

STRANGER THINGS



A SERIES ABOUT
BIZARRE BIBLE STORIES

Sunday, June 16, 2024
8:30 a.m. Worship Celebration

All Are Welcome

This week a man's donkey gets spooked by an angel of the Lord and starts talking! Join us as we uncover the meaning of what he had to say. Today we see how God offers us guidance through surprising messengers. When we encounter unexpected roadblocks in life, do you ask God for guidance and understanding?

Whether you are a guest or member, we invite you to scan the QR code to register your attendance so we know you're here and we can get to know you better.



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Welcome to St. John's United Methodist Church

GUEST INFORMATION

We are glad you've joined us and hope you feel at home here. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome. Our ushers are happy to assist you in anyway. Restrooms are in the Narthex, located in the back of the Sanctuary.

Please take home a copy of our Welcome Brochure located in the Narthex or view it online at: stjohnsbr.org/welcome-brochure.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

We fully welcome and love engaging children in worship! We include a special Children's Moment each Sunday.

- **The St. John's Playground** is located in the front of the sanctuary. This is a place for children and their families to worship together, allowing children to more fully participate in the service. More details about the Playground may be found on our website.
- A staffed **nursery** for infants through preschool is open every Sunday morning and is located next door in our Education/Administration building.
- **Changing tables** are located in the restrooms in the back of the sanctuary and in our nursery.
- Children are welcome to receive **Holy Communion**, which is served weekly at 8:30 a.m. and on the first Sunday of the month at 11 a.m. Our communion elements are bread and grape juice. Gluten-free elements are also available.
- **Sunday School** is offered for children starting at age 18 months through 12th grade from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

St. John's Clergy and Staff

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The Celebration of the Gospel

**Please stand as you are comfortable.
Bold indicates congregational response.
Please scan the QR Code to register your attendance.*



Prelude

Words of Welcome

Rev. Lane Cotton Winn

*Songs of Praise

Cry of My Heart

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2165, vs. 1

Guide My Feet

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2208, vs. 1 & 2

*Call to Worship

Mari Walker

God calls us to go out...

By faith, we trust that God is present in our journeying.

When the road becomes unfamiliar...

By faith, we follow where God leads.

Though we travel far, we remain grounded by one another...

By faith, we embark on a journey to worship God together.

*Response

Lead Me, Guide Me

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2214

Children's Message

Pastor Lane

Scripture

Numbers 22:21-31

For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us,

Thanks be to God.

Witness to the Word

Pastor Lane

"The Original Talking Donkey"

*Hymn

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

The United Methodist Hymnal 127, vs. 1 & 2

*Confessing Our Sin

Mari Walker

We come before God with our individual and collective prayers of confession, laying before God the sin that is weighing us down, so that as we journey on, we are freed from its burden, receiving God's mercy and love, and not looking back.

Holy God,

**We open our hearts to you this day,
and offer the truth of our lives:**

**Forgive us when we follow those paths
that do not lead to life and grace.**

**As we travel the road before us, help us find courage in
unlikely places,**

**see the world with new and gracious eyes,
enter into those places where love is needed,
have faith that you are with us wherever we are
on our journey.**

Hear us now as we offer the prayers on our hearts...

(Silence is kept for personal reflection.)

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer. Amen.

*Receiving Grace

Friends in Christ, know this:
the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting,
and I remind you of this surpassing grace:
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Alleluia! Amen.

*Sharing God's Grace

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

*We appreciate your generosity.
Each gift enables us to be a blessing in our community.
You may give online by scanning the QR Code
or navigate to stjohnsbr.org/give.*



*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:**

Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Gathering at the Table

To prepare for Holy Communion, we recall the story of the Last Supper and the pastor invokes the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord's Prayer

***Sharing the Bread and Cup**

Everyone is welcome to share in Holy Communion.

Communion will be served using the ancient means of "intinction" with only the pastor and servers touching the elements, or, if you prefer, you may receive pre-packaged elements. Our communion elements are bread and grape juice.

A gluten-free option is also available.

You are invited to stay at the chancel for prayer as long as you desire.

If you are a person with limited mobility, please let the usher know and someone will bring communion to you.

