

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, December 21, 2025

Fourth 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. Shaun Barnes

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.....“ O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye, faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of angels:

Refrain

O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;

The Invocation.....Rev. Xavier Beasley

The Choral Response.....The Soul Searchers

LOVE: THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

By: Reverend Dr. Adunnola Waterman French

Led by: Mr. and Mrs. Zachary and Terry Beasley

LEADER: On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we join in worship to celebrate LOVE—recalling God’s extended love to all peoples. God is love. God created love and gifted love. As we wait on the second coming of Christ, remind us, O Lord, that your love abides forever.

RESPONSE: Lord, deepen our love for you and our love for others.

LEADER: Transform us in the power of your love. Let your love guide us whenever we think, speak, or act. Let us love each other as you have loved us. “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” [1 John 4:7]

RESPONSE: Lord, deepen our love for you and our love for others.

LEADER: We thank you for the assurance that when nothing else can help, your love will provide the strength to carry on. May you kindle in our hearts, the pure flame of your eternal love; empower us so we may walk in your light and your love.

Light the three purple candles and the one pink candle.

ALL: We light the candle of love today, proclaiming that our hearts are filled with your pure, everlasting, and all-encompassing love. Lord, as we wait and worship, may we be persistent in hope, may we pursue peace with passion, may joy overflow in us, through us, beyond us, and may you magnify your love in us beyond measure, now and always, we pray, Amen.

The Scripture Lesson (s)

Old TestamentSis. Jackie Wilson
Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.

"This is the Word of the Lord."

New Testament.....Sis. Shirley Bailey
Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to

bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

GospelSis. Evelyn Beasley

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

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

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
...**Bro. Brandon M. Cleveland**

**Announcements, Acknowledgements
and Visitors**.....**Bro. Brandon M. Cleveland**

The Worship through Music..... **The Soul Searchers**

The Message.....**Rev. Dr. Patricia A. Outlaw**

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship

The Apostles' Creed.....**Bro. Brandon M. Cleveland**

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.....**Rev. Dr. Patricia A. Outlaw**