Welcome to the Worship of God

Third Sunday of Advent – Joy Sunday

Please silence or turn off all electronic devices

An asterisk (*) invites the congregation to stand as you are able.

December 14, 2025

Ten Thirty in the Morning

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING AND OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Rev. Kheresa Harmon

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Congregation

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Lee Grav

Leader: In this season of waiting, we gather to celebrate the Joy that God brings into the world.

People: Our hearts are open to the good news that lifts burdens and renews our spirit. We rejoice in the One who draws near, bringing comfort, courage, and promise.

Leader: Let us enter this time of worship ready to receive God's joy.

People: With gratitude and praise, we worship the Lord who fills our lives with iov.

PRAYER OF JOY AND ANTICIPATION

Rev. Gray

*CAROL OF JOY, NO. 143

Chalice Hymnal

Joy to the World

THE ADVENT WREATH AND CANDLES

ANTIOCH

Lighting the Candle of Joy

Steven, Kimberly, Joy, and Abigail Follis

ADVENT WREATH MUSICAL PRAYER

Hope, Peace, Joy and Love Mark Edwards



THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

CURRENT PRAYER CONCERNS

Mary Jo Breckenridge, Norman Fortson, Dale Johnson Fredda Kimball, Jane Starnes, Anne Sutton

THE 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.

*OFFERTORY CAROL, No. 164

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice IN DULCI JUBILO

Chalice Hymnal

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Alice Wirz

*OFFERTORY

J. Noel Lance

*Doxology

O Come, Let Us Adore Him ADESTE FIDELIS

HOW GREAT OUR JOY!

Joy to the world! The Lord has come!

While by the sheep we watched at night, glad tidings brought an angel bright.

How great our joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

There shall be born, so he did say, in Bethlehem a Child today.

How great our joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

The gift of God we'll cherish well, that every joy our hearts shall fill. How great our joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns; let all their songs employ; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy!

Joy to the world! The Lord has come!

JOY IN THE MORNING

Joy, there'll be joy! There'll be joy in the morning on that day.

For the daylight will dawn when the darkness is gone,

There'll be joy in the morning on that day.

And the glory of the Lord will shine, shine upon us.

And the glory of the Lord will bring the truth divine.

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.

There'll be joy in the morning. There'll be joy in the morning on that day.

For the daylight will dawn when the darkness is gone,

There'll be joy in the morning on that day.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began;

Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all within its span.

Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;

Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

And the glory of the Lord will shine.

And the glory of the Lord will bring the truth divine.

There'll be love and forgiveness everywhere,

And the way of the Lord will that day be restored.

There'll be love and forgiveness, there'll be peace and contentment.

There'll be joy, joy, joy, joy, JOY!

MARY HAD A BABY - Renee Hutchison, solo

Mary had a baby, my Lord.

What did she name him, my Lord?

She named him King Jesus, my Lord.

Where was he born, O my Lord?

Born in a manger, O my Lord.

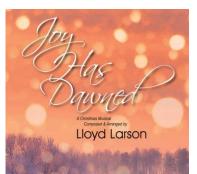
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Mary had a baby, my Lord. He is Christ the Lord, Jesus Christ the Lord.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!

Joy has dawned! The Angels are singing. Christ is born this holy night. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Welcome the Child, the King forever. Hope has come tonight in Bethlehem. Go, worship the newborn King!



Joy has dawned! The heavens are ringing. Christ is born in a humble stall.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Find the Child lying in a manger.

Peace has come tonight in Bethlehem. Go worship the newborn King!

Born to reign in us forever, born to set his people free;

Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Joy has dawned! The shepherds are bringing gifts of love, adoration and praise.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

This is the Child that God had promised. Love has come tonight in Bethlehem.

Go, worship the newborn KING! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

JESUS, JOY OF THE HIGHEST HEAVEN - Chloe and Aidan Salmeron, duet

Jesus, joy of the highest heaven, born as a little baby under a wondrous star.

Like us, crying he takes his first breath, held by his mother, helpless, close to her beating heart.

Jesus, laid in a lowly manger, facing a world of dangers;

Come to turn me, a stranger, into a child of God.

O, Jesus, King of the highest heaven, learning to take his first steps that he might bring us life. Like us, knowing our smiles and sorrows, he showed the way to follow a way that is true and right.

Jesus, take away every darkness; steady my simple footsteps that I might, in your goodness, live as a child of God.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;

The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE STARS

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, dawn on our darkness and come to our aid; Star of the east, the horizon adorning, guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

What shall we give him, in costly devotion? Shall we bring incense and offerings divine, Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean, myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?

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?

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 peasant, king, to own him;

The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby.

Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, guide where our Redeemer is laid.

JOY HAS DAWNED

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation;

God's salvation now unfurled, hope for every nation.

Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory,

But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels as the mighty Prince of Life Shelters in a stable.

Hands that set each star in place, shaped with earth in darkness,

Cling now to a mother's breast vulnerable and helpless.

Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee

Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds bow before the Lamb, gazing at the glory; gifts of men from distant lands prophesy the story. Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Sing Gloria in excelsis Deo!

JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; Give ye heed to what we say: 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 hear of endless bliss; Jesus Christ was born for this; He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forever more. Christ was born for this!

Joy has dawned! The angels are singing. Christ is born this holy night. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Welcome the Child, the King forever. Hope has come tonight in Bethlehem. Go, worship the newborn King!

Born to reign in us forever, born to set his people free. Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching over silent flocks by night, Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! Above the earth Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth!

Joy has dawned, hear the angel's song, that Jesus Christ is born! Jesus Christ is born!

*CAROL, No. 167 (verse 1 only - with refrain)
Chalice Hymnal

Go Tell it on the Mountain
GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNATIN

*COMMISSIONING

Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

*Postlude

JOY HAS DAWNED

presented by

ST. JOHN'S BAPTIST CHANCEL CHOIR

and members of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

Leigh Marsh – Violin 1
David Strasberg – Violin 2
Matthew Darsey – Viola
Liz Burns – Cello
Jan Mixter – Double Bass
Amy Orsinger Whitehead – Flute
Reese Manceaux – Clarinet
Elizabeth Sullivan – Oboe
Brice Burton – Percussion
Jesse Roberts – Piano

J. Noel Lance – Conductor

Narrated by Phil and Sarah Vavra

A special thank you is extended to sound engineers Matt Comer and Ryan Crowder.

Today's bulletin cover art is a beautiful contribution from **Jan Kerley**, whose creativity adds a special touch to our worship this morning.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

PJs & Pancakes Parents' Night Out

Children, babies through 12 years of age, are invited to join us on Friday, December 19, 6-8:00 p.m., for PJs & Pancakes. Wear your favorite Christmas pajamas and get ready to play, bounce, and eat pancakes! The cost is only \$15 per child. Register by TOMORROW December 15.

Room In the Inn 2025-2026

Room In The Inn 2025 season we'll be hosting our unhoused neighbors for 8 nights between December - March. We need volunteers for a variety of positions. Please scan the QR code to sign up and access more details. Donations are also needed, a list of items needed can be found in the Giving Nook or in this past



week's Family News. Donations should be placed in the designated bins inside the Giving Nook.

Brotherhood of the Biscuit

Young men of all ages are welcome to join us for the **Brotherhood of the Biscuit** on Friday, December 19th at 6:30 am in the church lounge. Pablo Fernando will share some of his life's story with us that morning and biscuits, coffee, and orange juice will be there for all who join us. Please email Lee Gray @ LGray@sjcharlotte.org if you would like to participate.

You're Invited: Common Table Christmas Reception

Our ecumenical community ministry, Common Table, is holding a Christmas reception and fundraiser on Thursday, Dec. 18. Christmas-themed interactive activities, music, and a chance to learn more about where we've been and where we're going. Learn more and get tickets (\$25) at commontableclt.com/gathering

The St. John's Neighbor Christmas Card Box is down in the gym foyer. Please turn in all cards before worship on December 21st.

This Week at St. John's		
Sun., Dec. 14	8:00 am 9:15 am 10:30 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Church Council (Conference Room) Sunday School Worship (Sanctuary) Together in Christ International Ministries (Chapel) Choir Christmas Lunch (Broach Hall)
Mon., Dec. 15	11:00 am	Faith Journey Book Study (Lounge)
Tues., Dec. 16	8:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Finance Resource Team (Zoom) Staff Meeting/Worship Planning Sandwich Ministry (Lounge)
Wed., Dec. 17	7:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Choir Suite)
Thurs., Dec. 18	10:00 am	Women of the Church Spiritual Growth Team (Prayer Room)
Fri., Dec. 19	8:00 pm	Eastway AA (Lasater Hall)
Sat., Dec. 20	6:30 am 8:00 pm	Benton Basketball (Gym) Together We Rise NA (Lasater Hall)

Membership and Ministry

If you would like information about the church or 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. You can also scan the included QR code to fill out the guest card online. 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.



Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 14, 2025
10:30 AM Worship
St. John's Baptist Church