



**Saint John's United Methodist Church**

**Tuesday, December 21, 2021, 7:00 PM**

*Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own.*

**Prelude**

Lisa Lamb, harp; Beth Ringel, cello

“Winter-Largo”

from *The Four Seasons* by Vivaldi, arr. Daniel Burton, © Jubal Press

“Fond Recollections”

by David Popper, Op. 64 No. 1, © 1919 Carl Fischer, New York

“Dance of the Blessed Spirits”

by Christoph Willibald von Gluck, arr. Daniel Burton, © Jubal Press

**Welcome and Gathering Words**

Rev. Hilary Marchbanks

**Introit**

“Gather Us In”

Cina Crisara, John Thomason

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

TFWS 2236

“Gather Us In”

Music: © 1982 GIA Publications, Inc.

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## Reading

Rebecca Witte

Come gather here, all of you who are feeling a little lost this season, all of you who are experiencing a difficult anniversary of grief, all of you who feel anxious and uncertain about the future, all of you who are struggling with health and finances, all of you who feel alone or forgotten, come gather here, for you are more than welcome, you are needed. We need you here. Without you we are not complete in this community of seekers, where we come in faith and humility, in open-mindedness and understanding, in kindness and compassion, welcoming one another, caring for one another, looking out into the darkness together with a vision of hope. Come gather here, whether you are old friends or strangers passing by, come gather here.

– Steven Charleston

## Hymn

“Gather Us In”

Cina Crisara, John Thomason

We are the young, our lives are a myst’ry,  
we are the old who yearn for your face,  
we have been sung throughout all of hist’ry,  
called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

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## Opening Prayer

Responsive, led by Rev. Cheryl Broome

Loving God of all our days, deepest heart where all our pain and joy are held, we come into the warmth and safety of your presence, bringing our minds filled with precious memories, and our hearts drinking in the beauty of this season.

We confess we don’t always know what to do with the ragged parts of our lives, the things we wish we could undo, and the joys we wish we could experience again. So we have come to you ... gathering ourselves into the trust, comfort, and hope of your presence.

**Thank you for being near to us tonight as we open our hearts to receive your loving spirit.  
Send us your peace. In the name of love eternal ... here and now, we pray. Amen.**

## Hymn

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

All, led by John Thomason

**O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thy justice here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death’s dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

UMH 211 vv 1,6

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

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## Scripture Reading

Eric Metcalf

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. – Matthew 11:28-30

## Reading

Enter the quiet room within. Sit in the stillness there, until you can hear your heart. Let your mind grow as calm as the ribbons of sunlight across the floor, your breathing as steady as the rolling waves on the ocean before you. Listen to the empty space around you. Silence is inside you for a reason. It is the counterpoint you need to the noise of the world. Enter the quiet room within and discover the peace that knows your name. – Stephen Charleston

## Hymn

“Come and Find the Quiet Center”

Cina Crisara, voice; Lisa Lamb, harp  
Beth Ringel, cello

Come and find the quiet center  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

TFWS 2128 vv 1,2

“Come and Find the Quiet Center”

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## Silence

### Hymn

“Still, Still, Still”

Lisa Lamb, harp

“Still, Still, Still” arr. Whitney Dobyns, © Whitney Dobyns

## Silence

## Lighting Candles of Remembrance

Rev. Randy Knighten and Eric Metcalf

We light these candles to remember those who are captive to darkness. For those lost in the night of addiction, depression, anxiety, or unexpected grief, we pray to God, who guided the Israelites through the darkness with a pillar of fire:

**Disperse the gloomy clouds of night.**

We light these candles to remember those who have died, and those who mourn the dead. The shadow of death can seem impenetrably dark during these long nights. We pray to God, whose first act in creation was to call light from darkness:

**Death's dark shadow put to flight.**

We light these candles to remember those who are alone. We remember those who are isolated from loved ones; far from home; wandering down the wrong path; or convinced that God is unconcerned with their suffering. We pray to God, who is like the woman who lit a lantern to search all night for one lost coin:

**Refresh the hearts that long for you.**

We light these candles to remember those who are battling illness. We lift up those who suffer the pain, indignity, and bewilderment that accompany a broken body. For all who desire to be returned to wholeness, we pray to God, who lit the night sky with a star to guide three magi to the healing Christ:

**Restore the broken: make us new.**

We light these candles to remember those who feel that hardship will overwhelm them. For the poor, the persecuted, the hungry, and the homeless, we pray to God, who walked with three men through the consuming flames of a fiery furnace:

**In strength and beauty come and stay.**

We light this candle to remember those affected by war. For soldiers; for civilians in war-torn nations; for families who mourn the loss of loved ones to violent conflict. We pray to God, with eyes of blazing fire, who promises a vision of peace:

**Teach us your will and guide our way.**

— Victoria Larson

## **Hymn**

“Spirit of the Living God”

All, led by John Thomason

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me,**

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

**Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.**

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

(sing two times)

UMH 393

“Spirit of the Living God”

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## **Invitation to Anointing**

Rev. Marchbanks

## **Anointing**

Rev. Marchbanks, Rev. Broome, and Rev. Knighten

*As the pastors move to their stations, those seeking anointing may come forward to stand or kneel at the altar rail.*

## **Music During Anointing**

Lisa Lamb, harp; Beth Ringel, cello

“Six Studies in English Folk-Song” - Mvts. 1, 2, and 4

by R. Vaughan Williams © 1927 Stainer & Bell Ltd, London

“Ashokan Farewell”

by Jay Ungar, © 1983 by Swinging Door Music

Selections from “Cello Suites”

by Bach, Public Domain

## Silence

### Reading

Don Anderson

Fill me again, great Spirit, with all that I need to make it through this life of mine. Give me the vision I need to see clearly. Give me the strength I need to keep going. Give me the love I need to share what I have with others. Let me have a little courage and a lot of wisdom, as much hope as you can spare, and that quiet determination to hold my ground when the world around me seems so uncertain. Please give me your blessings again, dear Spirit, for I use them up so quickly in these dark times. Please come into my life once more and fill me up that I may empty my heart each day in gratitude for what you have given me.

