

The Celebration of the Gospel

February 17, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

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.

Prelude

Fairest Lord Jesus

Words of Grace and Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

Gathering Song

Holy Ground

This is holy ground
We're standing on holy ground
For the Lord is present
And where He is is holy
This is holy ground
We're standing on holy ground
For the Lord is present
And where He is is holy
These are holy hands
He's given us holy hands
He works through these hands
And so these hands are holy
These are holy hands
He's given us holy hands
He works through these hands
And so these hands are holy
This is holy ground
We're standing on holy ground
For the Lord is present
And where He is is holy
This is holy ground
We're standing on holy ground
For the Lord is present
And where He is is holy

Call to Worship

Dave and Bonnie Byland

We are invited—
Into the story,
Into this place,
Into this time of worship.

We are invited—
Into reflection,
Into community,
Into our own spiritual journeys.

We are invited—
The broken and bruised,
The hopeful, the new,
The faithful, the doubting,
The wondering, the waiting.

We are invited—
Because God so loved;

So listen, trust the invitation, and bring your whole self.
All are invited here. Amen.

Invitation Song

Sanctuary

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living
sanctuary for you.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Deirdré Halliburton

Holy God—
We know that you are near,
for you are always here, gathered among us,
just a breath away.
And despite knowing your nearness, we still stumble over
ourselves, unsure of how to pray.
Bring our hearts into the room.
So often we talk to you like a stranger,
praying prayers of small talk about the weather
and surface level concerns.
We keep genuine fear and doubt tucked into corners,
out of sight, out of mind.
Bring our hearts into the room.
And so often we try to think our way to you,
as if we could use logic or our minds alone
to explain your great unknown.
We forget what we knew as children;
we forget how to feel our way to you.
Bring our hearts into the room.
And too regularly, we limit our experience of you
to one hour a Sunday,
Missing your constant invitation into the holiness
all around us.
Forgive us. Guide us.
Bring our hearts into the room.
We are here, God. We want to begin again.
Bring our hearts into the room. Amen.

Words of Assurance and Pardon

Pastor Deirdré

Unsure of what comes next,
or running your way through that threshold,
you are claimed, forgiven, and loved by God.
Again and again, we are forgiven.
Again and again, we are loved.
Again and again, we are invited in.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.

Sharing Signs of Peace and Reconciliation

Reading

Genesis 3:19b

Reflection

What challenges are you struggling with?

Poetic Reflection

*Invited
by Sarah Are*

I like to imagine that each year,
God invites me to a party.
God drops me a note that says,
“No gifts, casual dress. Come just as you are.”
I like to imagine that I am brave enough to go.
I like to imagine that I decide that I am worth it.
This was no pity invite,
There is no obligatory postage.
God wants me there.
So I get myself together,
Smudged glasses, sensitive ego, wrinkled shirt, and all.
I ring the doorbell a few minutes late
on account of the fact that
I lost my keys twice trying to get out the door,
And I almost turn back to hide in my car,
Afraid that I might embarrass myself over appetizers
or small talk.
But then God answers the door,
And God says, “You’re here!”
And I smile, because I am.
And with every step past that threshold,
I know that God is cheering me on.
It’s the pride of a parent watching their child
take their first step.
If I freeze, God is not disappointed.
If I fall, God is not mad.
But if I trust the invitation,
If I move closer,
I know, God celebrates.
Friends, you’ve got mail.
It’s an invitation to dust off your shoes,
To go deeper,
To trust that you’re worth it,
To lose your keys and your faith,
And then to find them both, along with your worth.
You are invited.
We are invited.
Again and again and again.
This invitation is for you.

Inspiration

A Pep Talk from Kid President to You

Reflection

What are your hopes for the Lenten season?

Affirming Our Faith

We believe in an inviting God
Who invites the poor and the sick,
the outcast and the lonely,
the immigrant and the refugee,
the awkward and the abrasive,
the young and the innocent.
We believe God invites the best and
the worst—in all of us.
We believe God invites us to:
A life of faith,
a crowded table,
a messy church,
a deeper truth,
a resilient joy,
a place to belong,
a family among strangers,
a world that is just,
and a love that knows no bounds.

Pastor Deirdré

We believe this invitation exists for all people.
We believe this invitation exists for us.
And when we miss the call or ignore the invite,
we believe that God invites us again.
Thanks be to God for that invitational Spirit. Amen.

Sharing Concerns and Joys

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer

Pastor Deirdré

Departing Song

Just As I Am

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Closing Prayer

Carissa Murray

God of open doors,
open arms,
and open conversations,
we know
deep in our souls
that you are forever inviting us in.
Again and again,
You invite us to take another step closer,
Another step deeper,
Another step further,
In this journey of faith and
into our one wild and precious life.
So with your invitation in our hands,
we pray for strength and wisdom.
Show us the next right step in this journey.
We are here.
You are here.
This is holy ground.
May our holy Lenten journey begin
once again.
Gratefully we pray,
Amen.

Benediction

Pastor Lane

Postlude

Holy, Holy, Holy

Thank you for worshipping with us!

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

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