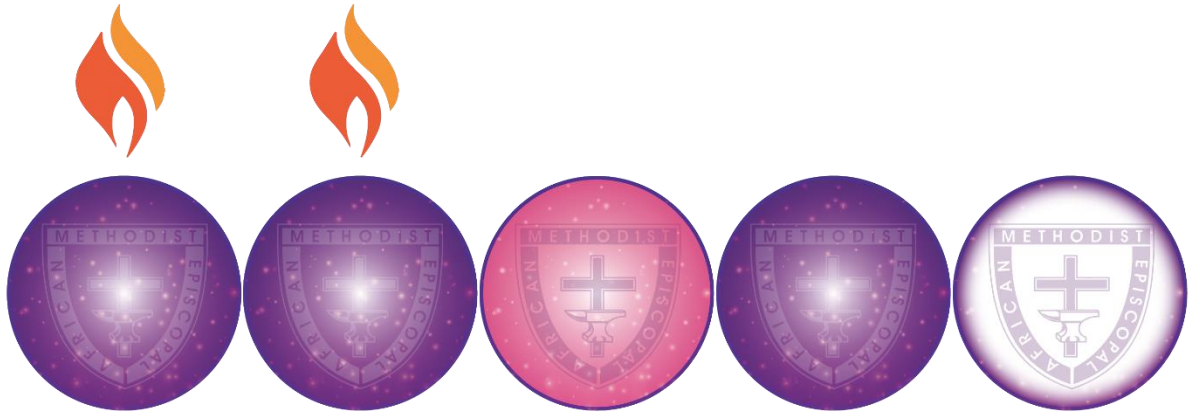


God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family

Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church
708 15th Street North • Birmingham, Alabama 35203
Rev. Dr. Ronald D. Sterling, Pastor



HOPE • PEACE • JOY • LOVE

PEACE

CELEBRATING CHRIST TIME OF ARRIVAL

Order of Worship

December 10, 2023 - 10:00 AM

The Praise & Worship.....**Music Ministry**

The Doxology *Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

The Call to Worship..... Pastor Sterling

Minister: I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord! Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!

People: **For a day in your courts is better than a thousand, elsewhere, I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

Minister: For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.

People: **They are planted in the house of the Lord, they flourish in the courts of our God.**

Minister: O Lord, I love the habitation of your house, and the place where your glory dwells.

People: **But the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him.**

Minister: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my Rock, and my Redeemer.

People: **O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth, sing praises!**

The Hymn of Praise..... "Come by Here"

Come by here, my Lord, come by here.
Come by here, my Lord, come by here.
Come by here, my Lord, come by here.
Oh Lord, come by here.

Somebody needs You, Lord, come by here.

Somebody's praying, Lord, come by here.

Kum Ba Yah, my Lord, come by here.

The Invocation Brother Benny Hardin

The Choral Response..... “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
His name is called
Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us,
His name is called
Emmanuel.

Special Musical and Vocal Selections..... The Rileys

**Kaden Riley – “Mary Did You Know”
Caleb Riley - Instrumental**

PEACE: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

By: Reverend Dr. Adunnola Waterman French

The Collins Family

LEADER: We live in a world of tension between order and disorder. In this season of Advent, Lord, teach us the way to peace. On this Sunday of Peace, we ask for your peace to rest in our hearts, homes, communities, churches, nation, and world.

RESPONSE: Lord, grant us your peace and bless us to be your instruments of peace.

LEADER: Lord, have mercy on our broken and divided world. We ask that you break the chains of injustice, inequality, violence, and war. We pray, Lord, to save us from the lie of false peace and grant us your true peace through the light of the gospel.

RESPONSE: Lord, grant us your peace and bless us to be your instruments of peace.

LEADER: Lord, we seek to walk humbly with you, and we pray that you would empower us to serve as your stewards of love, justice, and mercy. We yearn for peace in our hearts and our lives. Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with us.

Light two purple candles.

ALL: We light a candle of peace today, affirming the presence of Jesus Christ—the Prince of Peace. Renew us, restore us, revive us, and reconcile us. May the hope and peace of God rest with us in our worship and our waiting, now and always. Amen.

The Scripture Lessons

Old Testament Sister Megan Spears

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

New Testament Sister Megan Spears

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Hymn No. 69 From All That Dwell Below the Skies

*From all that dwell below the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung, Through every land, by every tongue.*

The Summary of the Decalogue:

Hear what Christ our Savior saith, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto It; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Blessing of the Offertory (Tithes/Offerings/Benevolent)

All things come of Thee, O Lord; and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen.

The Pastor's Words and Greetings to Visitors

The Hymn of Preparation.....Music Ministry

The Sermon.....Pastor Sterling

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. The third day, He arose from the Dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, The Church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

The Doxology

The Benediction.....Pastor Sterling