– Stephen Charleston

### Hymn

“Gather Us In”

All, led by Cina Crisara and John Thomason

**Here we will take the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt for the earth.**

**Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**

TFWS 2236

“Gather Us In”

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### Holy Communion

led by Rev. Marchbanks

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### Prayer of Jesus

All

**Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

*All present are invited forward to place a strip of cloth in the manger.*

## Music During Communion

Lisa Lamb, harp; Beth Ringel, cello

“Greensleeves”

arr. Samuel Milligan, © Lyon & Healy

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

arr. Whitney Dobyns, © Whitney Dobyns

“Song of the Birds”

arr. Pablo Casals, © 1972 Tetra Music Corporation

“Air” from *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D Major*

by Bach, public domain

“‘Twas in the Moon of Wintertime”

Huron Carol, arr. Gary Schocker © Theodore Presser Co. in PA

“I Wonder as I Wander”

arr. Louise Trotter, © Louise Trotter

## Scripture Reading

John Thomason

Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. – Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

## Hymn

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

All

**We share each other's woes,  
our mutual burdens bear;  
and often for each other flows  
the sympathizing tear.**

**Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.**

UMH 557 vv 1,3

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

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## Benediction

Rev. Marchbanks

May you be at peace today. May the living Spirit, the source of all that is nurturing and kind, come into your life today like an unexpected breeze, gently, but clearly. May you feel that presence all around you as it lifts the burdens from your shoulders, taking away the worry or the anxiety, the fear or the pain, offering you a deep moment of perfect rest. May you be renewed in your own spirit, strengthened in your mind and body as well, filled with the energy only hope can provide. You have given a great deal of yourself over these last many days, now let it be time for you to receive something in return. Open your mind, open your heart, and be filled with the peace that passes all of our understanding. Be made one with what you love most. Be at peace and know that your faith has made you whole.

– Stephen Charleston

## Sending Music

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Lisa Lamb, harp; Beth Ringel, cello

UMH 239

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*\* You are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

*Following the service, you are welcome to linger in the sanctuary.*

*The labyrinth in the chapel is also available.*

*Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from  
One License with license #A-730944 and CCLI Streaming license #20104970.*

*TFWS denotes “The Faith We Sing” hymnal.*

*UMH denotes “United Methodist Hymnal.”*



### **Participating in Worship This Evening**

Rev. Hilary Marchbanks, Senior Pastor

Rev. Cheryl Broome, Congregational Care Pastor

Rev. Randy Knighten, Director of Outreach Ministries

Don Anderson, reader

Cina Crisara, Director of Music, voice

Gary Flemmons, designer and builder of manger, table, and candle spiral

Mary J. Foster, Worship Arts Coordinator

Gary James, Sound Technician

Lisa Lamb, harp

Eric Metcalf, reader

Beth Ringel, cello

John Thomason, bulletin, voice

Rebecca Witte, reader

Natalie Young, Communications Coordinator



### **Saint John’s Committee on Passionate Worship**

Cina Crisara, Staff Liaison; Don Anderson, Chair

Nathan Dooley, Mary Foster, Jessica Foulke, Kassi Hardee, Aileen Kishi,  
Eric Metcalf, Cate Noellert, John Thomason, Angela Wallace, Rebecca Witte





## ***Christmas Eve at Saint John's United Methodist Church***

**Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

3:00 pm – Child-friendly service – Online

5:00 pm – Traditional service with candles and music by Chancel Choir – in person

7:00 pm – Traditional service with candles and music by Chancel Choir – in person and streamed

11:00 pm – Candlelight service with communion – in person and streamed, music starts at 10:45 pm

3:30 pm - 8:30 pm – Outdoor nativity scene – self-paced experience starting at the Youth House



## ***Sunday after Christmas at Saint John's United Methodist Church***

**Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am  
(one service only)**

11:00 am – in person and live streamed – Director of Faith Development Shelley Walters will preach on Colossians 3:12-17 and Director of Music Cina Crisara will lead us in singing carols.



## ***2021 Christmas Offering***

Thanks to your generosity, each year Saint John's shares funds with non-profit organizations in our community, region, and around the world. Saint John's also shares our beautiful facility as a community space for non-profits, music groups, and schools in our midst. This year's Christmas offering will enable us to complete our financial commitments for 2021 as well as look toward our ministry goals for 2022. One goal includes a potential staff raise; we have not had sufficient resources to give raises in three of the last five years. If you wish to make a gift online, you may do so at [stjohnsaustin.org/giving](http://stjohnsaustin.org/giving).



### **Saint John's United Methodist Church**

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