



CLOSE to HOME

Sunday November 28, 2021

11 A.M. WORSHIP CELEBRATION

All Are Welcome

When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, which begins today, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts.

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

STJOHNSBR.ORG | @STJOHNSBR

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

60TH ANNIVERSARY

St. John's was founded in 1961 by 60 charter members. Ground was broken for the present sanctuary in August 1962, and it was dedicated Easter Sunday 1963. We are celebrating our 60th anniversary throughout 2021. Give God the Glory!

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Do No Harm, our first Wesleyan rule continues to be our benchmark for all recommendations. In light of the Governor's recent COVID update, St. John's has returned to not requiring masks while in worship and in small group gatherings. If you feel better wearing a mask, by all means do what you are most comfortable with.

We look forward to the day when COVID will no longer be a part of our daily lives, until then, let us pray for our world, country, state, parish, and each other.

Grace & Peace

The Covid-19 Task Force

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. As a safety precaution, masks are required in the Playground for everyone ages 2 and older until December 12. After that date, masks will become optional. If you or your child need a mask, some are available in the Playground. 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 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 3 through 12th grade from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Any questions? Ushers are glad to assist you.

COMING HOME TO GOD

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

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Pastor Lane

*Song of Praise

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus
The United Methodist Hymnal 196, vs. 1, 2

*Candellighting

Fred and Dee Muenzler

Can you be homesick for something you've never known?

**We are homesick for a world where all are fed, where laughter
is contagious, where the doors are wide open.**

We are homesick for a world with more bridges than walls, where
trees grow tall and rivers run clear.

**We are homesick for a world where all people feel at home—
in their bodies, in their churches, in their homes.**

We long for that world.

We hope for that world.

So today we light the candle of hope, because hope keeps our hearts
alive as we wait.

May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.

God is here. May we carry hope with us.

We are close to home. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*Candle Response Song

As We Light the Candle

**As we light the candle of hope,
We await the Christ yet to come**

**Hoping for a world of shalom,
One where we are closely known.**

**Christ come to use, upon our earth do dwell,
May we carry hope close to home.**

GROWING CLOSE TO GOD

Children's Moment

Natalie Cooper

Prayer for Illumination

Bill Perry

**God of the stars and God of our hearts—
our days will pass**

but your words will last.

**The earth might fade
but your words will last.**

Our memories might blur
but your words will last.
The grass will wither
but your words will last.
The sky could go dark
and your words would last.
So as we listen today,
help us to hold onto what will last.
Help us hold onto you.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

***Scripture**

Luke 21:25-36

Bill Perry

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"Close to Home: Homesick"

Pastor Lane

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

***Hymn of Faith**

See Fig Tree Leaves Now Sprouting
Sung to the tune of "Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming"
The United Methodist Hymnal 216

***Affirmation of Faith**

Bill Perry

We believe in the God of HOPE,
Who embraces our longing for home;
Who gives us a vision of the kingdom of God,
though blurry and concealed;
Who yearns alongside us,
giving us dreams of resilience;
Who promises that the way is near.
We believe in the God of invitation,
Who welcomes the unloved,
as well as the unlovely.
We believe in a God of creation
Who holds both tradition and innovation
together in holy paradox.
We believe in the God who calls us home
by a way we can only dream of
by a path we've yet to travel.

***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

The Lord's Prayer

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 at 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.**

SHARING GOD IN THE WORLD

Call to Action

***Hymn of Discipleship**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
The United Methodist Hymnal 211, vs. 1, 2

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

WORSHIP NOTES

Flowers on the Altar

The flowers on the altar are given by Richard and Marilyn Damberg in celebration of Grace Idikwu's birthday on November 29. Happy birthday, Grace!

Worship Stewards

Ushers in today's service are Joyce Robinson and Paul Ivey.

Prayers and Liturgy

Most of our liturgy and prayers were written by Sarah Are Speed | A Sanctified Art, LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Livestream of Worship

To join a livestream of worship, share today's service or watch previous worship services, visit <http://facebook.com/stjohnsbr/live>.

Music Livestream

Permission to stream music covered by OneLicense A-732159 and CCLI 20233858.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent Fest, Sunday, December 5, 4 - 5:30 p.m. - Mark Your Calendars! Everyone is invited! Our Fest begins in the Sanctuary at 4 p.m. for an intergenerational Christmas-Sing-along. Please let us know your five favorite Christmas hymns or carols. A special visitor will be here to lead us to the FLC for fellowship, crafts, and story time. If weather permits, we will have a bonfire to roast marshmallows. Bring a snack to share, if you wish. And, don't forget to send in your top five Christmas hymns/carols online at <https://forms.gle/L4RbHZetGsXdvpg28>.

Christmas Angels

Instead of an Angel Tree, there will be Christmas Angels this year. We will be purchasing gifts for some of the children at Wildwood Elementary and the Gardere Christian Academy, as well as the Methodist Children's Home in Robert, LA. More details to come.

Lagniappe Kitchen Renovation Fund

Our fundraising efforts for the kitchen renovation are underway and we have already raised \$96,774! To give online go to www.stjohnsbr.org/give (under Fund, select Kitchen Renovation); to give by check write kitchen renovation in the memo line. Thanks for helping fill the pot!

Thank You For Pledging

Thank you for those who have already made a financial pledge to God's work here at St. John's for 2022. Your pledge will enable us to move into the future with hope. Pledges allow us to plan for the year ahead. Pledge cards are available in the Narthex and can be turned in through the Offering or the church office. You can also pledge online: stjohnsbr.org/pledge-2022.

Great Turkey Giveaway

The 11th Great Turkey Giveaway will be **Saturday December 18** in the FLC parking lot. Volunteers of all ages and abilities are welcome - please arrive by 7 a.m. While much of the food for the giveaway is donated, The Shepherd's Market purchases the turkeys and produce for over 500 meals. A donation of \$20 to the Shepherd's Market will buy a turkey and produce for one family. Gifts can be made to St John's with Shepherd's Market in the memo line, in an offering envelope, or online at <http://bit.ly/stjohnsgive>.

Staff Love Offering

An annual Christmas tradition at St. John's has always been saying thank you to our staff for all the work they do to make events and programs at St. John's possible. If you would like to participate in thanking them, please put "Staff Appreciation" in the memo line of your check or on the offering envelope, if cash. Donations may be placed in the offering plate, mailed to the church office, or dropped in the black box outside the Admin Building. You may also make your gift online at <http://bit.ly/stjohnsgive>.

Advent and Christmas at St. John's

November 28 - "Close to Home" worship series begins today. An accompanying daily Devotion Booklet is available in the Narthex.

December 4 - Youth Christmas Party at the Robertsons, 4 - 6 p.m.

December 5 - Grocery Bag Sunday

December 5 - Advent Fest, Sanctuary and FLC, 4 - 5:30 p.m.

December 12 - "The Song of The Shepherd" Cantata, composed by Terry Byars in 2020, both worship services.

December 18 - The Great Turkey Giveaway, volunteers needed at 7 a.m.

December 19 - The Longest Night Worship Service, 5 p.m.

December 24 - Christmas Eve Worship Service, 5 p.m.

December 26 - One worship service, 10 a.m.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW CHOIR DIRECTOR

DR. STEVE RUSHING



Steve and Lois Rushing

Dr. Rushing comes to us with many years of musical experience, 20 years of those as a church musician. In his choir director positions, he states in his resume, “my primary objective has been to worthily magnify the Lord through music and maintain high standards while maximizing the levels of talent present in each place of worship.” As choir director he sees his roles as teaching and inspiring.

A baritone with varied teaching methods Dr. Rushing will be taking on three roles at St. John's; director of the Chancel Choir, director of the Bell Choir, and director of a Student/Children music program to begin in the spring. We joyfully welcome him to our family! You can read his bio below.

Steve Rushing's Bio:

Steve Rushing is a native of Baton Rouge and comes from a musical family. His musical journey continued at LSU where he completed an undergraduate degree in Vocal Music Education. There he met his wife-to-be, Lois Kuyper and they moved to Iowa where they started a family and grew together in faith and their common love of music. They moved to Kansas in 1983 where Steve taught at Kansas State University.

He completed two other advanced degrees in music at Drake University and The University of Kansas and has enjoyed a career as a university professor and professional soloist in opera, oratorio, recital and musical theater. Concurrent with this career path, he has also served as choir director, conductor and soloist for a variety of religious denominations; his first position being at Winbourne United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge.

Lois, Steve and their two children Anthony and Johanna returned to Louisiana in 1992 where he served as a professor of vocal arts at Southeastern Louisiana University until 2019. He also served as the chancel choir director at First Presbyterian Church Baton Rouge for 15 years. Steve continues to share his knowledge and gifts as a music teacher at The Baton Rouge International School. They have been blessed with 7 grandchildren and their faith journey continues with close ties to their children, in-laws and grandchildren.



ST. JOHN'S

United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.