



Family News

A Servant Community: Actively Faithful, Faithfully Active
 St. John's Baptist Church · 300 Hawthorne Lane · Charlotte, North Carolina

Vol. 75, No. 49 - December 19, 2017



*St. John's
at Worship*

Sunday, December 24
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Homily:
A Love That Gives

Scripture:
 John 3:16-17

Christmas Eve

Sermon:
God's Gift of Love

Scripture:
 John 3:16-17

Sunday, December 31
First Sunday after Christmas

Proclaimer:
 Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD



Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 24

Worship - 10:30 am

(come in casual Christmas attire)

(no Children's/Youth Formation classes/no nursery care)

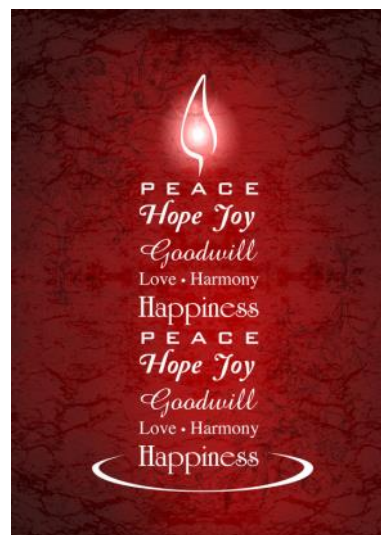
Christmas Eve Service - 5:00 pm

(family friendly/no nursery care)

From the Church Staff

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LETTERS TO SANTA & CHRISTMAS PRAYERS:

Each year, children write letters to Santa. You may have childhood memories of your letters to Santa. Along the way, some of us decide Santa does not exist. We change our 'asking' focus from Santa to a more tangible horizontal relationship – family. This is a bit odd; we begin to suppress our imaginations as our brains begin functioning at a more developed level.

St. John's member, Landis Wade, has written a trilogy of books offering adults and adolescents a creative opportunity to re-touch childhood glee. (Type 'Landis Wade' into the search line on your amazon app to see all three book covers.) Many people, too many, let go of some of the most important dimensions of what it means to be human as they leave childhood. As they let go of some of the immaturity of childishness, they also turn loose of some of the best qualities of child-likeness: imagination, sincerity, humility, vulnerability, honesty, kindness, trust, forgiveness, sensitivity, authenticity, thoughtfulness, compassion and collaborative collegiality.

Whatever your belief in Santa Claus (and Landis has restored my belief), I know your beliefs are centered in your relationship with God. So, consider joining me in this Christmas Prayer.

Living God, as you know, I am blessed to be part of a creative, committed and compassionate congregation in Charlotte, NC. As St. John's, we desire to do more than merely go through the motions of institutional church. We desire to improve the lives of others. As a loving faith community, we address some of the systemic causes of sin in our community and world. We desire to reduce hatred, prejudice, greed, abuse, injustice, fear, ignorance and mean-spiritedness. We serve those who are sick, hungry, homeless, poor and in need of community. And, this year, Lord, as we celebrate your incarnation in the life of Jesus, we ask for your help.

Lord, please restore to us the wonder we see through the eyes of children? In their eyes, we see hope glistening and trust twinkling. Children make their requests known to Santa with full confidence anticipating unwrapping gifts that offer enjoyment, companionship and warmth. God, help us believe in You as much as our children believe in Santa.

Living God, this year, at Christmas, as we bring ourselves to You in spiritual renewal, please send us a big box of seeds. We need seeds of Your love, mercy, grace, commitment, vision, healing, hope-giving education and peace-building as we invest our life energies and resources in Your missional vision. We will plant these seeds and water them with our tears and prayers in 2018 and beyond! AMEN!

