

# Welcome to the Worship of God

## First Sunday After the Epiphany

*Please turn off all electronic devices*

January 7<sup>th</sup> of 2024 *Ten-Thirty in the Morning*

**The Gathering Music** J. Noel Lance, Organist

**The Words of Greeting & Announcements Of Church Life** Rev. Lee Gray

**Reading of The Gospel** Rev. Gray  
Gospel of Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

**Preparing Our Hearts for Worship** J. Noel Lance

**The Entrance of The Christ Candle** Presented by Chloe Hall

**\*Hymn Of Trust and Assurance, No. 546** *Amazing Grace*  
The Chalice Hymnal NEW BRITAIN

**The Call to Worship**

ONE: We gather as part of the spiritual, global, and historical Church serving God by continuing the ministry of Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Our commitment to follow Jesus creates a community transcending barriers within the human family.**

ONE: Through the symbolism of baptism, we proclaim that we choose to learn of and live by The Way of Jesus.

**ALL: Today, we renew our commitments to be Jesus' disciples as we witness the baptism of our brother, Aidan.**

*We invite the children to come forward to witness the Sacred Ordinance of Baptism.*

**The Sacred Ordinance of Baptism**  
AIDAN SALMERON

**\*Hymn Of New Life in Christ, NO. 518** *This Is A Day Of New Beginnings*  
THE CHALICE HYMNAL BEGINNINGS

**Reading of the Pentateuch** Minh Callaway  
Genesis 1:1-5

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day."

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 Majesty, NO. 66** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*  
The Chalice Hymnal ST. DENO

**The Church at Prayer** Rev. Kheresa Harmon

Kelly Belcher, Jack Crymes, Flossie Dodge, Jean Hutson, Betty Mullins,  
Mary Rickenbaker, Annie Sam, Jane Starnes, Jerry Stephens

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth and 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.**

**The Presentation of Tithes Plus Offerings** Deaconate and Congregation

**The Chancel Choir Anthem** Directed by J. Noel Lance  
*This Little Light of Mine* Ken Berg

This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine.  
Ev'ry where I go, I'm going to let it shine.  
All through the night, I'm going to let it shine.  
This little light of mine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

**\*The Doxology** OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above ye heavenly host.  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen

**The Homily** 'And There Was Light' Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

**\*Hymn NO. 469** *I Am the Light of The World*  
The Chalice Hymnal LIGHT OF THE WORLD

**The Commissioning** Dr. Foust

**The Postlude** J. Noel Lance



Angela Hsieh/NPR  
"This Little Light of Mine"

### A Divine Center

- **Monday, January 8, 2024:** 1 Samuel 3:1-10 Wake Forest Divinity School
- **Tuesday, January 9, 2024:** 1 Samuel 3:11-21 Teachers in Our Youth Division
- **Wednesday, January 10, 2024:** Psalm 139:1-6 Stewardship Resource Team
- **Thursday, January 11, 2024:** Psalm 139:7-12 Amanda Morrison
- **Friday, January 12, 2024:** Psalm 139:13-18 Women of the Church
- **Saturday, January 13, 2024:** John 1:35-42 People of Ghana
- **Sunday, January 14, 2024 – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany:** John 1:43-50 Noel Lance

### A WORD ABOUT BAPTISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

#### Baptism of Our Lord and Epiphany

Epiphany, the season following Christmas, focuses upon announcing God's good news that offers salvation and grace for new beginnings. This is a good Sunday to review your commitments on the first Sunday of a New Year. As we recall Jesus' baptism, we celebrate Aidan's baptism today, and renew our commitments to live as disciples of Jesus.

#### A History of Baptism in Jewish History

In Jewish tradition, 'mikveh' is the Jewish tradition of immersion in a pool of living water or moving water. On Sardis Road at the Lubavitch Educational Center is a Jewish mikveh.

In the Jewish faith tradition, the mikveh serves the purpose of purification and restoring shalom – bringing things back into alignment with God's desire – God's will.

John the Baptizer, like Jesus, a practicing Jew, probably emerged from the Qumran community which practiced mikveh. He called people to a baptism or immersion of purification through repentance. Jesus came to him to set things in alignment with the will of God. By opening his life to commitment unto God, Jesus experienced an opening of the heavens and a divine blessing of assurance.

#### The Meaning of Baptism by Immersion

In Baptist tradition, baptism reflects the Greek word, 'baptizo,' which means 'to immerse.' Baptists reinterpret the mikveh (baptism by immersion) from purification to commitment. Baptism by immersion is an external symbol expressing an internal experience emphasizing a person's commitment to follow Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus was buried following his death and raised to new life, so each follower of Jesus dies to self-centeredness and is raised to walk a new life guided by the teachings and ministry of Jesus.

Baptism proclaims both God's commitment to humanity and our commitment to God.

#### Reflecting on Your Baptism

Think back on times when you failed, fell short, or missed the mark in your active learning of Jesus teachings. Consider times when you were guilty, ashamed, afraid, alone, abused, refused, rejected, etc. You are invited to revisit your baptismal waters today. Open your spirit to receive God's blessing of assurance providing you with spiritual renewal. May you experience a new beginning in your journey of active faith as we begin a New Year.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Celebrating Lee Gray on His 25th Anniversary with St. John's

Rev. Lee Gray has been a part of the St. John's family since 1997. We are now joyfully celebrating his 25th year with us as a permanent staff member.

Today, following worship, we will share fellowship in Lasater Hall to celebrate his ministry among us as a full-time minister on our staff. Please join us!

## Room in the Inn 2023-24

St. John's will serve as a RITI host church for up to 8 homeless men on the following seven Friday nights this season: 1/12/24, 1/26/24, 2/9/24, 2/23/24, 3/8/24, 3/22/24



To sign up, scan the QR code here. For more information or to sign up manually, please contact Dale Johnson at 704-454-8931, Alice Wirz at 704-222-6208, or Maggie and RD Bond at 704-399-5363.

## Save the Date for On the Way!

On The Way will be gathering for Lunch at Red Rocks Café (in Strawberry Hill - 4223 Providence Rd) on Wednesday, January 17 at 11:15 am. We will meet at the restaurant. Let Lee Gray know if you plan to attend.

## A Divine Center

As you live through this Christian Year, you may find our new prayer resource, A Divine Center, helpful as you pursue your inner sanctuary, your holy place, your Divine Center. These scripture passages are not intended to be prescriptive. Yet, you may find them to guide you during the next twelve months from Advent, 2023 until Thanksgiving Day, 2024.

Three brochures will be provided: Advent (already available), Christmastide, Epiphany; Lent & Eastertide; and Pentecost & Kingdomtide. In addition to the Daily Scripture Passages, a Daily Prayer Focus is provided so our congregation can be united in scripture and prayer each day for the next year. Scan the QR code to access the guide.



## Thursdays on the Town at Napa on Providence

Parents of children, ages birth - 5th grade, are invited to join us on Thursday, February 1 at 6:00 p.m. at Napa on Providence. Free childcare will be provided. Please register and reserve childcare by Sunday, January 28. You may register on Realm or contact Kheresa.

## Join the Faith Journey Book Study!

Faith Journey Book Study will resume meeting on January 22 at 11:00 in the Brown-McLeod Sunday School classroom on the lower level of the sanctuary building (NOT meeting on January 8th or 15th).

## 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

Worship: January 14, 2024

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

Message Title: 'For Such a Time as This'

Proclaimer: Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD

## This Week at St. John's

Sun., Jan. 7	9:15 am 10:30 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 11:30 am	Sunday School Worship (Sanctuary) Together in Christ International Ministries (Chapel) Reception for Rev. Lee Gray (Lasater Hall) Worship & Music Task Force (Conference Room)
Mon., Jan. 8	10:00 am	Adventures in Learning: Shepherd's Center (Broach Hall)
Tues., Jan. 9	10:30 am 10:45 am 5:30 pm	Staff Meeting/Worship Planning (Conference Room) Immigration & Refugee Ministry Group (Room 204) Women of the Church Meeting (Broach Hall)
Wed., Jan. 10	5:30 pm 7:15 pm	Personnel Resource Team (Conference Room) Choir Practice
Thurs., Jan. 11	10:00 am	Needle Ministry (Parlor)
Friday, Jan. 12	8:00 pm	Eastway AA (Lasater Hall) Room in the Inn (Gym)
Sat., Jan. 13	6:30 am 8:00 pm	Benton Basketball (Gym) 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 Care .....	Rev. Lee Gray
Minister for Children and Their Families.....	Rev. Kheresa Harmon

## Church Staff

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



# Sunday, January 7, 2024

## 10:30 AM Worship

## St. John's Baptist Church

## Charlotte, North Carolina