The Worship of God

at St. John Church
The Season after Epiphany
January 12, 2025 | 10:30AM

Welcome!

No matter who you are
or where you are on life's
journey you are welcome here.

Assistive listening devices are available at the Welcome Table.
Nursery (Room 103) for children under 6 with parents/guardians only. No staff provided.
Offering plates are in the front and back of the Church.
Restrooms are through the single doors in the front.
The people rise in body or spirit at this sign:
The people's responses are in **bold print**.
Masks are optional.

Allen Fluent, preacher; Melissa Artopoeus, liturgist; Brandon Stroup, director of music, piano

MUSIC AS WE GATHER AND LIGHT THE CANDLES — Eliza Palm

Shall We Gather at the River - arr. Marcia Wells

WELCOME & CHURCH MATTERS — Allen Fluent

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.
Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.

You are invited to visit the Welcome Table in the back by the red banner.
Please fill out the INFORMATION CARD on the back of the pew in front of you and place it in an offering plate at the front or back as you leave.

SILENCE IS KEPT

CALL TO WORSHIP — Allen Fluent

Ascribe to God, O heavenly beings, glory and strength and holy splendor.
The voice of God is over the waters; the God of glory thunders: Holy over mighty waters, powerful and full of majesty.
The voice of God flashes forth flames of fire. The voice of God shakes the wilderness.
The Holy One shakes the wilderness.
May God give strength to God's people.
May God bless the people with peace!

HYMN OF PRAISE — *Down by the Jordan -LOBE DEN HERREN*

Down by the Jordan, a prophet named John was baptizing,
Preaching a message the people found bold and surprising:

"God will forgive! Show that you'll change how you live!
Surely God's new day is rising!"

There by the river, the crowd came with great expectation:
"Are you God's Chosen One, sent here to rescue our nation?"
"No!" John replied. "He who is mightier than I
Judges and offers salvation."

Jesus, you went to be baptized along with the others,
Taking your place among sinners, God's lost sons and daughters.
Then with great love, God's Spirit came as a dove!
Your work began in those waters.

Here in the Church, we are baptized and filled with God's Spirit.
Freed and forgiven, we're welcomed with joy! Can you hear it?
This is God's sign! This is how God says, "You're mine!"
Let's take the good news and share it!

OPENING PRAYER

Allen Fluent

God of grace and new beginnings, today we remember the story of the young man Jesus, who heard your voice and responded to your call in the water of the Jordan River.

We have chosen to follow Jesus, and we give you thanks for his wisdom, his courage and his love. As the waters of life swirl around us, we acknowledge our fear of being overwhelmed, but we give you thanks for the family of faith that surrounds us, and in this fellowship we turn again to place our trust in you. Amen.

SONG OF RESPONSE

Spirit Song

O let the Son of God enfold you with his Spirit and his love.
Let him fill your heart and satisfy your soul.
O let him have the things that hold you, and his Spirit like a dove
Will descend upon your life and make you whole.

Refrain: Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill Your lambs. *(2x)*

O come and sing this song with gladness as your hearts are filled with joy/
Lift your hands in sweet surrender to his name.
O give him all your tears and sadness; give him all your years of pain,
And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name. *Refrain*

PASSING OF THE PEACE]

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

(With a word, a smile, a handshake, an embrace, whatever is most comfortable for you, greet one another with the peace of Christ.)

CHOIR ANTHEM — Chancel Choir

Down to the River to Pray
(with Lord, Listen to Your Children Prayin') -arr. by Mary McDonald

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: ISAIAH 43.1-7

(Page 672 – Old Testament section of the pew Bible) — Melissa Artopoeus

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

MINISTRY OF MUSIC — Jennie Malone, soloist

Baptism Song - words and music by Bruce Kau

✵ GOSPEL READING: MARK 1.1-12

(Page 34 – New Testament section of the pew Bible) — Allen Fluent

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON — *"BAPTISM OF JESUS"* — Allen Fluent

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

HYMN, 351 – AND SPRINKLING OF THE CONGREGATION

I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry -BORNING CRY

✵ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH — Melissa Artopoeus

As the falling rain turns dust into fertile soil where plants can grow, so the Spirit of the Christ becomes the splash and flow of our life in you, O God; and the gardens of compassion bear the fruit of new life in the midst of us. This is our faith and our calling on this baptismal day.

