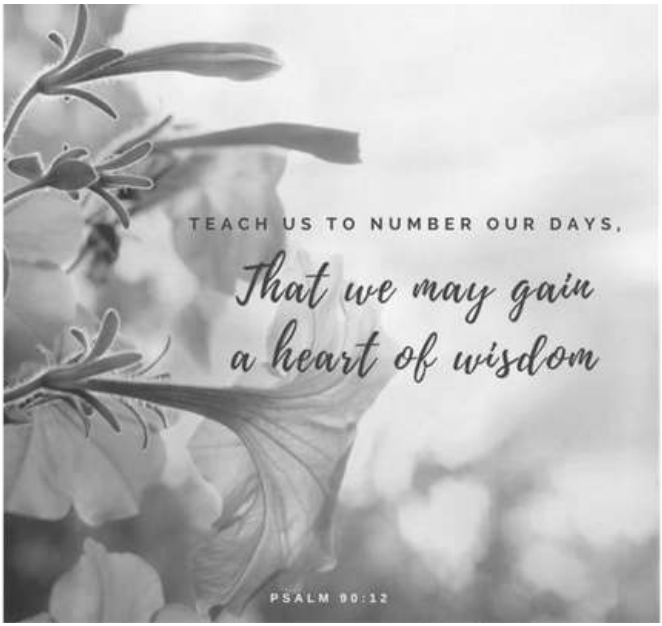
First St. John Lutheran Church

2471 Seaman Street
Toledo, Ohio 43605
419-691-7222

office@firststjohn.com
www.firststjohn.com

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*

November 15, 2026 - 10:30 am

November 15, 2026 **25th 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	Adult Sunday School
10:30 am	JAM 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.

Restroms: 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.

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ORDER OF WORSHIP—10:30 am

Prelude

Ringing of the Bell

Opening Hymn *"Christ, Be Our Light"* No. 715

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, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.
C: Amen.

P: Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

P: Compassionate God,
C: we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

P: Hear this good news: We have peace with God through (☩) Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
C: Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

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 Lord be with you.

C: And also, with you.

P: Let us pray. Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

Children's Message

Introduction

Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the Lord will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 14-17a

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the Lord as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the Lord.

7 Be silent before the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is at
hand! The Lord has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated his
guests.

14 The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the
sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the warrior cries aloud
there. 15 That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and
anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and
gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of trumpet
blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the
lofty battlements. 17 I will bring such distress upon people that
they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against
the Lord.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 90:1-12 (*congregation responds in BOLD*)

[1] Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
[2] Before the mountains were brought forth or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
[3] You turn us back to dust and say, "Turn back, you mortals."
[4] For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past or like a watch in the night.
[5] You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;
[6] in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.
[7] For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
[8] You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
[9] For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.
[10] The days of our life are seventy years or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.
[11] Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.
[12] So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
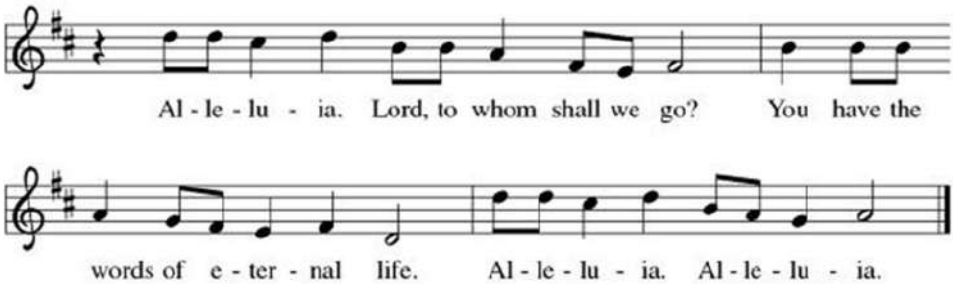
Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1] Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you
do not need to have anything written to you. [2] For you yourselves
know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the
night. [3] When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden
destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a
pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! [4] But you, brothers and
sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief;
[5] for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of
the night or of darkness. [6] So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do,
but let us keep awake and be sober, [7] for those who sleep sleep at
night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. [8] But since we
belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith
and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9] For God has
destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord
Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us, so that whether we are awake or
asleep we may live with him. [11] Therefore encourage one another and
build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand)

<u>Alleluia Verse</u> (sung in unison)



Gospel Acclamation

P: The Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 25.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once 16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26 But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?

