



December 29, 2024
10 a.m. Worship Celebration
All Are Welcome

Welcome to worship on this the Fifth Day of Christmas and the First Sunday of Christmastide! The good news of Christmas will be felt and experienced throughout worship - through carols, scripture, prayers, and Holy Communion. We're so glad you're here. Merry Christmas!

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

GUEST INFORMATION

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. Restrooms are in the Narthex, located in the back of the Sanctuary.

Please take home a copy of our Welcome Brochure located in the Narthex or view it online at: stjohnsbr.org/welcome-brochure.

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 Playground** 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 Playground 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.

St. John's Clergy and Staff

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn
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The Celebration of the Gospel

**Please stand as you are comfortable.*

Bold indicates congregational response.

Please scan the QR Code to register your attendance.



Prelude

Words of Grace & Welcome

Natalie Cooper

*Carols

Joy to the World

The United Methodist Hymnal 246, vs. 1

Angels From the Realms of Glory

The United Methodist Hymnal 220, vs. 1

*Call to Worship

"The Work of Christmas" By Howard Thurman

Bobbi Marino

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.
Together let us join God in the work of Christmas.
Welcome to worship!

*Carol

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
The United Methodist Hymnal 224, vs. 1

Candlelighting

Shawn, Mari, Jane, & Livia Walker

God of light and shadow, mystery and miracle,
we celebrate your birth in our lives.
Your coming at Christmas makes the impossible POSSIBLE!
You are making all things new!
Prepare our hearts to receive your precious gift of love.
God of hope, guide us as seek signs of your
promise in our lives and in the world.
Fill us with your spirit of hope.

(Candle of Hope is Lit)

God of peace, help us to be a part of the
harmony you desire for all creation.

Fill us with your spirit of peace.

(Candle of Peace is Lit)

God of joy, give us hearts and minds filled
with the joy of your liberating message.

Fill us with your spirit of joy.

(Candle of Joy is Lit)

God of love, open us to the love you bring
to the world.

Fill us with your spirit of love.

(Candle of Love is lit)

Source of all light, we celebrate the birth of
you son, Jesus Christ.

**May the light of Christ warm our hearts and
light our way as we share the joy of
God's salvation wherever we go.**

(Christ Candle is Lit)

The Light of the World shines in and through us now.

Let's offer one another signs of love and peace to the world, starting with those
around us right now.

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

***Sharing the Peace & Love of Christ**

Children's Moment

Blessing of the Toys

Natalie Cooper

Gospel Reading

Selected Verses from John, Chapter 1

Betsy Adams

In the beginning was the Word,
**and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.**

He was in the beginning with God.

**All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.**

What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.

**The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overtake it.**

There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

He came as a witness to testify to the light,
so that all might believe through him.

**He himself was not the light,
but he came to testify to the light.**

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

**He was in the world, and the world came into being
through him, yet the world did not know him.**

He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to
all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become
children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the
will of man, but of God.

**And the Word became flesh and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth. Amen.**

Carol Sing-a-Long

Gospel Reading

Rev. John Gilmore

Luke 2:15-22

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
For the Word of God within us.
Thanks be to God.

Carol & Hymn Sing-a-Long

Meditation

Natalie Cooper

Carol & Hymn Sing-a-Long

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

*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.*



*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!**

Gathering at the Table

Rev. John

The Lord's Prayer

Sharing in Holy Communion

*Everyone is 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.
If you are a person with limited mobility, please let the usher know and
someone will bring communion to you.*

Closing Prayer

Bobbi Marino

**O God,
We thank you for this mystery that is Christmas.
We are filled with joy, for we have heard the good news.
We are filled with love, for we have tasted
the signs of God's grace.
We are filled with hope, for the angels still sing,
and there is a Light for us to follow.
In the name of the One who brings peace to our souls.
Amen.**

Call to Action

Natalie Cooper

*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**

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
The United Methodist Hymnal 224, vs. 2 & 3

***Benediction**

Natalie Cooper

***Postlude**

Dr. Terry Byars

Worship Notes

The flowers on the altar are given by the Parker Tucker family in honor of all of the December birthdays in the Tucker family: Peggy Tucker (86), December 14; Callie Tucker Usry, December 20; Trent Tucker, December 22; and Parker Tucker, December 28.

Ushers for the service are Scott Durham and Susan Johnston.

Announcements

CHRISTMAS EVE THANK YOU

It was an amazing evening of Christmas Eve worship at St. John's United Methodist Church! Thank you to all of the volunteers, musicians, and staff who made the day so meaningful.

THANK YOU BETSY!

Thank you, Betsy, for your incredible dedication and hard work as our fall youth intern. Your passion and enthusiasm have made a lasting impact on the youth you've worked with. We truly appreciate all that you've done!

EPIPHANY LESSONS & LAUGHTER SERVICES ON JANUARY 5

To close out the Christmas season and celebrate Epiphany, these services of joy and connection on **Sunday, January 5** will amplify the good news of this holy season through song and laughter! We will also receive our 2025 Star Words, a spiritual practice that provides a word for guidance and reflection for the year ahead. We will resume our regular worship times of 8:30 and 11 a.m. as well as Coffee Time and Sunday School on January 5.

PICK UP YELLOW BAG AFTER WORSHIP

Don't forget to pick up a yellow bag after worship on Sunday and, if possible, bring it back with grocery items as well as household items that will help stock the shelves in the pantry. See the text below about how your donations of food and money have benefited The Shepherd' Market and helped to feed an average of 512 households per month. Thank you, St. John's!

GROCERY BAG SUNDAY

On the first Sunday of every month we collect non-perishable food as well as household items, such as paper products, hygiene items, and cleaning supplies, for The Shepherd's Market Client-Choice Food Pantry. Our next Grocery Bag Sunday will be January 5. In 2024, the St. John's congregation donated 9,070 pounds of food and \$40,121 to The Shepherd's Market, which enabled the pantry to buy food to supplement what we receive from the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. In 2024, we served an average of 512 households per month, totaling 6,144 throughout the year. Thank you for helping us feed people spiritually and physically through this vital mission.

COFFEE TIME SNACKS

If your last name begins with **T - Z**, “your” day to bring a snack for Coffee Time is **January 5, 2025**. Remember, this is just a much appreciated suggestion not an obligation. ***Please bring your items in a disposable container or single-use dish, and take them to the FLC by 9:30 a.m.***

HOLIDAY HOURS

During New Year’s Week we will have limited office hours; the office will **only be open** on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. The regular office week will resume on Monday, January 6 at 9 a.m.

The Shepherd’s Market is closed for the holidays and will reopen Monday, January 6 at 3:30 p.m. for regular shopping.

SPRING YOUTH MINISTRY INTERN

St. John’s is excited to announce applications are now being accepted for our Spring Youth Ministry Intern position. This 15-week internship spans February 2 - May 19 and is designed for young adults who have a passion for working with youth (6th-12th grades) and/or may be exploring a call to ministry. It is a great opportunity to gain valuable leadership and ministry experience. This is a part time, salaried internship of approximately 10 hours per week. Each intern will receive \$1,500 throughout the spring semester, to be paid semi-monthly (15th & 30th of each month) during the 15-week internship.

We are looking for someone who has a desire to learn, serve, and encourage others in a local church setting. This is a great opportunity for those majoring in education and humanities, but all degree programs are welcome. **Anyone who is interested should send a cover letter, resume, and the contact information of at least two references to jobs@stjohnsbr.org by January 12, 2025.**

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Beginning Sunday, January 26, we are asking members to spend some time with the youngest blessings of St. John’s. This will help us meet our budget and best stretch your contributions! If no children arrive within the first 15 minutes of the worship service and/or Sunday School, volunteers are free to leave the nursery. You will remain “on call” until your time has ended and will receive a text if a child shows up and you are needed. Thank you for your willingness to serve on the rotation with others! Keep an eye out for Safe Sanctuary Training sign-up, coming soon! To sign up and share your availability, go to stjohnsbr.org/nurseryvolunteer.

Middle school and high school students are welcome to sign up!

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM

The UWF books in the 2025 Reading Program are now available in the church library.

This Week at St. John's

Sunday, December 29
10:30 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary

Monday, December 30
THE CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC
6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Tuesday, December 31
THE CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
7:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Wednesday, January 1, 2025
THE CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
6:30 p.m. Ladies' AA Meeting, FLC-C

Thursday, January 2
THE SHEPHERD'S MARKET CLOSED
(will reopen Monday, January 6, 2025)

Friday, January 3
7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC

Saturday, December 28
12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-C
7:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC

*Family Life Center

Youth and Children's Ministries

YOUTH AND CHILDREN SUNDAY FLOW

We offer faith formation for children and youth of all ages during Sunday School.

Upstairs Café opens at 9:30 a.m. - Students start in the Upstairs Cafe (Room 202 of the Admin building) helping them get settled, enjoy a snack, and have a time of fellowship with one another before separating into their age specific Sunday School groups.

Sunday School Classes - Children 2 yrs to 4 yrs are in the Pre-K Room on the first floor of the Admin building; students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade are in Room 204; students in 3rd through 5th grades are in Room 207; students in 6th through 12th grades are in the Youth Sunday School class Room 201.

UPSTAIRS CAFE SNACK SCHEDULE

First Sundays - Sunday School Teachers
Second Sundays - PreK - 2nd Families
Third Sundays - 3rd - 5th Families
Fourth Sundays - Youth Families.
We will deal with Fifth Sundays separately.

JOIN MUSIC MAKERS

Music Makers rehearse on Sundays at 4:30 p.m. in the Choir Room. This is a wonderful opportunity for Kindergarten through 5th grade students as well as Youth (6th - 12th grades) to be introduced to songs and hymns of the United Methodist Church and a variety of instruments. Drop them off and pick them up in the choir room. They will have a wonderful time with Dr. Steve. **Music Makers will resume on January 12.**

YOUTH GROUP (6th-12th Grades)

First Sundays: The St. John's youth group gathers on the first Sunday of each month from 4 - 5:30 p.m. at the homes of different church members for small group Bible Study, games, crafts, or other activities. Our first Youth Bible Study of the new year will be held here at St. John's on January 5 in the Youth Room.

Third Wednesdays: Youth also meet on the third Wednesday of each month from 6 - 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Room for Wednesday Night Live. Monthly activity calendars are being mailed to households with youth. Contact Connor Dean (connordean@stjohnsbr.org) if you did not receive one.