



# OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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For Immediate Release

## **Our Saviour's to Showcase First Handwritten Bible in 500 Years**

*October 8 Presentation on 'The Saint John's Bible' Open to the Public*

**FAIRFIELD, Conn.**, September 10, 2006 – On September 30, 1452, the Gutenberg Bible was published, becoming the first mass-produced book in print and essentially bringing to a close a centuries-old tradition of hand-lettered, hand-illustrated Bibles.

Now, 554 years after that watershed event, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Fairfield is hosting a multimedia presentation on *The Saint John's Bible*, the first handwritten Bible commissioned in more than 500 years. The presentation, to be held at the church on Sunday, October 8, at 4:00 p.m., is open to the public and is free of charge.

"We are excited to be hosting this fascinating lecture on *The Saint John's Bible*, an impressive and inspirational work of art that illuminates the Word of God for a new millennium," said the Rev. Mark Christoffersen, pastor of Our Saviour's. "The Bible has always been central to the Lutheran tradition and, indeed, Martin Luther himself is credited with first making the Holy Scripture widely accessible to the people through his 1534 translation of the Bible into his native German."

The October 8 presentation, "Illuminating the Word," will be given by Tim Ternes, director of public programming and educational outreach at Saint John's Abbey and University, Collegeville, Minnesota, which commissioned *The Saint John's Bible*. The presentation will include a documentary video on the making of *The Saint John's Bible*, a discussion of the tools, methods and materials used to produce it, as well as projected images and a real page from the seven-volume work.

The lecture at Our Saviour's is being held in connection with a three-year international exhibition tour of *The Saint John's Bible*, which includes stops at New York's Museum of Biblical Art, September 6 – November 26, 2006, and the Library of Congress, October 6, 2006 – December 15, 2006, in Washington, D.C.

*The Saint John's Bible* was commissioned by Saint John's University in 1998 to revive a tradition and affirm the university's commitment to the study of scripture, to the book arts and to educational, artistic and spiritual pursuits. It consists of 1,150 pages in seven volumes: *Gospels and Acts of the Apostles*, *Book of Psalms*, *Pentateuch*, *Wisdom and Poetic Books*, *Prophets*, *Historical Books*, and *Letters and The Book of Revelation*.

In the tradition of great Medieval Bibles, *The Saint John's Bible* stands more than two feet tall, and will be more than three feet thick upon its completion in 2007. It will be housed permanently at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library at Saint John's Abbey and University, founded in 1856 by a group of Benedictine monks from Bavaria.

*The Saint John's Bible* is being created by a team of scribes, artists and theologians under the direction of Donald Jackson, scribe to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Crown Office at the House of Lords, and one of the world's foremost Western calligraphers. Jackson, who began copying ancient scripts and decorated letters as a nine-year-old in his native Lancashire, England, said of his childhood experience: "I loved the feel of the pen as it touched the page and the breathtaking effect of the flow of colored ink as its wetness caught the light."

"The Bible is the calligraphic artist's supreme challenge," said Jackson, "my Sistine Chapel, a daunting task."

For more information about the October 8 presentation and other programs, contact the church at (203) 255-0545. Our Saviour's is located at 160 Hill Farm Road (corner of Duck Farm Road) in Fairfield.

More information on *The Saint John's Bible* can be found at [www.saintjohnsbible.org](http://www.saintjohnsbible.org).

### **About Our Saviour's**

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), reaches out to the world and to its local communities with the Good News of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The congregation receives strength for this mission through Worship, Christian Education, Service, Benevolent Giving, Witness, Mutual Support and a commitment to grow in faith and participation. Our Saviour's is guided in the belief that, "As God Gives to Us, So We Give to Others."

Holy Communion is celebrated during worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. each Sunday. The church also offers Sunday School and Adult Forum programs at 9:30 a.m. For more information, please call (203) 255-0545 or visit us at [www.oursaviours.net](http://www.oursaviours.net).

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