Prayer After Receiving

Mari Walker

God of Surprises,

Energized by your word and this holy meal,

give us the wisdom to follow your will in our daily lives.

**May the wonder and mystery of your grace fill us with awe
and gratitude.**

We pray our thanks through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Call to Action

We joyfully welcome all those who wish to become members of St. John's and invite you to come forward during the singing of the closing hymn.

***Hymn**

Christ Beside Me

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2166, vs. 1 & 2

***Blessing and Sending Forth**

***Postlude**

Worship Notes

Ushers for the 8:30 service are Sandra Kuykendall and Amy Richardson.

After the 8:30 service, everyone is invited to the Family Life Center for coffee and refreshments.

Connect with Us

You are invited to participate in any of our activities, and to become a part of this community of faith and love. Sign up for text/email notifications by texting the word "Connect" to 225-230-1017.

PRAYER REQUESTS

We believe that prayer is a powerful way to connect us to one another and to God. If you have a prayer or joy you want lifted up, please email prayers@stjohnsbr.org. Pastor Lane and Lynn Cooper, our Administrative Assistant, will receive your request and pass it along to the Prayer Team, unless you request it only be shared with Pastor Lane. A group of dedicated volunteers receive prayer requests weekly and then focus on praying for these requests immediately and throughout the week. All of the Prayer Team Members are deeply committed to keeping prayer requests confidential as requested. Prayer Requests are also included in the *Inside St. John's* newsletter, sent on Tuesdays.

We are grateful for the individuals on our Prayer Team who commit to pray for the concerns and joys that are shared. Would you like to be a part of this team that commits to praying daily/weekly? Send a request to join the Prayer Team to prayers@stjohnsbr.org.

Vacation Bible School

VBS VOLUNTEERS

VBS starts Monday, and we could still use some people to help with set-up if you're available!

Setting Up

We are meeting for set up and VBS training **today, Sunday, June 16 at 2 p.m.**

All volunteers helping with VBS throughout the week, especially those signed up as small group leaders & activity station leaders, should attend the volunteer training **today, Sunday, June 16 at 2 p.m.**

You can visit stjohnsbr.org/vbs-volunteers to get more information and sign up. If you have any questions, please contact Connor (connordean@stjohnsbr.org).

Announcements

STRANGER THINGS: A SERIES ABOUT BIZARRE BIBLE STORIES

In our worship series, we are delving into some of the more bizarre passages in the Bible. Each week we are exploring an unusual story from scripture - some of which you may not have even heard before! Along the way, we'll see how even the strangest parts of the Bible reveal God's nature to us and encourage and strengthen our faith. The series includes a talking donkey, a tent peg, a floating hand, and a severed ear. As we read a few of the odd legends of the Bible, we are asking the question: What is the good news here?

COFFEE TIME REMINDER

Just a reminder that **if your last name begins with L - N, next Sunday, June 23**, is your Sunday to bring a treat to Coffee Time! And also remember that this is NOT an obligation, just a suggestion! You don't have to cook or bake - in these days of prepared foods, any grocery store has plenty to choose from.

Please have your item to the FLC before 9:30 am.

LOVE FEAST JUNE 30 AT 10AM

June brings summer, lazy days, and something else this year ... a fifth Sunday! What a perfect day to have a different experience for worship!

So, on **Sunday, June 30, we are celebrating the fifth Sunday by hosting a "Love Feast" worship experience in the FLC at 10 a.m., in lieu of our regular worship times.** This will be a celebratory service featuring music, prayer, and testimonies as we enjoy a potluck brunch. Everyone is invited to bring a breakfast or brunch item to share.

The early Christians met and broke bread together to signify their union, fellowship, and love. In 1727, the Moravian Church in Germany revived this practice, calling it a "Love Feast." John Wesley, co-founder of Methodism and an Anglican priest, experienced a Moravian Love Feast during his time in Georgia, and it quickly became part of early American Methodism. Our own celebratory Love Feast will be a great way to remember our history while spending time in fellowship with our church family!

We will resume our regular Sunday morning schedule the following Sunday, July 7, with worship at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. with Coffee Time and Summer Sunday School in between services.

