

STRANGER THINGS



A SERIES ABOUT
BIZARRE BIBLE STORIES

Sunday, June 9, 2024
8:30 a.m. Worship Celebration

All Are Welcome

The Bible is loaded with strange and bizarre stories and this summer we will take a look at five of those tales. Each week we will explore an unusual story from scripture, and along the way, we'll see how even the strangest parts of the Bible both reveal God's nature to us and encourage and strengthen our faith. Today we read the Old Testament story about Lot's wife turning into salt. Welcome to worship!

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 Prayground** 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 Prayground 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

Walk With Me

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2242, vs. 1

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

The Faith We Sing Songbook 2129, vs. 1 & 3

*Call to Worship

Gray Sexton

The journey begins again. Pack your bags!

What shall we carry?

Take the memories and stories of those who came before.

Then why do we go?

We go because *now* is not *then*.

We go because God beckons us.

What else do we need?

Take a deep breath, close your eyes.

Do you not perceive it?

(moment of silence)

The Spirit is with us in the NOW.

The Spirit dances before us, luring us forward.

Guided by the Spirit, we are open to new paths.

Let our pilgrimage begin.

Amen.

*Response

Through It All

The United Methodist Hymnal 507

Children's Message

Barbara Benton

Scripture

Genesis 19:15-26

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.

“Lot’s Wife Turns to Salt”

***Hymn**

This Is a Day of New Beginnings
The United Methodist Hymnal 383, vs. 1, 3, & 4

***Confessing Our Sin**

Gray Sexton

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.

Loving God,

**Our journey to You often feels like a dance,
one step forward and two steps back.**

**We follow and we falter;
we try and we give up.**

**The good we do seems to fall flat, and
the wrong we do gets magnified.**

**For all our failings, for all our missteps,
you do not give up on us.**

Help us trust that you are with us on the journey.

**Stay with, and when we lose our way,
turn us around to you.**

This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

***Receiving Grace**

The good news is that when we face ourselves and God with the awareness of our need, we are given grace to grow, and courage to continue the journey.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

What a gift! Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Sharing God’s Grace**

Offering Our Tithes and Gifts to God

Offertory: Take My Life and Let It Be
Betty Schroeder, John Toney, Pam Toney

*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

Gray Sexton

O God

**We thank you once again for this meal and this day.
Nourished by your Spirit, send us into your world
to share your love and grace with others.
Fixing our eyes on Jesus, may we not look back,
but trust Him with the journey ahead.
In Christ's name we now pray. 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

Hymn of Promise

The United Methodist Hymnal 707, vs. 1 & 3

*Blessing and Sending Forth

*Postlude

Worship Notes

The flowers on the altar are in celebration of the 35th wedding anniversary of Parker and Rhonda Tucker. Congratulations, Parker and Rhonda!

Ushers for the 8:30 service are Paul Ivey and Joyce Robinson.

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.

Announcements

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

VBS is only 1 week away and we still need lots of people to serve if we're going to host all the children we are anticipating!

Areas that need helpers include Snacks, Games, Storytime, Crafts. The best part is – everything is already planned, and all the materials will be provided.

- We have 5 people signed up to help with set up on Friday (June 14, 1-4pm) and need 5 more.
- We have 5 people signed up to help set up on Sunday (June 16, 2-6pm) and need 5 more.

If you can't come the entire time for setting up or for VBS, just come when you can, but please sign up! We are just asking for your time. If you do not have other commitments during that week or have a flexible work schedule that allows you to volunteer for a day or two, please consider serving.

Some slots only require 30 minutes of your time, some require 2 hours, and some require 4 hours. For many of the spots, you can choose if you volunteer for a single day or multiple days. All of that to say, there are many ways to get involved, and we have tried to make this as flexible and volunteer-friendly as possible. **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).

VBS REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Children who have completed fifth grade and younger are invited to join us for VBS! You can register online at stjohnsbr.org/vbs-2024.

COFFEE TIME REMINDER

Just a reminder that **if your last name begins with H - K, next Sunday, June 16**, 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.

YOUTH OLD/USED MAGAZINE DRIVE

The St. John's youth are asking for donations of your old magazines. The magazines will be used for a collaborative youth ministry event on Wednesday, June 12. If you have magazines you would like to donate, please drop them off in the church office no later than 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12.

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 STOPS AT LA. ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Summer Tour this week will be hosted by St. John's on **Wednesday, June 12**; students should be dropped off at the **Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center** (201 Lafayette St.) 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 is responsible for hosting each week. The next stop on the Summer Tour will be Jefferson UMC on Wednesday, June 19.

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 from May 26-July 28 (9:55-10:45 am). 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 Angeletta Gourdine with a talk by Lizzie Velasquez called "How Do You Define Yourself?" Our scripture focus will be Luke 17:11-19.

NEXT SUNDAY JUNE 16 our session 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

TODAY - STRANGER THINGS: A SERIES ABOUT BIZARRE BIBLE STORIES

Starting today, we will delve into some of the more bizarre passages in the Bible with our new worship series, "Stranger Things." Each week we will explore 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 will include a talking donkey, a tent peg, a floating hand, and a severed ear. We'll start the series off today with the story of Lot's wife turning into a pillar of salt. As we read a few of the odd legends of the Bible, we will ask the question: What is the good news here?

This Week at St. John's

Sunday, June 9

- 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
- 6:00 p.m. Summer Bells Practice, Bells Room

Monday, June 10

- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC
- 9:00 a.m. Ladies' Covenant Group, Founders' Parlor
- 3:00 p.m. Men's Covenant Group, Library
- 3:30 p.m. The Shepherd's Market Client-Choice Food Pantry, FLC
- 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

Tuesday, June 11

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market Client-Choice Food Pantry, FLC
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 7:30 p.m. AA Meeting, FLC-E

*Family Life Center

Wednesday, June 12

- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC
- 9:30 a.m. UWF Circle of the Heart, Founders' Parlor
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Summer Tour, Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center
- 6:30 p.m. Ladies' AA Meeting, FLC-C

Thursday, June 13

- 8:00 a.m. The Shepherd's Market Client-Choice Food Pantry, FLC
- 8:00 a.m. La. Registry of Interpreters, Library
- 1:00 p.m. Gardere Summer Program, FLC
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice, Choir Room

Friday, June 14

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Group, Founders' Parlor
- 7:00 a.m. Early Risers Exercisers, FLC
- 8:00 a.m. Food Bank Delivery, FLC
- 8:00 a.m. La. Registry of Interpreters, Library
- 1:00 p.m. VBS Setup, FLC

Saturday, June 15

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