INSTALLATION OF THE 2024 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

January 12, 2025

President:	Jim Palm
President Elect:	Stephanie Dalsfoist
Recording Secretary:	Stephanie Specter
Treasurer:	Mary Ann Reilly
At-Large:	Matthew Southerland
At-Large:	Steve Phillips

GREETING

ONE: Grace, mercy, and peace to you from Jesus Christ, the head of the church in heaven and on earth.

ALL: To God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

ONE: Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry of each person in the life of the church or in various settings in the life of the world. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

PRESENTATION

ONE: Jim Palm, Stephanie Dalsfoist, Stephanie Specter, Mary Ann Reilly, Matthew Southerland, and Steve Phillips.
These people have been called by God, in accordance with the faith and order of this church, to serve among us. They have accepted their call and are before us in witness to their willingness to serve.

COVENANT

ONE: Sisters and brothers in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility for particular service in the ministry of the church, whether gathered or scattered.

ONE: Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared to serve with the help of God in Christ's name and for the glory of God?

SLC: I am.

ONE: Do you promise to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing forth the love of Christ?

SLC: I do, relying on God's grace.

ONE: Members of this household of faith, you have heard the promises of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have answered God's call to service. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with them. Will those who are able rise and witness to the commitment we now make?

ALL: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ. (*The congregation may be seated.)*

PRAYER

ONE: Let us pray.

Eternal God, you have called these people to serve you in this household of faith and in the world, which you have entrusted to our care and keeping. Send your Holy Spirit on them that they may serve among us with honor and faithfulness. Help them to be diligent in their duties that your church may prosper in the mission you place before it. May their example prove worthy for all of us to follow, as we are united in Christ's ministry, to the glory of your name.

ALL: Amen.

DECLARATION

ONE: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the people of St. John United Church of Christ, I rejoice to announce:

You are installed as the 2024 Strategic Leadership Council.

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

ONE: In accordance with the faith and order of this church, I extend to you the hand of Christian love.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE — Allen Fluent

God of abundant grace, **hear our prayer**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Loving and beloved One, eternally present in our midst, may we know your sacred truth, and seek the goodness you desire for all the creatures of the earth. We ask for what we need to sustain us each day, and we pray that we may learn to share the rest. Teach us to forgive, so that we may learn to accept your forgiveness. And let us not be tempted by the anxious days to come. For the power of your love will rule our hearts forever. Amen

AN INVITATION TO THE OFFERING — Melissa Artopoeus

The offering in the early church was the bringing forth of the food for the fellowship meal. Now, like then, the offering of our gifts is for the nourishment of all. Let us celebrate all that we have to share.

(Offering plates are in the front and back of the Sanctuary. QR code to give online.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, we lay our gifts before you, made sacred by being shared and used in faithfulness and care. Amen.

✥ CLOSING SONG, 82 — *Go, My Children, with My Blessing -AR HYD Y NOS*

BENEDICTION — Allen Fluent

PARTING MUSIC

Saints Bound for Heaven -arr. Lloyd Larson

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GRATITUDE, THANKS, BLESSING, & PRAISE

A2A Team and Elsmere Ironworks for the new railings at the chancel steps
Praise for all the musicians who enhanced our December worship services
Thank you to all who ordered poinsettias
Chancel Ministry Team for beautifying the sanctuary for Christmas

Stay Connected at St. John Church*!*

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, email Pastor@StJohnChurch.net.
To submit a prayer request for the Prayer List, email PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net.
To reserve a room in the Church house, email BuildingUse@StJohnChurch.net.
To receive the newsletter, Prayer List, etc. email Office@StJohnChurch.net.
For more information go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.

No online connection? Call the office at 859.261.2066.
Typical office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00am to 4:00pm.

520 Fairfield Avenue • Bellevue, KY 41073 • StJohnChurch.net • 859.261.2066