

SCENES OF THE SEASON



Sunday, December 4, 2022

8:30 A.M. WORSHIP CELEBRATION

All Are Welcome

The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayers have been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will give birth to your son and you must name him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many people will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the Lord's eyes.

Luke 1:13-15

Today is the second Sunday of Advent and so we light the Candle of Love and hear about Zechariah's visit from an angel that left him speechless! Advent is a season when we learn again about the greatest love that there ever was and we practice giving and receiving that great love in ways that cause our hearts to grow!

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

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Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. - noon



ST. JOHN'S
United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.

GUEST INFORMATION

Welcome to worship! We are glad you've joined us and hope you feel at home here. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome. Our ushers are happy to assist you in anyway. Restrooms are in the Narthex.

You are invited to participate in any of our activities, and to become a part of this community of faith and love.

Thank you for being here.

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 in 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 18 months through 12th grade from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

Any questions? Ushers are glad to assist you.

ST JOHN'S CLERGY AND STAFF

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn
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SCENE ONE: *Glorifying God*

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

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

*Advent Hymn and Proclamation

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates
The United Methodist Hymnal 213, vs. 1 & 2

**“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord,
“When I will make a new covenant with my people.”
That great promise is happening again in this Advent season.
We prepare for it with the same care
that we anticipate the birth a child, for like life,
it keeps coming and never ends.
We are the people who know the end of the story
as well as we do the beginning.
We know, in faith, that our hope will be fulfilled;
that peace will reign;
that sorrow will become joy;
and that our love will be met with even more love.
Unto us a child will be born, the savior of the world – my Savior.**

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates
The United Methodist Hymnal 213, vs. 3 & 4

Advent Candlelighting

Karen Holton

As we focus on the meaning and scenes of the Advent season,
today we light the Candle of Love.

(Lighting of the Candles of Love and Hope.)

God’s love has the power to transform us.
We look for God’s love, and we seek to live it out
in our hearts and in our homes,
in our church and in our neighborhood,
in times of certainty and in times of doubt.

**This season we set the scene for Love, praying our hearts will
grow and grow.**

Let us pray:

Holy One,

we stand in awe of your overwhelming love.

At times it leaves us speechless.

**By your grace, drive out the fear and darkness in our hearts,
and inspire us to share your love with others. Amen.**

***We Sing a Song of Response**

In This Time of Waiting

**In this time of waiting we will sing of love,
Peace and joy and hope bound up in love.
In our expectation we bring hearts of love—
Hearts of longing, we bring hearts of love.**

SCENE TWO: *Feeding Our Spirits*

We Pray for Insight

**Light of Christ, Shine on our path.
Chase away all darkness,
and lead us to the heart of God.
Amen.**

Jami Prince

***We Celebrate the Witness of Holy Scripture**

Luke 1:5-25, 57-67

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Pastor Lane

Canticle of Zechariah

From Luke 1:68-79

The United Methodist Hymnal 208

SUNG RESPONSE

**Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
great David's greater Son.**

Jami Prince

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
Who has come to set the chosen people free.

**The Lord has raised up for us
A mighty Savior from the house of David.**

Through the holy prophets, God promised of old
To save us from our enemies,
From the hands of all who hate us;

**To show mercy to our forebears
And to remember the holy covenant.**

This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:

**To set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship without fear,
Holy and righteous in the Lord's sight,
All the days of our life.**

SUNG RESPONSE

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
For you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

To give God's people knowledge of salvation

By the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God

The dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness

and the shadow of death,

And to guide our feet into the way of peace.

SUNG RESPONSE

We Receive the Spoken Word

Pastor Lane

“Love Within and Around”

SCENE THREE: *Responding As Disciples*

***We Sing a Hymn of Faith**

Love Came Down at Christmas

The United Methodist Hymnal 242, vs. 1 - 3

***Call to Reconciliation**

Pastor Lane

Because it is so hard to wait, it's not easy to live through Advent's days.

But watch what God does during this time.

God waits for us to turn from our old ways to find the right paths;

God waits for us to admit what we have done, and failed to do,

so we might be forgiven and graced with new life.

Let us approach the One who waits - for us!

***Prayer of Reconciliation**

Holy Lord,

**In this time of Advent, we confess we often are distracted by
the season's busyness, by the stress of commitment,
and even by putting our own traditions ahead of the true
meaning of Christmas.**

**We confess we also often prefer being sentimental
to being sacrificial.**

**Forgive us for all the times we have missed seeing You
in our midst, for all the times we have doubted Your
presence, and for all the times we have failed to hold the
holidays as holy days.**

**Pour Love into our lives and let us be bearers of Your Love
to others.**

**Remind us that this is a season of waiting and preparation for
the greatest Gift of all.**

In the holy Name of our Savior, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

We Receive Forgiveness and Grace

Friends in Christ, hear this Good News!
God could not love you any more than God loves you
at this very moment.
You are that beloved.
So know that wrapped in that love is grace and
forgiveness, and a call to go out into the world to love.
We are loved, we are forgiven.
Alleluia! Amen.

***We Offer Signs of God's Peace and Grace**

Ministry Moment: Staff Appreciation

Gray Sexton

We Offer Ourselves and Resources

Gesu Bambino

by Pietro Yon

soloist: Rev. Dr. Jack O'Dell

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!**

SCENE FOUR: *Celebrating At God's Table*

***The Great Thanksgiving**

A Service of Word and Table

Our sung communion responses are from The Faith We Sing Songbook 2257.

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.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth. You loved the world so much you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior. Therefore, with the angels who sang on the night of his birth, we sing glory to you in the highest and peace on earth to all humankind:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)**

**Blest is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. In him, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. In him we witnessed the height and depth and breadth of your unfailing love for all the world. In him, from the cradle to the cross, was revealed to us the matchless wonder of your amazing grace.

The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled.

And so, in remembrance of Jesus and his life given for us, we offer ourselves to you and to one another as together we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.
Hosanna in the highest. (3x)**

Send your spirit upon us, let your love be born within us, so that in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup we may know the living presence of Jesus Christ who was, and is, and ever shall be,

**King of Kings, Lord of lords, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel -
God With Us.**

We Say The Lord's Prayer

We Share In the Bread and Cup

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 a person with limited mobility, please let the usher know and someone will bring communion to you.

Our Communion Response

Jami Prince

As we give each other gifts in this season,
let us remember that this Bread is a gift.

"Given by the one who gave us the sun and the moon and the stars and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans and all that lives and moves upon them and within them."

As we give each other gifts in this season,
let us remember that this Cup is a gift.

"Given by the one who has given us all that grows and blossoms and bears fruit; and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused; and to save us from our foolishness, from all our sins, God comes and dwells among us."

SCENE FIVE:

Departing To Serve

Call to Action

Pastor Lane

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.

***We Sing a Hymn of Discipleship**

Emmanuel, Emmanuel (2x)
The United Methodist Hymnal 204

Please bring groceries for The Shepherd's Market forward during the singing of our closing hymn.

***We Receive a Blessing**

***Postlude**

WORSHIP NOTES

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR

The flowers on the altar are given by Larry and Dee Muenzler with prayers everyone in our St. John's family has a wonderful holiday season.

USHERS

Ushers for the 8:30 service are Susan Johnson and Bobbi Marino.

COFFEE TIME

After the 8:30 service, everyone is invited to the FLC for coffee and refreshments.

COMMUNION RESPONSE

Our quoted responses are attributed to Sigrid Undset, novelist, 1882-1949, born in Denmark, who lived mostly in Norway. In 1928 she was the first woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. In 1924 she converted to Roman Catholicism and became a lay Dominican.

ADVENT PROCLAMATION

Our Advent Proclamation was written by Rev. John Winn, published in his book of prayers, *For All Seasons*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL CHILDREN

On behalf of St. John's UMC and Opening Doors Nonprofit, thank you for helping ensure so many children and their families in our community have a blessed and merry Christmas. We provided Christmas gifts for 50 students at Wildwood Elementary and 27 students at Gardere Community Christian School. Together, we shopped for gifts for 50 students from Charlie Thomas Headstart. And Opening Doors gave \$1,000 to the LA United Methodist Children's Home in Robert, LA for playground equipment.

FREEZER SPACE NEEDED

Duane Craig has begun baking 500+ loaves of homemade bread for the Turkey Giveaway. If you have room in your freezer, please consider taking some home and keep it until Friday, December 16 when they will be brought to the FLC where we will be taking count of loaves out and loaves in.

POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias will decorate our church this Advent and Christmas season, beginning December 18. Join in the adornment by dedicating a plant *In Honor Of*, *In Memory Of*, or *To the Glory of God*. The cost is \$12 per plant and the last day to sign up is December 15. Dedications will appear on December 18, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. You may place your order by using the form in the Narthex or online at stjohnsbr.org/poinsettia-2022.

FAREWELL RECEPTION FOR THE HARVEYS

The Louisiana Conference invites everyone to attend a celebration for Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey and Mr. Dean Harvey on **Sunday, December 4, 5-7 p.m.** with special presentations at 6 p.m. The open house reception will be held at First UMC, 930 North Blvd. Bishop Harvey will be leaving the Louisiana Conference as she has been assigned to serve the Texas Conference, beginning January 1, 2023.

UWF RUTH CIRCLE

The Ruth Circle will meet **Tuesday, December 6 at 9:30 a.m.** in the Parlor for their annual Christmas Party. Please bring a finger food and either a monetary donation or canned good for The Shepherd's Market.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The Church Council will hold its final meeting of 2022 on **Thursday, December 8 at 6 p.m.** in the Library. These are open meetings and all members of St. John's are welcome to attend.

STAFF APPRECIATION 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. You may also make your gift online at www.stjohnsbr.org/give. Deadline for staff appreciation gifts is **Tuesday, December 20**.

JOY FEST

Save the date of **Sunday, December 11** for our Advent celebration this year. We will gather for festive fellowship from 5 - 7 p.m. in the Family Life Center. We will have fun for all ages with a potluck dinner, word games, Name that Tune, crafts for the kids, and caroling. And don't forget! Expected attire for the upcoming Joy Fest will be, of course, Ugly Christmas Sweaters! Get yours aired out and ready to go! A couple of special activities will test your Christmas carol knowledge, but don't worry - we won't test your singing (even though we're going to do plenty of it)!

