

The CELEBRATION of the GOSPEL

DECEMBER 3, 2017 at 8:30 A.M.

Welcome to All

All are invited to to participate in any of our activities, and to become a part of this community of faith and love.

✝ Please stand as you are able. **Bold** indicates congregational response.

THE ADVENT OF WORSHIP

GREETING *and* ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT Alleluia Ringers

Advent Carol

✝ SONGS of PRAISE

Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth

FWS 2050, vs 1 & 2

**Mothering God, you gave me birth
in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.**

**Mothering Christ, you took my form,
offering me your food of light,
grain of life, and grape of love,
your very body for my peace.**

Star Child

FWS 2095

**Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God,
love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when
Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!**

**Hope for peace Child God's stupendous sign,
down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine,
This year, this year, let the day arrive when
Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!**

LIGHTING *of the* ADVENT CANDLE

Ron and Susie Newton

Today we light the candle of Hope and one more.
This is the candle of Peace.

It reminds us of God's peace in the busyness of our lives.

(Lighting of the first and second Advent Candles)

Let us be mindful of God's loving peace, which says,
"all are welcome."

**May Emmanuel find welcome in our hearts,
take flesh in our lives, and be for all peoples
the welcome advent of redemption and grace.**

RESPONSE *to the* LIGHT

UMH 204

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.**

WELCOME IN THE GOOD NEWS

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deirdré Halliburton

Parents may accompany their children to the altar if desired.

Ushers will pass out folders during the Children's Moment. Please register your attendance.

✝ SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:39-56

Jim Sandifer

This is the Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Welcome Inn Blessings

Pastor Lane

OUR PEACEFUL RESPONSE

✝ HYMN of FAITH

Come, Let us Sweetly Join

UMH 699, VS 1-3

✝ PRAYER of CONFESSION

**Merciful God,
always with us...always coming:
We confess that we do not know how to prepare
for your Advent.**

**We have forgotten how to hope in miracles.
We have not welcomed in the promise of your kingdom.
We get distracted by all the busyness of this season.
We ignore the needs of our neighbors.
Forgive us, we pray.**

**Grant us the patient faith and wisdom of Mary and
the joyful welcome of Elizabeth.
In the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make
us ready to welcome your Light into our lives.**

(A time for silent prayers and confession.)

✝ WORDS of ASSURANCE *and* PARDON

based on Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up from David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety.
And this is the name by which it will be called:

"The Lord Is Our Righteousness."

**Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce
this season, is our righteousness.
In Christ, we are made right with God.
In Christ, we are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen.**

✝ SHARING *the* LOVE *and* PEACE of CHRIST

OFFERTORY

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

Alleluia Ringers

✝ DOXOLOGY

UMH 94

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

✝ CALL *to the* TABLE

Welcome! This table is for all,
brothers and sisters, neighbors and newcomers,
from near and far, we gather at God's welcome.

This table is for all, but it is not our table.
It's God's table. So come, and take your place
at the table of grace.

You are welcome. You are invited. You are called.

**Let us share this holy meal together,
where all are welcomed in.**

✝ THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

And so, with your people on earth and
all the company of heaven we praise your name
and join their unending hymn:

Singing together:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest. Blest is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

The congregation is seated and the institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we
offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Singing together:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and concludes:

All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever.

Singing together:

**Amen. Amen. Amen. Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

UMH 895

GIVING *the* BREAD *and* CUP

- *All are welcome to partake in Holy Communion.*
- *Communion will be served using the ancient means of "intinction." When broken bread is placed in your hand you may dip it lightly into the cup and thereby receive both elements at the same time.*
- *Gluten-free communion is offered to anyone who desires it; when you come up to the altar, let the server know you would like the gluten-free elements.*
- *You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.*

PRAYER *after* RECEIVING

**Thank you, God, for meeting us in this holy mystery,
where you have welcomed us in and filled us with your grace.
Send us by your Spirit to be faithful signs of your steadfast love,
filled with the hope that comes from this blessed season,
as we prepare to "welcome inn," your Son, the Light
of the World. Amen.**

DEPARTING IN SERVICE & LOVE

INVITATION *to* CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

*We joyfully welcome all those whose wish to become members of St. John's
and invite you to come forward during the singing of the closing hymn.*

✝ HYMN of DISCIPLESHIP

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

UMH 213

During the hymn, we invite you to bring forward The Shepherd's Market grocery bags.

✝ BLESSING *and* SENDING FORTH

✝ POSTLUDE

All are invited to stay for refreshments in the Family Life Center.

*The flowers on the altar are given by Marilyn and Richard Damberg
in honor of Marilyn's birthday
and the birthday of their grandson, Quenton.*

Welcome to St. John's!

Welcome to worship! We are glad you've joined us and hope you feel at home here. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome.

Children of all ages are welcome in worship. However, if you or your child would prefer, nursery care is available in the Administration Building next door; an usher can escort you. Children's bulletins and sermon sacks are available from an usher.

Restrooms are in the Narthex.

Thank you for being here.

