TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Rebuilder

Why would builders "reject" a stone? It could be too weak or too porous or riddled with fractures that might cause it to crumble. Or it could be of such an unusual shape that there would be no way to fit other stones around it to make it a useful part of the structure.

In today's gospel reading Jesus quotes a psalm that speaks about such a rejected stone (Ps. 118:22-23). This unwanted stone becomes an important architectural element in a new kind of structure. The original wording of the psalm could mean this rejected rock is the cornerstone that determines the angles for the rest of the building. Or it could refer to the keystone at the top of an arch that holds the whole structure together. Either way, using a "rejected stone" would create a rather unusual building.

What parts of your life don't fit together right now? What in your life is out of place, awkward, or just plain wrong? Are there challenges or heartaches that threaten to turn carefully built walls--routines, assumptions, lifestyles--into rubble? Where in your life could you use a solid foundation?

Jesus tells his story about a vineyard in rebellion to give his listeners--and us--another chance. His message about God's unconditional love does not fit into the world's structures of accountability. Jesus himself is the rejected stone, the stone that doesn't fit. He affirms his rightful title as Son of God by being executed as a criminal. He is part of God's new plan for building a different reality in the world. And wondrous architect that he is, he is able to take the misfit, crumbling structures of our lives and turn them into something which will amaze our eyes! Let him get to work as the master builder in your life.