

Welcome to the Worship of God

Please silence all electronic devices.

**Invites the congregation to stand*

The Church Gathers to Worship The Living God

Gathering Music Dr. Matthew Manwarren

Words of Greeting and Gathering Rev. Haley Blackwell

Prayer of Submission Rev. Blackwell

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship Dr. Manwarren
To God Be the Glory arr. Donald Hustad

Entrance of the Christ Candle, presented by Kate Bailey

***The Hymn of Prayerful Vision, No. 464** *God of Grace and God of Glory*
Chalice Hymnal CWM RHONDA

Prayer of Blessing For the Blessing of the Backpacks

One (Kheresa): God, we thank you for each student that is standing before us today with their backpacks. We have watched them grow and mature and learn more about you in the past.

(Haley): We pray for and bless them as they begin a new school year. May their faith and lives reflect the fruit of the Spirit as they learn, have fun, meet new friends, and experience all this new school year.

Congregation: May you love in a way that reflects Jesus in all you do, finding joy in learning and growing in school, in your faith, and in your relationships with others. Even during difficult days, may you demonstrate the peace that comes from Jesus.

Family Members: As the school year begins, may you discover patience for yourself and others. When facing harsh words or actions, may you respond with kindness. May you act out of the true goodness of the heart and reflect the Fruits of the Spirit as you interact with others.

Students: Loving God, hold us and our prayers.

One (Haley): God, we thank you for teachers, professors, staff, and administrators. Bless these faithful servants with courage and confidence, knowing you are in their classroom with a steady hand on their shoulder.

(Kheresa): Give them peace, patience, and balance in the pressures they face, and bravery to build structures and systems which justly serve all your children. Give them delight in the young ones before them, and recognition of the sweet ways students are also teachers.

Congregation: May you love in a way that reflects Jesus in all you do. During difficult days, may you demonstrate the peace that comes from God's Son, Jesus Christ.

School Faculty and Staff: Loving God, hold us and our prayers.

One (Haley): God, we thank you for parents and remember them as the start of a new school year is always another leap of faith. Wrap them with your reassuring love as they entrust their children and trust in you.

(Kheresa): When questions remain unanswered, and the realm of control is finite, bless them with peace and the promise you are right there with their child, whether to preschool or driving to college.

Congregation: May you love in a way that reflects Jesus in all you do. May you discover patience for yourself and for others. May you demonstrate the peace that comes from God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Parents: Loving God, hold us and our prayers.

Congregation: Students, Teachers, Professors, Staff, Administrators, and Parents, in all you do, may you show faithfulness to what you have learned at home and church. May your words and actions show gentleness toward yourself and others. Each day, may you discover self-control as you make choices that will help you grow at school, at home, and in your faith.

Leaders (Haley and Kheresa): We bless you today ...

Congregation: We promise to pray for you as you start a new school year.

All: We thank you, God, and love you. Amen.

(Based on d365.org and Illustrated Ministry back to school liturgies)

***The Hymn of Ministry** *Believers All, We Bear the Name*
Composed by Milburn Price EDGE

Believers all, we bear the name of Christ, our living Lord;
As Christians in the world today, we hold fast to the Word.
From simple trust to growing faith our pilgrimage we trace
T'ward full maturity in Christ, led there thro' God's good grace.

Believers all, our common task is service in His name
As we, in word and song and deed, God's saving grace proclaim.
Yet, ministry has broader aims, so we pursue the goal
Of meeting persons' fuller needs of body, mind, and soul.

Believers all, in unity we follow God's commands;
Diverse in gifts, but one in Christ, we offer outstretched hands
To all within the bonds of faith, to those outside faith's call,
That thro' our love the world may know our God as Lord of all.

The Church at Prayer Rev. Lee Gray
Arnold Philemon, Jack Crymes, Joyce Ehrenberger, Mary Rickenbaker

Lord's Prayer

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.

Sympathy to the family of Stacey Almond who passed on ahead of us, her service will be on Tuesday, August 29th at 2:00 pm. Please remember her parents, Tommy and Margaret Almond, and her sister, Kelly Almond, in your thoughts and prayers.

The Reading of Scripture Gospel of Matthew 7:12-29 Adian Salmeron

'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

'Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

'Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.

'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord", will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers."

'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!

Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

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.

***The Hymn of Discipleship, No. 537** *My Hope Is Built*
Chalice Hymnal THE SOLID ROCK

The Offertory Prayer Jeff Levie

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Choral Anthem Chancel Choir, Directed by Dr. Lillian Quackenbush
If Ye Love Me by Philip Wilby

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. And ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you.

The Message Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD
'Building Contractors, Cockwomblers, Fruit Inspectors, and Disciples'

***The Hymn of Active Faith, No. 453** *Called as Partners in Christ's Service*
Chalice Hymnal BEECHER

Prayerful Moments of Commitment

The Commissioning Dr. Foust

The Postlude Dr. Manwarren
Trumpet Tune and Interlude Stanley Vann

CONNECTING SUNDAY WORSHIP WITH DAILY LIFE

To support your spiritual growth, we encourage you to invest in contemplation each day. These thoughts may help you in your reflections.

