

Sermon followed by Service

I have here a bottle of Aspirin. You know what aspirin is good for - it relieves our pain and helps keep our hearts healthy. Here is something a bit more exciting - an epi-pen. Epi-pens shoot epinephrin, or adrenalin, into the body; they can give our bodies a kick-start, an energy boost, and sometimes keep us from dying. Here I have my wedding ring; there's gold in this-here ring. I say that word "gold," and what happens? Our ears perk up; our interest piques.

What do aspirin, epinephrin, and gold have to do with today? It was 125 years ago when German chemists working for Bayer add some sort of salt to some willow tree stuff and come up with Aspirin. One-hundred-twenty five years ago when an American east-coast chemist takes the juice of the adrenal glands and purifies it down to epinephrin. And 125 years ago, when word got out in Seattle and San Francisco - "There's gold in the Klondike! - and the Klondike Gold Rush begins.

What else do we know about these three things? It wasn't long and the Klondike Gold Rush sputtered with more lives ruined than enriched. This aspirin might take away some pain; it might help keep my heart pumping; but just for a while. This epinephrin might give my heart and my breathing a jump start, but it can't keep me alive forever. All these things can be good, even great discoveries, but they all leave us wanting something more, something better.

One-hundred-twenty-five years ago, something more, something better, someone more, someone better was at work right here in Libertyville. The Shepherd and His Spirit were here working in the hearts of some German-Lutherans. He worked in them a discontent for the riches and pain-relievers of the world - they wanted something better, something more for their hearts and their children. He worked in them a discontent with

churches that thought it ok to compromise on God's Word, a discontent with churches that were satisfied with less of Jesus and more of self. He worked in them a hunger for God's Truth, a thirst for God's grace.

Hungering together for God's Truth, thirsting together for God's grace, the Shepherd and His Spirit connected them with a pastor from Waukegan. They rented space and gathered at the Union Church on Church Street (not the same building, but where the Episcopal church is now across from the library). First for a funeral, then once a month. But the Shepherd and His Spirit worked in them a discontent with once a month; they hungered and thirsted for more. So they met twice a month. But the Shepherd and His Spirit worked in them a discontent with twice a month; they hungered and thirsted for more of God's grace and truth. So they met every week.

This is before paved roads and fancy cars. The families walked to church; I imagine some came by horse-drawn wagon; some got to ride horse and buggy. This is before the railroad came to Libertyville. The Waukegan pastor would ride the freight train to Rondout where congregation members would pick him up and bring him in the last few miles by horse and buggy. A couple weeks ago on vacation, I was whining about riding an hour in air-conditioned comfort to get to church - oh, how good we got it!

Then what? Those first few families, they told their friends and neighbors. And the Shepherd and His Spirit gathered more and more. They pitched in and worked together. After a few years, they bought some swampland and built a white, wooden church. (You can still see it over by St. Joe's. In 1950, we sold it to buy and build here.) Later, they built a parsonage next to the church. You see, they weren't content to settle and relax and rely on someone else to provide their pastor. The Shepherd and His Spirit had them hungering and thirsting for more, hungering and thirsting to do more. The library downtown has a news bit that describes the members of St. John as eager - why? Because of the way they got the

mortgages for church and parsonage paid off. The Shepherd and His Spirit had them hungering and thirsting for his grace and truth. The Shepherd and His Spirit had them eager and working together to share his grace and truth.

So the Spirit called and the Shepherd gathered. We grew out of the white, wooden church, and built this beautiful, Lannon-stone church for the Shepherd and his work. We had Sunday School classes squeezed and crammed into the coat closet (we call it the table storage room) down under the front steps, squeezed and crammed into the vault room under my office, even squeezed and crammed into the nuts and bolts and light bulb closet behind the stage. Squeezed and crammed, the Shepherd and his Spirit worked a discontent, not just for classrooms in closets, but a discontent for one-hour a week Sunday School. The Shepherd and his Spirit wanted more for our children. And so we wanted more for our children - not just more stuff, more ball-time, more game time. No, the Shepherd and his Spirit worked in our hearts a drive to give our children more time with Jesus. So we pitched together and worked together and paid together to build our school wing, and then nearly 10 years later to open our school sharing the grace and truth of Jesus.

Why? Why all this? Why are we here? ... for 125 years? Why? The Shepherd and His Spirit had his people singing and living Psalm 100! “Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.” So why? Why all this? Why are we here? Because he made us. He made us his. He made us his people, the sheep of his pasture. He called us, gathered us, put his name on us.

Why? Oh, we want to find some reason in ourselves, don't we? Some reason to pat ourselves on the back. Moses fought that kind of thinking: **“The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you**

because you were more numerous than other peoples It was because the LORD loved you.” Paul fought that kind of “pat-ourselves-on-the-back” thinking: **“Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.”** That’s my history; that’s our history! **“It is because of him that [we] are in Christ Jesus.”** That’s why Paul says: **“Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”** And that’s why we’re in Psalm 100 today: **“Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.”**

We’re here because he’s called us, gathered us, put his name on us. That’s not to say that he’s always had us singing out strong or always singing together in perfect harmony, has he? Just like the rest of the world, there have been times we’ve preferred Klondike gold over the treasures of heaven. Times we’ve been content with the pain relievers and the quick fixes of the world instead of hungering and thirsting for the comfort and life that Jesus has for us. In other words, there have been times, so many times, so many ways, we have acted more like the sheep of this world than like those sheep in the window, eager to be with their Shepherd.

What happens to people who prefer Klondike gold over the treasures of heaven? What happens to people who are content with the pain relief and the quick fixes of the world instead of hungering and thirsting for Jesus? What happens to the sheep of this world? They wander and follow themselves and chase themselves and cheer themselves away from God, against God, and into hell. We’ve all had days and ways we’ve gone against God, haven’t we?

That's why Jesus didn't just call us, gather us, put his name on us. First, Jesus gave his life for us. His life in place of our lives. His death in place of our deaths. He took our place as the wandering sheep; he took our place as the following sheep; he took our place as the sheep chasing and cheering the sin of the world; he took our place as sheep turned against God. He took our place and took the judgment God had against us. His life in place of our lives, his death in place of our deaths. He paid the price so that God can see you and call you forgiven. So God can call you and gather you as his. So - in baptism - God can put his name on you with a smile.

Now instead of having to settle for the pain relief of the world, we get to live a new life with the peace and the hope that Jesus have for us. Instead of settling for the quick fixes of the world, we get to live with the Spirit of God himself living in us to jump start our hearts, to power us with the life and the love of God. Now, instead of settling for gold, we get to live with the treasures of heaven as ours!

That's why Psalm 100 isn't just part of our past. Psalm 100 is the song of our hearts today: "Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." Amen.

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Family Connecting in Christ



Pastor Kevin Raddatz
Principal Jon Woldt
501 West Park Avenue
Libertyville, IL 60048
847-362-4424
www.StJohnsLib.com

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Masked

With the renewed mask mandate across Illinois, we now offer masked worship - Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 9. If you have questions, please ask!

To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help, and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.
- Please join us after Sunday service for fellowship and Family Bible Hour.

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church. We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- Children's worship bulletins and "church bags" (with paper, colors, and Bible story books) are available in the Narthex Gathering Area.
- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Large Print** Service Folders are available from an usher.
- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.

January 22 & 23, 2022

125th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service

OPENING HYMN

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Hymn 624

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Let all who hear now to his temple draw near, joining in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is wondrously reigning
and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining.
Have you not seen how all that's needful has been sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who has fearfully, wondrously, made you,
health has bestowed and, when heedlessly falling, has stayed you.
What need or grief ever has failed of relief? Wings of his mercy did shade you.

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do as with his love he befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again; gladly forever adore him!

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

THANKSGIVING, CONFESSION, AND ABSOLUTION

For 125 years, God has lived in and worked through St. John:

- to bless us, his flock, with grace and truth
- to bless our neighbors and communities with grace and truth
- to bless our world with grace and truth through our worldwide ministry.

By God's grace,

- **for 125 years, we have come together to receive God's grace and truth**
- **for 125 years, we have worked together to share God's grace and truth.**

We thank and praise you, O Lord!

We know there's something more to the story, don't we?

For 125 years:

- Satan has been lying to us, tempting us
- our world has been distracting us, trying to bury us
- our own sinful nature has been fighting to turn us away from our Shepherd and against each other.

CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.**

For faithless worrying and selfish pride,

For sins of habit and sins of choice,

For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,

I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.

O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.

ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

LORD, HAVE MERCY (*Kyrie*)

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: Christ, have mercy.

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you have promised to be with your Church forever. We thank you for those who founded the community of believers and for the signs of your favor over these past years. Increase our faith, knit us together in the bonds of love, and make our fellowship an example to all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 7:6–9

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 100A

Refrain



En - ter his gates with thanks-giv - ing.

Tone



Shout for joy to the LORD, / all the earth.

Worship the LORD with / gladness;
come before him with / joyful songs.

Know that the / LORD is God.

It is he who made us, and / we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his / pasture. *Refrain*

Enter his gates with thanks- / giving
and his / courts with praise;
give thanks to him and / praise his name.

For the / LORD is good
and his love endures for- / ever;
his faithfulness continues through all gener- / ations.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

SECOND READING

Revelation 3:7–13

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.

I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

I'd Rather Have Jesus (CHOIR)

*1. I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold;
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands;
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand*

Refrain:

*Than to be the king of a vast domain
Or be held in sin's dread sway;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.*

*2. I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause;
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause;
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame;
I'd rather be true to His holy name*

Refrain

*3. He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom;
He's sweeter than honey from out the comb;
He's all that my hungering spirit needs;
I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead*

Refrain

GOSPEL

John 17:1, 13–26

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.

"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me — so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

“The Church’s One Foundation”

Hymn 855

The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.
From heav’n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from ev’ry nation, yet one o’er all the earth;
her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with ev’ry grace endued.

The Church shall never perish. Her dear Lord, to defend,
to guide, sustain, and cherish, is with her to the end.
Tho' there be those that hate her and strive to see her fail,
against both foe and traitor she ever shall prevail.

Tho' with a scornful wonder the world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
and soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
and the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.

SERMON

Psalm 100

HYMN

"Church of God, Elect and Glorious"
Hymn 854

Church of God, elect and glorious, holy nation, chosen race,
called as God's own special people, royal priests and heirs of grace;
know the purpose of your calling, show to all his mighty deeds,
tell of love that knows no limits, grace that meets all human needs.

God has called you out of darkness into his most marv'lous light,
brought his truth to life within you, turned your blindness into sight.
Let your light so shine around you that God's name is glorified
and all find fresh hope and purpose in Christ Jesus crucified.

Once you were an alien people, strangers to God's heart of love,
but he brought you home in mercy, citizens of heav'n above.
Let his love flow out to others, let them feel a Father's care,
that they too may know his welcome and his countless blessings share.

Church of God, elect and holy, be the people he intends,
strong in faith and swift to answer each command your master sends.
Royal priests, fulfill your calling through your sacrifice and prayer;
give your lives in joyful service, sing his praise, his love declare.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER

M: May this be a time, O Lord, for confession and repentance. Forgive us for the apathy that harms our faith and hinders our works. Forgive us for boasting of our past achievements and for blaming others for our present problems. Rid us of indifference to public worship and Bible study. Destroy the distrust that plagues us, and shatter every thought and word that harms the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

C: **Create in us pure hearts, O God, and renew steadfast spirits within us.**

M: Let this be a time, O Lord, when you renew us again by Word and sacrament, when you reform our hearts and minds, and when you restore to us the joy of fellowship and service. Grant to us in this age and in this place the courage, steadfastness, and dedication of those who have gone before us.

C: **May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us.**

- M: Let this be a time, O Lord, when we recommit and reconsecrate ourselves to the ministry of the gospel. Let us find joy in our unity, zeal for our work, and success in our labor.
- C: **May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us, that his ways may be known on earth, his salvation among all nations. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

The Lord's Prayer (CHOIR)

The Blessing of Aaron (CHOIR)

CLOSING HYMN

"Jerusalem the Golden"
Hymn 889

Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest—
the sight of it refreshes the weary and oppressed.
I know not, oh, I know not what joys await us there,
what radiancy of glory, what bliss beyond compare:
to sing the hymn unending with all the martyr throng,
amidst the halls of Zion resounding full with song.

O sweet and blessed country, the home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country that eager hearts expect,
where they who with their leader have conquered in the fight
forever and forever are clad in robes of white:
in mercy, Jesus, bring us to that dear land of rest
where sings the host of heaven your glorious name to bless.

The Christ is ever with them, the daylight is serene;
the pastures of the blessed are ever rich and green.
There is the throne of David, and there, from care released,
the shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast.
To God enthroned in glory the Church's voices blend,
the Lamb forever blessed, the Light that knows no end.

OFFERING

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Acknowledgments

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125 Years of Sharing God's Grace in Libertyville

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church - 1897-2022

125 years in the heart of Lake County

70 years on the corner of West Park Avenue and Garfield

49 years of St. John Lutheran School

Celebrating the Past and the Heart God has for Us Today!

Christian Life Resources Sunday - February 20, 2022

With a heart for the life God gives us, we were a primary partner in establishing this growing ministry. Let's see how we can continue to make a difference in saving lives in this broken world. (Guest preacher, Rev. Jeff Samelson, from Christian Life Resources)

How can you help? Wouldn't it be great to have ...

- Brunch! (Contact Sheryl Linnemann)

- *Show and Tell* how St. John shared the heart of Jesus starting

"WELS Lutherans for Life" (Contact Pastor)

St. John Church / School / Community Picnic - September 17 or 18, 2022

Imagine the delicious aromas and tastes of food trucks.

Imagine special musical entertainment.

Imagine church / school / neighbors coming together to be friends and family.

How can you help? Let Sheryl know you would like to help!

St. John Antigua Sunday - October 9, 2022

With a heart for sharing Jesus, we were a primary partner in establishing a congregation and school on this Caribbean island. Let's see what Jesus has done, and what he can keep on doing through us!

How can you help? Let Pastor know you would like to help!

