

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

Saint John AME Church

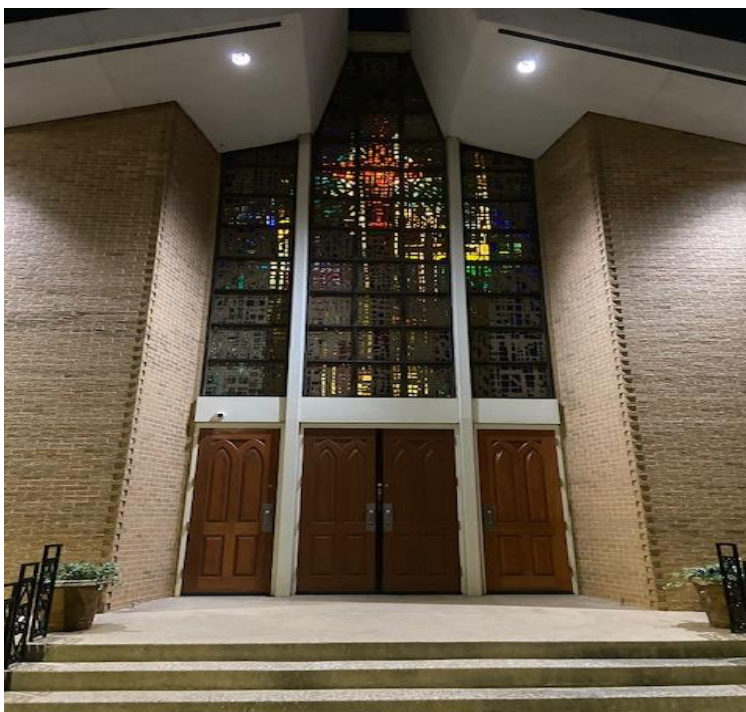
708 15th Street North

Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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

Mission

Saint John's mission is to "love God and love others" by ministering to the social, spiritual, and physical development of all people.



Sunday, March 9, 2025

First Sunday of Lent

The Praise & Worship.....Music Ministry

The Doxology

AMEC Hymn No. 647 [Tune: Old 100]

Praise God, from whom all blessings 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

Leader: We gather in the wilderness, where Jesus overcame temptation.

People: We come to worship the One who sustains us with His Word.

Leader: In this season of Lent, we seek to draw closer to God.

People: Let us turn our hearts toward Him, trusting in His grace.

Leader: As the psalmist says: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

People: For You are my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.

Leader: Jesus reminds us: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

People: We will worship with humility and joy, for He is our strength and salvation.

The Hymn of Praise..... "Blessed Assurance"

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Prayer of Confession:

Dear Lord, we humbly confess that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and deeds. We recognize that our love for You and for our fellow human beings has not been sincere. Please grant us the wisdom to learn from our past mistakes, the courage to improve our current actions

and the guidance to lead us towards a future where we may fulfill Your will and walk in Your ways, bringing honor to Your holy name. We pray this in the name of Jesus, Amen!

Assurance of Pardon:

In Jesus Christ, we find redemption and forgiveness. Let us bask in the enduring love of God, knowing that His mercy is everlasting. May we strive each day to live in the light of His grace and forgiveness, confident in His boundless love for us. In the name of Jesus, Amen!

The Invocation

The Choral Response..... “Thank You, Lord”

Thank You, Lord, thank You, Lord,
Thank You, Lord,
I just want to thank you, Lord.

Been so good, been so good,
Been so good,
I just want to thank You, Lord.

Made a way, made a way,
Made a way,
I just want to thank You, Lord.

The Scripture Lesson (s)

Old Testament Dr. Coretta Collins

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

“When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance and have taken possession of it and live in it, ²you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from your land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket, and you shall go to the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name to dwell there. ³And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, ‘I declare today to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our fathers to give us.’ ⁴Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the Lord your God. ⁵“And you shall make response before the Lord your God, ‘A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. ⁶And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labor. ⁷Then we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. ⁹And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O Lord, have given me.’ And you shall set it down before the Lord your God

and worship before the Lord your God. ¹¹ And you shall rejoice in all the good that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.

New Testament..... Sister Megan Spears
Romans 10:8b-13

But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Gospel Sister Kim C. Sterling
(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)
Luke 4:1-13

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’” And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, “‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The Preface to the Decalogue

AMEC 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 (Summary)

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, Amen.*

Ministry of Stewardship (Tithes/Offerings/Benevolent)
All things come of Thee, O Lord; and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen

Announcements and Acknowledgements **Pastor Sterling**

The Worship through Music.....**Music Ministry**

The Message..... **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

Doxology (Contemporary)

Benediction