

The CELEBRATION of the GOSPEL

December 6, 2020

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 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

People, Look East

Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

Lighting of Advent Candle - Love

Dina Villalobos,
Paul Allen

Soloist:

*I believe in love, I believe in love,
even when, even when I don't feel it.*

Holy One,

we thank you for the glimpses we catch
of your gift of daring love.

Even in the midst of fear,
of challenge, of struggle—

even when we cannot yet see a better day
when we will act like the human family we are,
ignite the flame of love within us,

**that we might glow with its brilliance
from the inside out. Amen.**

Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here!**

**Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

**Redeemer, come, with us abide;
our hearts to thee we open wide;
let us thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in us reveal.**

The Peace

We Proclaim

Children's Time to Shine

Pastor Lane, Beth Forester,
Jane Walker, Livia Walker

Prophetic Reading

Isaiah 7:1-14

Pastor Deirdré

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Advent Response Song

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us,
his name is called Emmanuel.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 1:1-25

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Pastor Lane

"I Believe in Love: Daring Right Relationship"

We Respond

Litany of Belief

Pastor Deirdré

In seasons of uncertainty and waiting,
it is a prophetic act to call out, name and claim our
belief that daring to love each other as God loves us
is a faithful response.

*Join me responsively in these statements of belief which
come from this week's Advent devotions, written by
members of our congregation:*

Holy is the ground we stand on, holy is the silence.

We listen for the echoes of Your love.

Sculpted by the Master's hands we yearn to be
held and loved.

We hunger for the embrace of Your love.

In the beauty of a blue sky or the cold of the rain
we stand in wonder and awe of Your love.

Come Lord Jesus, come.

We welcome you in love.

Litany Response Song

He Came Down

**He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love;
Hallelujah for evermore.**

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

Love Came Down At Christmas

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.**

The Great Thanksgiving

In this Advent of disquiet,
remember God comes to us.

God comes to be with you, as well.

Let us offer our empty hearts to our God,
as we begin this journey to Bethlehem.

God comes to fill our hearts with grace and hope.

With weary souls, and trembling voices,
let us sing praises to our God.

God comes to teach us new songs of love.

With those who try to be cautious in these days,
and those who don't seem to care,
we sing your praises this day:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who comes to us.

Creation always pours out its praise to you.

Glory to you in the highest!

Blessed is the One who is coming to us even now.

Glory to you in the highest!

With those who try to stay alert,
and with those who toss and turn trying to sleep,
we proclaim that mystery which is our faith:

Christ died, giving his life for all;

**Christ was raised, the light of resurrection
showing the way;**

Christ will come, gathering us in love and hope.

The congregation is seated.

*The pastor recounts the story of the Last Supper
and the words of institution from Christ.*

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let
us pray the prayer Jesus taught us ...

The Lord's Prayer

Sharing in Holy Communion

Deeper Love

**For deeper love we spread the bread;
I won't be full till all are fed.
Till every soul has home and bed;
The rest of us can't move ahead.**

**For deeper love we share the wine;
I cannot taste the love divine,
Till every soul has walked the line
And you've had yours like I've had mine.**

**We follow where the Christ has led;
To table that for all is spread.
And no one's sitting at the head,
But deeper love in wine and bread.**

We Go Forth

Invitation to Christian Discipleship

Carol of Love

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
**It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth,
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.**

**Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and we at war on earth hear not
the love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise and cease the strife,
and hear the angels sing.**

Benediction and Blessing

Pastor Deirdré

We wait for justice,

but we do not wait to work for change;

We wait for restored health,

but we do not wait to work towards healing;

We wait for wholeness,

but we do not wait to work at binding

brokenness;

We wait for peace,

but we do not wait to work to eliminate hatred.

A blessing is offered, then:

Raise your voices and repeat after me

"Do not be afraid!"

"Do not be afraid!" Amen!

Postlude

Thank you for worshipping with us!

*The flowers on the altar are from Richard and Marilyn
Damberg in honor of the December birthdays of
Marilyn Damberg, David (Arahu) Idikwu,
Paul Idikwu, and Abdiel Idikwu.*

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

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*Some liturgy adapted from Worship Design Studio
materials by Marcia McFee. Used with permission.*

The Great Thanksgiving was written by Thom M. Shuman.