

# Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come!

## Let Earth Receive Her King

Please turn off all electronic devices.

### GATHERING MUSIC

Delbridge Narron

*As we enter this room called Sanctuary, let us allow ourselves to invest these early moments of worship in being drawn from the hurried paces and concerns of our lives. Let us be drawn to the stillness and quiet, empowering us to be present to the Divine Presence. As the Sanctuary organ breathes harmony into the space of this room, may we welcome the breath of God into the space of our lives.*

### WORDS OF GREETING

Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

### A WORD ABOUT TODAY’S WORSHIP

Dr. Foust

### ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM

O WALY WALY

*Congregation will sing verses as each baptismal candidate is presented.*

You come to be baptized today to die with Christ and rise again.  
You choose through Christ to walk God’s way and seek a new life without end.

**Lily Wilkerson**

You join with those who went before the family of God on earth.  
You stand before the open door. Receive, O God, and give new birth.

**Emma Goodrich**

### EXPRESSION OF FELLOWSHIP

Congregation

### PRAYER OF SUBMISSION

Rev. Allison Benfield

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Benfield

ONE: Today, we gather as the baptized people of God. We are committed to obeying God, as we follow Jesus’ teachings, lifestyle practices and example of sacrificial service.

**ALL: Praise to the Living God, who is faithful and full of compassion. Through our worship we are shaped to become joyful witnesses.**

### SONG

Music Makers & Grace Notes

*Away in a Manger*

James R. Murray

### \*ADVENT PROCESSIONAL

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, o come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel! Shall come to you, O Israel!

### \*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF JOY

Joe & Betty Millsaps  
Lily & Max Cordello, Alexander Aguilera

ONE: By waiting for the coming of the Christ, we become more attentive to God at work in our world.

**ALL: God’s steadfast love for the world is everlasting.**

ONE: Christ’s saving work in our lives is expressed by our great joy.

**ALL: We welcome this one who brings healing to our brokenness and renewed vision in the midst of our despairing.**

### \*HYMN OF PRAISE

Chalice Hymnal No. 170, Verses 1, 2 & 4

How Great Our Joy!

JUNGST

### READING OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 35:1-7

Rev. Benfield

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.” Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

ONE: Through these written words of scripture, we listen for the Living Word of God.

**ALL: Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.**

### \*HYMN OF JOY

Chalice Hymnal No. 143

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

### THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

Rev. Lee Gray

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

#### Prayer Concerns

Harry Barr, Emily Batts, Judy Biber, Tom Bryson, Byron Bullard, Betty Curlin, Carol Drye, Don Furr, Polly Hull, Gene Poole, Brad Sifford, Henry Snyder, Elma Thomas, & Alison Zieglmeier (daughter of Ken & Donna Scott); Parker Jackson – military

Sympathy to the family of Bryan Thorn in his passing this Monday at home. Our prayers go to Jim Keese, his husband, and Bryan’s daughters as they grieve this loss.

### CHORAL ANTHEM

*Bethlehem Nights*

Grace Notes

Terry D. Taylor

## Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

Alan Dietz, Deacon

### GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

### OFFERTORY

*Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

Handbell Choir

arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

### PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

### \*PRESENTATION

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, let us adore Him.  
O come, let us adore Him.  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.

### READING OF THE GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-6

Jordan Benton

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

ONE: Through these written words of scripture, we listen for the Living Word of God.

**ALL: Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.**

### CHORAL ANTHEM

Handbell, Chancel Choir, & Aluel Nyuon, soloist

*All Is Well*

arr. Lloyd Larson

## And Heaven and Nature Sing

### MESSAGE

*The Question We Really Must Settle*

Dr. Foust

### \*SONG OF ASSURANCE

Grace Notes, Youth Choir, Chancel Choir,

*He Came Down*

Handbells, & Congregation

*Congregation join when cued*

He came down that we may have joy.  
He came down that we may have joy.  
He came down that we may have joy.  
Hallelujah, forevermore!

### \*CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Foust

### \*COMMISSIONING THE SCATTERED CHURCH

### \*POSTLUDE

J. Noel Lance

*\*Invites the congregation to stand.*

Copies of worship bulletins and message manuscripts are available on the St. John’s website: [www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org](http://www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Financial Ministry Plan 2020: Reaching Out**

Amount Received as of December 12: \$835,177 - Commitments Received: 158  
Please turn in your commitment card to Jacquelyn in the church financial office as soon as possible.

**Giving in 2019**

All allowable tax donations must be received, and checks dated, by December 31, 2019. If mailed, please ensure the envelope is postmarked 2019. If you are unsure of the remaining balance on your commitment for 2019, please contact Jacquelyn McAbee, Church Administrator, at [jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org](mailto:jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org) or 704-333-5428 ext. 20. Any monies received after December 2019 will count towards your 2020 pledge.