[27] Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. [28] So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. [29] For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. [30] As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON Pastor Rayl

Sermon Hymn *"As Saints of Old"* No. 695

(please stand)

Apostles' Creed
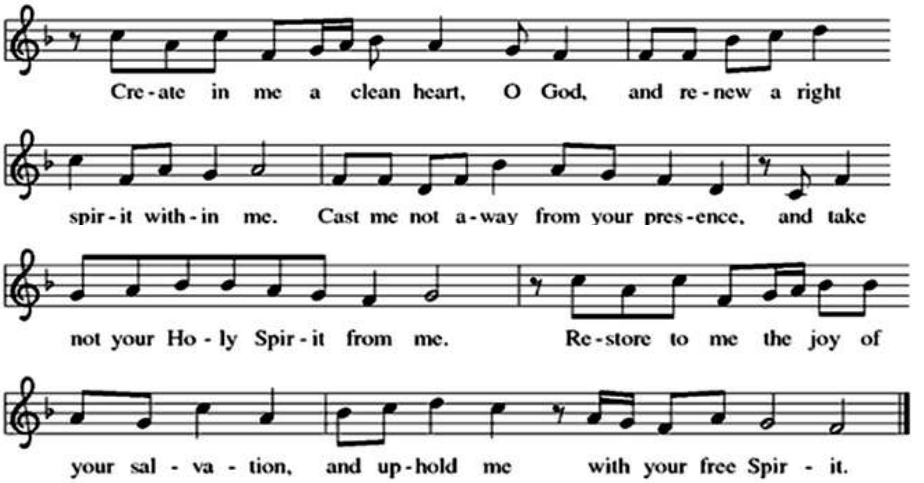
I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose 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 *"Together We Rise" 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 *"Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"* No. 674

Dismissal
P: Go in peace. Serve your neighbor with joy**.**
C: Thanks be to God

Postlude Dr. Anthony Pattin

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PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

ELDERS

Bob Haar
Sherrie Haar

READER

Bob Haar

SOUND BOARD

Andy Hodges

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

Please purchase full size items.

- dish soap, shampoo, disposable razors, paper towels, laundry soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, fabric softener sheets, toilet paper, tissues,
- body lotion, sanitary pads, deodorant, body soap, band aids

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.

<u>If you would like to donate items, please donate only full size products as sample sizes will not last a month</u>. 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.





2026 POINSETTIA SALE

SPONSORED BY THE ALTAR GUILD

Fill in the form below to place your order for poinsettias to be used during worship at Christmas time. You can place this form with payment in the offering plate or mail it in to the church office. Payment must accompany orders. Checks payable to: First St. John Deadline for placing orders is Sunday, December 13th.

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Number of plants @ $15.00 each ____ Enclosed: $_____

Color (circle one) Red White

Name_____

Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased)

_____

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_____

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_____

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In Honor of (Living)

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FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY
SPONSORED BY WELCA

Mark your calendars for the FSJ Family Christmas Party that will be held on December 6th in the gym,
following the late worship service. We will be serving Ham, Baked Potato, Corn, Applesauce, Salad, Rolls & Butter, and Dessert. RSVP below for your family. Please indicate all who will be attending.

Name(s) _____

# of Adults attending _____

# of Children attending _____

Drop in the offering plate



Wealth to Share

At first Jesus' words might seem unfair: "To all those who have, more will be given . . . but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away." Wouldn't it seem more evenhanded if everybody got a little? But try to see the story from the perspective of the master. Would you rather entrust your wealth to the wise investor or to the employee who hides a million dollars in the garden?

What is most important to realize is that none of the slaves in the story owns the wealth entrusted to them by their master. The difference between the trustworthy slaves and the lazy one is that the trustworthy slaves know the master expects something to be done with the wealth left in their care. What a lame excuse when the one who buried his loan in the ground says, in effect, "Oh, I was supposed to do something with this?"

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of all in Jesus' story is that the lazy slave never understands the extreme generosity and the extravagant trust of his master. "I knew that you were a harsh man." Hardly! Harsh people don't leave others with a million dollars to invest.

So, what are you doing with the extravagance of God? Do you have any idea how much has been given to you? Have you tasted the generosity of God? God holds nothing back from you--not even Jesus' life! Begin by taking stock of the wealth entrusted to your care. Remember, it's not just in your bank account. It includes your time, your relationships, the story of your one-of-a-kind journey through the world. What are you doing with all that wealth? Is it buried in the garden? Go grab a shovel and get to work! Understanding how wealthy we are is the first step to becoming generous investors in others.