



# seeking:

*Who will you  
listen to?*

Sunday, February 26, 2023

**8:30 A.M. WORSHIP CELEBRATION**

All Are Welcome

On this first Sunday of Lent, Jesus defies the deception of the tempter in the wilderness by listening intuitively—to God, to his inner moral compass, to the teachings of his faith. And so, who will you listen to? What sources do you seek for news, information, and media? Whose voices—and what messages—take up too much space in your head? Welcome as we consider these questions and more through our new Lent worship series, “Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith.”

***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



**ST. JOHN'S**  
United Methodist Church

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*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  
*Lead Pastor*  
pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org

Lynn Cooper  
*Administrative Assistant*  
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Dr. Steve Rushing  
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Dr. Terry Byars  
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Bill Putzig  
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Sofia Rodriguez-Martinez  
*Nursery Worker*  
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# seeking community

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

## Prelude

## Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

## \*Songs of Praise

*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying (2x)*  
The Faith We Sing Songbook 2193

*As the Deer*  
The Faith We Sing Songbook 2025

## \*Call to Worship

Rev. Larry Norman

Listen!

**There is hope to be found here.**

Listen!

**God calls you by name here.**

Listen!

**There is love that abides here.**

This world is full of chatter, so may we do our best to listen.

**God is speaking.**

Come, let us worship.

**May our hearts and ears be open and ready to receive.**

**Amen.**

# seeking insight

## \*Song of Praise

*Open Our Eyes, Lord*  
The Faith We Sing Songbook 2086

## Children's Message

Molly Means

## Prayer for Illumination

Pastor Lane

**Holy God,**

**Our lives are filled with noise – from the time we wake up,  
to the time we go to sleep.**

**Even so, your voice continues to speak to us.**

**Help us to tune out the distractions, God,  
so that our ears may hear your wisdom and  
your truth above all else.**

**In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

**\*Response to the Word**

For the word of God in scripture,  
for the word of God among us,  
for the word of God within us,  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Message**

“Seeking: Who will you listen to?”

Pastor Lane

# seeking wholeness

**\*Hymn of Faith**

*Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*  
The United Methodist Hymnbook 269, vs. 1, 4, & 5

**\*Call to Confession**

Rev. Larry

Friends,  
if you are seeking grace,  
this moment is for you.  
If you are seeking growth,  
this moment is for you.  
If you are seeking honesty,  
this moment is for you.  
In the prayer of confession, we admit to ourselves and  
to God that we do not have it all figured out.  
And in that vulnerability,  
we are surrounded by God's grace.  
So let us unite our voices in our Prayer of Confession.

**\*Prayer of Confession**

**Holy God,**  
**Too often we treat your Word like a radio station**  
**— something we can tune in and out of when it's convenient.**  
**Our minds are full of ads, emails, news updates, and**  
**notifications.**  
**In the midst of this clutter, we tend to gravitate toward the**  
**voices that think like us —**  
**easily ignoring the voices being silenced,**  
**easily ignoring your voice.**  
**Forgive us for failing to listen.**  
**Forgive us for getting caught in distractions.**  
**Forgive us for forgetting what your voice sounds like.**  
**Silence the distractions from our minds and help us**  
**turn once again toward you.**  
**With earnest hearts we pray, amen.**

## \*Words of Forgiveness and Grace

Rev. Larry

Friends, even when we tune God out,  
even when we prioritize other voices,  
even when we do all the talking and fail to listen,  
we are still held by God.

Our sins are forgiven.

Nothing could ever separate us from God's love.  
So with joy in our hearts, please repeat after me:

I am loved!

**I am loved!**

I am held in grace!

**I am held in grace!**

I belong to God.

**I belong to God.**

**Amen & Amen.**

## \*Sharing the Love and Peace of Christ

# seeking gratitude

## 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 by scanning the QR Code  
or navigate to [stjohnsbr.org/give](http://stjohnsbr.org/give).*



## \*Doxology

*Holy Ground*  
The Faith We Sing Songbook 2272

**We are standing on holy ground,  
and I know that there are angels all around;  
let us praise Jesus now;  
we are standing in his presence on holy ground.**

# seeking grace

## \*Invitation to the Feast

Pastors

Friends, if your seeking has led you here,  
if your weary heart followed breadcrumbs all the way to this sanctuary,  
then I have good news:

you do not have to seek anymore.

The One you seek welcomes you.

The grace you seek will be given.

This is Christ's table.

We are the guests.

He is the host.

There is a seat here with your name on it.

So kick off your walking shoes.

Let your weary heart rest.

We are standing on holy ground.

All are invited. All are loved.

**Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

### **\*The Great Thanksgiving**

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 God thanks and praise.**

God of the lost and the found,  
surely it is right for us to give our thanks and praise;  
for day after day we look for you,  
and day after day we find you:

in the laughter of children,  
in the sun rising over the horizon,  
in the flowers of spring.

