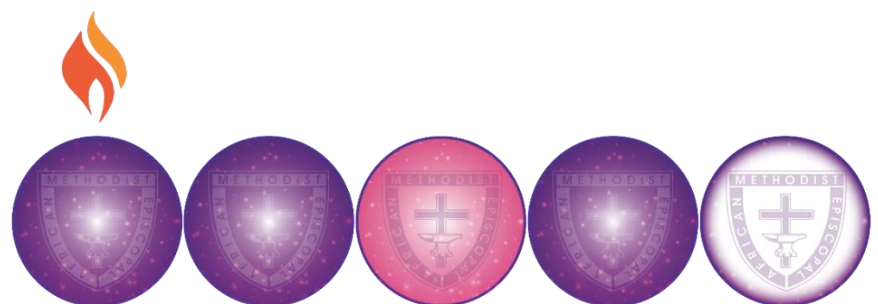


God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family

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

Holy Communion



HOPE • PEACE • JOY • LOVE

HOPE

CELEBRATING CHRIST TIME OF ARRIVAL

Order of Worship

December 3, 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..... "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Refrain:

O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem, unto your own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.

Refrain:

O come, O Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe for us the heavenward road and bar the way to death's abode.

Refrain:

Words: Latin, 12th Century, Trans. By John M. Neale, 1818-1866, Tune: Adapt. From Plainsong, Mode I, by Thomas Helmore, 1881-1890

The Invocation Rev. Laurel Thornton

The Choral Response..... “Completely Yes”

Yes, Lord, yes, Lord,
From the bottom of my heart to the depths of my soul.
Yes, Lord, completely yes;
My soul says yes.

HOPE: THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

By: Reverend Dr. Adunnola Waterman French

LEADER: The Advent season is a time of preparation, reflection, expectation, and waiting. The Sunday of Hope reminds us that we wait in hope for the Lord. Our hope is in the grace Jesus Christ brings us. *“May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.”* [Psalm 33:22]

RESPONSE: Lord, you are the hope of the world; our hope is in you.

LEADER: Hope sustains us in a world filled with disappointments and despair. To you, O Lord, we lift up our soul. In you, we put our hope; do not let us be put to shame. Hope of the world, show us the way of love, justice, and reconciliation.

RESPONSE: Lord, you are the Hope of the world; our hope is in you.

LEADER: Lord, as we prepare for your unexpected return, may our lives overflow with hope in you as we walk in our waiting. May we walk in your light, for you are the light of the world. Live in us and enable us to live in the way that inspires others to walk with you.

Light one purple candle.

ALL: We light a candle of hope today, praying that you fill our hearts with your light. We pray that the presence of the Holy Spirit will transform us so that both our worship and our time of preparation will please you in all things, both now and always, Amen.

The Scripture Lesson..... Sister Laura Armstrong

Old Testament Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

New Testament Revelation 2:20

“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”

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 Decalogue (Contemporary)Rev. Xavier Beasley
(Read all before singing The Gloria Patri and seating the people)

Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not commit murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not be a false witness.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

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 Communion Hymn....."There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood"

There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners, plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains, Lose all their guilty stains, Lose all their guilty stains; And sinners, plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see, That fountain in his day; And there may I, though vile as he, Wash all my sins away: Wash all my sins away, Wash all my sins away; And there may I, though vile as he, Wash all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood Shall never lose its power, Till all the ransomed Church of God Be saved, to sin no more, Be saved, to sin no more, Be saved, to sin no more; Till all the ransomed Church of God, Be saved to sin no more.

The Communion Elevation..... Come Thou Long Expected Jesus (with He Shall Feed His Flocks)
arr. Anna Laura Page

The Solicitation

The General Confession

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed against Your divine Majesty, provoking most justly Your wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake; forgive us all that is past and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please You in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The First Collect

The Second Collect

The Prayer of Adoration

The Prayer of Humiliation

The Prayer of Consecration

The Elements

The Prayer

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

**The Postlude Wachtel Auf
arr. Robert Lau**