

The CELEBRATION of the GOSPEL

DECEMBER 24, 2017 at 10 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.

GATHERING

GREETING *and* ANNOUNCEMENTS

CANDLELIGHTING The Cooper Family
Lynn, Paul and Natalie, Kellen, Madeline, and Elizabeth

Throughout our Advent journey,
Hope, Peace, Joy and Love serve as our guide.
**We sing carols, lift prayers, and light candles
to prepare the way.**

(Lighting of the candles of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love)

Today we will hear the story of God's wonderful love.

Today we proclaim: "For unto us a child is born."

Today we will be challenged to believe in all that God can do.

**Open our hearts, Lord, that we may be ready to receive
your great gift of Love. Amen.**

✠ HYMN of PRAISE UMH 220, vs. 1, 2, 4
Angels From the Realms of Glory

LISTENING

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. If you have any joys or concerns
please fill out a prayer card found in the left pocket of the folder
and place it in the offering plate.*

LIVING WORD
*Scripture Readers: Jason Chauvin, Shay Chauvin, Richard Damberg,
Deirdre Halliburton, Ray Halliburton, Ben Hartman, David Henson,
Bill Perry, Troy Prevot, Julia Puac-Romero, Lane Cotton Winn*

SPECIAL MUSIC Carrie Stephens *and* Terry Byars
Welcome To Our World

RESPONDING

PROFESSION of FAITH Elizabeth *and* Alex Lohmann

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life
and include Elizabeth and Alex in your care?

**With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live
according to the example of Christ. We will surround
Elizabeth and Alex with a community of love and forgiveness,
that they may grow in their trust of God and be found faithful
in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they
may be true disciples, who walk in the way that leads to life.**

Today we also receive Jerome, Lynn, Elizabeth, and Alex into church membership.

Brothers and sisters, I commend to your love and care, Jerome, Lynn,
Elizabeth and Alex, whom we this day receive into the membership of
St. John's. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their
hope, and perfect them in love.

**We give thanks for all that God has already given you and
we welcome you in Christian love. As members together
with you in the body of Christ and here at St. John's United
Methodist Church, we renew our covenant to faithfully
participate in the ministries of the Church by our prayers,
our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness, that
in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

✠ HYMN of FAITH UMH 228
He Is Born

✠ 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,
the joyful welcome of Elizabeth,
the courage and resolve of Joseph,
and the hope of the prophets,
that we may journey with them
to Bethlehem, and find the good news of a child
born for us.
Now, 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 Bryan Adams
Mary Did You Know?

✠ 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.*
- *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 TO SERVE

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 UMH 246
Joy to the World

✠ BLESSING *and* SENDING FORTH

✠ POSTLUDE

Welcome to St. John's

We are delighted you have chosen to join us during this most blessed season to celebrate the Light of Christ that is coming into the world. The St. John's family welcomes all to this sacred day of worship.

We especially want our guests to know how special it is to have you here.

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. Should you desire it, Children's bulletins and "sermon sacks" are available from an usher.

Our ushers are happy to assist you in any way. Restrooms are located in the Narthex.

We hope you will return to experience how God might change your life through St. John's. May the Good News of Christ's birth bring joy to your heart.

Ways to Worship and Connect with the St. John's family

Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

Traditional Worship with Holy Communion and music by our Praise Team.

Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

Traditional Worship with music led by our Chancel Choir.

Both services include a Children's Moment and a nursery is available all morning.

Adults

Sundays:

Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

Mondays:

Lectionary Ladies, 3:00 p.m.
Men's Covenant Group, 3:00 p.m.
AA Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesdays:

Cancer Support Group, 5:30 p.m.

Wednesdays:

Heavenly Hash Dinner,
resumes in January

Thursdays:

Holy Folders,
Bulletin folding, 8:30 a.m.

Fridays:

Men's Prayer Group, 6:30 a.m.
Arts & Crafts Group, 9:00 a.m.

Saturdays:

AA meeting, 12:00 p.m.

Monthly

Good Grief Support Group
Second Monday of the Month, 11:00 a.m.
Prime Timers Breakfast
*Second Saturday of the month,
Essen Lane Piccadilly, 8:30 a.m.*

United Methodist Women (UMW)
Ruth Circle

First Tuesday of the month, 9:30 a.m.
Mary Martha Circle
Second Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m.

Children and Youth

Sunday School

Ages 3 to 12th Grades
Sundays, 9:45 a.m.

Let's Geaux Play

Preschool Play Group
Mondays, 10 a.m.

Youth Group

Sundays, 5-7 p.m.

Shepherd's Market

Mondays, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesdays, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.,

with Worship in the Market at 8:15 a.m.

Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The Shepherd's Market is a client-choice food pantry serving the hungry and needy in our South Baton Rouge neighborhood.

Music

Chancel Choir

Wednesdays, 6:30-7:45 p.m.

Alleluia Ringers

Sundays, 7:00 p.m.

Alpha Bells (Beginners)

Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

Praise Team & Early Bird Choir

Sundays, 7:45 a.m.

St. John's United Methodist Church
230 Renee Drive | Baton Rouge, LA 70810
www.stjohnsbr.org | 225-766-4594

Announcements & Growth Opportunities

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

We hope you will worship with us this evening:

4 p.m. A family worship service with Christmas scripture readings by our youth, a children's live nativity, carols, Holy Communion, and concludes with candlelight.

7 p.m. A traditional worship service including the Chancel Choir, carols, meditation, Holy Communion and concludes by candlelight. If you ordered a poinsettia you may take them home after the 7 p.m. candlelight service.

OFFICE AND PANTRY HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Please make note of holiday closures for the church office and The Shepherd's Market. **The church office** will remain closed through Christmas week and will reopen with regular office hours (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) on Tuesday, January 2. **The Shepherd's Market** will be closed Christmas week and will reopen on Thursday, January 4 at 8 a.m.

END OF YEAR DONATIONS

Please note that all contributions for 2017 must be postmarked by **December 31** or received in the office by that date. If you have any questions about your giving, please email office@stjohnsbr.org or call the office (766-4594).

NEW TESTAMENT FAST TRACK BIBLE STUDY

On **Tuesday, January 23**, we will begin the 12-week New Testament Fast Track Bible Study. If you are interested in participating in this new version of the Disciple Bible Study series, please fill out a registration form and return it with your payment to the church office. Registration forms can be found in the narthex and in the Admin Building. Cost of the student book is \$20. (If you pay by check, please put Bible Study in the memo line.)

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mark your calendars for **Friday, February 9**, and **Saturday, February 10**. Daphne Grady will lead this 8 hour training session (over the 2 days) to teach participants how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Cost of the class is \$30. For more information contact Daphne at 266-7266 or dgaygrady@aol.com.

2018 FLOWER CHART

The 2018 Flower Chart is now up on the bulletin board in the Admin Building. If you have someone or an occasion to remember, flowers on the altar are a beautiful way to do that. Sign up now to be able to choose that special date.

THANK YOU FROM ST. JOHN'S STAFF

Many thanks for showing your appreciation for the work we do by your contributing to the Staff Appreciation love offering. We all care deeply for our church and you, and hope what we do will continue to be a blessing to all.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

USHERS: *Joyce Robinson, Randy Thayer, Susan Johnston, Rhonda Tucker*
HOSTS: *Jim Sandifer, Kathleen Adams*

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn
Lead Pastor
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Terry Byars
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Bill Putzig
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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.



10 a.m. Worship Service

DECEMBER 24, 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.