



**THE ABCs  
OF CHRISTMAS  
& BIRTHDAY PARTY  
FOR JESUS**



Sunday, December 24, 2023

**10 A.M. WORSHIP CELEBRATION**

All Are Welcome

We are delighted you have chosen to worship with us on Christmas Eve morning! In today's service we will hear the Christmas story through the letters of the alphabet, as our children and youth present "The ABCs of Christmas," we will sing our favorite Christmas carols, share in Holy Communion, and end the service by candlelight as we sing *Silent Night*. Thank you for being here with us. Merry Christmas!

STJOHNSBR.ORG | @STJOHNSBR

*Whether you are a guest or member, we invite you to scan the QR code to register your attendance so we know you're here and we can get to know you better.*



# WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## OUR MISSION

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.

## OUR VISION

Our church will be known as a center for feeding people spiritually and physically in our community.

## OUR CORE VALUES

We believe the following guiding principles make us a fruitful and spiritually intentional church:

- Fellowship: A sense of family, hospitality, and belonging to an open, accepting, and nurturing community.
- Caring: Loving response to needs of all people through empathy and compassion.
- Mission: giving of ourselves to meet and serve the needs of all others by faithful witness through our actions, servanthood and way of living.
- Spiritual Growth: Studying, understanding and growing in the word of God by Christ-centered prayer, worship and service through discipleship in action.

## OUR CONTACT INFO

230 Renee Drive | Baton Rouge, LA 70810

office@stjohnsbr.org | 225-766-4594 | stjohnsbr.org | @stjohnsbr

Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. - noon



**ST. JOHN'S**  
United Methodist Church

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*Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.*

# GUEST INFORMATION

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. Our ushers are happy to assist you in anyway. If you are feeling cold, shawls are available in a basket in front of the media desk in the back of the sanctuary. Restrooms are in the Narthex.

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

*Thank you for being here.*

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

We fully welcome and love engaging children in worship! We include a special Children's Moment each Sunday.

- **The St. John's Prayground** is located in the front of the sanctuary. This is a place for children and their families to worship together, allowing children to more fully participate in the service. More details about the Prayground may be found on our website.
- A staffed **nursery** for infants through preschool is open every Sunday morning and is located next door in our Education/Administration building.
- **Changing tables** are located in the restrooms in the back of the sanctuary and in our nursery.
- Children are welcome to receive **Holy Communion**, which is served weekly at 8:30 a.m. and on the first Sunday of the month at 11 a.m. Our communion elements are bread and grape juice. Gluten-free elements are also available.
- **Sunday School** is offered for children starting at age 18 months through 12th grade from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

*Any questions? Ushers are glad to assist you.*

## ST JOHN'S CLERGY AND STAFF

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn  
*Lead Pastor*  
pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org

Connor Dean  
*Director of Youth & Children's Ministries*  
connordean@stjohnsbr.org

Lynn Cooper  
*Administrative Assistant*  
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Dr. Steve Rushing  
*Choir Director*  
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Ben Balsler  
*Media Producer*  
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Cheryl Roubique  
*Nursery Coordinator*

Gabe Guillory  
*Youth Intern*  
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LeAnn Davis  
*Manager of Finance & Facilities*  
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Dr. Terry Byars  
*Praise Team Director and Accompanist*  
terrybyars@stjohnsbr.org

Bill Putzig  
*Custodian*  
billputzig@stjohnsbr.org

Brooklyn Hays  
*Nursery Worker*

# WELCOME TO THIS CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP CELEBRATION

December 24, 2023

\*Please stand as you are comfortable.  
**Bold** indicates congregational response.  
Please scan the QR code to register your attendance.



## GATHERING WITH THE ANGELS

Prelude

Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn,  
Connor Dean

Prayer

\*Carol

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 240, vs. 1 & 2

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Members of the 2023  
Confirmation Class

In God's house, there is hope –  
a hope that enables us to see new possibilities for our lives.

*The candle of Hope is lit.*

In God's house, there is love –  
because God is love, from beginning to end,  
and God's love exists for us all.

*The candle of Love is lit.*

In God's house, there is joy –  
because God created rhythm and music, dance and laughter,  
and if those things have God's fingerprints,  
then God's house surely exudes joy.

