

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

The First Sunday of Christmastide

Please silence all electronic devices.

*Invites the congregation to stand

Gathering Music Jane Lineberger

Greeting Rev. Dennis W. Foust PhD

Call to Worship

ONE: God has come to be among us.

ALL: Not as a politician or media influencer, craving our attention through votes and likes,

ONE: But as a humble child who will grow into a walking and talking incarnation of God's unselfish love.

ALL: Our praise of Jesus is different and unique, for we praise him because he has shown us God. He reveals the way of our salvation, our transformation, our becoming.

Prayer of Submission Dr. Foust

***Carol of Praise** *There's a Song in the Air!*
Chalice Hymnal No. 159 CHRISTMAS SONG

There's a song in the air! There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer and a baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire while the angel choirs sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!

There's a tumult of joy o'er the wonderful birth,
for the Virgin's sweet boy is the Lord of the earth.
See, the star rains its fire while the angel choirs sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!

We rejoice in the light, and we echo the song
that comes down through the night from the heavenly throng,
and we welcome the glorious gospel they bring,
and we greet in his cradle our Savior and King!

Reading from the Gospel Nancy Wilson
Luke 2:39-52

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they

were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

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.



Artwork by Jan Kerley

***Carol** *What Child Is This*
Chalice Hymnal No. 162, verses 1 & 3 GREENSLEEVES

What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, come rich and poor to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary

Message Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD
Where a Parent's Treasure Is Found

***Carol** *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*
Chalice Hymnal No. 163 W ZLOBIE LEZY

Infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all. Christ the babe is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new,
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.

Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you. Christ the babe was born for you!

The Church at Prayer & the Lord's 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 & Celebrations

Shirley Ballard, Katherine Barr, John Bragg, Betty Fuller, Polly Hull,
Barbara Ledford, Tish Philemon, Brad Sifford, Carole Ann Simpson,
Don Swofford, Elma Thomas, Dee Turner

After 58 years of marriage and lengthy illnesses in recent years, Carol and Gene Poole passed on ahead of us on December 20, 2021.

Arrangements will be announced in the coming days.

Please remember Craig and Leah and the Poole family in your prayers.

***Carol** *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*
Chalice Hymnal No. 164, Verses 1 & 3 IN DULCI JUBILO

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!
Listen now to what we say: News! News! Jesus Christ is born today.
Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was born
to save! Calls you one and calls you all, to gain this everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Offertory Prayer

Offertory Renee Hutchison
I Wonder as I Wander John Jacob Niles

***Doxology** ADESTE FIDELES

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

Commissioning the Scattered Church Dr. Foust

Postlude Jane Lineberger

*Invites the congregation to stand

LIFE AT ST. JOHN'S

Stewardship 2022: Rooted in Love



If you have not pledged yet, you can do so by turning in your pledge card to Jacquelyn in the office, by pledging online through Realm, or by scanning the QR code. Thank you so much for your financial faithfulness!

Giving in 2021

All allowable tax donations must be received (and checks dated) by December 31, 2021. If mailed, please ensure the envelope is postmarked 2021. If you are unsure of the remaining balance on your commitment for 2021, please contact Jacquelyn McAbee, Church Administrator, at jmcabee@sjcharlotte.org or 704-333-5428 ext. 20. Any monies received after December 2021 will count towards your 2022 pledge.

The church offices will be closed December 27-28 and December 31 for the holidays. There will be no Family News the week of December 27-January 2.



An Epiphany Sermon Series

ISN'T THAT JUST LIKE A WOMAN?