"WELCOME INN" WORSHIP SERIES

This Advent we look to the faith and wisdom of Mary, the joyful hospitality of Elizabeth, and the courage and resolve of Joseph as we prepare ourselves to "welcome inn" the greatest gift of all time, our Savior, Jesus Christ. With our Lessons and Carols service next Sunday, the sermon series will resume with Joseph's Advent stories from Matthew 1:18-25 on December 17.

ADVENT FEST - THIS AFTERNOON

Everyone is invited to our Advent Fest that is sure to be fun for all ages **THIS AFTERNOON** from 4-6 p.m. in the Family Life Center. We will sing Christmas carols, including some shared by our handbells. There will be a Christmas Cookie Swap, so bring 3 dozen of your homemade Christmas Cookies. Come dressed for the season, and we will vote on the ugliest Christmas Sweater and the Cutest Christmas PJs! There will be a time to share in Holiday Prayers and take photos with Santa, too.

UMW RUTH CIRCLE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

The UMW Ruth Circle will hold a Christmas gathering on **Tuesday, December 5** at 9:30 a.m. in the parlor. A devotional will be presented and a love offering for The Shepherd's Market will be collected. All women are invited to attend.

LESSONS & CAROLS

Next Sunday, we will celebrate the Advent season with our annual Lessons & Carols. Our music ministries, along with guest musicians, will offer beautiful songs and meaningful scripture at both worship services. You won't want to miss it.

UMW BAKE SALE

Next Sunday, the UMW will host a bake sale to help fund their mission projects. Come pick up a sweet treat in the FLC during coffee time at 9:30 a.m.

FALL BLOOD DRIVE

Our semi-annual blood drive will be held from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the back parking lot. Those who are eligible donors, please eat a healthy breakfast and stop by the blood mobile next Sunday.

ADVENT OPEN HOUSE AT THE PARSONAGE

Pastor Lane, Ben, and Julian have invited all of us to an Advent open house at the parsonage (11924 N. Oak Hills Pkwy.) on **Sunday, December 10**. It will be held from 2-4 p.m. and will be a wonderful opportunity for us to drop in for a short visit and wish them a Merry Christmas.

PRIME TIMERS BREAKFAST

Join the Prime Timers for a Dutch-treat breakfast before you hit the malls for Christmas shopping! We will be at the Piccadilly on Essen at 8:30 a.m. on **Saturday, December 9**. You will need energy for all the shopping and this is just the place.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS SEASON

Once again our sanctuary will be graced with the beauty of poinsettias during the Advent and Christmas seasons. If you have someone you would like to honor or remember, fill out the enclosed form and put it in the offering plate. Deadline to order is Monday, December 11.

GROCERY BAG SUNDAY

Thank you for bringing your food donations for The Shepherd's Market. This is a time of year when we have a greater number of folks needing help with food for the holidays so everything you bring for the pantry is in demand.

HAPPENING AT ST. JOHN'S THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 3

GROCERY BAG SUNDAY

9:45 a.m. Sunday School, *Campus Wide*

4:00 p.m. Advent Festival, FLC

Monday, December 4

9:00 a.m. Ladies Covenant Group, *Parlor*

10:00 a.m. Let's Geaux Play, *Toddler Nursery*

3:00 p.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*

3:00 p.m. Men's Covenant Group, *Library*

3:00 p.m. Lectionary Ladies, *Parlor*

5:00 p.m. Ladies' Covenant Group, *Parlor*

6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC-E*

Tuesday, December 5

8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*

8:15 a.m. Worship in the Market, *FLC*

9:30 a.m. Ruth Circle UMW, *Parlor*

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, *Pastor's Office*

4:30 p.m. Ladies' Covenant Group, *Parlor*

5:30 p.m. Cancer Survivors Support Group, *Choir Room*

6:00 p.m. Disciple Bible Study, *Library*

Wednesday, December 6

10:00 a.m. Spanish Class, *Library*

5:00 p.m. Ladies' Covenant Group, *FLC-A*

6:30 p.m. Alpha Bells, *Sanctuary*

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir, *Choir Room*

Thursday, December 7

8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*

8:30 a.m. Holy Folders, *Library*

6:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting, *Library*

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir, *Choir Room*

7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts, *FLC*

Friday, December 8

OFFICE CLOSED

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group, *Parlor*

8:30 a.m. Food Bank Delivery, *FLC*

9:00 a.m. Arts & Crafts, *FLC-A*

Saturday, December 9

8:30 a.m. Prime Timers Breakfast, *Essen Piccadilly*

9:30 a.m. Choir & Alleluia Ringers Rehearsal, *Sanctuary*

12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC-C*

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Ushers: *Jill Slicker, Paul Ivey, Sandra Kuykendall, Aileen Pine; Host: Bobbi Marino*

CHURCH STAFF

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Remember to pray for **The Walk**.
"...for we walk by faith, not
by sight." - 2 Corinthians 5:7
(NRSV)



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ST. JOHN'S

United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.



8:30 a.m. Worship Service

DECEMBER 3, 2017

We are a Christian community called to share our gifts through worship, witness and service so that others will know God and become disciples of Jesus Christ.