

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

Saint John AME Church

708 15th Street North

Birmingham, Alabama 35203

The Reverend Dr. Ronald D. Sterling, Pastor || Sister Kim C. Sterling, First Lady



HOPE • PEACE • JOY • LOVE

JOY

Sunday, December 15, 2024

Order of Worship

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..... Brother Brayden Hamilton

Minister: Come, let us worship the Lord our God, who is our refuge and strength.
(Psalm 46:1)

People: We come, seeking God's presence and peace.

Minister: The Lord is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear? (Psalm 27:1)

People: We come, trusting in God's grace and love.

Minister: Let us lift up our hearts and voices in praise and thanksgiving. (Psalm 100:4)

People: We come, ready to worship and glorify God's holy name.

Minister: For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever. (Psalm 100:5)

People: We come, rejoicing in the hope and promise of our Savior.

Minister: Let us worship the Lord with gladness and enter His presence with singing!
(Psalm 100:2)

All: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing! (Psalm 100:1-2)

**The Song of Celebration..... "Come We That Love The Lord"
(We're Marching To Zion)**

Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known,
Join in a song with sweet accord,
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne,
And thus surround the throne.

Refrain
We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God.

Let those refuse to sing,
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heavenly King
But children of the heavenly King
May speak their joys abroad,

May speak their joy's abroad.

The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
before we reach the heavenly fields
Or walk the golden streets,
Or walk the golden streets.

Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground,
We're marching through Immanuel's ground,
To fairer worlds on high,
To fairer worlds on high.

The Invocation **Brother Kaden Riley**

The Choral Response....."I Need Thee"

I need Thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord.
No tender voice like thine,
Can peace afford.

Refrain
I need Thee, O I need Thee,
Every hour I need Thee!
O, bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

I need Thee every hour;
Stay Thou nearby;
Temptations lose their power
When Thou art nigh.

JOY: THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LEADER: Surely God is our salvation, let us trust and not be afraid! For the Lord is our strength and our might, and he has become our salvation.

RESPONSE: We rejoice today, knowing that with joy, we will draw water from the wells of salvation.

LEADER: Let us lift our voices and sing praises to the Lord, for he has done graciously. Let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies, and let it be known in all the earth!

RESPONSE: We rejoice today, knowing that with joy, we will draw water from the wells of salvation.

LEADER: Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice! We wait in joy today, knowing that through our joy, we find strength.

Light two purple candles and the pink candle.

ALL: We light a candle of joy today, believing together that the joy we have did not come from the world and the world cannot take it away. We wait in expectation for the One who comes to stir the deep wells of joy in our life, and who causes us to triumph. Amen.

Old Testament Brother Connie Tripp, III

Isaiah 12:2-6

“Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the Lord God^a is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.”

³With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴And you will say in that day:

“Give thanks to the Lord,
call upon his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵“Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
let this be made known in all the earth.

⁶Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

New Testament Sister Ajah Tripp
Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness^[a] be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gospel..... Sister Miracle Tripp
Luke 3:7-18
(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)

⁷ He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" ¹¹ And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise." ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages." ¹⁵ As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Hymn No. 69 From All That Dwell Below the Skies Sister Miracle Tripp

*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 Sister London Hamilton

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 Sister London Hamilton
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

Children and Young People's Christmas Program

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