

FROM THE CORNER

The news of our life, growth, and discipleship

DECEMBER

4 SUNDAY— *Conversations on Race & Racial Tensions* at Centenary UMC (2:30pm)

4 SUNDAY— Meditation & Mindfulness in the room outside the chapel (4:00pm)

4 SUNDAY— Service of Healing & Blessing in the chapel (5:00pm)

9 FRIDAY— Youth Christmas Party (6:00pm)

11 SUNDAY— *Gloria*—Special Christmas Music Worship Service (10:50am)

11 SUNDAY— UMW Potluck at the Barker Residence (5:00pm)

14 WEDNESDAY— Family Christmas Pajama Party & Gifts for Guests packing event in the fellowship hall (6:00-7:30pm)

24 SATURDAY— Christmas Eve Worship Service (5:30pm)

25 SUNDAY— Christmas Day Worship Service (10:00am)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

East Tennessee Wildfire Relief Our communion offering for this Sunday will support relief efforts as a result of the wildfires in Gatlinburg and the mountains of East Tennessee. We are channeling our support to the disaster relief team of our sister conference, the Holston Conference, of The United Methodist Church.

Family Christmas Pajama Party We're doing the jingle bell rock in our jammies on **Dec. 14** from **6:00-7:30pm** in the fellowship hall! Join us for all the Christmas cheer and help us pack bags for Gifts for Guests!

UMW Potluck The UMW Potluck is **Dec. 11** at 5:00pm at Kathy Barker's home. Please contact Rae-Anne Pitts (raeanepitts@gmail.com) if you have any questions or need directions.

Restoration & Rejuvenation Help your mind, body, and soul get ready for the craziness of the holiday season through Meditation & Mindfulness **today at 4:00pm** in the room outside the chapel, followed by the Service of Healing & Blessing at **5:00pm** in the chapel.

Gloria—Special Christmas Music Worship Join us in worship on **Dec. 11 at 10:50am** when the St. John's choir, soloists, and members of the Memphis Symphony present Vivaldi's sacred work, *Gloria!* This represents the height of concerted music incorporated into Catholic masses during the Italian Baroque. Though not written for the Christmas season, it is now associated with many liturgical celebrations, including the Advent Sunday of Joy. The St. John's choir has been working hard, so come, be part of the "joy" found through music!

New Sunday School Class Join Renee at **9:30am** in the room outside the chapel each week of Advent for a time to live with the lectionary texts for the week. We will use this time to pray the scriptures and to consider how we can best journey through the weeks ahead as we prepare once again to celebrate light and love come into the world.

Gifts for Guests Help our soup kitchen guests this holiday season by sponsoring backpacks filled with necessities. Sponsorships can be purchased for \$20 on **Nov. 27, Dec. 4, and Dec. 11.** Pack backpacks at the Family Christmas PJ Party on **Dec. 14 at 6:00pm.** Join us for the **Christmas Eve soup kitchen (3:30-5:30pm)** to serve the meal and pass out backpacks!



This Friday at 6:00pm John Kilzer leads us with Scott Thompson, Steve Selvidge, Scott Bomar, and Steve Potts.



St. John's welcomes everyone. Our hearts, minds, and doors are open to people of all ages, races, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, theological identities, economic status, disabilities, and people who sojourn on the way to recovery and wholeness.

We are a diverse community whose discipleship to Jesus Christ is demonstrated through our deep commitment to servant ministry. Welcome Home!

TODAY'S USHERS:
Don Tyson, Bill Denton, John Buxton, Carla Shirley, Bob Miller, Gary Hall

TODAY'S COUNTERS:
Marcia Van Alstine

+ Please stand as you are able.

1207 Peabody Ave.
Memphis, TN 38104
(901) 726-4104
www.stjohnsmidtown.org

St. John's United Methodist Church

December 4, 2016

10:50 a.m.

"IMAGINE"

Advent 2—Love

THE ENTRANCE

Words of Welcome

Prelude

arr. Mark Hayes

"Sing We Now of Christmas"
Carol Craig, Pianist

+ *Call to Worship*

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For God is with us, smiling upon us with love.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For Christ has saved us from our enemies, our sins,
and our fears.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For God's Spirit shines upon us, giving light for our darkness.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
Let us worship God together.

+ *Processional Hymn—UMH 203*

ELLACOMBE

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

(During the final stanza children may come to the crèche.)

Time at the Crèche

Singing of God's Love

Worship
and Song
Graham
Kendrick ©
2001
Thankyou
Music
Onelicense
A-724667

Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splen - dor ar - rives. Fling
He comes the bro - ken hearts to heal, the pris - onersto free. The
wide the gates and wel - come him in - to your lives.
deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance, the blind shall see.

Lectern Side

Make way, make way for the King of kings.

Pulpit Side

Make way, make way for the
King of kings. Make way, make way and let his king-dom in.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Love

Text: Rev. Renee Dillard

Matthew 3:1-3

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

WORSHIP & MINISTRY STAFF

Rev'd Johnny Jeffords
Rev'd Renee Dillard
Rev'd John Kilzer
Matthew Bogart
Carol Craig
Zachary Ferguson
Lyn Stewart
Annie Hunter
Bill Dozier
Robert Phillips
Rose Holmes

Senior Minister
Discipleship Ministries
Recovery Ministries
Music/Worship Ministries
Organist
Children/ Youth/ Young Adults
Church Administrator
Office/Communications
Building & Maintenance
Custodian
Housekeeper

For staff and contact information visit:
WWW.STJOHNSMIDTOWN.ORG



Prayer Following Communion

God of pregnant expectations, God of Christmas promise, God of child-like hope, we have eaten and drunk from your table. May the eating and the drinking fill us with hope in a world of despair. May we be beacons of hope as we wait for the day when the world will be changed. Grant that this taste of your banquet which is to come would give us the hunger for peace and justice in our community and around the world. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

+ *Invitation to Journey*

+ *Recessional Hymn—UMH 211*

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL

+ *Benediction*

+ *Postlude*

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”
Matthew Bogart, Organist

arr. Noël Goemanne

*Worship
and Song*
Ken Bible ©
1998 Pilot
Point Music
Onelicense
A-724667

Christ's the lamp that lights our way, Je - sus, theLight of the
World! Step by step and day by day Je - sus, theLight of the
World! Walk in thelight, beau - ti - fullight;
comewhere hislove and his mer-cy arebright. Shineall aroundus by
day and by night, Je - sus, theLight of the World.

Advent calls us to wait and to prepare, to repent and to love.

Turning toward God, we seek the kingdom of heaven.

Advent calls us to prepare, to love God and to love neighbor.

Turning toward God, we seek the kingdom of heaven.

Mountain top or valley, security or wilderness, day by day...

Turning toward God, we seek the kingdom of heaven.

As we light two candles, pause and imagine Love...

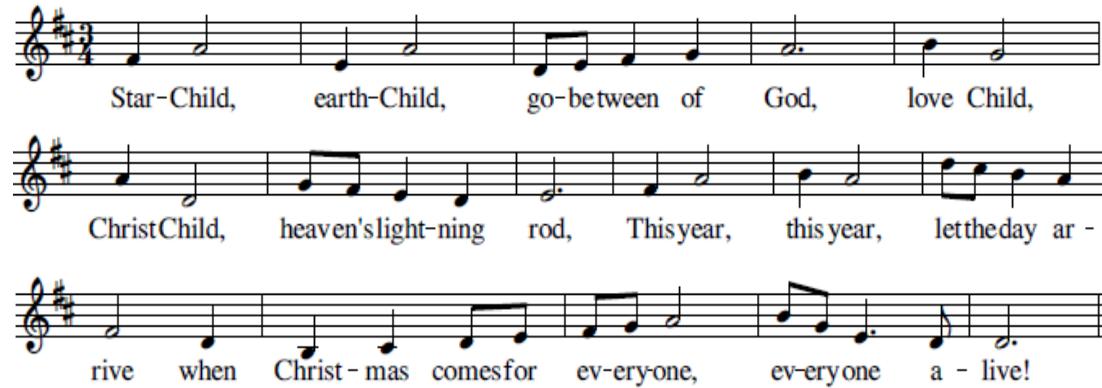
Prepare the way of the Lord through every demonstration of Love.

Congregational Response

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Joys and Concerns

Centering Hymn



Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God, love Child,
Christ Child, heaven's light-ning rod, This year, this year, let the day ar -
rive when Christ-mas comes for ev-ery-one, ev-eryone a - live!

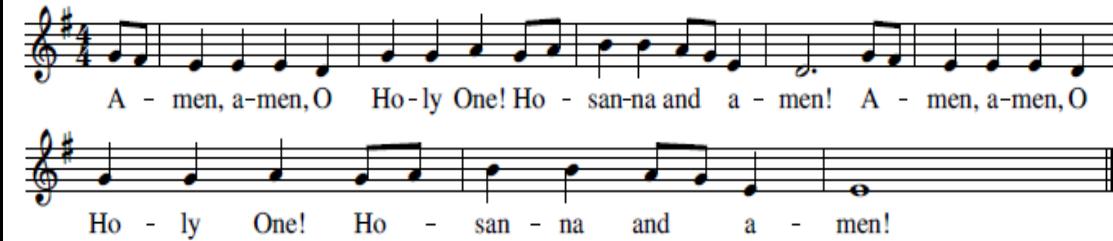
Prayers of the People

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 11:1-10 (NRSV)

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

As we eat and drink, may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power; and may we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice, so that we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality.

And the people all sang:



A - men, a-men, O Ho-ly One! Ho - san-na and a - men! A - men, a-men, O
Ho - ly One! Ho - san - na and a - men!

And now, as beloved children of a loving Parent, we pray:

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.**

The Pouring and Breaking and Serving

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life
The Cup we Share is the Cup of Promise
These are the gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.
Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

Communion Music

George Frideric Handel

“He Shall Feed His Flock Like A Shepherd” *Messiah*
Athena Hobbs, Soprano

The Story Remembered

Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby will live.

We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.

And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to come, that he ate with his closest friends.

Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation, he prepared them for liberation.

And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it, then passed it to them saying:

Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the heavenly banquet.

Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life, his death and his resurrection.

We remember how he poured his love out all he met and look forward to his return and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.

And in our remembering we sing the mystery of faith:

Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come a -
gain! Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come a - gain!

The Spirit Transforms

God, you poured your Spirit on Mary, and she sang words of defiance and hope. Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here. As we eat and drink, may we know your presence.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Homily

Rev Dr. Johnny Jeffords

“Stumped”

Invitation to the Table

United Church of Canada

God's banquet is coming. The time we await when all will gather from North, East, West, and South.

A banquet where the rich and powerful will sit with the weak and poverty-stricken. A table where young and old will learn from each other. A time when all will sit together in peace, “and the wolf will lie down with the lamb”.

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet. This is indeed God's table, not the church's, and so all who seek to follow The Way are welcome to eat and drink from it.

Come and taste the grace eternal, come and see that God is good.

Prayer of Confession

We need you to speak to us, O God, because we have, each in our own way, forgotten your Law, forgotten your love for us. We are in need of your deliverance, because we have, too often, given ourselves to powers and practices that would destroy us. We are lost, in need of rescue.

Silent Prayer, concluded with:

**Come, Lord Jesus; forgive us and restore us.
Come, Lord Jesus; guide us and deliver us.
Come, Lord Jesus; teach us and renew us.
Come, Lord Jesus.**

Assurance of Pardon

God, our kind and loving Savior God, has stepped in and saved us.

**God cleansed us, and we became new people,
washed inside and out by the Holy Spirit. Our Savior Jesus
poured out new life so generously.**

God's gift has restored our relationship with God and given us back
our lives.

And there's more life to come—an eternity of life!

+ *The Peace*

The peace of Christ Jesus be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation and love.

Offering

Felix Mendelssohn

"He Watching Over Israel" *Elijah*
Chancel Choir

+ *Doxology*

ADESTE FIDELES

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving

God is with us

We are not alone

Christ is present here

The Spirit moves within us

Let us give thanks to God

In memory and in hope

Blessings be to you, Creator God,

Who in the beginning brought light and life to the world and who continues to
bring it love and light everlasting.

**Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still
brings us hope.**

Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share
your love.

But even when they have closed their ears to the song you did not stop
singing.

You sent prophets and messengers to your people, reminding them of the
promised time of peace and justice that would surround the world.

They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise
in a new way

Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus

Promising her that in her son the world would be changed

And now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

O come, O come Emmanuel

And also we lift our voices in song, singing together the praises of ages:

O ho-ly ho-ly ho-ly God, O God of time and space. All
earth and sea and sky a-bove bear wit-ness to your Grace. Ho -
san-na in the high-est heav'n, cre - a-tionsings your praise. And
bles-sed is the One who comes and bears Your name al - ways.