

The CELEBRATION of the GOSPEL

December 22, 2019 at 11 A.M.

Welcome to All

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

✠ Please stand as you are comfortable. **Bold** indicates congregational response.

...We GATHER to PRAISE...

WORDS of WELCOME

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Guests, friends, members, welcome to worship! We are glad you are here. Please feel free to participate in ways that you feel led and comfortable or just observe, if you prefer. We welcome your presence among us.

INTROIT

✠ HYMN

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

UMH 204

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLES

Annette Anderson

Listen to Mary's words, spoken to the angel, Gabriel:

"With all my heart I glorify the Lord!

In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.

He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.

Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored

because the mighty one has done great things for me.

Holy is his name."

(Luke 1:46-49)

We light this candle as a reminder of the power of love,

which comes to us just as we are

and fills every corner of our hearts,

bringing light wherever there is darkness.

Eternal God, we stand in awe of your overwhelming love.

It is frightening to welcome it, to allow ourselves to be fully

loved just as we are, to say yes to your love without knowing

where it will lead us.

By your grace, fill us with love and drive out all the darkness in

our hearts, that we might say yes to you and bring your love to

others. Amen.

CANDLE RESPONSE SONG

He Came Down

UMH 204

He came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love;

Hallelujah for evermore.

✠ AFFIRMING our FAITH

The Nicene Creed

UMH 88o

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth,

of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,

True God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

He came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary

and became truly human.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory

to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son

is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in the one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism

for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

✠ GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father

and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen. Amen.

...to HEAR GOD'S WORD...

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Pastor Lane

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.

ANTHEM

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

Chancel Choir

✠ SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25

Rev. Marie Williams

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Light of Christ, shine on our path, chase away all darkness and lead us to the heart of God. Amen.

SERMON

"Altogether Love"

Pastor Lane

...to OFFER THANKS...

PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER

✠ HYMN of FAITH

Love Divine All Loves Excelling

UMH 384

OFFERING OUR TITHES and GIFTS to GOD

✠ DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

praise him, all creatures here below;

praise him above, ye heavenly host;

praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Pastor Marie

As prayers and petitions are offered our response will be:

Come, Lord Jesus, Emmanuel

and hear our prayer.

...we SCATTER to SERVE...

INVITATION to CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

We joyfully welcome all those who 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

✠ BLESSING and SENDING FORTH

✠ POSTLUDE

We thank Rev. Marie Williams for assisting in worship today.

The poinsettias in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in memory and in honor of our loved ones. A list of dedications can be found in your bulletin.

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.

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

Thank you for being here.

Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve, **Tuesday, December 24** we will hold two candlelight worship services. We hope you will join us for either of these beautiful services that will prepare your heart to welcome the Christ child. At both services Holy Communion will be shared and a nursery will be provided.

At 4 p.m. our family-friendly service will have a "live" nativity with our children in costumes as the angels and animals that were in the stable the night Jesus was born.

At 6 p.m. we will hold our traditional service that will feature a Service of Lessons & Carols and special music.

CHRISTMAS EVE PARKING

We are asking members of the congregation to park in the FLC parking lot (with the nice, new, bright stripes) on Christmas Eve at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. We are expecting a lot of visitors for both services and would like for them to be able to park close to the sanctuary. Thank you for your consideration.

END OF YEAR GIVING

If you would like to claim your pledges and gifts to St. John's on your 2019 taxes, they must be received in the Sunday, December 29 collection, brought to the church by Monday, December 30, or, if mailed, postmarked December 31. Also, online giving must be entered before midnight on December 31. If you have any questions, please contact LeAnn Davis at leannDavis@stjohnsbr.org or 225-766-4594.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

St. John's offices will be closed Tuesday December 24 and Wednesday December 25. We will reopen Thursday December 26 at 9 a.m. for regular office hours. We will also be closed Tuesday December 31 and Wednesday January 1, 2020. We will reopen Thursday January 2 at 9 a.m. for regular office hours.

The Shepherd's Market will be closed from Monday December 23 through Thursday January 2, 2020. They will reopen for regular shopping hours on Monday January 6.

2020 FLOWER CHART

The Flower Chart for 2020 is up on the bulletin board in the hall of the Admin. Building. If there is a special date you want to commemorate, a special person you want to honor or remember by putting flowers on the altar, now is the time to do it! You will be called prior to the date asking for a dedication to be put in the Sunday bulletin. If you wish, you may bring the flowers yourself just prior to the 8:30 service or call Heroman's on Staring (769-9898) and they will deliver to the Sanctuary on Saturday.

YOUTH GROUP

Our Youth Group will not meet on **Sunday December 29**. Regular gatherings will resume Sunday, January 5. All youth in grades 6 through 12 are invited to join us in the Family Life Center Sundays from 4 - 6 p.m.

STAFF THANK YOU!

From the staff, both clergy and lay, we thank our St. John's family for their generosity in giving to our Staff Love Offering. It is much appreciated.

THANK YOU FOR POINSETTIAS

Many thanks to everyone who dedicated poinsettias to go in the Sanctuary for the Christmas season. If you wish, you may pick it up after the 6 p.m. service on Christmas Eve.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, December 22

8:00 a.m. Praise Team, Sanctuary
8:30 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary
9:30 a.m. Coffee Time, FLC
9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Campus Wide
11:00 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary
4:00 p.m. Youth Group, FLC

Monday, December 23

THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
10:00 a.m. Almost Christmas Devotion Study, Library
6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Tuesday, December 24

OFFICE CLOSED
THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
4:00 p.m. Family-friendly Christmas Eve Service, Sanctuary
6:00 p.m. Traditional Christmas Eve Service, Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
OFFICE CLOSED

Thursday, December 26

THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
9:00 a.m. Office Reopens

Friday, December 27

8:30 a.m. Holy Folders, Library

Saturday, December 28

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

CONNECT WITH ST. JOHN'S

TEXTING: St. John's sends out timely reminders about church events via text message. Email the office (office@stjohnsbr.org) requesting that you be signed up for the texting service.

FRIDAY NEWSLETTER: Our Friday Newsletter keeps you up to date about all the happenings around St. John's, including worship information, special events, and service opportunities.

INSIDE ST. JOHN'S EMAIL: This new email is **in addition to** our Friday e-newsletter, and geared towards our active members and friends. It includes prayer requests, birthdays, anniversaries, celebrations, memorial and funeral announcements, and other St. John's family news.

*This email will **not** be sent to you unless you request it.* If you would like to receive this new weekly email, fill out the form that can be found in the Narthex or the hallway of the Admin Building; you may also contact Lynn in the church office at 225-766-4594 or office@stjohnsbr.org.

 Like us and check-in on Facebook: facebook.com/stjohnsbr

Give online: <http://bit.ly/stjohnsgive>

STEWARDS SERVING TODAY

Ushers: *Richard and Marilyn Damberg, Penny Kemler, Will Halliburton*
Hosts: *Tommie Reinhardt*

CHURCH STAFF

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ST. JOHN'S
United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.



ALMOST CHRISTMAS

ALTOGETHER & LOVE

DECEMBER 22, 2019

11 a.m. Worship Service

*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.*