

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

## Saint John AME Church

708 15<sup>th</sup> 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, December 14, 2025**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

**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.....Bro. Eron Collins**

**Leader:** 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.

**Leader:** 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.

**Leader:** 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.

**Leader:** 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....."Jesus, The Light of the World"**

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Jesus, the Light of the world;  
glory to the newborn King,  
Jesus, the Light of the world.

**Refrain:**

We'll walk in the light, beautiful light;  
come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright,  
shine all around us by day and by night,  
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Jesus, the Light of the world;  
join the triumph of the skies,  
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,  
Jesus, the Light of the world;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Jesus, the Light of the world.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!  
Jesus, the Light of the world.  
hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Jesus, the Light of the world.

**The Invocation.....Sis. Shai Carter**

**The Choral Response..... The Young Adult Choir**

## JOY: THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*By: Reverend Dr. Adunnola Waterman French*

*Led by: Mr. and Mrs. Brandon & Katricia Cleveland*

**LEADER:** As we journey in Advent, we are reminded of the joy that awaits us. We pray that as we reflect on the good news—the Savior’s birth—we may be filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The King is coming, and we rejoice.

**RESPONSE:** Lord, let your joy fill our hearts as we lift our hearts in praise.

**LEADER:** We rejoice knowing that there is the fullness of joy in the presence of God. Fill us with joy that cannot be contained but shared with others. Let us be messengers of peace, joyfully spreading your love wherever we go.

**RESPONSE:** Lord, let your joy fill our hearts as we lift our hearts in praise.

**LEADER:** The joy we experience is not influenced by what is happening around us because joy comes from knowing Jesus. This joy that we have is the gift of God; the world did not give it, and the world cannot take it away. *“In your presence, O God, is joy and contentment. Show me the path that leads to life.”* [Psalm 16:11]

*Light two purple candles and the pink candle.*

**ALL:** We light a candle of joy today, declaring that the joy of the Lord is our strength. We praise and thank for the hope that Christ gives us, the peace that Christ brings us, and the joy that Christ pours into our hearts. Hear our prayers, and fill our hearts with your love, now and always, Amen.

## The Scripture Lesson (s)

Old Testament .....Sis. Reagan Sims

### Psalm 146:5-10

<sup>5</sup> It is a great blessing for people to have the God of Jacob to help them.

They depend on the Lord their God.

<sup>6</sup> He made heaven and earth.

He made the sea and everything in it.

He can be trusted to do what he says.

<sup>7</sup> He does what is right for those who have been hurt.

He gives food to the hungry.

The Lord frees people locked up in prison.

<sup>8</sup> The Lord makes the blind see again.

The Lord helps those who are in trouble.

The Lord loves those who do right.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord protects strangers in our country.

He cares for widows and orphans,

but he destroys the wicked.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord will rule forever!

Zion, your God will rule forever and ever!

Praise the Lord!

**"This is the Word of the Lord."**

New Testament.....Sis. Dahlia Durant

### James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Brothers and sisters, be patient; the Lord will come. So be patient until that time. Look at the farmers. They have to be patient. They have to wait for their valuable crop to grow and produce a harvest. They wait patiently for the first rain and the last rain. <sup>8</sup> You must be patient too. Never stop hoping. The Lord is coming soon. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, don't complain against each other. If you don't stop complaining, you will be judged guilty. And the Judge is ready to come!

<sup>10</sup> Brothers and sisters, follow the example of the prophets who spoke for the Lord. They suffered many bad things, but they were patient.

**"The Word of God for the people of God."**

**Gospel .....Sis. Savannah Collins**  
**(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)**  
**Luke 1:46-55**

<sup>46</sup> Then Mary said,  
    "I praise the Lord with all my heart.  
<sup>47</sup> I am very happy because God is my Savior.  
    <sup>48</sup> I am not important,  
but he has shown his care for me, his lowly servant.  
    From now until the end of time,  
    people will remember how much God blessed me.  
<sup>49</sup> Yes, the Powerful One has done great things for me.  
    His name is very holy.  
    <sup>50</sup> He always gives mercy  
    to those who worship him.  
<sup>51</sup> He reached out his arm and showed his power.  
He scattered those who are proud and think great things about  
    themselves.  
<sup>52</sup> He brought down rulers from their thrones  
    and raised up the humble people.  
<sup>53</sup> He filled the hungry with good things,  
    but he sent the rich away with nothing.  
<sup>54</sup> God has helped Israel—the people he chose to serve him.  
    He did not forget his promise to give us his mercy.  
<sup>55</sup> He has done what he promised to our ancestors,  
    to Abraham and his children forever."

**"May the Lord bless the hearers and doers of His Word."**

**The Preface to the Decalogue.....Sis. Miracle Tripp**

**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**

***Children and Young People's Christmas Program***

**The Worship through Music.....The Young Adult Choir**

**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**