

# The CELEBRATION of the GOSPEL

January 3, 2021 at 11 a.m.

*Welcome to All*

If you are a guest, we welcome you to worship and ask that you consider filling out a contact form at [www.stjohnsbr.org/guest](http://www.stjohnsbr.org/guest) so we can be in touch with you this week.



**ST. JOHN'S**

United Methodist Church

*Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.*

*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.*

*We Gather*

## Prelude

## Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

## Call to Worship

Pastor Lane

God, we come to worship in this new year  
hoping it will be better.

Guide our thinking and doing and  
help us remember:

2021 will be kinder,  
**if I am kinder.**

2021 will be healthier,  
**if I practice good health guidelines.**

2021 will be more compassionate,  
**if I show more compassion.**

2021 will be less anxious,  
**if I offer more grace.**

2021 will be more just,  
**if I advocate for more justice.**

2021 will be less contentious,  
**if I speak more gently.**

2021 will be less violent,  
**if I more actively work for peace.**

2021 will be more loving,  
**if I demonstrate love more freely.**

Guide us by your Light, O God,  
**that we may bring your Light to the world.**  
Amen.

## Hymn of Praise

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Angels from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing;  
yonder shines the infant light:

Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn King.

*We Proclaim*

## Children's Moment

Pastors

## Scripture

Pastor Lane

*Matthew 2:1-12*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Prayer for Illumination

*based on Psalm 19:14*

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of  
our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, thou who are  
our strength and our redeemer. Amen.

## Sermon

"God's Guiding Star"

Pastor Lane

## Pastoral Prayer

Pastor Lane

*We Respond*

## Hymn of Faith

*Star-Child*

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!

Grown child, old child, memory full of years,  
sad child, lost child, story told in tears,  
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!

## Prayer of Confession

Rev. Deirdre Halliburton

God, we love to worship you when the stars are  
bright above us.

We love to worship you when the sky is clear, and the  
breeze just right.

We love to worship you when the journey to  
Bethlehem is an easy one.

Unfortunately, as you know, this journey of life,  
love, and faith is rarely easy.

Now and again, the stars disappear.

Our feet get blisters, and the journey is far too long  
and lonely.

On these days, forgive us for giving up quickly.  
Forgive us for allowing the dream to die and for  
taking the shortcut home.  
We want to be as brave as the Magi.  
We want to persevere.  
Guide our feet.  
Show us the stars. Amen.

### Words of Grace and Pardon

Pastor Deirdré

As far as the east is from the west – this is how far God  
will reach to bring us back to our divine nature  
and God-focus.  
Be assured: Immanuel. God is with us. Always.  
You are forgiven. Always.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.

### The Peace

### 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 here:  
<http://www.stjohnsbr.org/give>*

### Doxology

**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.**

### Invitation to the Table

### 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.

*The pastors tell of God's acts of love at creation.*

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

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and  
might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

*The congregation is seated as the Last 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.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come  
again.**

*The pastors invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in  
your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty  
God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

### The Lord's Prayer

### Giving of the Bread and Cup

### Prayer After Receiving

God of Light,

Like the Magi so many years ago,  
we are here, seeking you.  
Step by step, we have wandered into this space  
with the hope of feeling you in our midst.  
And step by step, you have claimed us, loved us,  
and fed us.

As a new year dawns, we pray that you would be  
in our dreams and in our waking.  
Allow us to use our star words as a tool to see you  
in our everyday life.  
May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi.  
May they illuminate our path,  
as light always does.  
And in a year, may we find ourselves here,  
together again,  
with a mouth full of praise for the ways  
in which you have been present to us.  
With hearts full to the brim,  
together we pray, Amen.

*We Go Forth*

### Invitation to Christian Discipleship

### Hymn of Discipleship

*Shine, Jesus, Shine*

REFRAIN

**Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory,  
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire;  
flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy,  
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.**

**Lord, the light of your love is shining  
in the midst of the darkness shining;  
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth you now bring us.  
Shine on me, shine on me.**

REFRAIN

**As we gaze on your kingly brightness,  
so our faces display your likeness;  
ever changing from glory to glory,  
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.  
Shine on me, shine on me.**

REFRAIN

### Blessing and Sending Forth

### Postlude

*Thank you for worshipping with us!*

*We thank all our worship stewards, musicians,  
tech team, ushers, and hosts for assisting in today's service.*

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