**Room in the Inn**

Each Friday night from now to March 27, we will collaborate with Caldwell Presbyterian Church to host 12 homeless neighbors. We still need volunteers and hope many of you will sign up to help. Contact Dale Johnson at 704-364-2575 or Alice Wirz at 704-377-6189. If you would like to sign up online, follow this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4caaae2eaafb6-room9>

**Advent Yoga & Meditation**

Advent Yoga and Meditation will be held tonight at 5:00pm in the McLeod-Brown Room 114 with Sara Vavra as the leader. Go calmly in the Advent season with breathing techniques and warm thoughts. Any ability of yoga is welcome to come. Chairs will be provided if you need a chair. Or bring a mat if you prefer. Mats are also available on site.

**Charlie Brown, Cocoa, and Cookies**

All generations are invited to join together in Broach Hall on Sunday, December 22 during the Sunday School hour (9:15-10:15) for a special viewing of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. We will enjoy one another and have cookies and cocoa to go along with this special time. All are welcome! Contact Allison if you have questions.

**UPDATE on the Road Closure**

We have been notified that the intersection of Hawthorne Lane and Fifth Street will remain open through this calendar year. The construction originally planned has been postponed until January 2, 2020 and will be closed at least through February 14, 2020.

**Jubilee Store THANK YOU**

Jubilee Store 2019 was a great success! Approximately 24 volunteers plus all our staff were involved with the Jubilee Store this year. St. John's contributed over 140 gifts in addition to gifts contributed by other churches. Our partner churches expressed gratitude for the ability to use our space and the shoppers from Charlotte Family Housing had a great time!

**Thank You from Lia Benton**

"As I think back on the past year and a half, I am overwhelmed by your support of my seminary journey. I've completed 11 classes in these first four terms, including Church History, Hebrew, Old Testament, and Pastoral Care. I'm looking forward to more Hebrew and Old Testament this Spring, in addition to Preaching and Greek. The real gift, though, is the opportunity to answer God's call to study. Thank you all for your prayers and the matching grant contribution. I would not be doing this without you. With immense gratitude, Lia Benton"

**St. John's Baptist Church**

300 Hawthorne Lane, Charlotte, North Carolina 28204  
704.333.5428 - [www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org](http://www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org)

**The St. John's Pulpit**

Sunday, December 22 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

Proclaimer: Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

Worship Theme: God Inspires the Nature and Character of Our Loving

Message: *How Does Jesus Affect Your Loving?*

Scripture: Psalm 80:1-3 & Matthew 1:18-25

**This Week at St. John's**

Sunday, Dec. 15	9:15 am	Sunday School (Classrooms)
	10:30 am	Worship (Sanctuary)
	10:30 am	Together in Christ Int'l Ministries (Chapel)
	11:30 am	Youth Lunch & Poinsettia Delivery (Lounge)
	2:00 pm	South Sudanese Worship (Chapel)
	5:00 pm	Advent Yoga (Room 114)
Monday, Dec. 16	11:00 am	Faith Journey Book Study & Lunch (Lounge)
	12:30 pm	Charlotte Family Housing (Room 305)
	5:45 pm	Young Voices of the Carolinas (Choir Room)
	8:00 pm	AA (Lasater Hall)
Tuesday, Dec. 17	10:00 am	Staff Meeting (Conference Room)
	12:00 pm	Staff Lunch (Conference Room)
	12:00 pm	Sandwich Ministry (Lounge)
	5:15 pm	SJBC Men's Basketball (Gym)
	6:15 pm	Young Voices of the Carolinas (Choir Room)
Wed., Dec. 18	6:30 am	Benton Basketball (Gym)
	9:30 am	Yoga (Room 114)
	6:00 pm	AA (Room 114)
	7:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)
Thursday, Dec. 19	All Day	Weekday School Teacher Workday
Friday, Dec. 20	5:00 pm	Room in the Inn (Lounge/Gym)
	5:30 pm	Volunteers Serve at Men's Shelter (Offsite)
	8:00 pm	AA (Room 114)
Saturday, Dec. 21	7:00 am	Benton Basketball (Gym)
	10:00 am	Basketball Games (Gym/Lounge)

**Membership and Ministry**

If you would like information on how you can become a member of St. John's, please call the church office (704.333.5428) or fill out one of the "For Our Guests" cards found on the back of the pew and place it in the offering plate. One of our ministers will be happy to reach out to you and answer any questions you may have. Visit our website to find out more information regarding the many ministry opportunities available in the life of St. John's.

**Ministers**

*Every participant in God's Servant Church*

**Equipping Ministers**

Minister for Spiritual Growth..... Rev. Allison Benfield  
Minister for Worship and Music ..... J. Kevin Gray  
Minister for Youth and Young Adults ..... Rev. Lee Gray  
Senior Minister ..... Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

**Church Staff**

Administrative Assistant..... Mallory Brown  
Church Administrator..... Jacquelyn McAbee  
Custodians..... Chris Mullis, Sonny Ross, Debora Thon  
Graded Choir Director..... Anna Ball  
Organist ..... J. Noel Lance  
Weekday School Director ..... Lydia Olmsted

The Worship of God



God Inspires Us to Rediscover Our Joy  
Third Sunday of Advent

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019

10:30 A.M. IN THE SANCTUARY

ST. JOHN'S BAPTIST CHURCH  
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA