



Sunday, December 19, 2021
8:30 A.M. WORSHIP CELEBRATION
All Are Welcome

After receiving the angel's extraordinary news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth and Zechariah's home to digest her new calling. She seeks refuge — physical safety and emotional protection. She receives a safe haven, a home for her heart to soon sing praise. Sanctuary and safe space is so crucial for everyone, especially the mother of Christ while she prepares to become a home for God. Sanctuary is anywhere God's love dwells freely and abundantly.

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.

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. Currently, we are not requiring masks while in worship or 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. 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

Alleluia Ringers

Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

*Songs of Praise

Sanctuary

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2164

Emmanuel

The United Methodist Hymnal 204

*Advent Candle Lighting

Sandra Bordelon, Jill Brant

We are seeking—

deeper faith, a place to belong,
the feeling that God is here in this room.

We are seeking—

joy that overflows, the courage to love,
the conviction to act in the face of injustice.

We are seeking, but here in this space —

We are found. This is our sanctuary. God's love is here.

God's love is like an open door, the roof over our heads and the floor
beneath our feet.

**God's love is the streetlight that guides us home and a table
with room for everyone.**

Today we light the candle of love to remind us of the truth that God's
love is a home for all, for you and me, for neighbors and strangers.

**May this light of love burn brightly in this space and even
brighter in our hearts.**

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

Lighting of the Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love

*Candle Response Song

As We Light the Candle

Sung to the tune of "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent"

**As we light the candle of Love,
We await the Christ yet to come.
Loving our Creator and neighbor,
In faith we do not live alone.**

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

GROWING CLOSE TO GOD

Children's Moment

Rhonda Tucker

Prayer for Illumination

Holy God,
we come to your Scripture today
hoping that it will feel a bit
like an open door,
like Elizabeth welcoming Mary,
like coming home.

We want to fall into it.
We want to find sanctuary here.
We want to breathe easier just hearing
these words.
And we want to find ourselves laughing
because this good news is just too good
to keep inside.
So hover close to us now, we pray.
Open the door to our hearts
so that we might find sanctuary
in your words.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

*Scripture

Luke 1:39-55

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Pastor Lane

"Close to Home: Seeking Sanctuary"

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

*Hymn of Faith

People, Look East
The United Methodist Hymnal 202, vs. 1, 4

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

Alleluia Ringers

*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 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!**

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.

You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.

If you are mobility challenged, please let the usher know and someone will bring communion elements to you.

Prayer After Receiving

O God, thank you for making a home among us through the gift of your son, Jesus Christ. Your Spirit has renewed, refreshed, and sustained us in this meal by the presence of your love, revealed to us in Christ. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to be daily revelations of that love. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

SHARING GOD IN THE WORLD

Call to Action

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**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
The United Methodist Hymnal 384, vs. 1, 4

Benediction

Postlude

Alleluia Ringers

WORSHIP NOTES

Worship Stewards

Ushers in today's service are Donnie and Susan Lambert.

Coffee Time

Everyone is invited to the Family Life Center for coffee and refreshments following worship.

Prayers and Liturgy

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

Alleluia Ringers Anthems

A Child Is Born arranged for organ and handbells by Janet Linker and Jane McFadden.

Advent Carol by Hal Hopson.

We Three Kings arranged by Cynthia Dobrinski.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Longest Night Worship Service

For those who have experienced loss, the holidays can be a particularly painful time, stirring up grief in acute ways. We know that many approach this season with mixed emotions. If this resonates with you, we invite you to give yourself the gift of attending our Longest Night worship service **tonight at 5 p.m.**, which is designed to provide space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance amidst the holiday hustle and bustle. *The service will be held in the Sanctuary and also livestreamed.*

Christmas Eve Service - December 24

You are invited home to St. John's for Christmas Eve worship. In keeping with our Advent theme of "Close to Home," we will join Mary and Joseph on their journey home, as the only place they can find shelter for giving birth is a stable. Jesus, born without a home, invites us to come home - a place of welcoming and appreciation. This special evening of worship will include beautiful music, featuring several ensembles, a children's message, a meditation by Pastor Lane, Christmas carols, Holy Communion and will conclude with a special candle lighting.

Carols, Communion, and Cookies - December 26

We invite you to come comfortable on **Sunday, December 26 for Carols, Communion, and Cookies at 10 a.m.** We will sing tons of Christmas carols, share in Holy Communion, and enjoy loads of cookies following the service – plus coffee and hot cocoa. Children are invited to bring one toy they received for Christmas for a Blessing of the Toys during worship – in person and virtually. You won't want to miss this uplifting morning of worship and fellowship! Feel free to bring some cookies to share.

Holiday Closures

The church office will be closed Friday, December 24 and Monday, December 27. Regular office hours will resume Tuesday, December 28 at 9 a.m.

The Shepherd's Market will be closed Monday, December 20 through Monday, January 3. Regular drive-through pantry hours will resume Tuesday, January 4 at 8 a.m.

Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir has resumed rehearsals on **Wednesdays at 7 p.m.** Whether a former member of the Chancel Choir or a new person wanting to join, all are invited. We are a volunteer group and no audition is required. Knowing that some may be hesitant to participate, the church has ordered several "singer's masks" that are washable and reusable

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 www.stjohnsbr.org/give. Deadline for gifts is today, the 19th.

Lagniappe Kitchen Renovation Fund

Our fundraising efforts for the kitchen renovation are underway and we have already raised \$108,844! 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!

Christmas Poinsettias

At St. John's United Methodist Church

DEDICATIONS IN MEMORY OF

Corinne Allen, Beatrice Elaine Schmidt, John & Charlene Maxwell, & Thomas Adams	<i>by Brandon, Betsy, & Maxwell Adams</i>
Baby Adams	<i>by Brandon, Betsy, & Maxwell Adams</i>
Freddie Carter	<i>by Cindy Carter</i>
Hans Metcalf	<i>by Bill & Jane Metcalf</i>
The Perry & Hargis families	<i>by Bill & Joyce Perry</i>
Carolyn Pynes McKeough	<i>by Michelle McKeough Pynes</i>
Christopher Schroeder	<i>by Betty Schroeder</i>
Jake Shearer	<i>by his parents, Fred & Becky Shearer</i>
Kaitlin & Riley Hunt	<i>by Kathy Vandiver</i>
Rev. John N. Williams, Roland C. Palmer, Jr.	<i>by Rev. Marie Williams</i>

DEDICATIONS IN HONOR OF

Pastor Lane & Bill Perry	<i>by Lynn Cooper</i>
My Aunt Pauline, in her 96 th year	<i>by Beth Forester</i>
My daughter, Brooke	<i>by Bob Hoover</i>
Billy Metcalf	<i>by Bill & Jane Metcalf</i>
The Hargis and Perry families	<i>by Joyce & Bill Perry</i>
Luke Schroeder, my son	<i>by Betty Schroeder</i>
My husband, John Toney	<i>by Pam Toney</i>
The baptism of Emmie Kait White	<i>by Kathy Vandiver</i>
Lauren & Edward White & girls	<i>by Kathy Vandiver</i>
Jane & Livia Walker	<i>by Mari & Shawn Walker</i>
My children & grandchildren	<i>by Rev. Marie Williams</i>
Our church staff	<i>by Rev. Lane Cotton Winn</i>
Our St. John's church family	<i>by Pastor Lane, Ben Hartman, and Julian</i>



ST. JOHN'S

United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.