GREAT TURKEY GIVEAWAY

The twelfth annual Great Turkey Giveaway will be held on **Saturday, December 17**. Volunteers of all ages and abilities are needed. Please plan to arrive by 7:30 a.m. For more information, contact Theresa Sandifer (225-337-1306 or tsandifer0829@gmail.com).

If you would like to make a monetary donation, \$20 will provide a turkey and everything for a Christmas dinner for one household.

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

Join us on **Sunday, December 18** for Sounds of the Season, a celebratory service filled with seasonal music and original writings from congregants. These identical services will feature the Praise Team, Chancel Choir, handbells and chimes!

UWF BAKE AND CRAFT SALE (CALL FOR DONATIONS)

The United Women of Faith are asking bakers and crafters to consider donating items to their Holiday Bake and Craft Sale on **Sunday, December 18 from 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.** All proceeds from the sale will benefit local missions. Contact Liz McDonald (318-542-9272) for more information.

LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP

Wednesday, December 21 at 6 p.m. The Longest Night Worship Service is a quiet meditative service for those experiencing grief and loss of all kinds. It is designed to provide space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance amid the holiday hustle and bustle.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHTING

Saturday, December 24 at 5 p.m. we will hold our Christmas Eve service as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. Our service will include singing of Christmas carols, reading the Christmas story from the Gospel, an inspiring message, a special time for children and Holy Communion. Our service will conclude by candlelight. Children, guests, family, and friends are all invited.

CHRISTMAS DAY - CAROLS, COMMUNION, AND COOKIES!

Sunday, December 25 at 10 a.m. We invite you to come comfortable to our one worship service. We will sing tons of Christmas carols, share in Holy Communion, and following the service enjoy loads of cookies 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. Feel free to bring some cookies to share!

LESSONS AND CAROLS FOR THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Many of us know the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," but did you know that each verse refers to a different teaching of church doctrine? The "Partridge" refers to Jesus Christ, who died on a tree, and the "True Love" is God, our Creator, the giver of life and every good gift. The twelve days of Christmas are the twelve days between Christmas Day, December 25, the birth of Jesus, and the Epiphany, January 6, the day Christians celebrate the arrival of the Magi (Wise Men) and the revelation of Christ as the light of the world. **Join us for a single service at 10:00 a.m. on January 1** for a lively service of *Lessons and Carols for the Twelve Days of Christmas*. Don't worry, we'll only sing the song once, but once you've heard the meaning behind this familiar carol, it will bring a whole new appreciation to the song.

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

There is still time to register for Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. The 9 week course on **Tuesday evenings 6 - 8 p.m. beginning January 17** is being offered by Opening Doors at a cost of \$60. For more information contact Jill Brant, Class Coordinator, at jbrant9651@gmail.com or 985-503-4246. Registration forms are in the Narthex or you may register online at stjohnsbr.org/financial-peace-university-2023.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who has made a pledge to the St. John's "well" for 2023. To date, we have received 87 pledges totaling \$416,024. If you have not had a chance to turn in a pledge for 2023, we hope you will do so soon. You can pledge online at stjohnsbr.org/pledge-2023 or turn in a pledge card at church, which are available in the office and the Narthex. Your 2022 pledge will NOT automatically renew for 2023 - you must turn in a new pledge card every year. Your pledge enables our Finance Committee to plan and budget for supporting and furthering our mission in the new year.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 4

- 8:00 a.m. Praise Team Warm Up, *Sanctuary*
- 8:30 a.m. Worship Service, *Sanctuary*
- 9:30 a.m. Coffee Time, *FLC**
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, *Campus Wide*
- 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, *Sanctuary*
- 3:00 p.m. No Youth Group Today
- 4:30 p.m. Music Makers, *Choir Room*
- 5:00 p.m. Open House for Bishop Harvey, *First UMC*
- 6:00 p.m. Alleluia Ringers Practice, *Bell Room*

Monday, December 5

- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, *FLC*
- 9:00 a.m. Ladies Covenant Group, *Parlor*
- 3:00 p.m. Men's Covenant Group, *Library*
- 3:30 p.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*
- 4:30 p.m. Ladies Covenant Group, *Parlor*
- 6:00 p.m. Disciple Bible Study, *Library*
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC-E*

Tuesday, December 6

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*
- 9:30 a.m. UWF Ruth Circle, *Parlor*
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC-E*

Wednesday, December 7

- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, *FLC*
- 3:30 p.m. U-High to The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice, *Choir Room*

Thursday, December 8

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, *FLC*
- 6:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting, *Library*

Friday, December 9

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group, *Parlor*
- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, *FLC*
- 8:00 a.m. Food Bank Delivery, *FLC*

Saturday, December 10

- 7:00 a.m. Runoff Election (7a.m. - 8p.m.), *FLC*
- 8:30 a.m. Prime Timers Breakfast, *Drury Inn*
- 12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC-C*
- 8:00 p.m. AA Meeting, *FLC*

**Family Life Center*