

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

PEACE

Sunday, December 8, 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..... Pastor Sterling

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....."Bless The Lord"
*Andraé Crouch***

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me,
bless His holy name! (Repeat)

He has done great things,
He has done great things,
He has done great things,
Bless His holy name!

The Invocation

**The Choral Response....."I Love You, Lord"
*Laurie Klein***

I love You, Lord, and I lift my voice
To worship You, O my soul, rejoice!

Take joy, my King, in what You hear;
May it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.

PEACE: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LEADER: Prepare the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight! The Lord is sending us a messenger, and he brings a message of peace.

RESPONSE: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace, and blessed are the peacemakers.

LEADER: But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For peace comes at times, like a refiner's fire and like a washers' soap.

RESPONSE: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace, and blessed are the peacemakers.

LEADER: Lord, we seek to know You and your peace more closely. Help us to prepare our hearts and minds for peace. Stir up in us the courage to prepare the way, and to bring about peace right where we are.

ALL: We light a candle of peace today, affirming our commitment to the One who calls us to be instruments of His peace. We wait for the day when every valley shall be filled, and every mountain be made low. We sit in anticipation for the crooked to be made straight, and the rough ways to be made smooth. Amen

Old Testament **Sister Evelyn Beasley**
Malachi 3:1-4

Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

New Testament **Sister Camilla Avery**
Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Gospel..... Brother Joel Bjornstad

Luke 3:1-6

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways,⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

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