Shalom – and Merry Christmas!
Dennis

From Martha

MT25 News

The Peacebuilding Team met at the Center for Community Transitions on Old Concord Road this past Thursday to help put together baskets for the women there. The CCT offers women a time of transition between incarceration and returning to private life. Rachel Nemecek is our liaison there, and she has been very active with the programs they offer and would love to tell you more if you are interested. Pictured here are Beverly and Dick Hester, along with staff from CCT and other volunteers who came to help.



From Allison
Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year. There won't be Formation Hour for children, and we will have a shorter worship service at 10:30 am. Our Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion service will be at 5 pm. No nursery will be provided for either service because the sounds and presence of children are very important as we remember Jesus being born. I will have worship bags and worship clipboards ready for both services so children will have plenty to do. It's such an important time for all of us to remember that Jesus came to us as a child, and having our children present with us for these services will help the whole church to remember the mystery of Christmas.

December 31

On Sunday, December 31, we will not have Formation Hour or nursery care for children. We will still worship together at 10:30am.

The latest Advent poster completed by the children depicting Mary.





From the Finance Office:

All allowable tax donations must be received (and checks dated) by December 31, 2017. If mailed, please ensure that the envelope is postmarked 2017. Any monies received after December 2017 will count towards your 2018 pledge.

The church offices will be closed December 25 and 26 and January 1, and most of the staff will also be off on December 29. There will be no newsletter next week. If you need to reach a minister, please call their cell phone.

**Financial Ministry Plan
Pledge Report**

**Amount Received: \$849,806
Commitments Received: 173**

If you have not turned in your Pledge Card to the church office, please do so as soon as possible.



Pictorial Directory Update



To update your St. John's pictorial directory, a page of photos of our recent new members and a new address/phone directory are now available on the table in the church office.

High School Youth Christmas Party for Charlotte Rescue Mission



Middle School Dinner for Room in the Inn & Christmas Party



What should St. John's look like in the 21st century?

As you know, the church has received \$130,000 for the sale of property on Park Avenue and has a contract for the potential sale of the Garrison Road property. The Administrative deacons have appointed a group to ask and listen to the congregation's ideas and to make recommendations on how we should spend this money. The "Investing in the Future Task Force's" members are David Allen, Bill Claytor, Bill Hartsell, Bobbi Sherrill, Randy Brantley, Charlie Harper, Wanny Hogewood, Fredda Kimball, Russell Norris, Meredith Sorrell, Sara Vavra, Sally Young, chair, and Dennis Foust, ex-officio.

How can we best use these funds to further and expand St. John's missional vision? Beginning in January, the "IF Task Force" will be visiting Sunday School classes and holding listening sessions to hear members' ideas. We look to the congregation to help us discern the ways we can challenge ourselves to grow and change our perspective and facilities so that St. John's is known in the community as a beacon of God's love at the corner of East Fifth and Hawthorne.

St. John's Baptist Church
300 Hawthorne Lane - Charlotte NC 28204
704.333.5428-www.StJohnsBaptistChurch.org
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Ministers

Every participant in God's Servant Church

Equipping Ministers

Senior Minister..... Dennis Foust
 ext. 12 - dfoust@sjcharlotte.org
Associate Minister Martha Kearse
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Minister for Youth & Young Adults Lee Gray
 ext. 15 - lgray@sjcharlotte.org
Minister for Children & Their Families . Allison Benfield
 ext. 18 - abenfield@sjcharlotte.org
Minister for Worship and Music Kevin Gray
 ext. 14 - kgray@sjcharlotte.org

Church Staff

Administrative Assistant..... Jacquelyn McAbee
 ext. 11 - jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org
Church Accountant..... Elaine Johnson
 ejohnson@sjcharlotte.org
Church Administrator..... Sandra Rogers
 ext. 20 - srogers@sjcharlotte.org
Organist..... Noel Lance
 nlance@sjcharlotte.org
Weekday School Director..... Lydia Olmsted
 ext. 39 - weekdayschool@sjcharlotte.org
Custodians..... James Ford, Chris Mullis
 Office hours: Mon.-Thurs.: 8:30 am-4:30 pm; Fri.: 8:30 am-12:00 noon

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

Emily Batts, Betty Crenshaw, Cathy Hartsell,
 Carmen Howard, Chuck Jones & Jan Kerley - home

Sunday, December 24

Deacons: Tricia Miller, Melissa Millette, Jane &
 Morgan Newman, Russell Norris, Kim & Robby Ray,
 Shannon Rodden, Gail Sifford, Ellen Smith
Tellers: Tom Blackmon, Gene Poole
Greeters: Main-Ed Turner, Chuck Jones; 5th St.-Al &
 Treva Bridges; Broach-Jimmy Carpenter, Ed Outen;
 Elevator- Marvin Carter

Sunday, December 31

Deacons: David Allen, Henry Snyder, Laura Sorrell,
 Kathy Spence, Todd Stillerman, Anne Sutton,
 Elizabeth Whipple, Lindsay Wilson, Alice Wirz
Tellers: Marvin Carter, Paul Lloyd
Greeters: Main-Ed Turner, Mark McNeill; 5th St.-
 Vanessa Boling, Betty Thompson; Broach-Monty
 Kearse; Elevator- Marvin Carter

Ushers: Arnold Philemon, Marvin Carter, Bobbie
 Hahn, Bobbie & Don Hinson, Carol & Gene Poole

Financial Ministry Plan Report:

Week of Dec. 11-17: \$28,947
 Income through December 17: \$975,321
 2017 Ministry Plan Budget Goal: \$1,075,535

Ministers on Call:

December 18-24: Dennis Foust 704-359-7234
 December 25-31: Martha Kearse 704-941-8446 (cell)
 (please call Martha's cell phone if you need her this week)



⇒ MT25 Hunger Team supports CROP Walk, Friendship Trays, Loaves & Fishes, Highland Backpacks and the Sandwich Ministry. Please contact Jane Winn if interested in working with these groups.



Children and Youth Basketball Results

No games on Saturdays, December 23 & 30

6 & Under Co-Ed - WON!	12 & Under Girls - WON!
8 & Under Boys - WON!	14 & Under Boys - BYE
10 & Under Boys - WON!	16 & Under Boys - Lost
10 & Under Girls - WON!	18 & Under Boys - BYE
12 & Under Boys - WON!	18 & Under Girls - BYE

Calendar: December 24 - January 6

Sunday, December 24
 9:15 Adult Sunday School (Classrooms)
 10:30 Worship (Sanctuary)
 5:00 Christmas Eve Worship (Sanctuary)
Monday, December 25
 Church Offices closed
 8:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
Tuesday, December 26
 Church Offices closed
Wednesday, December 27
 6:30 Benton Basketball (Gym)
 6:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
Friday, December 29
 5:00 Room in the Inn (Lounge/Gym)
 8:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
Saturday, December 30
 7:00 Benton Basketball (Gym)
 9:30 Girls' Basketball (Gym)
Sunday, December 31
 9:15 Adult Sunday School (Classrooms)
 10:30 Worship (Sanctuary)
Monday, January 1
 Church Offices closed
 8:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
Tuesday, January 2
 7:00 Tuesday Morning Men's Group (Lounge)
 10:00 Staff meeting (Conference Room)
 5:15 SJBC Men's Basketball (Gym)
Wednesday, January 3
 6:30 Benton Basketball (Gym)
 6:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
 6:00 Personnel Resource Team (Conference Room)
 6:00 Mission Resource Team (Lounge)
 7:15 Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)
Thursday, January 4
 9:00 Unity Coalition (Lounge)
Friday, January 5
 5:00 Room in the Inn (Lounge/Gym)
 8:00 AA (Lasater Hall)
Saturday, January 6
 7:00 Benton Basketball (Gym)
 10:00 Basketball games (Gym)

Complete calendar online:
www.StJohnsBaptistChurch.org