

Songs & Scripture done Safely



*O Holy Night*

CHRISTMAS  
AT STATESBORO FIRST

December 23+24 | 5:30-7:00 PM

Journey by candlelight through the Christmas Story  
enjoying carols and communion to celebrate Christ's birth

This outdoor walk-through experience will take about forty  
minutes and will be open from 5:30-7:00 PM

An offering for ACTS will be collected.

SFUMC  
NEWSLETTER



FOR THE WEEK OF:  
**DECEMBER 13, 2020**

**Worship Services:**

Traditional Worship 8:30AM & 11:00AM in our Sanctuary	Contemporary Worship 9:01AM & 11:00AM in our Fellowship Hall
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Watch online at [www.statesborofirst.com/live](http://www.statesborofirst.com/live)

- Main Church Phone** 912-764-7589
- Rev. Dr. Scott Hagan**, Senior Pastor 912-764-1875
- Rev. Stephanie Smith**, Associate Pastor 912-764-1874
- Church Email** [mail@statesborofirst.com](mailto:mail@statesborofirst.com)
- Church Website** [www.statesborofirst.com](http://www.statesborofirst.com)
- Church App** [www.statesborofirst.com/app](http://www.statesborofirst.com/app)

## SFUMC Prayer List

***Prayers for Barbara Fox, now undergoing physical therapy at Azalea in Metter***

***Prayers for Pierce Dickens, undergoing treatment at EGR***

***Prayers for Mike Beasley, ERG***

***Continued prayers for Dot Piazza, Burney Marsh, and Kathryn Olliff***

***Cathy and Mike Rollins and son's family, specifically their infant granddaughter Adaline, who is receiving treatment for a serious infection.***

**Every week we invite you to join us in praying for:**

- 1) Our nation's military and the civilians who support them as they defend freedom around the world.***
- 2) First-responders, who serve and protect our communities.***
- 3) Leaders of government at every level - for God's will to be done through them and around them.***

## Worship Attendance

*DECEMBER 6, 2020*

In Person Worship: <b>248</b>	
8:30AM: <b>25</b>	9:01AM: <b>97</b>
11:00AM: <b>80</b>	REVIVE: <b>46</b>
Online Worship: <b>192</b>	
9:01AM: <b>85</b>	11:00AM: <b>107</b>
Offering Received: <b>\$19,007.00</b>	
Building Comfort: <b>\$0</b>	Total: <b>\$30,147.67</b>

“John the Baptist was in the **wilderness** calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins.” - Mark 1:4

“Say more about the significance of the **wilderness** as the setting for John the Baptist,” someone asked me this week after it appeared in the sermon on Sunday. The prophet Isaiah spoke extensively about the wilderness in the many chapters that foretold of the promised Messiah to come. God would prepare a way or path through the wilderness in the future.

On a basic level, when the Gospel writers refer to John the Baptist in the wilderness, they are describing the area that he called home. We are told that the crowds of people went from their homes in villages and cities out to an uninhabited region along the Jordan River. This is where John the Baptist did his work. While there is not specific evidence in the Bible that says John was a member of the ancient Qumran community that left behind the Dead Sea Scrolls, geography does not rule it out, for they also lived in the wilderness.

On a deeper level, the wilderness represented truths as old as time. It was through the wilderness that God led his people out of slavery and bondage into a promised land. They derived their identity from the laws, stories, and heroes of the Exodus. Later, David would conquer the nations out in that same area. It is in the wilderness that Jesus triumphs over Satan in the temptation story.

On an even deeper level, I also think the wilderness as our future home is a contrast to the ‘false security’ offered by cities and civilization. Genesis 1 tells us that God brought order out of chaos, but the next chapter says that Eden was a garden and not a high-rise condominium. The wilderness brings uncertainty, but also affords us the chance to let God provide our defense and salvation. Life lived in perfect control or security might lead us to think we don’t need saving - which is opposite the message of Christmas.

Grace and peace, Scott

## Church News

### **Poinsettias**

Place a poinsettia in the Gathering Area in honor of or in memory of someone special go to [statesborofirst.com/poinsettia](http://statesborofirst.com/poinsettia) and fill out an online form. Forms are also available in the Church Office. Each poinsettia is \$15, with money raised going toward Missions, thanks to the poinsettias being furnished by the *Earnest Smith Floral Fund in memory of E.L. Smith and Mary Warthen Smith*. You can pick up your poinsettias anytime starting Sunday, December 20. Names of those being memorialized/honored will be included in the online bulletin on December 27.

### **Job Posting: Facilities Manager**

Our church is seeking a unique and called person to serve as Facilities Manager. We plan to hire a mature, growing Christian who serves out of a solid faith in Jesus Christ. This person will work within a team atmosphere and be responsible for overseeing the operation and maintenance of the church's buildings and grounds. This is a part-time position of 20-25 hours/week, and compensation will be commensurate with experience. To apply, email a cover letter, resume and a list of references to [rkersey@statesborofirst.com](mailto:rkersey@statesborofirst.com), or call the church office for more information.

### **UMW Honors Babies**

UMW will once again honor babies for 2020. The UMW donates \$5 to Missions for each baby born to church members. If you have a grandchild, niece, nephew or friend's baby who was born this year whose parents are non-members and you would like to honor them with a gift to Missions, please pick up a form from the Church Office or call and fill one out over the phone. The form and \$5 are due to the Church Office by December 16. If you have any questions please call Marilynn Sellers, 682-2582.

## **Important Notice From the Business Administrator**

Due to Federal tax laws, all donations to be included on your 2020 statement must be made by December 31, 2020. Any checks given or postmarked after that date cannot be listed on your 2020 statement regardless of the date on the check. Donations received after this date will be put on your 2021 contribution statement. Final statements for 2020 will be sent out in early January. Please review your statement as soon as possible. To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2020 income tax return until you have received written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. You may lose a deduction for some contributions if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions. Also, when making prepaid contributions toward your 2021 pledge in 2020, you must write "2021 pledge" on the memo line of your check. If you have any questions, please contact:

Robin Kersey

SFUMC Church Business Administrator

912-764-1872 or rkersey@statesborofirst.com

## **Church Calendar**

### **Sunday, December 13**

8:30AM - Traditional Service, Sanctuary

9:01AM - 901 Service, FH

11:00AM - Traditional Service, Sanctuary

11:00AM - REVIVE Service, FH

### **Monday, December 14**

6:00PM - Church Council Meeting, FH/Zoom

### **Wednesday, December 16**

8:00AM - DQ Men's Group, 306

12:30PM - Roxella Ball's Bible Study, 306

*No Youth or Childrens Ministry - Will resume Jan 13, 2021*

### **Thursday, December 17**

10:00AM - PS Christmas Program, FH

### **Saturday, December 19**

12:00PM - Soup Kitchen