



# seeking:

*Can these  
bones live?*

Sunday, March 26, 2023

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

All Are Welcome

In Ezekiel's vision, God asks the prophet, "Can these bones live?" Do we believe new life can come after death? Can we find hope when things are bleak? Can we really trust in God's resurrection? While we look to God to carry us through the valley, God looks to us to embody hope for others. As we prepare to enter Holy Week, we remember how Jesus began his final journey toward resurrection: by returning to Judea after the death of his dear friend, Lazarus. As we walk through the valley of dry bones that leads us to Calvary Hill, let us seek out the hope that will stir in us and sustain us.

***Whether you are a guest or member, we invite you to register your attendance (scan the QR code in the bulletin) 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. If you are feeling cold, shawls are available in a basket in front of the media desk in the back of the sanctuary. 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 Prayground** 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 Prayground 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  
*Choir Director*  
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Ben Balsler  
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Cheryl Roubique  
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Connor Dean  
*Interim Director of Youth and  
Children's Ministries*  
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LeAnn Davis  
*Manager of Finance & Facilities*  
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Dr. Terry Byars  
*Praise Team Director and Accompanist*  
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Bill Putzig  
*Custodian*  
billputzig@stjohnsbr.org

Sofia Rodriguez-Martinez  
*Nursery Worker*

# seeking community

*\*Please stand as you are comfortable.  
**Bold** indicates congregational response.  
Please scan the QR Code to register your attendance.*



## Prelude

## Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

## \*Songs of Praise

*Awesome God (2x)*  
The Faith We Sing Songbook 2040  
*My Hope Is Built*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 368, vs. 1 & 2

## \*Call to Worship

Johnny McWilliams

There are moments when exhaustion hits,  
**when we feel tired to our core.**

There are moments when grief weighs heavy upon us,  
**when hope feels out of reach.**

There are moments when we wonder:  
**Can these bones live?**

And so, let us gather in this place once more, for this is God's house,  
**and hope lives here.**

So come. Let us gather and rest our weary bones.  
**May we feel alive again as we worship our life-giving God.**

# seeking insight

## \*Song of Praise

*Something Beautiful*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 394

## Children's Message

Rhonda Tucker

## Prayer for Illumination

Johnny McWilliams

**Life Giving God,  
Speak to us through this ancient story that we might find what  
we are seeking in you. Help us to listen to the hope that you  
breathe into every word. With gratitude and open hearts we  
pray, amen.**

## Scripture

Johnny McWilliams

Ezekiel 37:1-14

## 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

Pastor Lane

“Can These Bones Live?”  
*Ezekiel 37:1-14 & John 11:1-45*

# seeking wholeness

## Hymn of Faith

*Trust and Obey*  
The United Methodist Hymnal 467, vs. 1 - 3

## \*Call to Confession

Pastor Lane

Friends, there is nothing that we have to keep hidden from God—  
not our anger, our grief, or the ways in which we have fallen short. In  
confession, we speak honestly and are met with grace. So let us not  
hold back. Let us bring our full selves to this prayer, knowing that God is  
already running to meet us.

## \*Prayer of Confession

*Let us pray.*

**Jesus of Nazareth,**

**I confess:**

**I forget that you know this feeling.**

**I forget that you, too, have wept.**

**I forget that you, too, have lost.**

**I forget that you, too, have gathered at the tomb,**

**have grieved for a friend,**

**have felt the sting of humanity.**

**Forgive me for all the times I place blame on you.**

**Forgive me for all the times I create distance,  
imagining that you could never feel what I feel.**

**Forgive me for allowing the valley of dry bones  
to be a sea of space between us.**

**Pour yourself into the cracks in my heart.**

**Bring these bones back to life. Bring me closer to you.**

**With gratitude I pray, amen.**

## \*Words of Forgiveness and Grace

Friends, you could spend your whole life ignoring God,  
pushing God away, or trying to solve the world's problems  
all on your own, and God would still love you all the same.  
Even in our shortcomings, we are God's beloved.