Our seeking does not go unanswered,  
and for that we are grateful.

And so together, we proclaim our praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy One  
God of justice and love  
Heaven and earth are full of your wonder.  
Hosanna, among us!**

*The congregation is seated.*

Like those who gathered with Jesus on the night of his arrest, we come in need of grace.

After feasting with his companions, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to all of them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Take, eat, and remember me."

After the supper, he did the same with the cup, saying, "This is a sign of the new covenant. Drink in remembrance of me."

As a way to remember Christ's perfect love and life we joyfully and thankfully give you back our lives as holy, living sacrifices. Receive this gift of our lives, together with Christ's gifts for us, as we speak the Truth about our faith:

**Christ died.  
Christ rose!  
Christ is alive, and is coming again.**

*Let us pray.*

Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary bread and cup.

May this meal be the nourishment we need to continue seeking you in the world.

Use your Holy Spirit to make us one with Christ and one with each other, so we can care for the world until Christ comes again and we all join around his table as family in perfect love.

We also pray for conviction.

Do not let us get comfortable with half-hearted seeking.

Do not let us grow numb to the suffering of this world.

Make us persistent in our pursuit of justice,

in our consoling of the grieving,

in our welcoming of the stranger,

and in the feeding of the hungry.

Until your promised day, we will seek.

### The Lord's Prayer

Until your promised day, we will pray, saying:

**Our Father...**

### Breaking the Bread

This broken bread is *whole* in our taking.

This full cup *overflows* in our sharing.

No matter what it is your soul is seeking,  
there is good news to be found here.

Come with your questions.

Come with your hunger.

Come, because this feast is a reminder that God's Table is big enough for all of us.

So come. All are welcome.

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

### Gratitude Prayer

Rev. Larry

**God of manna and mustard seeds,**

**we came to this table hungry and we leave feeling full -**

**full of hope,**

**full of promise,**

**full of what could be.**

**Thank you for nourishing our curiosity**

**alongside our spirit and our conviction.**

**May we always seek you the way you seek after us.**

**With grateful hearts we pray, amen.**



# may God bless you in your seeking

## **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.*

## **\*Hymn of Discipleship**

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

The United Methodist Hymnal 140, vs. 1 & 3

## **\*Blessing and Sending Forth**

Pastor Lane

As you leave this place,  
may God bless you with seeking.  
Seek out the hungry.  
Seek the weary.  
Seek the good in every person you pass.  
Seek out the hopeful.  
Seek the faithful.  
Seek God in each of us.  
As you seek and as you wonder,  
may you find what you are looking for.  
In the name of our loving God,  
who is always seeking us, go now in peace.  
**Amen.**

## **\*Postlude**

# worship notes

## **USHERS**

Ushers for the 8:30 service are Donnie and Susan Lambert.

## **COFFEE TIME**

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

## **LITURGY AND PRAYERS**

Most of our liturgy and prayers were written by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

# announcements

## **TODAY - YOUTH BIBLE STUDY "BLACK HISTORY WITHIN THE UMC**

This afternoon, **February 26, 3 - 4:30 p.m.**, the Youth will be discussing Black history within the United Methodist Church and learning about some of the primary Black figures in United Methodist history as well as understanding a timeline of other historical events that shaped notable shifts within our denomination. They will meet in the youth Sunday School classroom.

## **TODAY - MEETING FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

A meeting for families with children in elementary school (Kindergarten-5th grades) will be held THIS AFTERNOON, **Sunday, February 26 from 4:30-6pm**. The meeting will primarily be informative, shedding light on the Children's Ministry programming calendar for spring and summer activities. As always, constructive feedback is appreciated to help create a ministry that best meets the faith needs of your family! Childcare will be provided.

## **TODAY - YELLOW BAG PICKUP**

Don't forget to pick up a yellow bag and return it for **Grocery Bag Sunday, March 5**. The Shepherd's Market continues to serve 135+ families each week. All donations are greatly appreciated. It is the donations we receive from St. John's that let's us serve anyone who comes to the pantry.

## **MANNA MISSION MEAL**

Join us for a food, fun, and fellowship event on **Sunday, March 19 at 5 p.m.**! The youth will lead us in packing manna bags assembly-line style. We will meet in the FLC at 5 p.m. for a potluck dinner so bring a dish to share. There will be a blue tub in the hallway of the Admin/Education Building and in the Narthex for your donations. You may also make a monetary donation online at [www.stjohnsbr.org](http://www.stjohnsbr.org)/give. Fund: Mission, Sub Fund: Manna Bags.

