

Welcome to the Worship of God

Epiphany Sunday

We invite you to silence your electronic devices so we can fully share this time together.

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

January 4, 2026

Ten-Thirty in the Morning

Gathering Music

Greeting and Our Life Together

Rev. Kheresa Harmon

*Passing of the Peace

Congregation

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

J. Noel Lance

Entrance of the Christ Candle – Mae Redding

Call to Worship

Eric McCombs

Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon us!

People: We come to worship the Light revealed to the world!

Leader: Nations are drawn to the brightness of God's dawn, and hope rises with the morning.

People: We lift our eyes and follow the light of Christ.

Leader: From far away, the wise ones followed a star, trusting where God would lead.

People: We come as seekers, ready to journey in faith.

Leader: They brought gifts of gold and incense, and offered their hearts in worship.

People: We bring our gifts, our praise, and our whole lives.

Leader: The light still shines, calling us to rise and go another way.

People: We worship with joy, courage, and expectation!

Leader: Come, let us worship the Christ, revealed to all nations.

People: We arise, we shine, and we praise God together!

*Hymn of Gladness, No. 173

As with Gladness
Chalice Hymnal
DIX

Moments with the Younger Church

Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

Reading of the Old Testament

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples, but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together; they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you; the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Leader: This is the written Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Church at Prayer

Current Prayer Concerns

Mary Jo Breckenridge, Dale Johnson
Jane Starnes, Anne Sutton, Gayla Tyson

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 Hymn No. 172 (Sing the Refrain ONLY AFTER Vs. 1 and Vs. 5)

We Three Kings
KINGS OF ORIENT

Offertory Prayer
Phillips Bragg

Offertory Anthem
Brightest and Best of the Stars
Chancel Choir
Lloyd Larson

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.



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

*Doxology

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.

Rev. Lee Gray

Reading of the Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, [¶] until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Leader: This is the written Word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon
Home By Another Way

Rev. Benton

Song of Response
Take Us Home By Another Way

Folk Ensemble
Christopher Gundy

(The congregation is invited to join in the refrain after each verse)

Refrain:

Spirit, take us home, take us home by another way.

Take us long way 'round the tyrants and their schemes.

Give us strength to walk, show us dreams of a better day,

And we'll pave the way with justice, going home by another way.

The mountains and the hills made low, the rough places made plain.
The despots thrown down from their thrones 'til only love remains.

(Refrain)

No offerings for billionaires to make them richer still.

Bring all your frankincense and myrrh that the hungry may be filled.

(Refrain)

So when the kings and thieves come 'round, and ask where the Christ child lies, just tell 'em that you'll let them know next time you're passing by.

(Refrain)

So when things get tough and feet are tired, we'll know it'll be okay.
Cause we'll pave the way with justice going home by another day.

(Refrain)

*Commissioning

Rev. Benton

*Postlude

J. Noel Lance

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Room In the Inn 2025-2026

Join us for the Room In the Inn 2025 season where we'll be hosting our unhoused neighbors for 5 more nights between January - March. See the dates and available positions below:

Dates: 01/09 01/23 02/06 02/27 03/06

Positions

Bag Lunch Prep	Setup Crew	Guest Van Driver
Food Prep/Delivery Coordinator		Overnight Hosts
Laundry Washing Assistant		

Please scan the QR Code to sign up and access more details. We hope to see you there!

Below is a list of items needed for this ministry. Please consider giving. Donated items should be placed inside the designated bins inside of the Giving Nook at the Main Entrance.

- Body wash, Shampoo, shaving cream, Razors, Lotion, Boxer shorts underwear (we have enough tightey whities) Size Large, Extra Large, and Medium, Tee shirts EXTRA Large, Socks, Gloves, Hats, Cleaning supplies, Dish soap, Candy, Tylenol/Ibuprofen, Washcloths



St. John's Depression Support Group Resumes January 6

The St. John's Depression Support Group will be starting back on Tuesday, January 6th at 6:00 PM. Meetings will be held every Tuesday evening in Room 104. This season, the group will focus on the important topic of grief—providing a safe and supportive space for those navigating loss and its emotional impact. Whether you are coping with the loss of a loved one or experiencing other forms of grief, you are welcome to join and share in a compassionate community. For more information, please contact Kathy Turner ([\(919\) 225-2749](tel:(919)225-2749)). Thank you for walking this journey together.

Parents' Meeting with Rev. Kheresa Harmon

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

ON THE WAY

St. John's retired adults and friends will eat lunch at [Lang Van Vietnamese Restaurant](#) on **Wednesday, January 21st at 11:00 am**. Please email Lee Gray at LGray@sjcharlotte.org if you would like to join us for lunch that day.

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

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

St. John's Baptist Church

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The St. John's Pulpit

Worship: January 11, 2026

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-13

Sermon Title: Our Father

Proclaimer: Rev. Dr. Don Gordon

This Week at St. John's

Sun., Jan. 4	9:15 am	Sunday Growth Groups Children/Youth/Adults
	10:30 am	Worship (Sanctuary)
	10:30 am	Together in Christ International Ministries (Chapel)
Mon., Jan. 5	11:00 am	Faith Journey Book Study (Lounge)
Tues., Jan. 6	10:00 am	Staff Meeting/Worship Planning (Conference Room)
	6:00 pm	Depression Support Group (Room 104)
Wed., Jan. 7	5:45 pm	Handbell Rehearsal (Handbell Suite)
	7:15 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Choir Suite)
Thurs., Jan. 8	10:00 am	Needle Ministry (Lounge)
Fri., Jan. 9	10:00 am	Immigrant & Refugee Ministry Group (Room 222 & Zoom)
	5:30 pm	Room in the Inn (Gym & Lounge)
	8:00 pm	Eastway AA (Lasater Hall)
Sat., Jan. 10	8:00 pm	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.



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
Interim Weekday School Director.....Kristina Hartzell
Church Administrator.....Amanda Morrison
Custodial/Maintenance Associate.....Herb Parrott
Children's Music DirectorChloe Salmeron
Media Coordinator.....Liza Wade



Sunday, January 4, 2026

10:30 AM Worship

St. John's Baptist Church