Except for the words of Matthew 7:12, it is possible to quote rabbinic parallels for almost everything that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. However, this teaching of Jesus had never been said before. It is a new teaching offering a new way of life. These words present us with a new perspective of our obligations toward one another and every other human: *"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you."*

How would our world be different if we could truly live the Golden Rule?

How is your life different because you are building on the solid foundation of the teachings of Jesus?

One of Jesus' repetitious teachings is forgiveness. Jesus knew that revenge is like a dragon lurking in your soul breathing fire that destroys. A heart fixed on grudging holds you inside a prison cell, although you hold the key to your freedom in your hand. The key is forgiveness and the Golden Rule.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Collection for Highland Renaissance Academy

Through today, we are collecting individual fruit cups and canned soup as well as elementary school supplies. All donations can be dropped off in the Giving Nook at the Main Entrance. If you have questions, please contact Becky Skidmore.

End-of-Summer Cookout for Children and Families

Let's wrap up summer with a cookout at the home of Anna and Blinn Cushman (4601 Truscott Road, Charlotte, NC 28226) at 11AM on Saturday, September 9! We'll grill hamburgers and hotdogs, play games, and simply fellowship. Hamburgers, hotdogs, and buns will be provided. Register on Realm so we know who will attend.



Please sign up to bring the condiments, sides, desserts, beverages, and paper products with QR code by September 5. Questions? Please email or text Kheresa at kharmon@sjcharlotte.org or 910-890-3392. Finally, bring your favorite yard game, comfy chair and/or blanket, and an appetite for fun!

Women of the Church Luncheon: Sunday, September 17

The Women of the Church are looking forward to the Annual Luncheon held in Broach Hall on Sunday, September 17 at 11:45AM. We are excited to gather again for fellowship and good food, catered by Anderson's, and to begin exploring this year's theme of *Embodied Faith*.

We are delighted to have as our guest speaker, Dr. Lillian Quackenbush, Interim Minister for Worship & Music. She will share how she Embodies Faith Through Music! Reservations are REQUIRED by September 10. You may register via Realm (scan QR code) or by submitting the paper form and a check for \$15.00 to Nancy Wilson. For your convenience, you may also place the form and your payment in the after-hours drop box outside the Church Office. Nancy Wilson will be available to receive reservations from 10:00 - 10:25AM outside the Church Office on Sundays, September 3rd and September 10.



In the spirit of WOC, donations to Dove's Nest of feminine hygiene products, lotion, and deodorant will be collected at the door.

Children's Ministry Day at The Hunter Farm

Families, mark your calendars for Saturday, October 14 at 10AM. We're headed to The Hunter Farm in Weddington for seasonal festivities amongst pumpkins and baby goats and more!

St. John's Baptist Church

300 Hawthorne Lane
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204
704.333.5428 | www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org

The St. John's Pulpit

Worship: September 3, 2023
Scripture: Colossians 3:12-17
Message Title: 'Dress for Success'

Proclaimer: Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

This Week at St. John's

Sun., Aug. 27	John 13:18-30 9:15 am Sunday School/ Learning Groups (Virtual/ in-person) 10:30 am Worship (Sanctuary) 10:30 am Together in Christ International Ministries (Chapel)
Mon., Aug. 28	John 13:31-38 10:00 am Adventures in Learning Shepherd's Center (Broach Hall)
Tuesday, Aug. 29	John 14:1-14 10:30 am Staff Meeting/Worship Planning (Conference Room) 2:00 pm Memorial Service for Stacey Almond (Sanctuary)
Wed., Aug. 30	John 14:15-24 4:30 pm Weekday School Back to School Evening 7:15 pm Choir Practice (Choir Room)
Thursday, Aug. 31	John 14:25-31 6:00 pm Carolina Premier Practice (Gym)
Friday, Sept. 1	John 15:1-11 8:00 pm Eastway AA (Lasater Hall)
Saturday, Sept. 2	John 15:12-17 6:30 am Benton Basketball (Gym) 8:00 pm Together We Rise NA (Lasater Hall)

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 Youth and Young Adults..... Rev. Haley Blackwell
Senior Minister.....Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD
Minister for Congregational CareRev. Lee Gray
Minister for Children and Their Families..... Rev. Kheresa Harmon
Interim Minister for Music and Worship.....Dr. Lillian Quackenbush

Church Staff

Academy of the Arts Director.....Jessica Borgnis
Media CoordinatorMallory Brown
Children's Music DirectorChloe Hall
OrganistJ. Noel Lance
Associate Organist..... Dr. Matthew Manwarren
Custodian..... Chris Mullis
Church Administrator..... Amanda Morrison
Weekday School Director.....Lydia Olmsted



Sunday, August 27, 2023
10:30 AM Worship
St. John's Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina