

The Celebration of the Gospel

March 14, 2021 at 11 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

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 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.

Again We Gather

Prelude Terry Byars
Love Divine All Loves Excelling

Words of Welcome Rev. Deirdré Halliburton

Introit

Call to Worship Rev. Marie Williams

Before we were born,
before we took our first breath,
before the week started,
before the year started,
before we said, "I love you,"
before we said, "I'm sorry,"
before we figured out who we really are,
before we figured out who we want to be,
before it all—
God loved us.
Unconditionally and freely,
fully and honestly—
God loved us.
Again and again,
this is where our story begins.
Let us worship God!
We come to worship the God of Love.

Hymn

For God So Loved the World

For God so loved the world, God gave God's only son,
that through him life is found and our salvation won.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good!
May all rejoice!

For Christ did not descend upon us to condemn,
but that we might be saved and live to follow him.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good!
May all rejoice!

Let's celebrate the news that God has conquered sin,
that evil forces all around no more may win.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good!
May all rejoice!

All praise to God above for we are God's design.
Christ wins the fight; let's share the light; may justice shine!
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good!
May all rejoice!

Prayer for the Pandemic Pastor Lane

Prayer Response

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.

Again We Proclaim

Children's Moment Molly Means

Scripture Pastor Lane

John 3:14-21

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Prayer for Illumination Pastor Lane

God of the here and now—
We have heard the words,
"For God so loved the world
that he gave his only son,"
time and time again.
We have read them on billboards,
heard them in worship,
and seen them on signs.
And yet we know,
there is a difference between
hearing those words in passing
and truly, deeply listening.
We long to listen, God.
We long to hear your truth.
We long to know your love.
Open our hearts and minds.
We are listening.
Amen.

Sermon Pastor Lane

"Again & Again, God Loves First"

Again We Respond

Affirmation of Faith

We believe God is love
— unconditional, constant love.
We believe this love exists for all,
choosing each and every one of us,
day after day,
again and again and again.

We believe that God's love is like a river.
Rivers cannot help but flow toward the sea;
God's love cannot help but move toward us.
We are swimming in it.

We believe that God loved first.
We believe that God breathed life into dust.
We believe that God said, "This is good,"
and because we believe that God loved first,
we strive to build lives that reflect God's love.
May we begin again here. 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.

Prayers of the People

Rev. Marie

O God, whose very essence is love, we remember as we hear once again the words about Moses lifting up the servant in the wilderness, that his action was a sign of your saving love. We are reminded that you love the world, you have loved the world and you will continue to love the world. The world, and each of us, are your creation.

Again and again. . .

O Lord, speak to us your word of love.

Our world and our lives are messy, broken and so many times overwhelming with choices and decisions we need to make. Sometimes we wonder why you don't condemn us for the mess we have made: we pilfer your beautiful and amazing creation, we think more about ourselves and what we want than we do about others and what they need and we ignore injustice when it rears its ugly head. Then we remember this truth: you don't denounce the world, you love the world, you love us and you choose to walk with us each and every day.

Again and again. . .

O Lord, speak to us your word of love.

Jesus came into the world right in the middle of all its messiness, all its brokenness all of its overwhelming trouble to meet us right smack dab in the middle of the wilderness that is our lives. He walked among us, he taught us how to live with one another and with ourselves. He showed us how to love as You love.

Again and again. . .

O Lord, speak to us your word of love.

Help us to remember, on this fourth Sunday in Lent, that when we find ourselves in darkness, you are light; that when we find ourselves not knowing which way to turn, you will guide us; that when we find ourselves hopeless, your light will show us the way. Help us to know down to the center of our very being that you love us, that you sent Jesus to us and that we have life in Him.

Again and again. . .

O Lord, speak to us your word of love. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

Give Yourself to Love
John McWilliams

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.

Again We Are Sent Out

Call to Action

Hymn of Discipleship

There's a Wideness In God's Mercy
There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice,
which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader
than the measure of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple,
we should rest upon God's word;
and our lives would be illuminated
by the presence of our Lord.

Benediction

Young People of St. John's

*Betsy Adams, Jane Walker, Bishop Idikwu, Eric Threadgill,
Julian Hartman, Anna Durham, Seth Robertson, Evie Durham,
Cadee Gauthier, Faith Robertson, Carissa Gauthier, Livia Walker.*

Postlude

Thank you for worshipping with us!

*The flowers on the alter are given by Kathleen and Jim Matthew
in celebration of their 60th Wedding Anniversary.*

Thanks be to God.

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

*Permission to stream music covered by
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*Most of our liturgy and prayers were written
by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art, LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