GOOD GRIEF! FELLOWSHIP

The grief support group, Good Grief, St. John's!, will meet at George's Southside, 8905 Highland Road for an off-campus gathering on **Tuesday, June 18 at 5:30 p.m.** Please RSVP to Susan Johnston (phone or text) 225-773-9563. If you would like more information about this grief support and fellowship group, please contact Susan at the above number. All who have suffered any type of loss are welcome.

TRUSTEES MEETING

The Trustees will be meeting on **Tuesday, June 18 at 4 p.m.** in the library. One item on the agenda for this meeting is to begin the process of revising and bringing up to date our policies on facilities usage, weddings, safe sanctuaries, and key usage.

UPDATE ON UMC CONFERENCES

Join us between services on **Sunday, June 23** for updates about General Conference and the Louisiana Annual Conference. Pastor Lane and Natalie Cooper (Lay Delegate to Annual Conference) will share highlights from the global General Conference and the local Louisiana Annual Conference. If you have topics you'd like them to include or questions you'd like considered, you can submit those at stjohnsbr.org/gc-ac-update by June 19. Our conversation will start at 10am on June 23 in the sanctuary.

SUMMER BELLS

Have you thought about joining the Alleluia Ringers and learning how to play handbells? Do you want to be a part of a group that serves the church community in a unique way? Then come to rehearsals in the bell room for the month of **June on Sunday evenings at 6:00 pm**. We will teach you how to play and when to play. All you have to do is count. All are welcome!

YOUTH SUMMER TOUR

The next stop on our Summer Tour will be Jefferson UMC (10328 Jefferson Hwy.) on **Wednesday, June 19**. Youth should be dropped off at Jefferson UMC at 6 p.m. and picked up at 8.

The Youth Summer Tour meets each Wednesday in June & July (except for the week of July 4th) from 6 - 8 p.m. A different church will be hosting each week. The Summer Tour will be stopping at First UMC of Gonzales on Wednesday, June 26.

CHILDREN & YOUTH SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are looking for volunteers to serve as "table leaders" to help lead each age group within our one-room Sunday School class for our children & youth during the summer. Please carefully review the available slots at stjohnsbr.org/sumer-ss or contact Connor if you have any issues or questions.

TODAY - ADULT SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL - TED TALK THEOLOGY

Our adult summer study series is called TED Talk Theology and runs through July 28 (9:55-10:45 am) in the sanctuary. Each Sunday we're watching a TED Talk, reading scripture, and talking about what they say to us about our faith and life. We have a new facilitator each Sunday. Come weekly or come when you can! There's nothing to prep for or to read ahead of time.

TODAY'S SESSION will be led by will be led by Rev. Marie Williams with a talk by Brene Brown titled "The Power of Vulnerability." Our scripture focus will be 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

NEXT SUNDAY JUNE 23 Pastor Lane and Natalie Cooper will give a report on the General Conference and the just completed Louisiana Annual Conference.

This Week at St. John's

Sunday, June 16

- 8:00 a.m. Praise Team Warm Up, Sanctuary
- 8:30 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Coffee Time, FLC*
- 9:45 a.m. Youth/Children's Sunday School, FLC
- 9:55 a.m. Adult Sunday School, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. VBS Volunteer Training and Setup, FLC
- 6:00 p.m. Summer Bells Practice, Bells Room

Monday, June 17

- 8:00 a.m. **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**
- 9:00 a.m. Ladies' Covenant Group, Founders' Parlor
- 3:00 p.m. Men's Covenant Group, Library
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Tuesday, June 18

- 8:00 a.m. **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 4:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting, Library
- 5:30 p.m. Good Grief! Fellowship, George's Southside, Highland Rd.
- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Wednesday, June 19

- 8:00 a.m. **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Summer Tour, Jefferson UMC
- 6:30 p.m. Ladies' AA Meeting, FLC-C

Thursday, June 20

- 8:00 a.m. **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**
- 1:00 p.m. UWF Committee Meeting, Founders' Parlor
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice, Choir Room

Friday, June 21

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group, Founders' Parlor

8:00 a.m. VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Saturday, June 22

- 12:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-C
- 7:00 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC

*Family Life Center



ST. JOHN'S

United Methodist Church

Glorifying God. Feeding People. Making Disciples.