## **COFFEE TIME REVISITED**

Tired of boxed raisins and packaged muffins? It's time to Bring Back the Food! The Food, Fun, and Fellowship team is looking for volunteers to provide snacks for Coffee Time on Sundays. Sign up for several Sundays as a group – Sunday School class, church committee, or just a bunch of friends! Sign up to celebrate a birthday or an anniversary! See more details and get on the schedule by going to <https://tinyurl.com/CoffeeTimeSignup>.

## **INTRODUCING COMMUNION COMPANIONS**

One of the many ministries impacted by the pandemic has been our Visitation ministry to our home-centered and facility-bound church members. We are eager to re-launch this ministry and rebuild those connections! To do so, we need volunteers to serve as Communion Companions.

Communion Companions will make a monthly visit to a church member to which they are paired, extending Christian love and fellowship, serving Communion, which was consecrated in worship, and maintaining the connection to our church family. These visits are set up by you, the Communion Companion, so it fits into your personal and/or work schedule.

These visits are so rewarding for everyone! If you are interested in visiting one of our cherished church members as a representative of St. John's, please come to the **Communion Companions Orientation on Sunday, March 5 at 3 p.m.** in the Library led by Pastor Lane. She will go over helpful tips for having a brief yet meaningful visit as well as instructions for sharing Communion together. If you are unable to attend the orientation but are willing to serve as a Communion Companion, please let Pastor Lane ([pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org)) know.

## **MEET & GREET OUR NEW BISHOP!**

You are invited to attend the Service of Installation for Bishop Delores J. Williamston, the 11th bishop of The Louisiana Conference of The United Methodist Church on Saturday, **March 4 at 11 a.m. in Lawless Chapel at Dillard University in New Orleans**. It will be a joyous occasion to gather for worship and celebrate the historic installation of the first African-American bishop to be assigned to the Louisiana Conference, and the first African-American female to be elected bishop in the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church.

Bishop Williamston has begun a Boots on the Ground Tour, meeting with clergy, laity, and members of local congregations all across Louisiana. All Laity of the Baton Rouge District are invited to meet with her on **Saturday, March 11 from 10:00am-11:30am at Wesley UMC** (544 Government St Baton Rouge, LA 70802). This gathering gives Bishop Williamston the opportunity to listen to United Methodist' hopes and dreams in Louisiana, hear their concerns, and learn of their interests. She also hopes to offer guidance and support for the coming year.

### **UMCOR EARTHQUAKE RELIEF**

We are collecting donations to support the earthquake relief efforts in Turkey and Syria. Tents, heaters, blankets, warm clothes, ready-to-eat meals and first-aid kits are being distributed to earthquake survivors through a grant from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Please join us in prayer for the affected areas and consider giving to UMCOR's International Disaster Response to support these efforts. Through UMCOR, every penny donated goes to helping those in need. To make a financial donation, we have set up a special Disaster Relief Fund on our website at [stjohnsbr.org/give](http://stjohnsbr.org/give). Use the *Fund* drop down menu and choose *Missions*, under *Sub Fund* choose *Disaster Relief/UMCOR*. Checks written to St. John's should have UMCOR in the memo line or on the cash envelope.

### **LENT DEVOTIONAL CARDS**

To guide your Lenten journey, we are offering each household a set of **Daily Devotional Cards**, which you can take home today or pick up from the church during office hours. Each card has a reflection question and prayer, and continues through the week of Easter. You can also follow St. John's on Facebook and Instagram (@stjohnsbr) for daily reflections during Lent.

### **SANCTUARY OPEN ON WEDNESDAYS**

Each Wednesday during Lent, our Sanctuary will be open for people to come for prayer, quiet time, and reflection. As you enter the narthex, a church member will greet you and offer you a devotional guide, which you can read as you sit in the sanctuary. Your prayer time can be quietly on your own while sitting in the pew or kneeling at the communion railing. The sanctuary will be open from Noon to 1p.m. and again from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. each Wednesday during Lent, beginning this week. You may come and go as your schedule allows.

## this week at a glance

### Sunday, February 26

- 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. Youth Fellowship
- 4:30 p.m. Families With Children, Library
- 4:30 p.m. Music Makers (1st-12th grades),  
Choir Room
- 6:00 p.m. Bells Practice, Bells' Room

### Monday, February 27

- 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, February 28

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, FLC
- 6:00 p.m. Gardere Youth Initiative, FLC
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

### Wednesday, March 1

- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC
- 12:00 p.m. Sanctuary Open for Prayer
- 5:00 p.m. Sanctuary Open for Prayer
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir, Choir Room

### Thursday, March 2

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, FLC

### Friday, March 3

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

### Saturday, March 4

- 12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-C
- 8:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC

\*Family Life Center



# seeking sanctuary

OUR SANCTUARY IS OPEN FOR REFLECTION  
AND PRAYER EVERY WEDNESDAY IN LENT  
NOON - 1PM | 5PM - 6PM