So hear and believe this good news:  
**We are saved by grace through faith. We belong to God.  
We are not alone.**

In in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.  
**In in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **\*Sharing the Love and Peace of Christ**

#### **Ministry Moment**

Living Our UMC Beliefs Workshop

Natalie Cooper

#### **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**

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.**

## **Consecration and Blessing**

*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, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen.**

### **\*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. The bread will be dipped in the grape juice and handed to you. Or, if you prefer, you may receive pre-packaged elements.*

*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 an usher know and someone will gladly bring communion to you.*

### **Gratitude Prayer**

Johnny McWilliams

**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

*To God Be the Glory*

The United Methodist Hymnal 98, 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

## FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR

The flowers on the altar are in honor of members of Congregational Care and UWF who visit those in our congregation who are confined to their homes or in an assisted living facility, bringing flowers and much appreciated fellowship.

## USHERS

Ushers for the 8:30 service are Phil and Jill Slicker.

## 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

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

There will be a regularly scheduled Church Council meeting on **Tuesday, March 28 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Library. A portion of the meeting will be a called Charge Conference to approve the pastor's compensation, which is already in place, to meet the strict interpretation of The Book of Discipline. As with all Church Council meetings, this is an open meeting and all members are invited to attend.

## UWF CRAFT AND BAKE SALE

The United Women in Faith of St. John's is once again sponsoring a Craft and Bake Sale on **Palm Sunday, April 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.** There will be wonderful crafts and delicious Easter goodies to bring home or share with others. Proceeds from the sale go to UWF missions and projects.

### CALLING ALL CRAFTS PEOPLE AND BAKERS!

If you love to bake or you have a craft you love to do, please consider donating to the upcoming United Women in Faith Spring Bake and Craft Sale. Contact Liz McDonald at 318-542-9272 if you will be able to donate a craft or bake goods.

## EASTER LILIES IN THE SANCTUARY

Easter lilies will adorn the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. If you would like to dedicate a lily in honor of or in memory of a loved one, contact the office, pick up an order form in the Narthex, or use the QR code. Each lily dedication costs \$15. You may pay online at [stjohnsbr.org/give](http://stjohnsbr.org/give) and choose "Other" in the Fund drop down box, then under Sub Fund choose "Flower fund." *You may also pay by check or cash in the offering plate or mail. Mark your donation with "Lilies."* **The deadline to order is Monday, April 3.**



## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

*PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 8:30 & 11 A.M.*

Celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. *Children and the young at heart are invited to arrive early to line up for the Palm Processional which will happen at the beginning of both services.*

*MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP & AGAPE FEAST, APRIL 6, 6 P.M., FLC*

Mauudy Thursday demonstrates God's invitations to encounter, to connect, and to be transformed. Our service will take place in the Family Life Center and will be followed with an Agape Feast, or Love Feast, featuring Mediterranean finger foods, a modern-day variation of what might have been served to Jesus and his disciples.

*GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP, APRIL 7, 6 P.M.*

Our Good Friday worship service is structured around Jesus' last words - "Why have you forsaken me." Join us for this solemn worship service at 6 p.m. in our sanctuary and online.

*EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP, APRIL 9, 6 P.M.*

Celebrate the glory of Christ's resurrection on Easter at our regular worship times in the sanctuary and online. *Children and the young at heart are invited to arrive early to line up for the Flower Processional which will happen at the beginning of both services.*

## CALLING ALL FOODIES & FOOD LOVERS

We are hosting an Agape Feast, or Love Feast, as part of our Mauudy Thursday worship experience on April 6 at 6pm. We will serve Mediterranean finger foods such as hummus, pita, olives, almonds, cashews, dried fruit, cheese, and grapes. Pastor Lane is looking for some "Foodies" to help host. If you are willing to provide something for the feast, set up, and/or clean up, please contact Pastor Lane ([pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:pastorlane@stjohnsbr.org)).

# BUNNY BREAKFAST & EGG HUNT

ON SATURDAY, APRIL 1, St. John's will host an Easter event for families with children at St. John's and our neighbors from The Shepherd's Market. Join us for pancakes, faith-filled crafts, face painting, an egg hunt, and pictures with the Easter bunny.

There are several ways you can support the event: **VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME, DONATE ITEMS, & PRAY FOR THE EVENT**

**ITEMS STILL NEEDED:** Individually wrapped, nut-free candies and small prizes/toys for games.

**VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED:** Our greatest need is for people to run activity stations. **The stations are already planned and materials are provided!**

**Activity/Game Volunteers should arrive by 8:50 a.m. Activity stations will run from 9 - 10:15 a.m. All you need to do is show up and help us out.** *You will be free to go around 10:15 a.m.*

## THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY STATIONS STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS:

**Resurrection Hand Print Craft** (Needs 2 volunteers) - See sample in Narthex  
Involves cutting, gluing & painting, a little more adult oversight required

**Basket Bonanza Game** (Needs 3-6 volunteers)

A game where kids toss ping pong balls into different Easter baskets to win prizes.

There will be 2 lines of baskets running at the same time. Supplies and prizes provided.

**Easter Bunny Photo Booth Helper** (Needs 1 volunteer)

To help manage the line for the photo booth.

*If you don't have a particular booth that you would like to volunteer for, please put your name in the "No Preference" row in the Signup Genius. If you select this option, you will be placed where there is a need left unmet.*

We are signing up Volunteers through a simple online form called **Sign Up Genius**.<sup>\*</sup> You can get to the Sign Up Genius by scanning this QR Code or by going online to: [tinyurl.com/BunnyBreakfastSignup](https://tinyurl.com/BunnyBreakfastSignup). Groups of friends, your Sunday School class, Bible Study, or covenant group as well as Individuals are welcome to sign up and help!



**\*NOTE:** To sign up as a group, select the number of people in your group in the drop down menu under "Quantity". If you have any issues with the Signup Genius, please reach out to Connor ([connordean@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:connordean@stjohnsbr.org) or 225-766-4594). She will be happy to assist you!

## UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

- Spring Lock-In: Friday, April 21, \$10 to attend.
- Youth 2023 at Daytona Beach: July 24-29, \$75 deposit due by March 30.

More information about upcoming youth events can be found in the weekly youth newsletter. If you would like to be added to the email list to receive the youth newsletters or have any other questions related to youth events and activities, please contact Connor Dean ([connordean@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:connordean@stjohnsbr.org) or 225-766-4594).

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

If you have a passion to work with young people or are just looking for more ways to get involved at St. John's, consider signing up as an adult volunteer with our youth group. To ensure the safety of our young people, St. John's requires at least two adults be present to oversee all events involving youth and/or children. Volunteers essentially serve as a secondary adult to help supervise these activities. Remember - you don't have to have a child in youth group to volunteer. Email Connor Dean ([connordean@stjohnsbr.org](mailto:connordean@stjohnsbr.org)) to sign up or if you have any questions. You may also sign up online at [tinyurl.com/jumcyouthsignup](https://tinyurl.com/jumcyouthsignup).

# this week at a glance

## Sunday, March 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 Group, Youth Room
- 4:30 p.m. Music Makers (1st-12th grades), Choir Room
- 6:00 p.m. Bells Practice, Bells' Room

## Monday, March 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, March 28

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market, FLC
- 2:00 p.m. Grief Program, Parlor
- 6:30 p.m. Church Council, Library
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

## Wednesday, March 29

- 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 30

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

## Friday, March 31

- 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, April 1

- 9:00 a.m. **BUNNY BREAKFAST, FLC**
- 12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-C
- 8:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC

\*Family Life Center

## ONE DAY STUDY ON "LIVING OUR UMC BELIEFS"

A study that aims to examine the role of doctrine within the United Methodist Church will be held on **Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. at First UMC downtown.** The class, will be facilitated by Rev. Brady Whitton. The cost for the class is \$20, which includes lunch. Additionally, in advance of the class, participants are required to purchase and read *Living Our Beliefs The United Methodist Way* by Bishop Kenneth L. Carder. The book is currently available on the Upper Room and Amazon web sites for \$13. To register go to [la-umc.org/umcbeliefscourse](http://la-umc.org/umcbeliefscourse).



# seeking sanctuary?

Our sanctuary is open for reflection and prayer  
every Wednesday in Lent.

NOON - 1PM | 5PM - 6PM