Some Women Who Helped Jesus Reveal the Mission of God

January 9: The Day Jesus Was Re-Baptized by a Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15:21-28)

January 16: The Day Jesus Couldn't Control His Mother (John 2:1-12)

January 23: The Day Jesus Almost Got Killed Over a Phoenician Woman (Luke 4:14-30)

January 30: The Day Jesus Transformed a Community through a Trusted Woman (John 4:1-42)

February 6: The Day Jesus Silenced a Mob on Behalf of a Victimized Woman (John 8:2-11)

THE ST. JOHN'S PULPIT

Sunday, January 2, 2021 | Christmastide
Proclaimer: Rev. Lee Gray

GUEST CONNECTION

If you would like information on how you can become a part of St. John's, please fill out one of the "For Our Guests" cards found on the back of the pew and place it in the offering plate. Our church staff 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.

MOBILE GIVING AT ST. JOHN'S

You can text your contributions and offerings to St. John's! Text SJGIVE (not case sensitive) and the amount you would like to give (i.e. 10=\$10) to 73256 to give using your mobile device. When you receive a message, click on the link provided and follow the instructions. You will then receive a receipt to confirm your gift was received.

MINISTERS

Every participant in God's Servant Church

EQUIPPING MINISTERS

Minister for Spiritual Growth

Rev. Allison Benfield

Minister for Worship & Music

J. Kevin Gray

Minister for Congregational Care

Rev. Lee Gray

Senior Minister

Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

SUPPORT STAFF

Church Administrator

Jacquelyn McAbee

Custodial Staff

Chris Mullis & Debora Thon

Organist

J. Noel Lance

Weekday School Director

Lydia Olmstead

Children's Choir Director

Anna Ball

St. John's Baptist Church

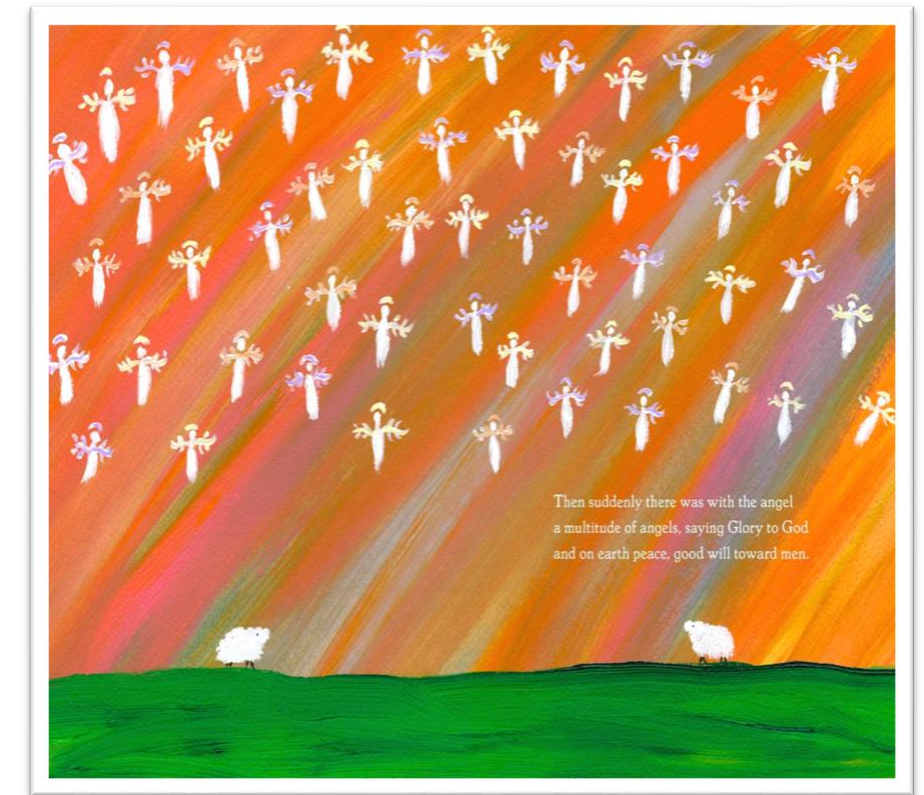
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Then suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of angels, saying Glory to God
and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Artwork by Cynthia Rylant from her book, *Nativity*

Sunday, December 26, 2021, at 10:30AM
ST. JOHN'S BAPTIST CHURCH
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA