

WELCOME TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD

CHRISTMAS EVE

Please silence or turn off all electronic devices

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

December 24, 2025 *Five-Thirty in the evening*

GATHERING MUSIC J. Noel Lance

WORDS OF GATHERING Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship J. Noel Lance

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE Don and Bobbie Hinson



***CHRISTMAS CAROL** *O Come, All Ye Faithful*
ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the King of Angels:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,
We would embrace thee, with love and awe;
Who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

MOMENTS WITH THE YOUNGER CHURCH Rev. Kheresa Harmon
All children are invited to come to the front of the sanctuary to join with all children for a message from Rev. Harmon.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY Dawn Anthony
Gospel of Luke 2:1-18

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

SONG OF REFLECTION Dawn Anthony
Breath of Heaven Amy Grant and Chris Eaton

PRAYERS OF GOD’S CHILDREN AT CHRISTMAS Rev. Lee Gray

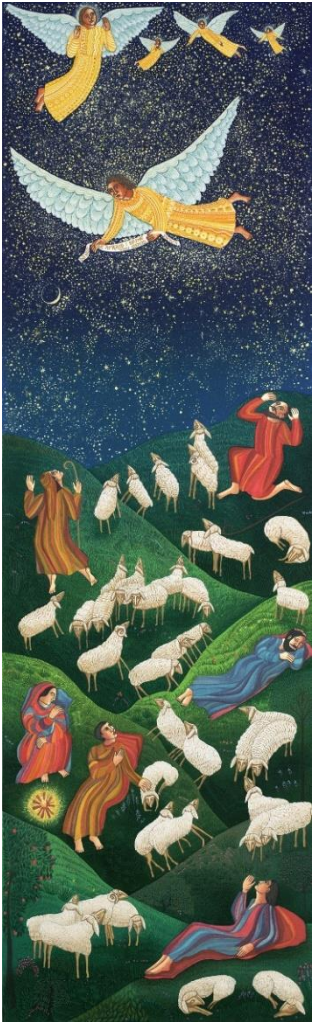
WE BRING OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST CHILD

OFFERTORY ANTHEM Chancel Choir
Come, Messiah, Come Becki Slagle Mayo and Lynn Shaw Bailey



During the Offertory, you are invited to give as an expression of gratitude and generosity. A QR code is provided for digital giving.

***DOXOLOGY** ADESTE FIDELES
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him; Christ the Lord.



HOMILY *The Inhospitality of Christmas* Rev. Gordon

***CHRISTMAS CAROL** *Once in Royal David’s City* IRBY

Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laide her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

Christ came down to earth from heaven, love incarnate for us all,
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
With the poor, the scorned the lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew.
Thus he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
For that child who seemed so helpless lives and reigns in heaven above;
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

SACRED COMMUNION

St. John’s observes the communion tradition of an OPEN TABLE.

This is the Lord’s Table, and all are welcome here.

No person is excluded from Christ’s inclusive invitation, “Come to me.”

SERVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP Deacons and Congregation

SOLO Dawn Anthony
O Holy Night Adolphe Adam

***CAROL OF PROCLAMATION** *Silent Night*
STILLE NACHT

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright, round yon virgin mother and child, holy infant so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight, glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia; Christ, the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light; radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace. Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend Thy light; with the angels let us sing, alleluia to our King; Christ, the Savior, is born, Christ, the Savior, is born.

***POSTLUDE** J. Noel Lance

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Thank you for extinguishing your candles and placing them in the bins by the doors as you leave the sanctuary.

The artwork featured on the front of tonight’s bulletin is a beautiful artistic expression offered by Jan Kerley.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Church Office Holiday Closing

The Church Offices will be closed for Christmas from Wednesday, December 24th to Friday, December 26th and closed for New Year's Day on Thursday, January 1st.

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.



No Children or Youth Sunday School on Sunday, December 28th.
Nursery care will be provided.

Meeting with Families with Children

On Sunday, January 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the Library Commons Rev. Kheresa Harmon will meet with Families with Children.

2026 Save the Dates

- February 8 : Youth Sunday
- February 9 : All Deacons Meeting
- February 15 : Valentine's Par-Tea
- March 14 : Women of the Church Retreat
- March 22 : Heritage Sunday and Youth Mission Auction
- March 29 : Easter Eggstravaganza

St. John's Baptist Church

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

The St. John's Pulpit

Worship: December 28, 2025

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-23

Sermon Title: *Putting Herod Back in Christmas*

Proclaimer: Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

This Week at St. John's

Wed., Dec. 24	ALL DAY 5:30 pm	Church Offices Closed Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sanctuary)
Thurs., Dec. 25	ALL DAY	Christmas Day - Church Offices Closed
Fri., Dec. 26	ALL DAY 8:00 pm	Church Offices Closed Eastway AA (Lasater Hall)
Sat., Dec. 27	8:00 pm	Together We Rise NA (Lasater Hall)
Sun., Dec. 28	10:30 am 10:30 am	Worship (Sanctuary) Together in Christ International Ministries (Chapel)
Mon., Dec. 29		
Tues., Dec. 30	10:00 am	Staff Meeting/Worship Planning (Conference Room)

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.



Ministers

Every participant in God's Servant Church

Equipping Ministers

Interim Senior Minister.....Rev. Dr. Don Gordon
Minister for Congregational CareRev. Lee Gray
Minister for Children and Their Families.....Rev. Kheresa Harmon
Minister for Worship and Music.....J. Noel Lance

Church Staff

Stratus Custodians.....Pray & Thomas Chanwal
Office Assistant.....Stephen Davis
Weekday School Assistant Director.....Kristina Hartzell
Church Administrator.....Amanda Morrison
Weekday School Director.....Lydia Olmsted
Custodial/Maintenance Associate.....Herb Parrott
Children's Music DirectorChloe Salmeron
Media Coordinator.....Liza Wade



Candles, Carols, and Communion

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

5:30 PM Worship

St. John's Baptist Church