*The candle of Joy is lit.*

In God's house, there is peace –  
and all that threatens to separate us from God falls away.

*The candle of Peace is lit.*

In the center of our hope,  
in the center of our peace,  
in the center of our joy,  
in the center of our love,  
is God –  
who came to spread light and love to all the world.

**May Christ's light shine on us,  
and in us,  
and through us,  
that God's glory may be seen and God's love be fully known.**

*The Christ candle is lit.*

Let us pray...

**God who is with us, the Light of the World,  
shine in our hearts,  
light up our homes,  
illuminate our communities,  
send sparks of love around the world.**

**This we ask in the name One who taught us how to live  
as children of the Light. Amen.**

**Scripture**

Luke 2:1-7

Grace Idikwu

**Anthem**

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

Music Makers

## **THE ABCs OF CHRISTMAS**

**Introduction**

Connor Dean

**A is for ...**

Daniel Csaszar

**B is for ...**

Jane Walker

**C is for ...**

**Carol**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 230, vs.1

**D is for ...**

Haylee Matthews

**E is for ...**

**F is for ...**

**G is for ...**

**Scripture Reading**

Luke 2:8-16

Julian Hartman

**Carol**

*Angels We Have Heard On High*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 238, vs. 1

**H is for ...**

Anna Durham

**I is for ...**

**J is for ...**

Carol

*Joy to the World*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 246, vs. 1 & 2

K is for ...

Hayden Matthews

L is for ...

M is for ...

Carol

*Away In a Manger*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 217, vs. 1

N is for ...

Livia Walker

O is for ...

Anna Durham

### Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

Offertory: *Noel*  
Connor Dean, soloist

*We appreciate your generosity.  
Each gift enables us to be a blessing in our community.  
You may give online by scanning the QR Code  
or navigate to [stjohnsbr.org/give](http://stjohnsbr.org/give).*



### \*Doxology

**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!**

P is for ...

Haylee Matthews

### Prayer

Living God, on this holy day we gather ~  
To stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory;  
To sing with angels, rejoicing in your work;  
To wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise;  
To sit with Mary, cradling your love.  
May the good news of this night inspire us  
To tell the world of our great joy:  
For to us is born a Savior,  
The Messiah, our Lord.  
Glory and praise to you forever! Amen.

Q is for ...

Julian Hartman

R is for ...

S is for ...

## Special Music

*O Holy Night*  
Evie Durham, violin

T is for ...

Daniel Csaszar

U is for ...

V is for ...

W is for ...

Carol

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 234, vs. 1

X is for ...

Jane Walker

Y is for ...

Z is for ...

Carol

*Go, Tell It On the Mountain*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 251, vs. 1

# CELEBRATING THAT CHRIST IS WITH US

## Sharing in Holy Communion

*Carol during Communion:*  
*The First Noel, UMH 245, vs. 1 - 5*

***Everyone is invited and welcome to share in Holy Communion.***

*Communion will be served using the ancient means of "intinction"  
with only the pastor and servers touching the elements, or,  
if you prefer, you may receive pre-packaged elements.*

*Our communion elements are bread and grape juice.*

*A gluten-free option is also available.*

*You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.  
If mobility is a concern, please let an usher know and someone will bring  
communion to you.*

## Gratitude & Invitation

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

# SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

## \*Candlelighting Carol

*Silent Night*

The United Methodist Hymnal 239, vs. 1, 3, & 4

## \*Closing Prayer

Pastor Lane

## \*Hymn of Celebration

*Joy to the World*

The United Methodist Hymnal 246, vs. 1, 4

## Blessing and Sending Forth

## \*Postlude

*Everyone is invited to the Birthday Party for Jesus  
in the Narthex following the service.*

## WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to everyone who shared their gifts in the ABCs of Christmas and our worship service.

Prayer: Feasting on the Word Advent Companion, p. 99

ABCs of Christmas Source: Rev. Erin Klassen

(<http://youngclergywomen.org/the-abcs-of-christmas-a-worship-service/>)

Ushers for the 10 a.m. service are Richard Damberg and Paul Ivey.



# UPCOMING WORSHIP

## **TONIGHT: CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION 5 P.M.**

Our evening service is a traditional Christmas Eve service with carols, special music featuring the Chancel Choir and other musicians from our congregation, a Children's Moment, a Christmas message by Pastor Lane, Holy Communion, and *Silent Night* by candlelight. Join us for a time of worship, community, and celebration of the birth of Jesus.

## **ONE SERVICE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE at 10 a.m.**

We will celebrate the coming of the new year on **New Year's Eve morning at 10 a.m.** We will have a combined Service of Light and Reflection on Sunday, December 31, as we consider this past year and prepare our hearts and lives for 2024.

## **STAR WORD AND EPIPHANY SUNDAY**

On Epiphany Sunday, **January 7 at 8:30 and 11 a.m.**, we will receive a Star Word during worship as a gift and guide for the new year. Inspired by the Magi following the star to Jesus, selecting a star word to meditate on throughout the year can deepen your self-reflection and prayer practices. Join us in this spiritual discipline and for our first worship service of the new year.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **CHURCH & SHEPHERD'S MARKET HOLIDAY CLOSURES**

The church office will be closed on Tuesday, December 26, reopening on December 27 and Friday, December 29 thru Tuesday, January 2, reopening on January 3, 2024. The Shepherd's Market is closed for the holidays following the Great Turkey Giveaway and will reopen for regular pantry hours on Thursday, January 4 at 8 a.m.

**ABOUT THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET:** New volunteers are always welcome! In addition to being a client-choice food pantry, we also serve a meal every time the pantry is open. A snack supper is offered on Mondays and a hot breakfast is served on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Clients can shop twice a month, and you can eat as many times as you would like. Find out more about The Shepherd's Market at [shepherdsmarket.org](http://shepherdsmarket.org). Whether you are in need of food or fellowship, there is a place for you at The Shepherd's Market!

## **END OF YEAR GIVING**

We would like to close the year with the joyful feeling of having met all our financial obligations, and to begin next year with renewed hope and confidence. We can do that with your help. As a church, we rely on strong December offerings, and this year is no different. **In this season of gift giving, we invite you to make a special year-end gift to the church.** Through your gifts, vital ministries of St. John's can continue.

Contributions can be made online ([stjohnsbr.org/give](http://stjohnsbr.org/give)), by mail, or during worship. We also accept stocks, bonds, securities, IRA charitable rollovers, and RMDs. Mailed contributions must be postmarked by December 31 to receive contribution credit for 2023. Online gifts can be made until midnight on December 31. If you have any questions, please contact LeAnn Davis in the office at 225-766-4594 or via email at [leanndavis@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:leanndavis@stjohnsbr.org).

## **2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN "CALLED TO COMMUNITY"**

Thank you to those who have made a pledge for 2024. We celebrate the following:

- **105** individuals & families have pledged a total of **\$515,688**, so far.
- **57** households have increased their pledge for next year.
- **15** are first time pledged givers.

If you have not yet pledged, please consider joining your fellow St. John's family members who have increased their pledge from this year to next. Our 2024 budget includes a Spirit-led 13-14% increase, and your increased pledge will get us closer to our goal. You can complete a pledge card and turn it in during the offering or to the church office, or you can pledge online at: [stjohnsbr.org/pledge-2024](http://stjohnsbr.org/pledge-2024).

# YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

## SUNDAY MORNING CAFE TIME AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30-9:50 Cafe time for youth & children (K-12th) in Room 202

9:50-10:50 Children's & Youth Sunday School time

**NOTE: There will be no Sunday School on December 24 or December 31.**

**Our regular Sunday morning schedule resumes January 7.**

## NEW YEAR'S EVE LOCK IN

The St. John's youth group is hosting a lock-in for United Methodist Youth in and around Baton Rouge. One youth group all the way from Amite will be joining us as well! Students should plan to be dropped off at St. John's UMC at 6:00 p.m. with overnight bags, sleeping bags/blankets, pillows, and air mattresses/cots. Dinner and snacks will be provided.

## MUSIC MAKERS

Music Makers will resume their time with Mr. Steve on **Sunday, January 7 at 4:30 p.m.** in the Choir Room. All children in kindergarten through 5th grades are invited to join in.

## C.H.A.O.S. - CHRIST HERE AND OTHER SPACES

Save these dates for our upcoming events for children and their families!

**January 28, 4:00 p.m.** Join us for a family movie night in the Family Life Center. We will enjoy a hot cocoa bar as well! Families can vote for the movie using the link included in the Faith Friends Newsletter.

**February 25, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.** Bring your leftover Mardi Gras beads and join us for a craft night using upcycled beads! Dinner will be included.

**March 23, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.** St. John's UMC is hosting our annual Bunny Breakfast celebration - complete with pancakes, crafts, games, and an egg hunt. You won't want to miss out on this!

**April 28, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.** Save the date for this event... More info coming soon!

## YOUTH PROGRAMMING FOR SPRING SEMESTER

The St. John's youth group will start gathering on the first Sundays of each month from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m., beginning January 7th, 2024. Throughout the spring semester, we will meet at the homes of different church members for intimate small group Bible Study, games, crafts, or other activities.

St. John's youth will also meet on the 3rd Wednesdays of each month throughout the spring semester. These Wednesday gatherings will be called "Wednesday Night Live" (or WNL for short).

Households with youth students will receive monthly calendars by mail to stay connected on upcoming events.



# POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

## ***IN MEMORY OF***

**Jake & Mary Marino, Willis & Aline Webb** by Frank and Bobbi Marino  
**Jim Schaffhauser** by Joyce and Bill Perry  
**Keith Hartman, Dan Winn** by The HartWinns-Ben, Lane, and Julian  
**Kaitlin & Riley Hunt** by Kathy Vandiver  
**Christopher Schroeder** by Betty Schroeder  
**George & Frances Lindsley** by Jim and Norma Thomason  
**Jim & Hilda Thomason** by Jim and Norma Thomason  
**Valentine & Jessie Sexton** by Gray and Suzanne Sexton  
**Pearl & Walter Fournet** by Gray and Suzanne Sexton  
**David's mom Sandra Ferguson** by David, Konnie, and Emilie Ferguson  
**Konnie's father Charles Kelly** by David, Konnie, and Emilie Ferguson  
**Danny Fontenot** by Bobby Johnson and Hal Holloway  
**Ron Johnson** by Bobby Johnson and Hal Holloway  
**Danny Jones** by Bobby Johnson and Hal Holloway  
**J.A. & Heartsease Higgins, Frank & Genevieve Cooper** by Lynn Cooper

## ***IN HONOR OF***

**My parents** by Amy Richardson  
**Our family** by the Gordon family  
**Our daughters Jane & Livia Walker** by Mari and Shawn Walker  
**Dale Biggs on his 95th birthday** by Bill Elrod and Fran Bussie  
**Barbara & Dale Biggs on their 50th wedding anniversary**  
by Bill Elrod and Fran Bussie  
**Stevie Irene, my granddaughter** by Betty Schroeder  
**Jim & Claudia Fowler** by Ruth, Fran, Charles, and Colleen  
**Our four great grandchildren: Weston, Hensley, Emmylou, and Wrenley**  
by Phil and Jill Slicker  
**Our St. John's UMC family** by Pastor Lane, Ben and Julian Hartman  
**The Connections Sunday School Class** by Bernie Johnson  
**To the Glory of God and to the retired clergy who call St. John's home**  
by Bernie Johnson  
**Our daughter Emilie** by David and Konnie Ferguson  
**The unfailing, joyful love of my honorary aunts, uncles, and church family**  
by Wally Isenhower

*Thank you for adorning our worship space with beautiful poinsettias.  
Poinsettias may be taken home after today's 5 p.m. worship service.*



## WAYS TO CONNECT WITH



**ST. JOHN'S**  
United Methodist Church

### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@stjohnsbr



### CHECK OUT OUR WELCOME BROCHURE

**[stjohnsbr.org/welcome-brochure](https://stjohnsbr.org/welcome-brochure)**

*Or grab a printed brochure on your way out!*

### SIGN UP FOR TEXT/EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

Text the word "Connect" to  
225-230-1017

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[stjohnsbr.org](https://stjohnsbr.org)

