

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 7, 2025

Second 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.....Pastor Sterling

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....."Holy, Holy, Holy"

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning, our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty;
God in three persons, Blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works, shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty;
God in three persons, Blessed Trinity!

The Invocation

The Choral Response.....The Saint John AME Church Choir

PEACE: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

By: Reverend Dr. Adunnola Waterman French

Led by: Sisters Larntenia Armstrong & Shirley Bailey

LEADER: We live in a world of tension between order and disorder. In this season of Advent, Lord, teach us the way to peace. On this Sunday of Peace, we ask for your peace to rest in our hearts, homes, communities, churches, nation, and world.

RESPONSE: Lord, grant us your peace and bless us to be your instruments of peace.

LEADER: Lord, have mercy on our broken and divided world. We ask that you break the chains of injustice, inequality, violence, and war. We pray, Lord, to save us from the lie of false peace and grant us your true peace through the light of the gospel.

RESPONSE: Lord, grant us your peace and bless us to be your instruments of peace.

LEADER: Lord, we seek to walk humbly with you, and we pray that you would empower us to serve as your stewards of love, justice, and mercy. We yearn for peace in our hearts and our lives. Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with us.

Light two purple candles.

ALL: We light a candle of peace today, affirming the presence of Jesus Christ—the Prince of Peace. Renew us, restore us, revive us, and reconcile us. May the hope and peace of God rest with us in our worship and our waiting, now and always. Amen.

The Scripture Lesson (s)

Old TestamentBrother Micah Eli Wright
Psalm 72:1-7 (Easy-To -Read Version)

72 God, help the king be like you and make fair decisions.
Help the king's son know what justice is.
2 Help the king judge your people fairly.
Help him make wise decisions for your poor people.
3 Let there be peace and justice throughout the land,
known on every mountain and hill.
4 May the king be fair to the poor.
May he help the helpless and punish those who hurt them.
5 May people always fear and respect you, God,
as long as the sun shines and the moon is in the sky.
6 Help the king be like rain falling on the fields,
like showers falling on the land.
7 Let goodness grow everywhere while he is king.
Let peace continue as long as there is a moon.

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

New Testament.....Brother Montell Washington
Romans 15:4-13 (ESV)

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name."

¹⁰ And again it says,
"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

¹¹ And again,
"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him."

¹² And again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope."

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

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

GospelBrother Peter Fields
(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel)
Matthew 3:1-12 (ESV)

³ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"

⁴ Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not presume 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. ¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

"This is the Word of the Lord."

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 (Contemporary)

Minister: Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not make for yourself any idol.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: Honor your father and your mother.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not commit murder.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not commit adultery.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not steal.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not be a false witness.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

People: **Amen, Lord, have mercy.**

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

The Pastor's Words and Greetings to Visitors

The Worship through Music.....Music Ministry

The Message.....Pastor Sterling

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship

The Communion Hymn....."There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood"

Communion Elevation....."Offertory for Christmas Season"
by Reginald Barrett

The Solicitation

The General Confession

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed against Your divine Majesty, provoking most justly Your wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake; forgive us all that is past and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please You in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The First Collect

The Second Collect

The Prayer of Adoration

The Prayer of Humiliation

The Prayer of Consecration

The Elements

The Prayer

Postlude.....“Ijo Keresimesi (Christmas Dance)”
by Godwin Sadoh

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